Columbia Law School | COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL
SABIN CENTER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE LAW

The Environment and Law
The Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Law and Policy, Kyoto Univ.

Climate Litigation in the Asian Context: Diversity and Potential

Call for Presentations | March 24, 2027 | Faculty of Law, Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan

The Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia Law School and the Environment and Law Unit, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Law and Policy, Kyoto University, invite proposals for presentations at *Climate Litigation in the Asian Context: Diversity and Potential*, a workshop examining the development, distinctive characteristics, and future directions of climate litigation across Asian jurisdictions.

Climate litigation has developed along different trajectories across Asia, reflecting diverse legal traditions, constitutional and statutory frameworks, institutional settings, and political and socioeconomic contexts. While some jurisdictions have seen significant litigation activity and emerging judicial approaches to climate governance, others have experienced comparatively limited litigation. These differences raise important questions about the opportunities, barriers, and evolving role of courts and legal institutions in addressing climate change.

The workshop will bring together a small group of scholars and practitioners to examine these developments through doctrinal, empirical, theoretical, and comparative perspectives. It is designed as a collaborative research exchange, with substantial time for discussion and engagement among participants.

Contributions should engage with broader conceptual, comparative, or theoretical questions. Works-in-progress and recently published papers with a forward-looking research agenda are encouraged. We will give special attention to early-career researchers.

Proposals should be submitted to kyoto.sabin.conference2027@gmail.com by **December 20, 2026.** Authors will be notified of decisions by January 25, 2027. Selected presenters will be asked to submit a preliminary discussion paper by February 19, 2027, and to participate in the workshop in person. Presentations and discussions will be conducted in English.

Conference Themes

We welcome proposals addressing the following themes and questions. The examples below are illustrative rather than exhaustive, and submissions may engage with more than one theme.

1. Diversity and Development of Climate Litigation in Asia

This theme examines the emergence and evolution of climate litigation across Asian jurisdictions, including the legal, institutional, and socioeconomic factors shaping different litigation pathways. It invites reflection on the diversity of litigation experiences across the region and the extent to which common patterns, distinctive approaches, and opportunities for comparative learning can be identified.

Illustrative questions include:

- What explains differences in the development, frequency, and character of climate litigation across Asian jurisdictions, including those where relatively few cases have been brought?
- How do constitutional structures, legal traditions, political institutions, civil society, and access to legal resources influence the emergence and development of climate claims?
- What distinctive legal theories, litigation strategies, or judicial approaches have emerged in different Asian jurisdictions?
- What can comparative analysis reveal about the possibilities and limitations of climate litigation across East, Southeast, South, and Central Asia?

2. Legal Pathways and Barriers to Climate Adjudication

This theme explores the substantive and procedural frameworks through which climate claims are advanced, adjudicated, or constrained in Asian legal systems. It considers how existing legal doctrines and institutional arrangements shape access to courts, the recognition of climate-related obligations, and the exercise of judicial authority.

Illustrative questions include:

- How are constitutional rights, environmental and administrative statutes, civil liability doctrines, and other legal frameworks being interpreted or developed to address climate change?
- How do standing, justiciability, jurisdiction, admissibility, evidentiary requirements, and access to justice shape the types of climate claims that can be brought?
- How do courts navigate questions of separation of powers, institutional competence, and the relationship between judicial intervention and executive or legislative climate policymaking?
- How can legal approaches developed in other jurisdictions inform climate litigation in Asia, and what are the opportunities and limitations of adapting those approaches to different domestic legal contexts?

3. International Law and Domestic Climate Litigation

This theme considers the relationship between international law and domestic climate adjudication in Asia, including the significance of international climate obligations, human rights norms, and recent international judicial developments.

Given the diversity of constitutional arrangements and approaches to international law across Asian jurisdictions, the workshop invites examination of how international legal developments are interpreted, invoked, or incorporated into domestic litigation.

Illustrative questions include:

- How have litigants and courts relied on international climate agreements, human rights instruments, and general principles of international law in domestic climate proceedings?
- What influence might the recent climate advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have on climate litigation in Asian jurisdictions?
- How do differences in constitutional frameworks, domestic legal doctrines, and approaches to the relationship between international and national law affect the reception of international climate obligations?
- What opportunities and limitations arise from international legal developments for jurisdictions without a regional human rights adjudicatory system comparable to those operating in other regions?

4. Corporate Accountability, Climate Finance, and the Energy Transition

This theme explores the evolving role of litigation in shaping the climate-related obligations of corporations, financial institutions, and other private actors, alongside disputes concerning energy development and the financing of climate action.

Across Asia, questions of economic development, fossil fuel dependence, energy security, and climate commitments create complex legal and policy challenges. Contributions may examine how litigation interacts with these priorities and whether existing legal frameworks provide pathways for corporate accountability and climate-related financial obligations.

Illustrative questions include:

- What legal frameworks and causes of action may support climate-related claims against corporations, including corporate governance requirements, civil liability, environmental law, disclosure obligations, and human rights standards?
- What role can financial regulation, corporate social responsibility frameworks, environmental, social, and governance standards, and due diligence obligations play in climate litigation involving banks, investors, and other financial institutions?
- How are courts and other legal institutions addressing disputes involving fossil fuel development, coal-fired power generation, energy infrastructure, and the transition toward lower-carbon energy systems?

- How might litigation address obligations relating to climate finance, adaptation, and the allocation of costs associated with climate action, particularly in developing and climate-vulnerable countries?

5. Climate Harm, Loss and Damage, and Transnational Litigation

This theme examines how climate-related harm is conceptualized and addressed through litigation involving states, corporations, and other actors, including proceedings brought by Asian claimants before domestic and foreign courts.

It invites analysis of the legal frameworks, evidentiary approaches, jurisdictional questions, and remedial possibilities associated with claims for climate-related loss and damage, as well as the opportunities and limitations of transnational litigation.

Illustrative questions include:

- How are climate-related losses and damages framed in litigation, and what legal theories support claims for compensation, prevention, or other forms of relief?
- How do courts approach causation, attribution, foreseeability, and the evidentiary challenges associated with climate-related harm?
- What procedural, jurisdictional, and substantive challenges arise in transnational litigation involving Asian claimants and corporate defendants operating across multiple jurisdictions?
- How do historical responsibility, colonial legacies, unequal exposure to climate harm, and access to justice shape the development and potential of climate-related accountability claims?

6. Remedies, Implementation, and Institutional Change

This theme focuses on the consequences of climate litigation beyond the issuance of judicial decisions. It examines the design and implementation of remedies, compliance with judicial orders, and the relationship between litigation outcomes and broader institutional or policy change.

Judicial recognition of climate-related obligations does not necessarily result in effective implementation. Contributions may explore the mechanisms through which court decisions influence climate governance, as well as the institutional and practical barriers to realizing their intended effects.

Illustrative questions include:

- How do courts design and justify remedies in climate litigation, including declaratory relief, injunctions, compensation, structural orders, and ongoing judicial supervision?

- What mechanisms are available to monitor and enforce compliance with climate-related judicial decisions?
- How do administrative institutions, civil society organizations, and other actors contribute to the implementation or monitoring of judicial outcomes?
- Under what conditions does climate litigation contribute to broader policy, regulatory, or institutional change, and what are the limits of judicial intervention?

Across All Themes

We particularly welcome proposals that:

- Offer comparative or cross-jurisdictional perspectives, including analyses of underexplored jurisdictions;
- Identify emerging legal developments, distinctive regional approaches, or common challenges across Asian legal systems;
- Engage with underlying theories of responsibility, governance, justice, or adjudication;
- Examine the relationship between climate litigation, public policy, regulation, and broader climate governance; or
- Draw on empirical research or practical experience to advance understanding of the opportunities and limitations of climate litigation.

The organizing committee welcomes interdisciplinary perspectives where they contribute to the legal questions at the center of the workshop.

Submission Guidelines

Please submit a proposal that includes:

- Presentation title
- Presenter name(s) and affiliation(s)
- Contact information
- Short biography
- Abstract (250–350 words) summarizing the research question, approach or methodology, principal argument or anticipated contribution, and relevance to the workshop themes.

Proposals and all subsequent workshop materials must be submitted in English. Presentations and discussions will also be conducted in English.

Please disclose any use of generative AI tools in preparing the submission, briefly describing how such tools were used, where applicable.

Proposals will be reviewed by the organizing committee based on their relevance to the workshop, originality and scholarly contribution, analytical depth, and potential to stimulate productive discussion.

The workshop will be held in person at Kyoto University. Selected presenters are expected to attend and present their research in person.

Workshop Format

The event will be organized as a closed, discussion-oriented workshop involving approximately 10–15 selected presenters.

Selected presenters will be asked to submit a preliminary discussion paper of approximately 3,000 words, excluding references, in advance of the workshop.

Papers will be circulated among participants before the event, and participants will be expected to read the materials in preparation for the discussions.

Each presenter will have approximately 6–8 minutes to introduce the main argument and questions raised by their paper, followed by moderated discussion and exchange among participants. The emphasis will be on constructive engagement with the research rather than extended formal presentations.

All papers, presentations, and discussions will be in English.

Timeline

- December 20, 2026: Deadline for submission of proposals.
- January 25, 2027: Notification of selection decisions.
- February 19, 2027: Deadline for submission of preliminary discussion papers (approximately 3,000 words, excluding references).
- March 24, 2027: In-person workshop at Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan.

Please submit proposals to **kyoto.sabin.conference2027@gmail.com**. We are able to offer funding for authors who cannot obtain funding via their institutions. More information will be provided to those authors whose proposals are selected.

For further information, please contact Manasa Venkatachalam (Sabin Center for Climate Change Law) and Masako Ichihara (Kyoto University) at the email address above.