

Systemic Integration of Climate Change in International Law

28-29 August 2025
Singapore



Supported by:



Table Of Contents

About the Conference

Welcome Remarks

Keynote Remarks

High-Level Roundtable: Progress on COP29 and Expectations for COP30

Panel 1: Climate Change Commitments under the Paris Agreement

Panel 2: Climate Change - Just Transition

Panel 3: Intersections of Climate Change Law and Other Areas of Law

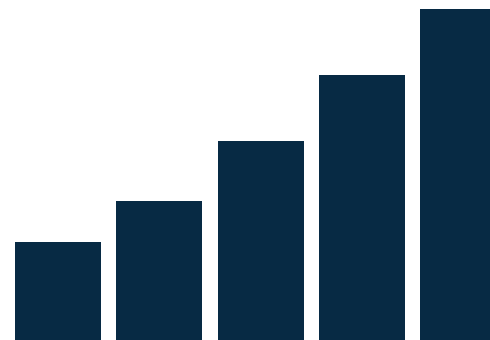
Panel 4: Artificial Intelligence, Technology, Innovation, and Climate Change

Panel 5: Legal Responsibility for Climate Change, Climate Litigation, and Reparation

Panel 6: Trends in International Environmental Law and Governance

Closing Panel: Reflections and Way Forward

MOU Signing



About the Conference

From 28 to 29 August 2025, the Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore in partnership with the Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy, University of Durham convened a two-day conference on the theme of 'Systemic Integration of Climate Change in International Law'. The conference was supported by the Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines College of Law; Centre for Environmental Law and Climate Justice, Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law; and the Universiti Malaya Climate Change Network. It brought together scholars, policymakers, and legal experts to discuss recent developments in national and international governance on climate change and identify ways in which systemic integration and coherence can be achieved.



Welcome Remarks



Dr. Nilufer Oral

Director, Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore

At the opening panel, Dr. Oral and Prof. Minnerop delivered their welcome addresses. Dr. Oral thanked participants for joining the Climate Change Conference from all over the world and underscored the importance of actively engaging with climate issues.



Prof. Petra Minnerop

Director, Durham University Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy

Prof. Minnerop thanked the National University of Singapore, wished all participants two days of enriching discussion, and affirmed that the insights gained would endure long after the conference. Prof. Minnerop also reflected on how the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Climate Change has progressed the systemic integration of climate change, stating that international law must be interdisciplinary to adequately address climate change. She further stresses the ICJ's emphasis on the need to serve the normative strengthening of the international legal order and the need for states to take necessary regulatory and legislative measures to comply with their international obligations.

Keynote Speaker

Ambassador Rena Lee

Singapore's Ambassador for International Law



Ambassador Lee welcomed attendees, especially those who had travelled far, to the Singapore conference. She highlighted key findings from the International Court of Justice's recent advisory opinion, noting that, while not binding, such opinions clarify the law and guide State obligations. Ambassador Lee emphasised the need for effective implementation of international law and expressed hope that the collaborative spirit witnessed with the Montreal Protocol could similarly help drive progress on climate change.

High-Level Roundtable

Progress on COP29 Outcomes and Expectations for COP30

The roundtable was moderated by Ms. Danielle Yeow, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow and Lead, Climate Change Law and Policy at NUS CIL. The roundtable centred on the transition from climate negotiation to implementation, discussing the urgency of submitting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the need for robust regulatory frameworks to unlock private financing.

Ambassador Luciano Mazza de Andrade
Ambassador of Brazil to Singapore

Ambassador Mazza de Andrade noted that at COP29, most countries had completed negotiating the details of implementing the Paris Agreement, with the focus shifting to mobilising all actors for implementation. He emphasised the significance of COP30 as the first COP held in South America, highlighting the crucial connection between forest protection and sustainable development. Ambassador Mazza de Andrade also shared how Brazil has developed a framework with six thematic objectives, is implementing an action agenda and using hybrid financing for forest protection.





High-Level Roundtable

Ms. Diane Tan

Deputy Director-General (Security) of the International Affairs Division of the Attorney-General's Chambers of Singapore

Ms. Tan expressed that the COP29 discussions in Baku have set the stage for COP30's return to routine programming, providing Brazil with an important avenue to re-engage with climate negotiations. She expects COP30 to focus heavily on mitigation strategies, just transition policies, and work programmes. Ms. Tan stressed that implementation remains the critical priority, as 2025 represents a crucial opportunity to see Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) take centre stage. Yet, challenges remain, as only a minority of countries have submitted their updated NDCs. As a member of the Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee, she shared that notices have been sent to all parties that have not yet submitted their NDCs and highlighted the urgent need for broader participation in concrete climate action and the role of COP 30 in generating momentum.

Ms. Sim Ting

General Counsel; Managing Director and Head of Corporate Services Group GenZero

Ms. Sim Ting outlined GenZero's commitment to investing in climate solutions while acknowledging the significant risks and challenges that complicate this mission. She highlighted how the extended development timelines of nature-based projects, combined with lengthy feasibility studies and operational setbacks, have dampened the risk appetites of the private sector and financial institutions for such investments. Ms. Sim Ting reiterated that well-defined regulations are essential to unlock private financing and advocated for corporations to catalyse climate action through participation in carbon markets, noting that established market mechanisms enable States and firms to form effective coalitions in pursuing shared climate goals.

Prof. Dr. Winston Chow

Professor of Urban Climate, Singapore Management University (SMU); Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Working Group II

Prof. Chow expressed that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has played a crucial role in informing governments about the precarious nature of climate change since its founding in 1988, now entering its seventh assessment cycle. By projecting the likelihood of natural disasters over the next 30 to 40 years, the IPCC aims to spur immediate climate action among policymakers. Prof. Chow explained that the IPCC is greatly concerned with helping maintain societal stability over the next two to three decades as countries work toward the ambitious 1.5°C target. Prof. Chow also noted the frequent citation of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report in the recent ICJ advisory opinion on climate change, emphasizing its growing influence on both domestic climate policy and legal cases. He suggested that the IPCC's next report may need to address countries' historical greenhouse gas emissions, given possible legal implications in future international negotiations. Prof. Chow also highlighted the complexities of attributing emissions, especially for major emitters like India, Brazil, and Indonesia, which have colonial histories; thus raising ongoing debates about distinguishing emissions from colonial versus post-independence periods.

Climate Change Commitments under the Paris Agreement



The first panel was moderated by Prof. Dr. M. R. Andri G. Wibisana, Professor of Environmental Law and Director in Chief of the Centre for Environmental Law and Climate Justice (CELCJ), Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law. This panel explored the legal and institutional dimensions of climate accountability. From North Africa to Southeast Asia, and across sectors such as finance and aviation, the speakers highlighted the challenges of translating climate commitments into concrete frameworks.

Ms. Ikram Yassamine Mekidiche

Lawyer and Research Advocacy Specialist, Women of the South Speak Out

“From Commitment to Implementation: Translating the Paris Agreement into National Policies in North Africa”

Ms. Mekidiche examined how North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya) pursue diverse approaches to achieving their Nationally Determined Contributions despite shared geographic and climatic conditions, each adapting strategies to their unique political, legal, and socio-economic contexts. She stressed that while these countries contribute minimally to global emissions, they face disproportionate climate impacts. Looking toward COP30, Mekidiche called for North African nations to progress beyond symbolic commitments toward concrete, rights-based, and legally binding national climate strategies.

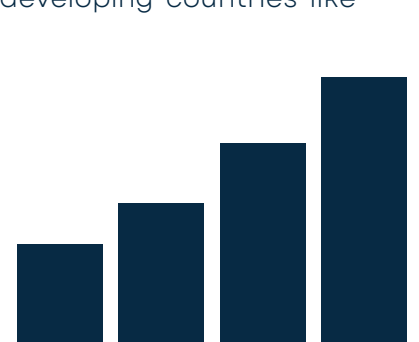


Prof. Dr. Garima Maheshwari

Assistant Professor, Vivekananda School of Law and Legal Studies

“Climate Justice in Transition: India’s Adaptation Challenges in the Post-Paris Climate Regime”

Prof. Maheshwari explored how adaptation measures are conceived within the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF). She examined how the ETF's development has juxtaposed transparency mechanisms with the development of domestic climate priorities and analysed the implications of the ETF for the development of transparency norms that address the adaptation priorities of developing countries like India.



Climate Change Commitments under the Paris Agreement

Ms. Thanh Mai Nguyen and Mr. Hung Thinh Vu

Law Students, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam

“Practices in NDC Implementation in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Study of Legal Frameworks”

Ms. Nguyen shared how six Southeast Asian countries integrate their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) into domestic law. Her research revealed that despite having various legal frameworks, most Southeast Asian countries struggle with fragmented governance, economic priorities that favour fossil fuel-dependent growth over climate action and insufficient funding and technical expertise. While external pressures from foreign actors like the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism are driving some adaptation toward renewables, institutional weaknesses continue to hinder effective climate action, with most countries' efforts rated as "critically insufficient" by international assessments.



Dr. Sanaz Youssefi

Postdoctoral Fellow, Dalhousie University

“Reconciling Basel IV with International Climate Obligations: A Path Toward System Integration”

Dr. Youssefi explained that Basel IV banking regulations clash with Paris Agreement climate commitments by employing a backwards-looking risk assessment that penalises clean energy investments that lack long credit histories while favouring established fossil fuel industries and ignoring future climate policy impacts. She proposed reconciling Basel IV with international climate obligations through systemic integration, which requires interpreting treaties harmoniously rather than in isolation and recalibrating Basel IV's three pillars to include climate-adjusted risk weights, scenario analysis, and unified disclosures.

Mr. Le Minh Nhut

Lecturer, Ho Chi Minh City University of Law

“Bridging International Aviation Decarbonisation and Vietnam's Climate Governance: Legal Integration and Emerging Contributions”

Mr. Nhut introduced CORSIA, a mechanism adopted by the ICAO in 2016 to offset and reduce carbon emissions for international aviation. He explained the processes and obstacles of ensuring the accuracy and verifiability of emissions data through CORSIA's monitoring, reporting and verification structure, and the CORSIA Emissions Unit Eligibility Criteria. As an ICAO member, Vietnam is required to implement CORSIA and has started developing a domestic carbon market, with expected annual revenues of \$285 million from carbon credits. From 2028, this market will support trading and offsetting of carbon credits, and from 2029, greenhouse gas emission allowances.



Climate Change - Just Transition



The second panel was moderated by Dr. Yew Wei Lit, Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, Universiti Malaya. This panel focused on the evolving concept of Just Transition across diverse legal, economic, and geopolitical contexts. Speakers examined how climate action must be accompanied by inclusivity and fairness.

Dr. Peixuan Shang,
Staff Attorney, Natural Resources Defence Council, China Office
“Understanding Just Transition in China Through Judicial Practice”

Dr. Shang explored the state of Just Transition in China, explaining how litigation in this frontier is driven by the country’s dual carbon goals, evolving energy regulations, and its commitment to the Paris Agreement. She presented three case studies of environmental claims in which courts evaluated economic, social, and environmental consequences in their judgments. Dr. Shang concluded that China is developing a more expansive vision of Just Transition, one that considers procedural rights and scientific transparency, promotes environmental integrity, and seeks a fair distribution of the benefits and burdens associated with renewable energy development.



Dr. Opeyemi Gbadegesin
Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Ibadan
“Rethinking the Just Transition: The Limitations of Integrating Human Rights into Climate Change Law”

Dr. Gbadegesin explained that while human rights approaches to climate law are important, they have significant limitations in achieving systemic just transition. He traced Just Transition from its beginnings in labour protection in polluting industries to its contemporary broader meaning of fairly distributing the benefits and burdens of decarbonisation. Dr. Gbadegesin contends that rights-based litigation faces persistent doctrinal challenges of causation, extraterritoriality, and justiciability, and cannot alone deliver the required socioeconomic transformation. Instead, rights-based litigation must be embedded in political-economic strategies and supported by stakeholder engagement, financial support and regular monitoring.

Climate Change - Just Transition

Dr. Nguyen Thi Lan Huong

Deputy Head of International Trade Law Department, Ho Chi Minh City University of Law

“Bridging Equity and Energy: A Just Transition Framework for Vietnam and Emerging Economies”

Dr. Nguyen explained how Vietnam and other emerging economies can pursue a just energy transition that balances fairness, energy security, and climate goals. She shared that Vietnam has historically relied on coal to provide affordable and stable electricity for growth, but current policies aim to reduce this dependence and expand renewable energy. This shift faces major challenges, including high costs and potential legal risks from investor-state disputes. To address these issues, Vietnam is considering nuclear power and developing the renewable energy market through new direct power purchase agreements and regional integration efforts like the ASEAN Power Grid.



Mr. Ahmad Sabirin

President, Institute for Climate Law and Sustainable Policy

“Operationalising Just Transition in Indonesia’s Coal Phase-Down: A Case Study of Labour and Community Rights in JETP Projects in Cirebon and Sukabumi”

Mr. Sabirin examined the shortcomings of Indonesia’s Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), an agreement which seeks to mobilise public and private financing to support a just energy transition in Indonesia. Through the case studies of coal power plant retirements in Cirebon and Sukabumi, Mr. Sabirin highlighted that the operationalisation of Just Transitions principles in Indonesia is generally unsuccessful, due to the institutionalisation of worker precarity and the systemic exclusion of local communities and governments. To address these issues, Mr. Sabirin called for legal reforms, mandatory stakeholder inclusion, and dedicated funding for social protection, reskilling, and local economic diversification.

Mr. Muhammad Amjad Raza

PhD Scholar, Government College University Faisalabad

“Operationalising Just Transition Principles in China-Africa-Pakistan Green-Technology Supply Chains”

Mr. Raza explored the application of Just Transition principles in renewable energy projects within China-Africa-Pakistan green technology supply chains. A comparative analysis of Kenya’s Garissa Solar Power Plant and Pakistan’s Dawood Wind Power Project shows that, while these projects delivered clean energy, they fell short on social justice. These projects provided fewer jobs than promised, overlooked land and cultural rights, and relied heavily on imported technology and expertise. Going forward, Mr. Raza expressed that tripartite governance, value chain integration and digital ESG tools should be considered to ensure renewable transitions are inclusive, equitable and sustainable.





Intersections of Climate Change Law and Other Areas of Law



The third panel was moderated by Prof. Dr. Arjuna Dibley, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore. This panel explored the intersection of climate change with international legal regimes, highlighting the urgent need for systemic integration across investment law, environmental governance, human rights, health law, and taxation. The speakers collectively emphasised that climate obligations are no longer siloed within environmental law but permeate multiple domains of global governance and demand proactive legal reform.

Mr. Davit Khachatryan

Lecturer, Russian-Armenian University of Armenia and American University of Armenia

“Integration of Investment Treaty Law and Climate Obligations: Towards a Climate-Conscious Interpretation of Investment Regime”

Mr. Khachatryan explored the conflicting relationship between international investment law and the urgent need for climate action. With countries increasingly bringing environmental counterclaims against investors, he argued that systemic integration of climate and investment law has become more pressing than ever. Mr. Khachatryan stressed that for State climate measures to remain legitimate, they should pass a proportionality test, being linked to a clear objective, suitable, transparent, and implemented in good faith. Going forward, future investment treaties should also be proactively designed to integrate climate objectives from the outset.



Ms. Tajra Smajic

PhD Candidate, Chinese University of Hong Kong

“Climate Change and Deep Seabed Mining: Implications of the COSIS Advisory Opinion”

Ms. Smajic examined the ITLOS advisory opinion’s potential to reshape the legal framework for deep-seabed activities and explained that deep-seabed activities are linked to climate change through habitat destruction, CO₂ release, sediment plumes, and biodiversity loss. She questioned whether compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Part XI alone is sufficient to fulfil the environmental obligations under Part XII broader environmental duties, and whether States face the obligation of introducing domestic legislation if the International Seabed Authority (ISA) fails to incorporate climate change considerations in the Mining Code.

Intersections of Climate Change Law and Other Areas of Law

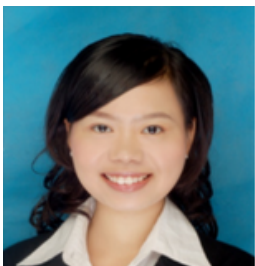
Dr. Elena Pribytkova

Senior Research Fellow, Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore

“Conceptualising the Right to a Safe Climate”



Dr. Pribytkova shared that the right to a safe, stable, and healthy climate is a fundamental human right closely linked to climate justice. She highlighted the many injustices caused by climate change and emphasised the importance of adopting decolonial approaches that, among other things, integrate non-Western and indigenous knowledge. Dr. Pribytkova explained that the right to climate shifts the global order from a state-centric to a polycentric model, imposing obligations not only on States but also on non-state actors and individuals. Furthermore, the right to climate promotes interspecies justice by recognising nature and non-human species as rights-holders, thereby marking a progressive paradigm shift to ecocentrism.



Dr. Yinling Zhou

Associate Researcher, Wuhan University Academy of International Law and Global Governance

“Intersections of Climate Change Law and Global Health Law Through Legalisation of the One Health Approach: Possibilities and Challenges”

Dr. Zhou explored whether the WHO Pandemic Agreement can meaningfully integrate climate change into global health law. She found that the WHO Pandemic Agreement exemplifies such integration through three key mechanisms: the expansion of the definition of the One Health approach to explicitly include climate change, the adoption of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities from climate law into the health context, and the proposal of dedicated financial contribution mechanisms that recognise the interconnected nature of climate and health challenges.

Mr. Edwin Vanderbruggen

Senior Lecturer, Foreign Trade University

“Can International Cooperation on Climate Change and Taxation be Systemically Integrated?”



Mr. Vanderbruggen emphasised the central role of taxation in climate change discourse, noting that taxation has both direct and indirect implications for implementing climate measures. While it was encouraging that recent climate change advisory opinions have referenced taxation either explicitly or implicitly, he warned that countries will struggle to achieve systemic integration of Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) with climate norms. Given international courts' recent pronouncements on due diligence obligations regarding climate change, Mr. Vanderbruggen stressed that countries must urgently align their national and international tax policies with their climate targets.

Artificial Intelligence, Technology, Innovation, and Climate Change



The fourth panel was moderated by Dr. Jon Mark Truby, Visiting Research Associate Professor, NUS CIL. This panel explored the opportunities and challenges posed by AI in combating climate change. Collectively, the speakers underscored the importance of introducing new legal frameworks and/or updating existing legal frameworks that recognise these rapid technological innovations, such that they do not create further environmental burdens and inequalities.

Prof. Dr. Suryanarayana Raju Vadapalli
Assistant Professor, Galgotias University

“Towards a Climate-Conscious Digital Future: Systemic Integration of AI and Innovation into International Climate Governance”

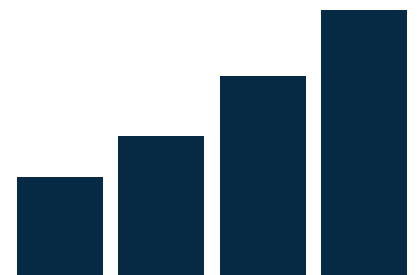
Prof. Dr. Vadapalli focused on the integration of AI into Indian and international climate governance. He explained how AI and innovation can play a significant role in climate action, such as using natural language processing for climate reports, harnessing data mining for climate patterns, and adopting AI-driven planning for energy grids and adaptation. However, he also noted several challenges in systemically integrating AI and innovation in the climate governance context. These include data security concerns, energy and water consumption from AI usage, and data access and availability. Ultimately, a climate-conscious digital future requires inclusive frameworks, data sharing, and ethical safeguards.



Mr. Ivan Harris Tanyag
Graduate Student, School of Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Philippines, Diliman

“Admissibility Standards for Algorithmic Projections in Climate Litigation”

Highlighting the growing reliance on AI-generated climate projections as legal evidence, Mr. Tanyag argued that the more complex the evidence becomes, the more the absence of clear procedures creates obstacles. He examined that AI-generated models create an evidentiary problem as they may reflect the biases/prejudices of those who operate them, risk misleading courts or favouring one party based on technological sophistication alone, and operate in a black box. A legal framework for international courts to handle AI-generated evidence was then proposed. This had three elements: (i) full scientific disclosure; (ii) independent replication and benchmarking; and (iii) neutral expert involvement and accreditation.



Artificial Intelligence, Technology, Innovation, and Climate Change

Prof. Dr. Niharika Kumar and Mr. Shobhit Pratap Singh

Assistant Professor and Research Scholar, University of Lucknow

“Algorithmic Inequality? AI-Driven Carbon Border Adjustments and the Risk of Green Protectionism Against South Asia”

In their paper, Prof. Dr. Kumar and Mr. Singh argue that AI-driven Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAMs) embed inequities by relying on Western-centric datasets and opaque algorithms. Using South Asia as their case study, they highlight that CBAMs externalise compliance burdens to South Asia, a region lacking sufficient infrastructure. This, in turn, creates distributive injustice in practice, with the European Union advancing climate capitalism and the Global South absorbing regulatory liabilities. They deem such distributive injustice attributable to the dominance of Western datasets and AI opacity in AI-driven CBAMs.

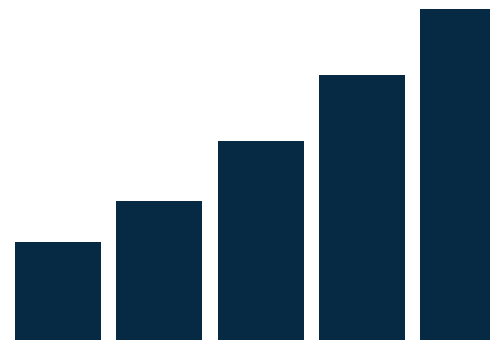


Ms. Cecilia Therese Guiao

Head Legal Officer, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines College of Law

“Climate Change and Outer Space: Interplay and Potential International Legal Intersections”

Ms. Guiao highlighted that the rapid expansion of space activities demonstrates the increasingly indispensable role of space data and technology in addressing today’s challenges. Yet, while the emphasis on the importance of space technology to climate change action is readily apparent in international climate change law and policy, the five space treaties—entered into force between 1967 and 1984—completely omit mentions of climate. She deemed this omission notable, given that the very space activities intended to help mitigate and adapt to climate change are becoming unsustainable. Ms. Guiao then proposed that concepts in the literature, such as planetary sustainability, can be used to address the fact that space technology has the potential to adversely affect climate change.





Legal Responsibility for Climate Change, Climate Litigation, and Reparations



The fifth panel was moderated by Prof. Rommel J. Casis, Associate Professor/Director, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines College of Law. This panel focused on the opportunities and challenges inherent in seeking climate reparations before domestic and international courts and tribunals, as well as climate finance mechanisms.

Prof. Dr. Hélène Tigroudja

Visiting Professor of Public International Law, Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore

“Climate Change as a Human-Rights Matter: Contribution of the UN Treaty Bodies to Fostering States’ International Obligations, Scope of Jurisdiction and Regime of Responsibility”



Prof. Dr. Tigroudja began her presentation by highlighting three key attributes of the “green turn”: that this has been done in a short period of time; that this was a movement brought by civil society; and that States and experts have been strongly resisting this green turn. Underscoring the risk of further State resistance to the integration of climate change matters in their international obligations, she highlighted the issue of implementation of decisions from the Human Rights Committee and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). Lastly, she commented on the deep institutional crisis facing the field of international human rights law, attributing this to “human rights fatigue”.



Mr. Vincenzo Elia

Research Associate, Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore

“The Development of Innovative Causation Strategies in Climate Change Litigation”

Mr. Elia examined a significant issue plaguing existing climate litigation: that plaintiffs, courts and tribunals struggle to prove a direct causal link between one State’s acts and specific harm. In response to this, he argues that shifts in the law of causation are legally defensible and normatively required. Mr. Elia then identified the rise of “normative causation”. Citing cases such as *Duarte Agostinho v Portugal and others* and *KlimaSeniorinnen v Switzerland*, he explained that courts have shifted their focus from direct causation to a duty to protect fundamental rights.

Legal Responsibility for Climate Change, Climate Litigation, and Reparations

Prof. Dr. Miriam Cohen

Associate Professor and Canada Research Chair, Université de Montréal

“Between Repairing and Assisting: Reimagining the Architecture of Climate Justice”

Prof. Dr. Cohen explained that a parallel system of climate finance mechanisms operating beyond judicial frameworks has emerged, delivering aid and support without reference to liability and responsibility. In citing the recent climate change advisory opinions before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), she also highlighted a shift from political commitments to binding obligations. Taking these two systems into account, Prof. Dr. Cohen argued that the future lies in “hybrid models of justice”. This ensures that affected communities have their harms acknowledged, while ensuring that accountability mechanisms are maintained.



Prof. Dr. Millicent McCreath

Assistant Professor, Durham University

“Common but Differentiated Responsibilities for the Protection of the Marine Environment”

Prof. Dr. McCreath highlighted that many States had failed to reference the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) during the advisory proceedings before the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. Outlining the evolution of the CBDR principle, she identified its three core elements: (i) common responsibility; (ii) unequal State contributions to climate harm; and (iii) unequal State capabilities to contribute to climate solutions. Ultimately, Prof. Dr. McCreath argued that without reference to historical responsibility, we lack a complete picture of CBDR in UNCLOS.



Prof. Dr. Andri G. Wibisana

Professor of Environmental Law and Director in Chief of Centre for Environmental Law and Climate Justice (CELCJ), Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law

“Climate Crime Cases in Indonesia: A Breakthrough or Breakdown?”

Prof. Dr. Wibisana critically challenged a recent publication arguing that recent climate crime cases in Indonesia represent a legal breakthrough, arguing instead that they unlawfully criminalize defendants without a proper legal basis, thus violating the principle of legality. He illustrated his criticism with involving wildfires and corruption cases involving climate change, such as *Republic of Indonesia v. Kosman Vitoni Siboro* and *Republic of Indonesia v. Nur Alam*, where greenhouse gas emissions were treated as criminal acts despite the absence of clear regulatory standards. Prof. Dr. Wibisana warned that such reasoning could dangerously expand criminal liability to non-criminal offenses and called for a more careful and critical assessment of these so-called climate crimes.



Trends in International Environmental Law and Governance



The sixth panel was moderated by Ms. Railla Puno, Associate Lead, Climate Change Law and Policy, NUS CIL. In this panel, speakers identified emerging trends and explored innovative approaches to strengthening global climate and environmental law and governance. Collectively, the speakers highlighted pathways toward greater inclusivity, stronger enforcement, and more coherent collaboration between related legal regimes to meet the complex demands of the climate crisis.

Prof. Dr. Wan Mohd. Zulhafiz Wan Zahari

Associate Professor, Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws, International Islamic University of Malaysia

“Renewable Energy Certificates Within Global Climate Regulations: A Systematic Coherence Framework”



Prof. Dr. Wan attributed the importance of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) to three factors: that it (i) mobilises private capital for renewable projects; (ii) enables corporates to meet environmental, social, and governance (ESG) and net-zero goals; and (iii) supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 (clean energy) and Paris Agreement objectives. Subsequently, he proposed a harmonisation framework to strengthen RECs’ governance within international law. He argued that this framework should, inter alia, (i) standardise issuance, certification, and retirement of RECs; (ii) integrate RECs into Articles 6 and 13 of the Paris Agreement; and (iii) include a blockchain-based global registry to ensure validity.



Ms. Catherine Hall

PhD Researcher, University of Eastern Finland

“Enhancing Representation of the Most Affected in Climate Club Governance: Lessons from the Arctic Council and Role of Indigenous Peoples”

Ms. Hall conducted an empirical analysis of climate clubs, finding that climate change’s most affected communities have little to no representation in existing climate clubs. With these communities having a limited role in decision-making during United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations, this reproduces existing international hierarchies and colonial dynamics. Ms. Hall then suggested that the Arctic Council offers some important lessons for structured and meaningful inclusion of indigenous voices.

Trends in International Environmental Law and Governance

Prof. Dr. Patan Saleem Akram

Associate Professor, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation

“Evolving Paradigms in International Environmental Law: Towards a More Equitable and Enforceable Global Governance Framework”



Prof. Dr. Akram highlighted that, despite progress in norms, the lack of binding enforcement mechanisms, fragmented governance, and inconsistent state application limit the effectiveness of international environmental law. Moreover, global legal responses to new threats, such as climate-induced displacement and biodiversity loss, often marginalise vulnerable nations and communities. Prof. Dr. Akram ultimately stressed the need for a reformed governance model that includes legal accountability, fair distribution of responsibilities, and flexible legal tools to tackle complex, cross-border ecological challenges.



Mr. Ricardo Murilo da Silva

Adjunct Professor of Environmental Law, Regional University of Blumenau and PhD Student, Federal University of Santa Catarina

“Reframing International Environmental Governance: Addressing Fragmentation and Advancing Synergies Through Climate Litigation and Private Environmental Governance”

Mr. Murilo da Silva argued that the traditional state-centric model of international environmental law has been insufficient to manage the complex, multi-level risks posed by climate change. This is because fragmentation—evident in the proliferation of treaties, courts, and non-state mechanisms—requires a strategic realignment focused on systemic integration rather than mere coordination. Ultimately, Mr Murilo da Silva proposed that international climate litigation, combined with corporate climate due diligence, provides a strategic pathway to overcome the fragmentation of international environmental governance by fostering synergies between public and private regimes.

Prof. Rommel J. Casis

Associate Professor/Director, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines College of Law

“The Risks and Rewards of the Systemic Integration Approach to the Development of Climate Change Law”



Prof. Casis identified three specific integration pathways for the development of climate change law, namely (i) environmental law into climate treaties; (ii) human rights into climate treaties; and (iii) climate rules into UNCLOS. Outlining the rewards of systemic integration, Prof Casis stated that this both creates a more robust regulatory framework and avoids fragmentation. However, several risks and challenges abound. One such challenge is that of practical application in specific regimes: while integration can be agreed upon in principle, how such integration will be implemented in practice remains unsettled.



Closing Panel

Reflections and Way Forward

The final panel was moderated by Dr. Tara M. Davenport, Asia Pacific Centre for Environmental Law (APCEL) and NUS CIL. Seeking to tie the themes explored during the conference together, panellists emphasised the importance of information and education, increased State ambition, and finance and technology transfer in combating climate change.

What is the future of climate change law and governance?





Closing Panel

Reflections and Way Forward

Prof. Dr. Andri G. Wibisana

Professor of Environmental Law and Director in Chief of Centre for Environmental Law and Climate Justice (CELCJ), Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law

Prof. Dr. Wibisana encouraged participants to explore how the burden of climate change is distributed between governments and non-State actors. He also highlighted how governments have been questioning the legality of the precautionary principle and the limits of using human rights in tackling climate change. Using Indonesia as a case study, he underscored domestic challenges in transitioning from coal to cleaner energy.

Ms. Cecilia Therese Guiao

Head Legal Officer, Institute of International Legal Studies, University of the Philippines College of Law

Ms. Guiao shared that a significant challenge for the COP30 presidency will be one of resource limitations, underscoring the importance of increased coordination within negotiation blocs, especially for developing country negotiators. She also highlighted how the ICJ advisory opinion, unfortunately, failed to distinguish between particularly vulnerable groups and less affected groups, which may result in some developing countries refusing to use the advisory opinion in climate negotiations moving forward. Lastly, Ms. Guiao remarked that although finance and technology transfers are required to unlock the necessary climate action, ensuring equity may come at the cost of speed in negotiations.

Prof. Dr. Petra Minnerop (online)

Professor of International Law and Director of Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy (CSDLP), Durham University

Prof. Dr. Minnerop shared that all the climate advisory opinions—before the ICJ, IACtHR, and ECtHR—ought to be jointly considered as they press in the same direction. In singling out the ICJ advisory opinion, she explained that rather than going above and beyond, the Court instead chose to largely affirm existing legal research. She not only saw this as a mandate to continue with interdisciplinary research at the intersection of climate change and international law, but also an affirmation that legal imagination can result in greater legal certainty and clarity on international legal rules. Nevertheless, she recognised the nature of the ICJ advisory opinion as a double-edged sword—that it could lead to regulatory chill, or make people realise that the enforcement machinery of the Paris Agreement is actually working.

Closing Panel

Reflections and Way Forward

Dr. Yew Wei Lit

Senior Lecturer, Department of Geography, Universiti Malaya

Dr. Yew encouraged participants to harness international discourse and the importance of urban planning and fairness in the climate change context. He explained that local communities will look to the “powerful moral grammar” that is the law and try to embed it in their own local contexts when seeking to pursue justice. However, Dr. Yew also emphasised the importance of looking at structural realities on the ground to achieve real systemic integration.

Ms. Danielle Yeow

Lead, Climate Change Law and Policy, Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore

Ms. Yeow recognised that achieving true systemic integration requires accounting for different “lenses” at the domestic and international levels. She identified three main “lenses” arising from the conference, namely (i) interactions within the law; (ii) the interaction between law and science; and (iii) the interaction between law and technology/AI. Lastly, she acknowledged that the climate advisory opinions simply form one part of the equation, situating it within geopolitical dynamics that affect how negotiators will approach the upcoming discussions at COP30.



MOU Signing

National University of Singapore Centre for International Law

and

Universitas Indonesia Center for Environmental Law and Climate Justice

The Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore (CIL) and the Center for Environmental Law and Climate Justice (CELCJ) at Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 5 August 2025. Professor Dr. M. R. Andri G. Wibisana, Director-in-Chief of CELCJ and Vice-Dean of Universitas Indonesia Faculty of Law, and Ms. Danielle Yeow, Lead of the Climate Change Law and Policy commemorated the occasion with a ceremonial exchange of the MOU during the conference, marking a further key step towards establishing the ASEAN Universities Climate Change Network.

