Durham University
Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy

MARTIN-LUTHER-UNIVERSITÄT HALLE-WITTENBERG

JTC JUST TRANSITION CENTER

# Just Transitions to a Net Zero World

## Second Annual International Conference

Jointly convened by Durham University's Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy (CSDLP) and the European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer (JTC) at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

**Thursday 9th & Friday 10th October 2025**
**Durham University**

## Conference Synopsis

The arrival of the concept of just transitions at the level of the international climate change regime under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement provides a new opportunity to fundamentally shape the Paris Agreement's preambular imperative of a just transition. Just transitions entail the transformation of societies towards sustainable ways of life. At the international level, the global stocktake decision of 2023 reaffirmed that "the global transition to low emissions and climate-resilient development provides opportunities and challenges for sustainable development and poverty eradication". Yet one year later, at the 29th Conference of the Parties in 2024, Baku, no consensus between countries could be forged for a substantial decision on the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP), not even on the identification of elements for dialogue. Proposals so far include to develop stand-alone principles, mechanisms and measurements for just transitions, or to embed these into National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and Long-Term Strategies (LT-LEDS).

This conference seeks to advance the academic discourse but also the policy and international developments so that the agreed goal of "Transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science" (1/CMA.5 para. 28 d) can move closer to reality. Our interdisciplinary focus acknowledges the international and national contestations of pathways and elements that form just transitions, and the need to find implementable solutions that reflect the social, economic, technological, legal and ethical dimensions.

## Objectives:

- Assessing progress on the interdisciplinary research agenda of JusTN0W and the JTC in respect of international, regional, and national environmental legislation.
- Analysing the potential of the emerging digital technologies, including AI, to manage interdisciplinary decision-making under uncertainty and investigating the potential of Digital Twins as a supporting technology.
- Understanding how stakeholders are recalibrating just transitions in the changing political world order.
- Comparing developments in international law as they emerge from the ICJ, the ITLOS, and IACtHR advisory opinions.
- Mapping the science-policy interface with a view to the scientific production and policy uptake of climate science evidence.

**Conference outcomes** will include content for influencing **UNFCCC submissions** and **reports that feed into regulatory and policy agendas at COPs.**

# Conference programme

## Day One, Thursday, 9th October 2025

**08:30 – 09:00** Registration, coffee & networking

**09:00 – 09:15** Welcome from Durham University and Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

**Prof Martin Evans**, Executive Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Durham University

**Prof Kieran Fernandes**, Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Durham University

**Prof Christian Tietje**, Chair for Public Law, European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer, Martin Luther University, Germany

**09:15 – 09:20** Introduction to Day One - **Prof Petra Minnerop**, Durham University

**09:20 – 10:00** **Morning keynote**

**Prof Elisa Morgera**

**UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change and Human Rights**, **Professor in International Law and Sustainability, Durham University**

### Theme 1 - Interdisciplinary Research for Conceptualisations of Just Transitions

Chair: **Prof Petra Minnerop,** Professor of International Law, Director of the CSDLP, Principal Investigator of the JusTN0W Initiative, Durham University

**10:00 – 10:20** **Prof Rüdiger Wolfrum**

Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, Heidelberg, Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and the Rule of Law, Heidelberg

**10:20 – 10:40** **Dr Kevin Grecksch**

Associate Professor, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford

Presentation - Shaping (just) transitions: Historic narratives and property rights

**10:40 – 11:00** Panel discussion & questions from the audience

**11:00 – 11:30** **Morning coffee, networking and posters**

### Launch of Poster Exhibition Sessions

Facilitator: **Prof Laura Marsiliani**, Professor in Economics, Faculty of Business Associate Dean for Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability (ERS), Principal Investigator of the JusTN0W Initiative, Durham University

**11:30 – 11:50** **Prof Gleider Hernández**

Professor of Public International Law, KU Leuven

Presentation - And now the Hard Part: Taking Stock of the ICJ Advisory Opinion

**11:50 – 12:10** **Dr Katalin Sulyok**

Associate Professor in International Law and Sustainability, Durham University

**12:10 – 12:30** **Dr Amy Elizabeth Walker**

Researcher, Institute of Geosciences and Geography and European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

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| | **Felix Schiedlowski**<br>Centre for Interdisciplinary Regional Studies (ZIRS), Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany<br>Presentation - Ethnographic Reflections on the Limits of Just Transition Interventions in the Central German Coal Mining Just Transition Territory |
| 12:30 – 12:55 | Panel discussion & questions from the audience |
| 12:55 – 13:05 | Group Photo |
| 13:05 – 14:05 | **Lunch, networking & posters** |

## Theme 2 - Digital and Technical Infrastructures for Just Transitions

Chair: **Danielle Yeow**, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore

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| 14:05 – 14:25 | **Prof Einar Broch Johnsen**<br>Professor, Department of Informatics, University of Oslo<br>Presentation - Digital Twins and the Natural Environment |
| 14:25 – 14:45 | **Prof Adrian Friday**<br>Professor of Computing and Sustainability, Lancaster University |
| 14:45 – 15:05 | **Dr Nelly Bencomo**<br>Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, Principal Investigator of the JusTN0W Initiative, Durham University |
| 15:05 – 15:30 | Panel discussion & questions from the audience |
| 15:30 – 15:55 | **Afternoon coffee, networking & posters** |
| 15:55 – 16:15 | **Dr Thomas Hoffmann**<br>Associate Professor, Tallinn University of Technology<br>Presentation - e-Estonia in Just Transition |
| 16:15 – 16:35 | **Dr Janine Hauer**<br>Researcher, Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg<br>Presentation - When solutions become problems: Thoughts on 'toxic infrastructures' as challenge for just transitions |
| 16:35 – 16:55 | Presentation – *to be confirmed* |
| 16:55 – 17:20 | Panel discussion & questions from the audience |
| 17:20 – 17:30 | Closing remarks Day One - **Prof Petra Minnerop**, Durham University & **Prof Christian Tietje**, Martin Luther University |

## Speakers' Dinner venue, Durham Cathedral Prior's Hall

9th October, Reception at 19:00 | Dinner to start at 19:30

**Fireside Chat after first course - Judge Ida Caracciolo, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea.**

Brief address by JusTN0W PIs and the JTC leads

The dinner will be introduced by the Dean of Durham Law School, Durham University.

# Conference programme

## Day Two, Friday 10th October 2025

**08:30 – 09:00** Coffee and networking

**09:00 – 09:10** Introduction to Day Two - **Prof Laura Marsiliani**, Durham University & **PD Dr Katrin Seidel**, Martin Luther University

**09:10 – 9:50** **Morning keynote** *(Introduction by Pia Andres, JusTN0W)*

**Prof Ralf Martin**

**Principal Economist (Climate, Natural Resources & Sustainability) &**

**Professor of Economics (Imperial College Business School, London)**

**Economics and Private Sector Development**

**IFC International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group**

### Theme 3 - Science for Just Transitions

Chair: **Prof Christian Tietje,** Chair for Public Law, European Law and International Economic Law, Director of Institute of Economic Law, Law School, European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer, Martin Luther University, Germany

09:50 – 10:10 **Prof Friederike Otto**

Professor in Climate Science, Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College

Presentation - From World Weather Attribution to losses and damages

10:10 – 10:30 **Prof Uwe Schlink**

Senior Researcher, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ, Dept. Urban and Environmental Sociology

Presentation - Shaping a just distribution of environmental exposures through adaptive personal behaviour

10:30 – 10:50 Panel discussion & questions from the audience

**10:50 – 11:10** **Morning coffee, networking & posters**

11:10 – 11:30 **Prof Maurizio Zollo**

Professor of Strategy & Sustainability, Imperial College Business School and Scientific Director, Leonardo Centre on Business for Society

11:30 – 11:50 **Dr John Bothwell**

Associate Professor (Reader in Bioenergy), Principal Investigator of the JusTN0W Initiative, Durham University

11:50 – 12:10 **Dr Stefan Knauß**

Senior Researcher, European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer, Martin Luther University

Presentation - Transforming Justice: The Rights and Values of Nature

12:10 – 12:30 Panel discussion & questions from the audience

**12:30 – 13:30** **Lunch, networking & posters**

## Theme 4 - Financing Just Transitions

Chair: **Prof Laura Marsiliani**, Professor in Economics, Faculty of Business Associate Dean for Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability (ERS), Principal Investigator of the JusTN0W Initiative, Durham University

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| 13:30 -13:50 | **H.E. Mr Francois Jackman**<br>Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Barbados to the United Nations (Barbados) |
| 14:10 – 14:30 | **Prof Franziska Müller**<br>Professorship of International Development, University of Vienna, Austria<br>Presentation - Thinking like a fund. A governmentality analysis of renewable energy projects of the Green climate fund in Africa |
| 14:30 – 14:50 | **PD Dr Katrin Seidel**<br>Senior Researcher, European Center of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer, Martin Luther University, Germany<br>Presentation - The Justice Gap in Just Energy Transition Partnerships: Bridging Rhetoric and Reality in Climate Finance |
| 14:50 – 15:10 | Panel discussion & questions from the audience |
| **15:10 – 15:30** | **Afternoon coffee, networking & poster exhibition** |
| 15:30 – 15:50 | **Dr Joseph Kobusheshe**<br>Director Environment, Health and Safety, Petroleum Authority of Uganda<br>Presentation - Equity in Just Transitions |
| 15:50 – 16:10 | **Dr Sandra Batten**<br>Senior Economist, Bank of England |
| 16:10 – 16:30 | **Ingmar Juergens**<br>CEO & Founder, Climate and Company |
| 16:30 – 16:50 | Panel discussion & questions from the audience |
| 16:50 – 17:00 | Closing remarks Day Two – **Prof Petra Minnerop**, Durham University & **Prof Christian Tietje**, Martin Luther University |

## Evening Drinks Reception

17:00 to 19:00

Join speakers and delegates from the day and enjoy refreshments and informal networking.

**Registrations for the conference are now open and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. To register and secure your place, please visit the following link or scan the QR code.**

**https://pay.durham.ac.uk/event-durham/just-transitions-to-a-net-zero-2025**

For further information on either the JusTN0W project or the JTC, please email the following contacts in the first instance:

**JusTN0W – Just Transitions to a Net Zero World**
Centre for Sustainable Development Law and Policy, Durham University
Kate Morris, kathryn.l.morris@durham.ac.uk

**Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg**
European Centre of Just Transition Research and Impact-Driven Transfer (JTC)
Transregional Just Transition Governance: socio-legal and polit-economic perspectives
PD Dr. Katrin Seidel, katrin.seidel@jura.uni-halle.de

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