



FWO Scientific Research Network
“Climate Change Law in Europe – Klimaatveranderingsrecht
in Europa”

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Deadline: 30 April 2026

**International Workshop (in person)
“Land Use, Land-Use Change and Deforestation”**

5–6 November 2026
Hasselt University, Hasselt, Belgium

About the Network

The FWO Scientific Research Network (SRN) “Climate Change Law in Europe - Klimaatveranderingsrecht in Europa” aims to boost and facilitate the development of Climate change law and governance as an autonomous field of legal studies in Flanders (Belgium) and Europe more at large. The network’s activities are centred around four key pillars:

1. A just transition to a low-carbon economy
2. Human rights in climate change law
3. Biodiversity protection in climate change law
4. Governance innovation in climate change law.

Workshop Theme

The EU’s land use, land-use change and forestry sector plays a dual role in climate governance: it is both a carbon sink - through forests, soils, wetlands and

grasslands - and a source of emissions, particularly when ecosystems are degraded or converted. Land covers over three-quarters of EU territory and can either absorb or release significant CO₂ depending on practices such as afforestation, deforestation, and peatland drainage, with climate-related stressors (such as wildfires, pests, drought) increasingly threatening its mitigation potential. At the same time, the energy transition increases pressure on land use and forestry, through growing demands for bioenergy and critical raw materials. Despite the LULUCF sector being a net sink overall, biodiversity continues to decline due to ongoing ecosystem degradation. To combat biodiversity loss, policies must protect and restore ecosystems rather than rely on land-sector mitigation. These dynamics underpin tensions at the intersection of climate action, biodiversity protection, governance innovation and human rights - directly affecting rural communities, food systems, culture, indigenous and local rights, and long-term climate resilience

Recent reforms under the European Green Deal – including the revised LULUCF Regulation, the Fit for 55 package, the Nature Restoration Law, and the Carbon Removal Certification Framework – have substantially expanded the EU’s regulatory ambition in this field. However, growing evidence highlights persistent implementation gaps, administrative capacity constraints, legal uncertainty surrounding carbon accounting methodologies, uneven enforcement across Member States, and tensions between climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity protection, and agricultural competitiveness. Moreover, the increasing reliance on land-based carbon removals to meet EU climate targets raises concerns about monitoring, permanence, double counting, and the distributive impacts of land-use policies on rural communities.

Scope of the Call

We invite abstracts related to “Land Use, Land-Use Change and Deforestation” particularly where they intersect with one or more of the Network’s four pillars: a just transition to a low-carbon economy, human rights, biodiversity protection and governance innovation. We welcome contributions focusing on regulatory effectiveness, structural and other challenges in the implementation of EU-law objectives, compliance challenges, and governance issues.

Indicative (Non-Exhaustive) Topics:

- Carbon sequestration, carbon sinks, and climate change mitigation
- Carbon removals and carbon farming (CRCF)
- Carbon farming and certifications
- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and alignment of sustainable farming practices with climate goals
- Direct and indirect land-use changes (iLUC) from bioenergy
- Direct and indirect land-use changes from the search for critical raw materials
- The Soil Monitoring Law as a tool to strengthen LULUCF-based mitigation
- Implementation of the LULUCF Regulation
- Environmental justice, indigenous land rights, and the impact of climate policy on local communities
- Human Rights protection and land-use conflicts
- The right to food in balance with LULUCF-based policies

- LULUCF alignment with biodiversity goals
- Synergies & tensions between the implementation of the LULUCF Regulation and the Nature Restoration Law
- Nature-based solutions, biodiversity, and carbon sinks
- Supply chain due diligence and deforestation-free supply chains
- Land use and carbon sinks in urban settings
- Balancing competitiveness and sustainability in EU policies related to LULUCF and climate protection.

We encourage proposals on related topics not explicitly mentioned above.

While the workshop has a legal focus, we welcome interdisciplinary contributions (e.g. law and economics, economics, political science) where they enhance understanding of the real-world effectiveness and implementation of EU climate and biodiversity law.

Submission of abstracts

We hereby invite academics from any career stage and practitioners to submit an abstract of max. 500 words.

Abstract Requirements:

- Maximum 500 words
- Written in English
- Clearly state the precise topic and content of the proposed contribution
- Include a short CV (maximum 150 words).

Submission Details:

- Send to: environmental.law@uhasselt.be
- Deadline: 30 April 2026
- Email subject line: "Submission of Abstract – Climate Law Network – Land Use and Deforestation".

Submissions will be reviewed on a rolling basis due to limited places. Early submission is strongly encouraged. Applicants will be notified on a rolling basis and no later than **30 May 2026**.

Publication of conference papers

Submission of a full paper is not mandatory. However, authors interested in publishing will be offered the opportunity to submit a full paper for inclusion in a special issue of *Climate Law* dedicated to the conference proceedings. Further details regarding timelines and submission requirements will follow.

For further information or questions, please contact the conference organisers at environmental.law@uhasselt.be.

Conference Fee

95 EUR

Fee includes access to the full conference programme, catering, and conference dinner.

Organizing Committee

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