

Workshop

Meeting European Commission and Academia

The preliminary reference procedure as a compliance mechanism of EU environmental law
Brussels, Friday 17 June 2016, 13.00-18.30,
Royal Winsor Hotel, 5 Rue Duquesnoy, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Organized by *Lorenzo Squintani* (University of Groningen) and
Moritz Reese (Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research)

DRAFT CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

In order to strengthen the working relationship between Academia and the European Commission in the field of environmental protection, the **European Environmental Law Forum (EELF)** is organizing a workshop focusing on the functioning of the preliminary ruling procedure as an important compliance mechanism.

From the very beginning, the effectiveness of EU law has benefited from the preliminary ruling procedure. This is particularly important in the field of EU environmental law, as the environment has no voice of its own. Private parties and ENGOs play indeed an important role in the enforcement of EU environmental acquis. As well known, the 'indirect enforcement' of EU environmental law complements and facilitates DG Environment's task of guiding interpretation and ensuring compliance with the EU environmental acquis.

In the last years, the preliminary ruling procedure has gained importance also from the perspective of enhancing the European Union's compliance with the Aarhus Convention. To this extent, the *Vereniging Milieudefensie* (C-401/12) and *Stichting Natuur en Milieu* (C-165/09) cases showed that in the actual state of development of EU law, Article 267 TFEU is used by the Court of Justice to integrate the legality review procedure under 263 TFEU and thereby implement the Aarhus Convention.

Despite the pivotal function that Article 267 TFEU plays as regards compliance with international and European environmental standards and the uniform interpretation of the latter, very little research is available on the functioning and optimal use of the preliminary ruling procedure as a compliance mechanism.

This workshop aims to initiate a more intensive debate on this matter.

13.00 - 13.30 Arrival with Coffee

1st Part, Chair: Moritz Reese

Lorenzo Squintani - Introduction

Moritz Reese - Welcome from EELF

Patrick Dietz - DG Environment

Laura Pignataro - DG Legal Service

Luc Lavrysen – Keynote: The interplay between national judges and the CJEU

15.10 - 15.40 Coffee break

2nd Part, Chair: Nicolas de Sadeleer

Janek Nowak - The preliminary reference procedure as an effective Aarhus Convention enforcement mechanism

Veerle Heyvaert - With reference to the environment: the preliminary reference procedure, environmental decisions and the domestic judiciary

Sanja Bogojevic - Judicial dialogue as judicial protection: 20 years of preliminary references on environmental matters as initiated by the Swedish judiciary

Jan Darpo - The Wolf, the Commission and the ENGOs in the Courts

17.40 - 18.15 Closing remarks

3rd Part, Chair: Bernard Vanheusden

Plenary Discussion

Lorenzo Squintani - Closure and announcement next event

18.15 - 18.45 Drinks

18.45 - Conference Dinner (Optional)

Enrolment

Enrollment takes place by means of this enrollment site [[LINK](#)] and by paying the conference fee. Early birds fee (**before 15 April 2016**) Euro 110; normal fee (**before 1 June 2016**) Euro 145 including drinks and VAT. The conference dinner is optional. The extra fee for the conference dinner is Euro 80 per person. The payment information is available on the enrolment site. For further information contact: Lorenzo Squintani (L.Squintani_at_rug.nl)