

OFFICIAL COP 29 SIDE EVENT

# Global Climate Cases:

## Advancing Climate Justice through the International Rule of Law

📅 16 November 2024, 11:30-13:00 UTC+4

📍 Room 4



*Official COP29 side event organized by the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (IUCN WCEL), the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), the Republic of Vanuatu, the University of Oslo, and World's Youth for Climate Justice.*

Throughout 2024, climate change cases have finally reached the level of the international judiciary. The European Court of Human Rights has, for the first time, issued a judgment on state obligations to protect human rights against the impacts of climate change. In addition, advisory opinion (AO) processes have taken place at three international courts and tribunals: the International Court of Justice, the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. At the International Court of Justice in particular, the oral hearings in December 2024 represent a critical juncture. Their outcomes stand to provide legal certainty on climate rights and obligations, and bolster efforts for justice and accountability within and outside international climate negotiations. In many of these cases, the countries and people on the frontlines of the climate crisis – who are already feeling the brunt of extreme weather and climate events – have been leading the campaign for justice. From Small Island Developing States to global youth networks and groups of women and girls, the rule of law is being used as a powerful tool for those seeking to defend their rights in the face of the climate crisis, and to demand greater action in this critical decade. These cases – some of them still ongoing – may act as potential game-changers for the international climate regime, with far-reaching implications for future climate negotiations, loss and damage and climate justice at all levels.

Unpacking the different and distinctive roles that governments, intergovernmental organizations, and civil society alike can all play in these developments, this event will seek to:

- Strengthen understanding of the three Advisory Opinion processes, particularly the ongoing International Court of Justice advisory proceedings, and how they contribute to the evolution of international law, and impact domestic litigation efforts;
- Discuss the judgment by the ECtHR in *Verein Klimaseniorinnen vs Switzerland* and identify challenges and inequalities that affected groups and activists face in upholding their rights, and discuss proven examples and recommendations to overcome them;
- Identify linkages between global climate cases and loss and damage negotiations as part of an effective remedy;
- Explore the roles of different actors involved in these international decisions and how they contribute to building representation and partnerships that empower people, communities and individuals in the pursuit of climate justice through the international rule of law.