

Strengthening EU Environmental Law: Legal Perspectives on Greening Europe

This lecture will be delivered by

Prof. Colin Reid and Dr Sean Whittaker

'Freedom of Environmental Information'

21 September 2023 | 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM CET

Abstract

The right of access to environmental information is viewed as a key component of promoting good environmental governance. This is reflected in the range of legal instruments at the international, European, and domestic levels which act to guarantee the public's ability to access environmental information. However, the operation and even existence of the right are often mysteries to the very public it is supposed to empower.

In this lecture we will introduce the right of access to environmental information, based on the Aarhus Convention and the implementation of it through EU law, setting out the "proactive" and "reactive" rights of access and their associated obligations. We will then consider the impact that the right has had on environmental governance, highlighting both the right's successes and the challenges it has faced (and continues to face) in practice by drawing on an empirical study of who is using the right and in what ways.

Bio

Prof. Colin T Reid

Colin Reid is Emeritus Professor of Environmental Law at the University of Dundee having recently retired from his full-time post. Work with Dr Sean Whittaker and Dr Jonathan Mendel has led to the book *Freedom of Environmental Information: Aspirations and Practice* (Intersentia, 2023). Other work has focussed on biodiversity, e.g. *The Privatisation of Biodiversity: New Approaches to Conservation Law* (with Dr Walters Nsoh (Intersentia, 2016)), and on matters of environmental governance, especially in the context of Brexit and devolution, including a role as adviser to committees at the Scottish Parliament. He was a founder member and is now a Patron of the UK Environmental Law Association.

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/people/colin-reid>

Dr. Sean Whittaker

Sean Whittaker was conferred his PhD in Environmental Law from University College Cork in 2018, under the supervision of Professor Áine Ryall. Following the publication of his book *The Right of Access to Environmental Information* (Cambridge University Press, 2021), he worked on an Economic and Social Research Council-funded project. This project led to the publication of the co-authored book *Freedom of Environmental Information: Aspirations and Practice* (Intersentia, 2023) with Prof Colin Reid and Dr Jonathan Mendel. Currently, Dr Whittaker is a Lecturer in Law at the University of Dundee and is the Executive Director of the Centre for Freedom of Information, which is based at the University of Dundee. <https://www.dundee.ac.uk/people/sean-whittaker>



Register here!

We hope to see you on 21 September 2023!



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