**Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment**

*Call for input*

Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment

Visit to Norway

12 – 23 September 2019

In connection with an official visit to **Norway**, to take place from **12 to 23 September 2019**, the United Nations [Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Environment/SREnvironment/Pages/SRenvironmentIndex.aspx), Mr. [David R. Boyd](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Environment/SREnvironment/Pages/DavidBoyd.aspx), would like to take your feedback into account. The visit will include discussions with government officials, representatives of civil society, and the private sector about good practices and challenges in the implementation of human rights obligations relating to environmental protection.

Human rights and the environment are interlinked and interdependent. The full enjoyment of human rights depends on healthy environment. Environmental degradation undermines our ability to enjoy our human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water, culture, and a healthy and sustainable environment.

States have a general obligation to protect the environment (including by regulating businesses and other private actors) in order to protect the rights that depend upon it. These obligations include duties of the State to provide information about environmental matters, facilitate public participation in environmental decision-making, and provide effective remedies for environmental harm. States must establish and maintain substantive environmental standards and effectively enforce these standards aimed at respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. States must protect environmental defenders from harassment and violence. States also have heightened duties to protect those whose rights are most vulnerable to environmental harm.

The Special Rapporteur will present a public report on his Norwegian country visit to the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2020.

Any responses you provide to the questions below would be greatly appreciated. You need not answer all of them – you can focus on the ones that are relevant to you.

If you would like your submission to be considered *during* the visit as well as after it, please send any responses to the questions to [srenvironment@ohchr.org](mailto:srenvironment@ohchr.org) **at your earliest convenience** but no later than **31 July 2019**.

If you reply by **15 October 2019,** your submission will not be considered during the mission, but it will be taken into account for the Special Rapporteur’s report to the UN Human Rights Council.

Please feel free to share this message and the questions with anyone who might be interested in contributing.

**Your responses will be kept *confidential*. Neither you nor your organization will be identified, and your response will not be attributed to you or your organization, even if the Special Rapporteur raises issues that you brought to his attention.**

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Questions

1. Norway’s Constitution guarantees the **right to a healthy environment** (see Article 112 of the Constitution below). How effective has the Constitutional right been in protecting and promoting human rights as well as in environmental protection?
   1. Are there any good examples? Why are these good examples?
   2. Is the constitutional right to a healthy environment having positive effects? If so, please give examples. If not, please explain why not.
   3. Are there any challenges? What are the causes? How can these be overcome?

*“Every person has the right to an environment that is conducive to health and to a natural environment whose productivity and diversity are maintained. Natural resources shall be managed on the basis of comprehensive long-term considerations which will safeguard this right for future generations as well.*

*In order to safeguard their right in accordance with the foregoing paragraph, citizens are entitled to information on the state of the natural environment and on the effects of any encroachment on nature that is planned or carried out.*

*The authorities of the state shall take measures for the implementation of these principles.”*

1. Norway has ratified many **international and regional human rights treaties and environmental agreements**.
   1. How well are these agreements implemented on the ground?
      1. Are there any good examples? Why are these good examples?
      2. Are there any challenges? What are the causes? How can these be overcome?
   2. Are there any other international/regional agreements that need to be ratified by Norway in order to protect and promote a wide range of human rights (e.g., rights to information, participation, access to remedies, an adequate standard of living, food, health, land, housing, water, sanitation, a healthy and sustainable environment, cultural life, etc.) from environmental harm (e.g., environmental degradation, pollution, climate change, deforestation, harm to biodiversity and ecosystems, etc.)? If so, how would this ratification help to protect and promote human rights?
2. What are the major **domestic laws and regulations** that are intended to protect human rights from environmental harm? How well are they implemented and enforced?
   1. Are there any good examples? Why are these good examples?
   2. Are there any challenges? What are the causes? How can these be overcome?
3. What are the most **urgent human rights and/or environmental issues** that require the attention of the Special Rapporteur? These issues can be related to the guarantee of procedural rights (e.g., rights to information, participation and access to remedy), the protection/realization of substantive rights (e.g., rights to health, an adequate standard of living, food, land, housing, water, sanitation, a healthy and sustainable environment, cultural life, etc.) and/or linked to the rights of certain groups/individuals who are exceptionally vulnerable to environmental harm (e.g., indigenous peoples, women, children, rural communities, people living in poverty, minorities, etc.).
   1. What are the causes? What needs to be done?
   2. How can the Special Rapporteur contribute to improving the situation?
4. How well are **environmental human rights defenders** (those who work to protect the environment and/or the human rights that depend on it) protected in Norway?
   1. Are there any good practices in promoting the activities of environmental human rights defenders? Please elaborate if you have specific cases.
   2. Are there any challenges? If so, what are the causes? What can be done to improve the situation? Please elaborate if you have specific cases.
5. How would you evaluate the practices of Norwegian **businesses** whose activities have environmental implications (e.g., oil, gas, mining, forestry, fishery, etc.), including multinational, domestic and state-owned businesses? Are these businesses complying with the requirements of environmental laws, regulations and standards? How well do the businesses respect and protect human rights? What role does the Government of Norway play in addressing human rights violations caused by environmental damage created by businesses?
6. Do you have any information regarding good practices or concerns about the environmental and human rights consequences of actions taken in other countries by Norwegian businesses or the Government of Norway? Examples could include activities in energy development or natural resource extraction by Norwegian businesses or their subsidiaries. Examples could also include activities funded by the Norwegian government’s Official Development Assistance programs.
7. Please provide the names and contact details of any key persons and/or organizations (e.g. government officials, academics, research institutes, environmental organizations, victims’ organizations, etc.) whom you think it would be useful for the Special Rapporteur to be in touch with, either in Norway or elsewhere.
8. Please indicate if you have any suggestions for **places to visit outside Oslo** as well as key persons to contact to meet during proposed field visits (*Please send your input for this question as early as possible but no later than by* ***30 June 2019*** *to allow sufficient time to arrange visits*).
9. Are there any **specific questions** that you would like the Special Rapporteur to raise with a particular government body/ministry?
10. Following the visit, the Special Rapporteur will submit an official report of the visit to the Human Rights Council which will include his **recommendations** to the Government of Norway and possibly to other relevant stakeholders (e.g., UN agencies, CSOs, businesses, etc.). Are there any specific recommendations that you wish the Special Rapporteur to consider? If so, please describe your proposed recommendations and their underlying rationale.
11. Please let us know if there are **any other issues** that you want to bring to the attention of the Special Rapporteur.