

HORIZON
2020

Global Ecological Custodianship: Innovative International Environmental Law for the Anthropocene

Rendicontazione

Informazioni relative al progetto

GLEC-LAW

ID dell'accordo di sovvenzione: 751782

[Sito web del progetto](#)

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Progetto chiuso

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Periodic Reporting for period 1 - GLEC-LAW (Global Ecological Custodianship: Innovative International Environmental Law for the Anthropocene)

Periodo di rendicontazione: 2018-01-04 al 2020-01-03

[Sintesi del contesto e degli obiettivi generali del progetto](#)



Research problem

We might be living in a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene is characterised by: an increase in greenhouse gas concentrations and biodiversity loss; rising temperatures; increasing droughts and floods; depletion of ocean ecosystems and coastal zone alteration; rise in domesticated land and urbanization; increased inter and intra-generational human injustices; and multiple inter-species injustices. The central thesis of this project is that international environmental law (IEL) has been structurally complicit in causing the Anthropocene; IEL is unable to minimise and rectify Earth system damage; and IEL is unable to restore Earth system integrity. To this end, IEL reinforces the type of human behaviour that is causing the Anthropocene, while allowing environmental destruction, growing inter and intra-species hierarchies, human rights abuses, and socio-economic and ecological injustices. Lawyers acknowledge the deficiencies and structural failures of IEL, but refrain from confronting their insufficient understanding of the nature, reasons for, and extent of these deficiencies and failures; how they manifest and how they are created and maintained through law and politics; how they are related to the Anthropocene; what the full extent of the impact of these deficiencies and failures are on the Earth system; and how these could be addressed. Without a deeper multi-disciplinary understanding of these complex issues and their relationship with the Anthropocene, such as proposed by this project, IEL's response to the Anthropocene will remain incomplete and insufficient.

Objectives

What is needed is a comprehensively critical interrogation of IEL, its deficiencies and deeper structural failures, and the reasons for, ways in, and extent to which these contribute to the Anthropocene, so that a contemporary solution can be crafted to reform IEL, including potential ways to institutionalize ecological custodianship obligations. As a response to this challenge, this project seeks to answer three overarching questions: i) what are the normative implications of the Anthropocene for law generally and for IEL specifically; ii) why and to what extent is IEL unable to respond to the socio-ecological crisis of the Anthropocene; and iii) how could IEL be reformed alongside a global ecological custodianship (GLEC) framework of care so that it can better respond to the Anthropocene? To answer these questions and by using methodologies situated in the juridical, complexity and political sciences domains, this project's aim is to reveal, understand and appraise the deficiencies of IEL and its deeper structural failures in the context of the Anthropocene. It then seeks systematically to formulate and to apply an adequately theorized alternative GLEC framework to IEL in a way that could present realistic options to reform it in the short, medium and long term.

Societal relevance

Ultimately, alongside such a reformed conception of IEL, stakeholders such as states, the United Nations (UN), regional organizations such as the European Union (EU), and global civil society could be better able to contribute to the collective global sustainability effort in a manner that is tailor-made for the Anthropocene. Considering the critical global socio-ecological crisis, the increased scientific popularity of the Anthropocene framework, and urgency on the part of regulators to improve the outcomes of global environmental governance, this project is timely, incorporates an innovative multi-disciplinary methodology and will generate novel results of interest to the scientific community, the governance community and global civil society. It also shows direct impact for society at large to the extent that it will offer options to improve socio-ecological security through law. In particular, the

current project is relevant for and comprehensively responds to global, regional and national governance priorities that relate to

Lavoro eseguito dall'inizio del progetto fino alla fine del periodo coperto dalla relazione e principali risultati finora ottenuti

Several deliverables materialised during the 2 year course of this project.

Scientific:

Presented papers at 21 academic conferences and invited public lectures

Published 2 peer reviewed book chapters for collected volumes

Published 9 peer reviewed articles in leading international scientific journals

Outreach, dissemination and public engagement activities:

-The project hosted a roundtable discussion at the University of Lincoln in the Summer of 2018 where global experts were invited to present on and critique the gaps in IEL in light of the Anthropocene context.

- The project co-hosted and organised a Oñati Socio-legal Series conference titled Climate Justice in the Anthropocene where invited global experts presented papers in Onati Spain which are now being reviewed for publication in the Onati Socio-Legal Series.

-The project was fully presented during the annual University of Lincoln Research Showcase in 2018 which was attended by academics and students from Lincoln and surroundings and by members of the public.

- A Pint of Science event was hosted at the University of Lincoln in 2019 to engage in an informal pub setting with members of the public around the project's objectives, findings and broader activities.

- A project website was created to provide information on the project, it's activities and main deliverables.

Training activities:

-A formal writing retreat and writing retreat skills training event.

-Extensive hands-on, one-on-one media skills training at the University of Lincoln's Media School.

Progressi oltre lo stato dell'arte e potenziale impatto previsto (incluso l'impatto socioeconomico e le implicazioni sociali più ampie del progetto fino ad ora)

"The project achieved all initially stated objectives, and even went beyond these, especially in terms of the number of publications and scientific papers and public lectures that were delivered over the course of 2 years. Most significantly, the project went beyond the initial goal of ""merely"" critiquing IEL and developing a GLEC framework alongside which to reform IEL. It started tracing out the outlines of a new legal paradigm for the Anthropocene called Earth System Law (ESL). In coining this new legal paradigm, the foundations have now been laid for the future exploration and elaboration of this new legal paradigm which is intended to become the replacement for ""traditional"" environmental law. The

following outputs are particularly noteworthy in this respect:

Conference papers and public lectures:

-2018. Kotzé LJ. Earth System Law: Exploring the Juridical Dimensions of Earth System Governance. Invited public guest lecture presented at Universitat Rovira I Virgili, Tarragona, December 2018.

-2019. Kotzé LJ. Earth System Vulnerability in the Anthropocene. Invited guest lecture presented at the University of Copenhagen, January 2019.

-2019. Kotzé LJ. Introducing Earth System Law. Paper presented at the annual IUCN Academy of Environmental Law Colloquium, Faculty of Law Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, August 2019.

-2019. Kotzé LJ and Kim R. The Juridical Dimensions of Earth System Governance: Initiating a Debate on Earth System Law. Paper selected for presentation at the annual Earth System Governance Conference, hosted by the National Autonomous University of Mexico, Oaxaca, Mexico, November 2019

Journal articles-

-2019. Kotzé LJ and Kim R. "Earth System Law: The Juridical Dimensions of Earth System Governance". 2019 Earth System Governance 1-12.

-2019. Kotzé LJ. "Earth System Law for the Anthropocene" 2019 Sustainability 1-12."



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