



Environmental Management's Challenges in the next Decade

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Abstract

The skills and knowledge acquired through the still new field of environmental management are fundamental for attaining sustainable development in all sectors. The MEM discipline around the world extends beyond the focus on environmental management systems (EMS) or environmental impact assessment procedures (EIA). These are core elements, to be sure, as was made clear in the Declaration on Environment and Development at the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. But more is evident. The MEM studies produce environmental leadership in all sectors, building toward the shift to the "green economy" that Earth must have as we add two billion more people to the planet in the coming 50-75 years. For these reasons, the next decade is particularly important. Societies will need to move environmental management from a sub-field of management to a central point of authority. Events are demanding adaptation to the effects of climate change, and environmental management has fashioned the analytic tools, proven reform programs, and long-term vision to enable societies to sustain the resilience needed in order to weather the coming changes.

About the Speaker

Nicholas A. Robinson founded the environmental legal studies program at Pace Law School in 1978, including its Environmental Litigation Clinic in 1985, which was set up to represent the Hudson Riverkeeper. Pace University's Law School has consistently ranked among the top three universities in the US for environmental law. Robinson is Pace's University Professor for the Environment, and also teaches at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He authored New York's wetlands legislation and the State's wild bird law. He served from 1983-85 as the Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel for the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and was the first chairman of the Hudson Valley Greenway Conservancy, established by the State legislature. He is the author of many books and articles, including a new text on *Climate Change Law*. The World Conservation Congress in 1994 elected him to chair the Commission on Environmental Law of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the highest professional position in environmental law globally. He also served as IUCN's Legal Advisor for a decade. He has lectured on environmental law in more than 100 nations, helped draft the United Nation's World Charter for Nature, and worked on the development of the Convention on Biological Diversity. For 20 years he was a US government delegate to the USA-USSR environmental law negotiations, and he currently serves on the Environment and Social Advisory Council to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Forty years ago, he served on the Legal Advisory Committee to the President Council on Environmental Quality, establishing the procedures for the environmental impact assessment process. Locally, he serves on the steering committee for the Pocantico River Watershed Conservancy and for eight years chaired the Planning Board of the Village of Sleepy Hollow. He is a graduate of Brown University (*Phi Beta Kappa*) and Columbia University School of law.

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