

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

ELA ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE WEEK

31 AUGUST – 5 SEPTEMBER 2020 (limited daily sessions)

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE - VIA ZOOM

“(Re)configuring environmental law amidst COVID19”

As we compile this call for abstracts, South Africa and the world grapple with the unprecedented challenges posed by the global COVID-19 pandemic, and the immediate social, economic and environmental consequences thereof. There can be little doubt that as we emerge from this crisis, the foreseeability of future crises of this nature will be interrogated, and existing ways of doing business, governance structures and policy and legal responses scrutinised.

It is universally recognised that human health, and social and economic development, are inextricably linked with the state of the environment. But this symbiosis is being destabilised by increased rates of environmental degradation, anthropogenic climate change, and accelerated resource consumption. COVID-19 is an apt example of such destabilization, there now appearing to be little doubt that the virus arose as a result of human-related interference with and abuse of the biosphere. For instance, illegal trade of wildlife, and exploitative practices towards animals are a significant contributing factor to the spread of disease from animals to humans.

The impacts of the pandemic as well as the dramatic and rapid human response to the crisis, will undoubtedly be long-lasting and far-reaching. But what do such impacts mean for existing conceptions of environmental law, particularly our pre-dominantly anthropocentric understanding of our relationship with the Earth, existing governance systems, and environmental justice? Beyond issues relating to COVID-19, how does our current environmental legal framework respond to other environmental, social and economic challenges, and is this response adequate?

Given the current situation in the world concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, the date for submission for abstracts will only be 31 July 2020.



This is a call for abstracts for conference papers / presentations addressing (i) the (re) configuration of environmental law amidst COVID-19, or (ii) the adequacy of the law in response to other critical environmental, social and economic challenges, from the perspective of one or more of the following sub-themes:

- Animal law
- Biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources
- Climate change and climate justice
- Disaster management
- Earth jurisprudence and wild law
- Environmental governance
- Environmental justice
- Integrated environmental management
- Recent developments in South African law (legislation and case law)
- Resilience
- Sustainable development (especially critical perspectives on its continued relevance given COVID-19)
- Traditional and indigenous knowledge and environmental law

Conference fee:

ELA Members – Free
Non-members – R200.00

Submission of abstracts and registration:

Email enviro.association.sa@gmail.com to submit an abstract and to confirm your attendance at the conference.