

***Making National Environmental Legal and Governance Systems Work Better –
Challenges and Opportunities for putting Law, Justice and Development into Action***

***Thursday, 21 November 2013
10:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.***

Room: MC 9 – 100

Virtually every country in the world has accepted obligations or committed to achieving internationally agreed goals and objectives in the field of the environment and sustainable development, be it through Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) or other instruments. Although the number of these commitments has grown over the last few decades, there continues to be a marked decline in the overall quality of the environment. In the outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), 'The future we want', Governments remarked on the importance of the implementation of international, regional and sub-regional agreements and commitments (paragraph 22) and acknowledged good governance and functioning legal systems at the national and international levels as essential for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger (paragraph 252).

This event invites the Global Forum and its partner organizations to discuss how national systems, in the field of law and governance, for the achievement of environmental objectives could be improved. Taking recent developments as example, such as the principles for the Advancement of Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability adopted by Chief Justices, Attorneys- and Auditors-General in the Rio+20 Declaration on Justice, Governance and Law for Environmental Sustainability, the event will focus on the importance of transparent, effective governance systems based on law and the necessary systems of social and other safeguards that will ensure a balanced and just approach to achieving developmental and environmental objectives.

Moderated by: World Bank and UNEP

Invited Panelists:

- *Ms. Siu Tip Lam*, Director, U.S.-China Partnership for Environmental Law, Vermont Law School
- *Mr. Steve Wolfson*, US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of General Counsel - International Law Group
- *Mr. Johan Bergenas*, Deputy Director, Managing Across Borders, Stimson Center
- *Mr. Steven L. Elstein*, Assistant Director, Natural Resources & Environment, US Government Accountability Office
- *Mr. Jacob Scherr*, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
- *Ms. Claudia de Windt*, Senior Legal Specialist, Department of Sustainable Development, OAS