



VINAYAKA MISSION'S
RESEARCH FOUNDATION
Granted to the University under section 3 of the UGC Act 1956



VMLS
VINAYAKA MISSION'S LAW SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RIVERS

18th to 19th October 2024

CONFERENCE BROCHURE

Knowledge Partners

Publication Partner

VIDHI Centre for Legal Policy



VMLS is mentored by OP Jindal Global University (an Institution of Eminence) and Jindal Global Law School under an institutional mentorship agreement.





THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

Rivers are lifelines of ecosystems, economies, and cultures across the globe. Their management and governance are influenced by a complex interplay of political, social, economic, and legal factors. This international conference aims to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration on the issues surrounding rivers, focusing on the socio-legal aspects that are crucial for their sustainable use and management. By bringing together scholars, experts, practitioners, and indigenous voices, we seek to explore the multifaceted dimensions of river governance from local to global scales.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine historical and contemporary legal frameworks governing rivers and their effectiveness.
- To analyze the impact of social, economic, and political systems on river management.
- To foster dialogue among stakeholders from various disciplines and regions to share knowledge and best practices.
- To identify and address the challenges in achieving sustainable river governance in the context of global environmental changes.
- To highlight the importance of incorporating indigenous and local community perspectives in river management policies.



ABOUT VMLS

Vinayaka Mission's Law School (VMLS) has been established by VMRF-DU to impart legal education and skills relevant to the evolving needs of the local, national and global community. VMLS intends to achieve this vision through its highly qualified and experienced faculty, and with mentorship from Jindal Global Law School and O.P. Jindal Global University. Our faculty aims to create a progressive learning environment where they teach law courses prescribed by the Bar Council of India, as well as Elective Courses to address legal issues of a dynamic society and an ever-changing world.

ABOUT CPIL

The Centre for the Promotion of International Law is dedicated to promoting excellence in research and teaching of International Law, a field that has gained unprecedented significance in today's world. Additionally, the Centre operates an E-Journal, which features original work focusing on contemporary issues in International Law. The intersection of international law, research, and policy is a critical intersection where legal principles, academic research, and governmental or organizational decision-making come together. The study of this convergence is particularly significant in the context of global governance, diplomacy, and addressing complex transnational issues.

The Centre fosters academic research in international relations, law, and related fields to contribute to the development and understanding of international law. CPIL works to promote the confluence of international law, research, and policy as being essential for addressing global issues, promoting cooperation among nations, and ensuring that international agreements and legal principles are effective in practice. The research at the Centre helps to identify gaps and challenges in existing legal frameworks, assess the effectiveness of international agreements, and propose innovative solutions. The Centre's recent work delves into teaching and researching international law, human rights, environmental protection, trade, and conflict resolution, providing valuable insights and analysis.



SUB-THEMES

- 1. Historical Narratives and River Security**
- 2. Transboundary River Governance**
- 3. International Law and Emerging Challenges**
- 4. Climate Resilience and River Resource Management**
- 5. Cross-border River Conflicts and Cooperation**
- 6. River Diplomacy**
- 7. Aligning River Policies with Sustainable Development Goals**
- 8. Legal Frameworks for Indigenous Rights and River Resources**
- 9. Gender and River Governance**
- 10. Community Participation in River Policy Development**
- 11. Human Rights and Access to Clean Water**
- 12. Environmental Justice in River Basin Management**
- 13. Legal Responses to Pollution and Industrial Use of Rivers**
- 14. Cultural Heritage and River Law**
- 15. Water Privatization and Public Rights**
- 16. Implementing International Water Law at the Local Level**



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Day 1: October 18, 2024

Day/Time	Event Details
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Registration
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM Inaugural Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome by Prof. Nabeela Siddiqui, VMLS• Lighting of the Lamp & Felicitation of the Guests• Welcome Address by Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan, Dean, VMLS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inaugural Address by Chief Guest: Dr. Tiina Paloniitty, Associate Professor of Environmental and Sustainability Law, University of Helsinki, Finland.• Address by Guest of Honor: Prof. SM. Ramasamy, Professor of Eminence, Bharathidasan University.• Address by Guest of Honor: Eklavya Prasad, Megh Pyne Abhiyan• Vote of Thanks & Instructions by: Dr. Sanga Mithra, VMLS.



Day/Time

Event Details

**Parallel Sessions
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

Session I : IR and Policy

Session Chairs -

- Dr. Masrur Salekin
- Ms. Rhea Lopez
- Dr. Fowmina

Session II: Law and Policy

Session Chairs -

- Dr. Mrinalini Banerjee
- Mr. Siddharth
- Prof. Rudra Chandran

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Lunch Break

**Panel Discussion 1
2.00 PM - 3.30 PM**

Theme:

**Law, Diplomacy, and Ecology: Rethinking
Governance of the Transboundary Ganges Basin**

**Special Address - Remy Kinna (Legal officer,
Secretariat, UN Water Convention) (recorded
message)**

Panelists -

- Dr. Masrur Salekin
- Adv. Shawahiq Siddiqui
- Dr. Dipak Gyawali

Moderator: Prof. Nabeela Siddiqui



Day/Time

Event Details

**Parallel Sessions
3:30PM - 5:00PM**

Session III: Law and Policy II

Session Chairs -

- Dr. Amrisha Pandey
- Mr. Shashank Pandey
- Prof. Shubham Shukla

Session IV: Geography

Session Chairs -

- Dr. Dipak Gyawali
- Mr. Shawahiq Siddiqui
- Prof. Ashwani Kumar Singh

5.00PM - 7.00 PM

Photo Exhibition

Mr. Eklavya Prasad- Megh Pyne Abhiyan
Mr. Siddharth - Veditum

7:30PM - 8:30PM

Dinner



Day 2: October 19, 2024

Day/Time

Event Details

9:00 AM - 9:30 AM

Registration

Panel Discussion 2
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Theme:
Floods and Ecosystems: Sustainable Strategies
for Integrated Management

Panelists -

- Mr. Shashank Pandey
- Dr. Jagdish Krishnaswamy
- Mr. Tarun Nair
- Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan

Moderator: Prof. Najeed Naved Siddiqui

Parallel Sessions (Paper
Presentation and Panel
Discussions)
11:45 AM - 1:30 PM

Session V: Regional

Session Chairs:

- Dr. Sanga Mithra
- Dr. G. Rajasekar
- Dr. Krishna Kishore Padala

Panel Discussion 3
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Theme: "Rivers in Conflict: Navigating Water
Rights and Sustainability in Tamil Nadu"

Panelists -

- Senior Advocate Ganesan Umopathy
- Prof. Saravanan

Moderator: Prof. Amrita Nambiar



Day/Time

Event Details

1:30PM-2:30 PM

Lunch Break

Valedictory
Session
2:30PM-3:30 PM

Closing Ceremony

- Welcome and Felicitation - Dr. Sanga Mithra (emcee)
- Valedictory Address by Dr. Ananth Padamanabhan
- Conference Report by Prof. Nabeela Siddiqui
- Remarks by Dr. Tiina Paloniiti
- Remarks by Adv. Gopinathan
- Remarks by Shri Kalyan Jhabhak
- Remarks by Mr. Sanjay Mehta
- Remarks by Mr. Sanjay Sharma
- Best Paper Awards
- Vote of Thanks by Prof. Abhinandita Biswas



SESSION I - IR AND POLICY

DAY - 18TH OF OCTOBER, 2024

Title	Author(s)
River Management and Conservation in India through the lens of Participative Democracy	Mathews p. George Sushma George Mathew, Vaishnav m, Aavani r c
Lesson from Mekong - Ganga cooperation: A way forward for the Cauvery river water dispute	Sakthivel M Muhammed Althaf Malik E.H
A detailed study on the impact of Nepal's Hydrological practices on Bihar floods and evaluating the efficacy of the 2024-25 Indian budget allocation for flood management in Bihar	Prateek Singh
Hydro-politics: Understanding Transboundary River Disputes and Opportunities for River Diplomacy	Ziegen Gifty E Schwartz Sweety E
Rivers of Ice: Emerging trends in South Asia's Transboundary River Governance	Aishwarya Sanas
Unravelling the Democratic chess, Geopolitical currents and Strategic Dimensions of Transboundary River Conflicts.	Ms. Ananya K Ms. Mahruk Aslam



SESSION II - LAW AND POLICY

DAY - 18TH OF OCTOBER, 2024

Title	Author(s)
Comparative Analysis of Legal Responses to Industrial Pollution of Rivers: Strategies for Mitigating Environmental Impacts Across Asian countries with special reference to India	Abraham. S Swati. V
Navigating Currents- Evolving Trends in International River Legislation and Future Strategic Directions	Raja Annamalai Guru Raghav Nivas
Resolving the conflict between biodiversity and food security : An international corporate lawyer's perspective	Saswati Soumya Sahu
International River Law : Emerging Challenges and Strategic directions	Ruba Dharshini Visalni
Leveraging Intellectual Property to address River Management Challenges and Advance SDG 6	Dhanushree N Gowthami R Sindhuja R
International Outlook: Strategies and laws for Mitigating Industrial pollution in Rivers and Repercussions on public access to Rivers	Sai Nivetha Prasanna, Reva J R



SESSION III - LAW AND POLICY II

DAY - 18TH OF OCTOBER, 2024

Title	Author(s)
Critical Appraisal on Viability of the Laws relating to Water Pollution in India	Kanchan Sachin Nayana Nitin
Privatization of rivers : legal consequences	Kirithika R Dhanushya M
Assessing the Legal Mechanism of Integrated River Basin Management systems in Ganga and Pamba basins	Ms. Ananya Saroha Mr. Daksh Saroha
The Hindon River's Struggle: Legal Responses to Industrial Pollution	Mirza Shaaz Beg
The Legacy of River Water Disputes in India: An Overview	Dr. Rakesh Chandra



SESSION IV - GEOGRAPHY

DAY - 18TH OF OCTOBER, 2024

Title	Author(s)
Transboundary river conflicts in the Himalayan region	S. Harshavardhini
Navigating Transboundary Waters: Resolving the Teesta River Dispute through enhanced Hydro-data sharing and lessons from International Commissions	Robin. R Manu Vishweshwaran. S
Role of Rivers in ensuring gender equalities	Maheshwor Leishangthem
What happens when a river dies? A socio-cultural study of the Girija River in Marathwada region of Maharashtra	Tushar Pathade
Rethinking Flood Protection: A Critical Look at Efficacy of Embankments in the Brahmaputra River Basin	Sonal Sharma
What are the values a river holds? The story of Luni River; Rajasthan	Hassan Islam Madhuri Sharma



SESSION V REGIONAL

DAY - 19TH OF OCTOBER, 2024

Title	Author(s)
Unveiling River Sand Mining: Causes, Effects and Environmental Concerns	Aneesha Dominic
Disaster and Women in Cross-Border River System: An analysis of Kosi river floods in Nepal and India	Divya Chopra
Mining the Mahanadi: The Contested Terrain of Coal Extraction, Ecological Sustainability, and Community Rights in Eastern India	Mr. Shrey Kapoor
Kaptai Dam as the Lake of Tears: An Injustice to the Jummas' Rights	Fahim Abrar Abid Mahbuba Kamal
River Rights and Indigenous Voices	M. Tony Aakash
Urban Riverine Islands of India - A Modern Day Diaspora or an Untold Story	Manju Rajeev Kanchan Ayushi Govil Lovlesh Sharma



Panel Discussion 1

Law, Diplomacy, and Ecology: Rethinking Governance of the Transboundary Ganges Basin

Agenda:

- Opening Remarks.
- Moderator's Introduction.
- Overview of the Ganges Basin and its transboundary nature.
- Outline of the legal, diplomatic, and ecological challenges in managing the basin.
- Goals of the panel discussion.

Panel Discussion 2

Floods and Ecosystems: Sustainable Strategies for Integrated Management

Agenda:

- Opening Remarks.
- Moderator's Introduction.
- Overview of the increasing frequency and severity of floods globally and their impact on ecosystems and human societies.
- Introduction to the concept of integrated flood and ecosystem management.
- Goals of the panel discussion.

Panel Discussion 3

Rivers in Conflict: Navigating Water Rights and Sustainability in Tamil Nadu

Agenda:

- Opening Remarks
- Moderator's Introduction
- Overview of the significance of river systems in Tamil Nadu, with a focus on the Cauvery River dispute and other regional water conflicts.
- The growing challenges posed by climate change and unsustainable water usage on water resources.
- Introduction to the panel's focus on integrated water rights, ecosystem health, and sustainable development.
- Goals of the discussion: Explore ways to balance water rights, environmental sustainability, and interstate cooperation.

OUR GUESTS

DR. TIINA PALONIITTY

Associate Professor of Environmental and Sustainability Law, Faculty of Law, University of Helsinki



Dr. Tiina Paloniitty is Associate Professor of Environmental and Sustainability Law at the Faculty of Law (Vaasa unit), University of Helsinki. Dr. Paloniitty has a passion for the intersection of science and law, specifically in regards to aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity. Dr. Paloniitty is the Chair of the Board of the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law, member of Journal of Environmental Law's Editorial Board, and member of the Finnish Nature Panel. Dr. Paloniitty is working the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law, member of Journal of Environmental Law's Editorial Board, and member

of the Finnish Nature Panel. Dr. Paloniitty is currently researching carbon capture and utilization and value chains in EU environmental law in Bio-CCU project (BusinessFinland). Earlier they led a team of researchers and a work package in Circular Economy of Waters in Industrial Processes (CEIWA) consortium, probing the novel water technologies and their regulation, also funded by the innovations funder BusinessFinland. Dr. Paloniitty has published with leading international journals and anthologies. Their recent works include Law, Ecology and the Management of Complex Systems: The Case of Water Governance (Routledge 2022, Open Access) and co-edited volume EU Environmental Principles and Scientific Uncertainty Before National Courts: the Case of the Habitats Directive (Mariolina Eliantonio, Emma Lees and Tiina Paloniitty (eds) Hart, 2023). Dr. Paloniitty teaches national environmental law at Faculty of Law's Vaasa unit, sustainability law at both Helsinki and Vaasa units, leads sustainability law research seminar together with Assistant Professor Cambou, and supervises six doctoral researchers.

DR. S M RAMASWAMY

Professor of Eminence



Dr. SM. Ramaswamy specialises in Remote Sensing and Geo informatics modeling and visualization of Palaeo -Time transgressive - Active Geological Systems and Processes for-Mineral, Hydrocarbon and Water Resources exploration, Earth Ecosystem modeling in hill, plain, riverine, coastal and desertic systems, Natural Disaster mapping, mitigation and management, Spatial Decision Support Systems for sustainable development and, Geo Archaeology. Currently, as Chair, Distinguished and Professor of Eminence at Bharathidasan University, he carries out advanced academic, research and extension activities in remote sensing and Geo informatics.

DR. DIPAK GYAWALI

Pragya Academician of NAST; Former Minister of Water Resources of Nepal



Dr. Dipak Gyawali, a hydroelectric power engineer (Moscow Energy Institute) and a political-economist (UC Berkeley), is an Academician at the Nepal Academy of Science and Technology and former Chair of Nepal Water Conservation Foundation. He was Nepal's Minister of Water Resources in 2002/03 and has been an advisory board member of STEPs Center/IDS Sussex, Stockholm World Water Week, UN World Water Assessment Program, as well as US Pacific National Northwest Lab's multi-country study Human Choice and Climate Change. In 2006, he chaired a multi-expert team that

reviewed the EU's global water research. He was also a member of an independent external evaluation committee for UNESCO and the Dutch government (2007) which reviewed institutional arrangements of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education at Delft and has chaired the review of UNESCO's Sixth Phase of its International Hydrological Program (2011). Till recently, he co-chaired Climate Action Network South Asia. His research focus is on the interface between society and resources, mostly water and energy, which he examines from the perspectives of Cultural Theory.

MR. REMY KINNA

Legal officer, Secretariat, UN Water Convention



Mr. Rémy Kinna is a Legal Officer working with the Secretariat of the UN Water Convention, serviced by UNECE. An environmental lawyer by training with specialisation in international water law, he leads the Convention's engagement and accession processes in Southern Africa, Eastern Africa and Asia-Pacific and on Transboundary Water Allocation. Prior to joining the UN in 2019, he lived and worked for many years across Asia with environmental rights and humanitarian NGOs, having previously worked in law firms, academia and consulted on international environmental and

water law in Asia, Africa and globally. Rémy holds undergraduate Law, Science (Honours) and French degrees from Monash University (Australia) and a Master of Laws from the University of Cape Town's Institute of Marine and Environmental Law where he was an Honorary Research Associate from 2015-2018.



MR. EKLAVYA PRASAD

Managing Trustee, Megh Pyne Abhiyan



Eklavya Prasad leads Megh Pyne Abhiyan (MPA, a grassroots public charitable trust), literally meaning Cloud Water Campaign, conceptualized, and sketched by him and working in partnership with local non-government organizations, and supported by resource institutions, individuals and volunteers in rural north Bihar and rural and urban areas in Jharkhand state. Through MPA, Prasad is working on issues concerning resilience and adaptability amidst extreme weather conditions, participatory groundwater management, safe and secure drinking water processes and technologies, and hygienic and contextual sanitation management, through collective accountability and action. However, much beyond that, the wider mandate is to stimulate collective action and accountability towards a 'common good' amongst the local community. Prasad has been guided by the experiences accumulated while working on several rural concerns for past 22 years. Eklavya Prasad, has photographed the lives of people in rural Bihar while leading the grassroots organization. His images capture the complexity and beauty of the human spirit and depict the strength, determination and vivacity of the people who have survived the floodwaters. His different frames project the character of the region, and range of experiences, from the disastrous aftermath to periods of relative normalcy, and facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of the Bihari people's day-to-day struggle and inner strength for survival.

DR. R. SARAVANAN

Professor & Director (Centre for Water Resources)



Dr. R. Saravanan is a Professor and Director of the Centre for Water Resources at Anna University, renowned for his expertise in groundwater modeling and management. With a strong focus on rainwater harvesting and the application of evolutionary algorithms in water resources engineering, Dr. Saravanan has made significant contributions to sustainable water management practices. His research advances innovative solutions for efficient water resource utilization, addressing critical challenges in water scarcity and conservation. A committed academic, he is dedicated to improving water resource engineering methodologies and has garnered respect for his leadership and expertise in the field.



MR. TARUN NAIR

Conservation Biologist, Wildlife Conservation Trust



Mr. Tarun Nair is a conservation biologist with an affinity for crocodylians and rivers. His work has largely focused on understanding the conservation needs of gharials (*Gavialis gangeticus*) in North-Central India, particularly along the Chambal, Son and Gandak Rivers. He is also interested in human-wildlife interactions, conservation philosophy, policy, and the human impact on wildlife and ecosystems. His first chance to work with wildlife came immediately after high school. Opting out of formal education, he spent the next three years as a wildlife rescue-and-rehabilitation volunteer, and also monitored wildlife crimes like pet trade, hunting for wild meat, animals used in performances, and ritual hunting. An accident forced him back into higher secondary school which, luckily, was a wooded campus adjacent to a Reserved Forest. He completed his graduation through open-university whilst still staying involved in conservation-related work. Soon after, an M.Sc. in Wildlife Biology and Conservation helped pursue a career in conservation biology. As part of WCT's Conservation Research vertical, he works on the Otter & Hydrology project in the Satpura Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh.

PROF. JAGDISH KRISHNASWAMY

Dean, School of Environment and Sustainability, Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru



Dr. Jagdish Krishnaswamy is the Dean of the School of Environment and Sustainability (SES) at IIHS, where he leads the school's strategic development, expanding its academic, research, and practice portfolios. With a BTech in Civil Engineering from IIT Bombay, an MS in Statistics and Decision Sciences, and a PhD in Environmental Science from Duke University, his expertise spans ecohydrology, landscape ecology, and biodiversity. His research has focused on the impacts of extreme weather and climate change on ecosystems across various regions, including India, USA, Costa

Rica, and Africa. Dr. Krishnaswamy played a significant role in the IPCC's Special Report on Land and Climate, serving as the coordinating lead author for its synthesis chapter. He also contributed to the IPCC's Summary for Urban Policymakers, highlighting the urban implications of climate science. His current work includes developing India's first Long-Term Urban Ecological Observatory (LTUEO) at the IIHS Kengeri campus, focusing on the intersections of food, water, and biodiversity in urban environments.



DR. MASRUR SALEKIN

Additional District and. Sessions Judge, Dhaka



Dr. Salekin has over 17 years of experience as a judge, researcher, teacher, and legal practitioner. He completed his PhD in Law from the University of Galway, Ireland, where his research topics included environmental justice, judicial pro-activism, separation of powers, and collaborative constitutionalism. He also holds an LL.M. in International Law and Development from the University of Nottingham, which he earned as a Chevening Scholar. Dr. Salekin is an Additional District and Sessions Judge in Bangladesh Judiciary, He is an adjunct faculty at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Aviation and Aerospace University (BSMRAAU), Dhaka International University (DIU), Bangladesh University of Business and Technology, and the Academy of Business Professionals. His teaching and research interests include environmental justice, comparative constitutional law, climate change mitigation, the role of courts, and the training of judges and lawyers. Dr. Salekin has worked at BRAC and as a Research Supervisor for the Law, Innovation, and Professional Skills module at the School of Law, University of Galway. His scholarship has been published or is forthcoming in several journals, including Environmental Liability: Law, Policy and Practice Journal, Law, Environment and Development Journal, IUCN Academy of Environmental Law series, Judicial Administration and Training Institute Journal, South Asian Journal of Environmental Law and Policy, Dhaka University Law Journal, and the Bangladesh Law Commission Digest.

ADV. GANESHAN UMAPATHY

Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India



Adv Umopathy is an experienced advocate who has handled matters pertaining to - Interstate Water Disputes, Infrastructure, Electricity laws, Petroleum, Environment, Taxation, Anti-Dumping, SEZ, Consumer, Civil etc. He has represented State of Tamil Nadu in all water disputes, He regularly appears before the Supreme Court of India, High Court of Delhi, all other High Courts, National Appellate Tribunal of Electricity/CERC, National Green Tribunal.



MR. GOPINATHAN

Advocate



Mr. P.R. Gopinathan is a practicing advocate with 33 years of experience at the BAR and judiciary, specialising in Higher Education, Service Jurisprudence, and Environment. He is also the advisor and standing counsel for University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education, National Council for Teacher Education, and The Tamil Nadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University. Additionally, he is the visiting faculty at Judicial Academy, Chennai, Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai, University of Madras, and Bharathidasan Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli.

DR. G. RAJASEKAR

HOD, I/C, Dept. of Legal Studies, UNOM



Since May 2014, he has been serving as an Assistant Professor and has recently taken on the role of Head i/c for the Department of Legal Studies and Dean, Legal Affairs, University of Madras as of July 2023. With a total of 15 years of teaching experience, he had the privilege of participating in the Advanced Training Programme for University Lecturers organized by the ICRC in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 18 to 23, 2015. He has served as an Ex-Officio Member of the Academic Council at the University of Madras, chairs the Board of Studies in Human Rights Duties and Education at the

Institute of Distance Education and hold life memberships in several professional organizations, including the Madurai Bench High Court Advocates Association and the Indian Society of International Law. Resource Person, Tamil Nadu Police Academy - Capacity Building Course, He has been the Principal Investigator for studies on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, funded by Fourth Police Commission, Government of Tamil Nadu and evaluating Human Security Issues related to local government participation, Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan RUSA 2.0. His academic output includes 35 publications, 7 study materials, and 20 chapters in edited books, alongside presenting 71 papers at seminars and conferences showcasing his commitment to advancing legal scholarship.



MR. SHAWAHIQ SIDDIQUI

Founding Partner, Indian Environment Law Organisation



Mr. Shawahiq Siddiqui is an Environment and Development Law consultant with over sixteen years of experience in environmental compliance and institutional governance. He has worked extensively on drafting and developing natural resources policies, regulations, and monitoring frameworks for both state and federal governments in India and South Asia. His expertise includes advising on climate risk resilience, adaptation policies, cumulative impact assessments, and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for water and forest sector resilience. Mr. Siddiqui has collaborated

with key government agencies, multinational financial institutions, and the private sector. Some of his notable contributions include working with the Urban Development Department (Government of Maharashtra), Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority (MWRRA), Ministry of Jal Shakti (Uttar Pradesh and National Mission for Clean Ganga), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and various international organizations such as The Asia Foundation, World Bank, UNDP, and IUCN Asia. His work focuses on multi-stakeholder policy frameworks and their financial sustainability across state, national, and international levels.

MS. RHEA LOPEZ

Associate, Veditum India Foundation



Rhea Lopez is a conservation ecologist, who works with river communities and wildlife – conducting research, contributing to policy work and outreach, and collecting stories of the many lives along the river. She has specific interests in human-wildlife interactions, socio-ecological systems, fisheries and conservation action. In continuation of her M.Sc. thesis research (The Role of Species-Specific Ecology and Behaviour on Fishers' Perceptions of Smooth-coated Otters and Mugger Crocodiles in traditional Khazan fisheries of Goa, India), she is currently studying the persistence and resilience

of biodiversity in traditional Khazan fisheries, and the promotion of wildlife-friendly fisheries.



MR. SIDDHARTH AGARWAL

Founder, Veditum India Foundation



Mr. Siddharth Agarwal is a trained aerospace engineer from IIT Kharagpur and founder at Veditum India Foundation, who has walked across India and along its rivers for the past 7 years, learning of its social and environmental challenges. One component of his work (India Sand Watch) aims at building environmental accountability in India, with the current focus being on the pan India issue of river sand mining, where revenue losses can be in the 1000s of crores every year. He has designed & led all of Veditum's projects since inception. Siddharth is also a steering committee member at India Rivers Forum.

DR. MRINALINI BANERJEE

Assistant Professor (Law), National Law University Odisha



Dr. Mrinalini Banerjee is currently an Assistant Professor at National Law University, Odisha (NLUO), having previously taught at Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), Gandhinagar. She completed her undergraduate studies in International Law Honors at KIIT School of Law, followed by a Masters in Transnational Law at King's College London, where she received the Goodenough Commonwealth Scholarship for the 2016-2017 session. Dr. Banerjee earned her PhD from Gujarat National Law University, focusing on the legal rights of climate refugees. She also undertook additional academic courses at SOAS, University of London, and participated in the summer school at The Hague Academy of International Law. She has successfully qualified the UGC-NET and AIBE exams. Dr. Banerjee has been recognized with numerous grants, projects, and scholarships. In 2020-2021, she served as a researcher at The Hague Academy of International Law, where she was the only Indian among 34 participants worldwide. She also undertook a consultancy project in Environmental Law in 2021 and received project funding from NUJS Kolkata and NLUO. Dr. Banerjee has been awarded grants from the Asian Development Bank in 2016, along with scholarships from the Global Alliance for Justice Education (GAJE) in 2019 and 2022, and the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law in 2019. Her scholarly contributions are extensive and have been published in various indexed journals.



DR. AMRISHA PANDEY

Assistant Professor (Law), BML Munjal University



Amrisha Pandey is an Assistant Professor in the School of Law. Her research interests are in Environmental Law; Freshwater Governance (Law and Policy); Human Rights Discourse with emphasis on Nature's Rights; Ocean Law and Governance; and Water Diplomacy and Cooperation. Amrisha has taught at the Gujarat Maritime University and School of Planning and Architecture in Bhopal.

MR. SHASHANK PANDEY

Research Fellow, Vidhi Centre for Public Policy



Shashank is a Research Fellow at Vidhi. He works with the Climate and Ecosystem team wherein he focuses on legal and policy issues related to current government measures around climate and environment. Prior to joining Vidhi, Shashank worked as a LAMP (Legislative Assistant to Member of Parliament) Fellow with a Lok Sabha MP wherein he worked on environment, disability and tech related matters. He also drafted two Private Members' Bill for the MP which were introduced in Lok Sabha. Shashank was also a Javed Abidi Fellow at NCPEDP wherein he worked on issues related to inclusivity and accessibility.

His work as a Javed Abidi fellow primarily focused on the exclusion of disabled people from the political landscape. He likes to write on multiple policy related issues and his articles have regularly featured across platforms. Shashank graduated from Dr Ram Manohar Lohia National Law University with BA LLB (IP hons) in 2021

SPECIAL GUESTS

Senior Practice Heads, Surana & Surana International Attorneys

Shri. Sanjay Mehta

Shri. Kalyan Jhabhak

Head - Client Relations

Shri Sanjay Sharma Kishanlal



ORGANISING COMMITTEE

PATRON



Dr. Ananth Padmanabhan
Dean, Vinayaka Mission's Law School

CONFERENCE CHAIR



Prof. Nabeela Siddiqui
*Assistant Professor,
Vinayaka Mission's Law School*



Dr. Gnana Sanga Mithra S
*Associate Professor,
Vinayaka Mission's Law School*

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**VINAYAKA MISSION'S
RESEARCH FOUNDATION**
Granted to be University under section 3 of the UGC Act 1956



VMLS
VINAYAKA MISSION'S LAW SCHOOL



VMLS is mentored by OP Jindal Global University (an Institution of Eminence) and Jindal Global Law School under an institutional mentorship agreement.



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