Climate Change & Renewable Energy: Opportunities & Challenges

Climate change is considered as one of the main challenges to this generation’s policymakers and scholars with potential impacts on generations to come. While the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions has been the main focus of international efforts thus far, the development of alternative fuels is another important policy response to climate change. Lawmakers are looking for new ways to accelerate the development of low carbon and no carbon fuels. The use of renewable energies and fuels such as wind, solar photovoltaic, and biofuels will continue to grow as new techniques and technologies are developed. These changes are a welcome and necessary development. However, along with the growth of these industries comes a number of challenges for individual nations and the international community.

The Wisconsin International Law Journal 2012 Symposium will highlight a number of the opportunities and challenges encountered in the development of renewable energies. The symposium will include three main panels. The first panel will discuss renewable energy in the United States. Wisconsin and other states including California have made important strides in the development of renewable energy in their respective states, but these states also face a number of challenges. The second panel will focus on cross-cutting issues impacting all countries. Topics include biofuels and food security, human and indigenous rights, intellectual property, and land tenure. The third panel will look at the development of renewable energies in other countries and regions in order to see what lessons can be learned by the policymakers here. This panel will include a discussion of efforts in the European Union (particularly Germany and Denmark) and Brazil (sugar cane ethanol), as well as ongoing efforts to integrate the use of renewable energy into China and India. Presenters will be invited to submit their papers for possible publication in the special issue of the Wisconsin International Law Journal.

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