



West Virginia University®

DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**REASSESSING THE TRUTH:  
THE ROLE OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECH-  
NOLOGICAL PROGRESS, THE BUSI-  
NESS SECTOR, THE SUSTAINABLE  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE  
ENERGY TRANSITION**

AT

**WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, JOHN ROCKEFELLER IV  
SCHOOL OF POLICY AND POLITICS, DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MORGANTOWN, WEST VIR-  
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 West Virginia University  
CENTER FOR INNOVATION  
IN GAS RESEARCH AND  
UTILIZATION

 American Society  
of International Law  
**INTEREST GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW**

 **gLAWcal**  
Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development

 American Society  
of International Law  
**INTEREST GROUP ON INTELLECTUAL  
PROPERTY LAW**

# **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Regulating climate change, human health, human genome, circular economy, pandemics, nanoscience, sustainable development, food safety and security would not be possible without objective and scientifically sound information. In these science-based areas, scientific arguments and proceedings have been often a way to achieve political agreements in practice (norms and standards). However, in recent times, sound science data has been put in doubt. This is partly caused by the diversity of sources and ideology of scientific information. Since the role of science in policymaking and public administration is under fire domestically and internationally and scientific data are relativized in the post-truth era, very foundations of rule of law are undermined. Along with this necessity to reassess the importance of evidence-based legislation, citizens should be also part and brought back in the policy process. Inclusive public engagement is therefore not only pivotal to guarantee the legitimacy and legitimization of policy, but also to align science and technology progress to society's needs. Laws, regulations and policies could bridge detachments between the scientific community, policymakers and citizens by providing a framework aimed at increasing trust between them. This is particularly relevant in the areas of energy, environment, climate.

As an example, unconventional sources of energy such as shale gas have been welcomed with caution by citizens while strongly supported by Oil and Gas companies. The discussion is polarized and not many points of contact exist between supporters and adversaries of the technique reflecting the clash between local community – worried about the negative consequences on the environment – and corporations – worried about the restraints placed by citizens on their highly profitable activities. Existing research has primarily been concerned in evaluating and assessing the 'appropriateness' of this new technique of energy production in relation to environmental protection and on how to increase the security in exploration and exploitation activities (fracking, offshore, etc.). On the contrary, the engagement of local communities and public participation, its potential and contribution in the process of regulation and monitoring of exploration and exploitation of natural resources, has been relatively overlooked. Along with the participation and inclusion of civil society, the role of another Non-State actor is often excluded from the debate: corporations. Business is not only at the forefront of job creations, progress in technology development and key for the advancement of the society but is also taking proactive steps for the transition towards a low carbon economy. "Going green" is not a slogan but an effective strategy for business to increase profitability and innovation. Corporations require solid and certain regulatory framework and an intellectual property regime that support and stimulate innovations also in the energy sector. Reinforcing IPR regimes and protecting American companies from infringements of their rights when operating abroad should be prioritized. The strong support of the interna-

tional business community to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is best exemplified by the open letter submitted by the six largest Oil companies to the Secretariat that call for the establishment of an international carbon pricing system that “will contribute to provide our businesses and their many stakeholders with a clear roadmap for future investment, a level playing field for all energy sources across geographies and a clear role in securing a more sustainable future” (Major Oil Companies Letter to UN, 2015). Simultaneously, it is important to support and adequate existing technologies and industries, vital for national economic development, to environmental challenges. Investing in energy efficiency measures, in cleaner fossil fuels such as shale gas and in technologies that could reduce the impact on the environment of still essential sources of energy such as coal, should be at the center of the policy agenda. Tax incentives have proven to be successful tools to enhance environmental performance of polluting industries. For this reason, local governments should look at ways to encourage rather than punish energy companies, cornerstone of the national economy, that are gradually adapting to the changing socio-economic situation. Economic development should go hand in hand with the development of local communities. Benefit-sharing agreements between corporations and local communities strengthen citizens’ acceptance of the investment of businesses. By focusing on health, education and welfare corporations can bring new and economic-oriented forms of public assistance and at the same time help to fill the gap in federal funding in isolated parts of the country.

The abundance of natural resources in the Appalachian regions coupled with federal and state’s level incentives for energy companies bring even positive spillovers not only on job creations but also on the energy transition. Particular attention will be paid, in this conference, to case studies in the US (including but not limited to West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Kentucky and Tennessee etc.) and at the identification of the different answers at state and federal level in energy field.

In addressing energy, a multiscalar and multilevel perspective is in fact essential to better grasp the peculiarities of energy policy. Because of the transnational nature of the environmental crises the geographical coverage of the conference is however not limited to the US. Multilateral, regional, state, city responses help to better design and formulate national energy policy. Therefore, we strongly encourage submissions that focus on national and local experiences inside and outside of the US. European Countries are also addressing similar issues to the US such as inadequacies of the national grid for integrating renewables and for power distribution, energy diversification of the national portfolio, increasing energy security. As an example article 194 TFUE is focused on ensuring the functioning of the market and the security of supply, promoting efficiency and the interconnection of energy networks. An international trade’s perspective is also encouraged especially in light of the US-China trade dispute and because of the importance of the liberalization of energy markets, still facing relevant tariffs and non-tariffs barriers, for the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Countries from the Global South have also adopted interesting and innovative approaches and are strongly working towards the transition to a low-carbon economy by supporting industrial reorganization and energy efficiency measures via a favorable taxation regime. The case of the China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is in this regard exemplary. The BRI is in fact promoting cooperation in energy field and is trying to increase cooperation in energy. Any paper submission on the experiences from other newly industrialized countries or developing countries would be also an asset.

Considering the challenges of environmental degradation, the mainstreaming of scientifically dubious approaches to energy and environmental policy, the worsening of climate conditions, the increasing participation of concerned citizens in environmental protests and movements, the conference will focus on energy, environment and climate and encourages different perspectives on these topics. The perspective of the research area of Science, Technology and Society, in fact, involve different disciplines and expertise like public policy, public administration, sociology, anthropology, history, political philosophy, law, comparative law, international law, communication, geography and other humanities, social sciences and sciences disciplines. From a methodological perspective, environmental and scientific considerations will be examined in order to provide a general background concerning the complexity of the topic.

## **AREAS OF INTEREST**

The objective of this conference is twofold. The first, is to analyze from the perspectives of humanities and social sciences the impact that science and technology have on the society, the ethical and social concerns with particular consideration on the community impact of exploration and exploitation of energy, water and other natural resources and how to balance these concerns with such relevant important issues like economic development. The second is to look at how to increase inclusive public engagement in drafting energy and environmental policy and to focus on community development. We invite contributions addressing but not limited to the following topics:

- Science, Technology and Society towards energy in transition
- Corporations as climate policy actors (business and human rights, standardization, green industry, CSR measures, soft law, impact investment, industry standards and regulations, impact investing)
- Public engagement for environmental protection in US and other countries (indigenous people, local communities, environmental rights and access to justice, climate migrants, monitoring and evaluation of natural resources exploitation, new forms of collaboration between citizens, digital-enabled public participation)
- Combining public engagement with the new technological developments through citizen's science in US and other countries

- The importance of educating and training experts before the public on the emerging technologies and its relation with public administration and the law in US and other countries
- Technology transfer and Energy Innovation
- Designing an appropriate IPRs regime for energy business
- The role of intellectual property, technology transfer and know-how in the upstream, midstream and downstream energy market
- Liberalization of energy markets and energy trade
- Energy under the WTO legal framework
- Energy market integration and regional power trading
- Impact of the US-China trade dispute on energy (retaliatory measures on American energy companies, international energy market etc.)
- Bridging the gap between Business and Government
- Public-Private Partnerships in the energy field (distribution and transmission, extraction of natural resources)
- Strengthen the relationship between natural resources and community development
- The role of public administration and the law in questioning and supervision the so-called “disruptive technologies”. For the purposes of this conference, with disruptive technology, we intend the one which displaces an established technology and shakes up the industry or a ground-breaking product that creates a completely new industry (see Clayton M. Christensen, The Innovator’s Dilemma)
- Energy Efficiency, Renewable and Non-renewable sources of energy
- Policies to boost innovation and energy efficiency (tax incentives, subsidy, benefit sharing agreements, industrial reorganization and job creation)
- The inefficiencies of policies at the national and international levels related to environmental concerns in following-up with technological developments.
- Inclusive energy policy for sustainable economic and community development
- The China’s Belt and Road Initiative as an Energy cooperation mechanism
- Energy Cooperation in Central Asia
- Innovative Energy Governance Approaches in the Global South
- Third World approaches to international law regarding IP law, energy and environment



# VENUES AND DATE

The international conference will take place at the premises of the West Virginia University, Department of Public Administration, Morgantown, USA, on 5–6 November 2019.

## ELIGIBILITY

This call is open for senior and junior academics, as well as business professional and practitioners of international organizations and NGOs working in these areas.

## APPLICATIONS

Applications should be submitted via e-mail by September 27, 2019 to the following e-mail address: PDFarah@mail.wvu.edu

Please include the following information:

- The author's name and affiliation;
- A 500–700–word abstract [Word file or PDF];
- The author's CV, including a list of relevant publications, if applicable;
- The author's contact details, including e-mail address and phone number.

Co-authored papers are also welcomed.

## PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITIES

*with*



The organizers have publication plans for the presented papers. The precise format of publication will be discussed during the conference. Among the options already available at the time of the call for papers, the organizers envisage to publish a book collection in the [Routledge Publishing](#) (New-York/ London) multidisciplinary gLAWcal book series on “[Transnational Law and Governance](#)” or a special issue/symposium in relevant peer-review SSCI or US journals.

# CONFERENCE CHAIR

Paolo Davide Farah (West Virginia University (WVU), Eberly College of Arts and Sciences, John Rockefeller IV School of Policy and Politics, Department of Public Administration)

## CO-ORGANIZERS

The international conference is organized by the Department of Public Administration of West Virginia University, USA.

The event is in collaboration with West Virginia University, Center for Innovation in Gas Research and Utilization (CIGRU), the American Society of International Law (ASIL) Interest Group on International Environmental Law and Interest Group on Intellectual Property Law, and gLAWcal – Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development, UK.

