



# NATURAL RESOURCE GOVERNANCE, INEQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

## Call for Papers

The Law and Society Association (LSA) International Research Collaborative (IRC) on Natural Resource Governance, Inequality and Human Rights invites submissions for panels at the LSA conference in Mexico City June 20 – 23, 2017. The overarching theme of the LSA conference is “Walls, Borders, and Bridges: Law and Society in an Inter-Connected World.”

The extraction of natural resources is ubiquitous and fundamental to the global economy. It provides the raw materials for massive industries and a livelihood for untold numbers. It is the linchpin of many economies. It promises development and social welfare, the realization of social and economic rights, and the closing of the gap between states in the Global North and the Global South. At the same time, natural resource extraction is deeply implicated in human rights violations around the globe. It is accompanied by violence against its opponents and against the land. It contributes to global climate change as well as to the destruction of local ecosystems. It is often located on the land of indigenous or otherwise socially marginalized groups, and can devastate their way of life, their health, and their communities. In spite of many promises to the contrary, extractive projects often seem to benefit the corporations or governments that control them more than the local populations that bear their costs. Persistent inequalities between and within countries mark the way we structure the projects, distribute the benefits and allocate the harms that flow from them. In the years following the opening of new natural resource megaprojects, what are the factors that lead to land being laid to waste, labor exploitation, corruption, increasing inequality and more violence rather than hospitals, schools and vibrant, healthy communities? It is incumbent on us to find a way to understand and respond to the human rights issues that arise in the context of natural resource extraction and governance, whether specifically in relation to the exploitation of resources such as fossil fuels, minerals, and timbers, and more generally in relation to their impact on climate change, development, and the economy.

We invite research papers that address any of the following or related questions.

- Does a human rights perspective help us adjudicate the tensions between the economic benefits of resource extraction and its harms?
- How do existing inequalities – within or across countries – influence how the benefits, risks, and decision-making authority in relation to natural resource governance are distributed?

- Would a human rights lens, a human rights strategy, help redress some of these inequalities?
- What alternative governance regimes can we envision to most effectively address the inequalities that arise in the context of natural resource extraction?
- What should we do and how should we think about the downstream effects of fossil fuel extraction, such as the carbon it releases into the atmosphere?

We particularly encourage papers that examine these questions in the context of a specific country or region or by focusing on a specific “site” of governance – domestic public law, private or contractual law, financing, international trade or investment law, indigenous or customary law. Preferably, the papers should address economic inequality, either as a cause or an outcome of rights violations in connection with resource extraction, and we encourage papers that attend to the way in which this interacts with other forms of inequality, such as those based on gender, race, nationality and physical or mental ability. Comparative, interdisciplinary, and intersectional work is welcome. We hope to curate a series of panels that bring together scholars from the North and the South to share cross-regional experiences on issues related to these themes.

Please send an abstract of between 1500 – 3000 characters to Julia Dehm ([jdehm@law.utexas.edu](mailto:jdehm@law.utexas.edu)) by **October 1, 2016**. If you are interested in acting as a Chair or Discussant for an IRC-organized panel, please let Julia know. For more information on the 2017 LSA conference, see: <http://www.lawandsociety.org/MexicoCity2017/mexicocity2017.html>