



Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment

19 September 2016

Dear friends and colleagues,

I wanted to let you know about three recent developments that may be of interest.

New Human Rights Watch position. Human Rights Watch has announced that it is accepting applicants to direct its new program on “Environment and Human Rights.” It describes the position as follows: “As vulnerable communities around the world face growing consequences of environmental degradation, pollution, and climate change, the Environment and Human Rights Program will work to protect the rights of people around the globe, especially the poor and marginalized. The Environment and Human Rights Program will initially focus on human rights issues concerning toxic pollution, climate change, and the protection of environmental defenders. This position may be based in one of HRW’s major offices (multiple locations) and reports to the Deputy Executive Director for Program, based in New York.” The deadline is 7 October 2016. For more information, [click here](#). Please do NOT send your application to me!

UNITAR course on human rights and the environment. The UN Institute for Training and Research again offers a course on Human Rights and Environmental Protection for Sustainable Development, from 14 November to 12 December 2016. This course will take into account the lessons learned from the pilot version of the course, which was offered for the first time this spring. For more information, [go to the UNITAR website](#).

New report on environmental human rights defenders. Michel Forst, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, has published [a report to the General Assembly](#) dedicated, in his words, “to the heroic activists who have braved the dangers facing them and defended the rights of their communities to a safe and healthy environment.” The report describes the violence and harassment against environmental defenders, and sets out recommendations for empowering and protecting them.

This week in Geneva. For those of you in Geneva this week, I remind you of several events:

-- Thursday, 22 September, 10:00-12:00, International Environment House II: a panel discussion on how human rights contribute to the protection of the environment, with myself and Baskut Tuncak, the UN Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes.

-- Thursday, 22 September, 13:00-15:30, Room XXIII, Palais des Nations: I will hold a public meeting to receive views for the preparation of my upcoming thematic report on biodiversity and human rights to the Human Rights Council.

-- Friday, 23 September, 10:00-18:00, Room XIX, Palais des Nations: The Committee on the Rights of the Child holds a [day of general discussion on children's rights and the environment](#).

Questionnaire. Finally, a final reminder that we sent out a questionnaire to recipients of this newsletter inviting you to reply to questions about the intersection of biodiversity conservation and human rights. **The deadline for replies is September 30.** If you did not receive the questionnaire, we will be happy to send you another!

As always, thank you for your interest in and support for the mandate!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John H. Knox', written in a cursive style.

John H. Knox
UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment
Henry C. Lauerman Professor of International Law
Wake Forest University School of Law