



Are you interested in assisting developing nations in the climate negotiations?

Join our network of legal advisers

The Legal Response International (LRI) is an award-winning charity based in London that provides free legal assistance to negotiators from developing countries and civil society observer organisations in connection with the international climate negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Why does legal support matter?

International climate negotiations are among the most complex multilateral law and policy-making processes. Meetings often involve technical jargon, carefully crafted wording, and references to international legal principles and obligations. Delegations of industrialised countries include specialised experts, lawyers and technical staff. However, developing country negotiators, often representing those most affected by climate change, can rarely rely on similar backing. This impacts their ability to put forward their positions effectively, challenge opposing views, and shape the negotiation outcomes.

How does LRI work?

LRI works through a global network of over 160 legal experts from leading law firms, barristers' chambers and universities across various jurisdictions who produce legal opinions/advice in response to queries by developing countries and civil society observer organizations. LRI shares the legal opinions/advice with the query requester on an anonymous basis. After a negotiation session, this opinion/advice (still anonymised) is usually made available on LRI's [free public database](#).

The queries LRI receives received can vary considerably. Here are some examples:

Please prepare a short overview on how human rights are addressed under the UNFCCC.

How is graduation/transition from Least Developed Country status treated under other agreements in terms of timelines, flexibilities and other contexts?

Can the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) directly request the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to do something or is the Conference of the Parties (COP) required to take a decision to this effect?

Does Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement create a new financial obligation, or does it only confirm the existing ones under the Convention? Who has an obligation to provide financial resources under Article 9.1 PA: only countries listed in Annex 2 of the UNFCCC, or all developed countries?

Following the postponement of COP26 (originally planned for November 2020) by when do Parties to the Paris Agreement have to communicate or update their NDCs?

What are the consequences of the Doha amendment's entry into force for AAUs, other Kyoto Protocol credits and the general KP framework?

The bulk of LRI service is delivered during UN climate meetings (twice a year, usually in June and in November/December), when advisers are “on call” to assist remotely with legal queries that usually need a quick turnaround. Some queries that do not require a quick turnaround are worked on by the adviser(s) after the climate meetings. Being on call does not necessarily mean advisers will be asked to assist: it depends on the subject matter of the query received and whether it matches an adviser’s areas of expertise and availability. In addition, we increasingly are asked to procure legal advice in the lead-up to climate meetings. When this is the case, we contact our experts on an ad-hoc basis to gather their interest and availability in providing assistance.

The areas of expertise/experience that are most relevant to our work are:

- Rules and regulations under the UNFCCC/climate change regime
- Reporting, review and compliance under the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement
- Treaty drafting and interpretation
- Public international law
- International environmental law/multilateral environmental agreements
- International Trade Law/WTO
- Law of the Sea/ International Maritime Organisation
- International Civil Aviation Organisation
- Energy law
- Carbon trading, carbon markets
- International dispute resolution
- Climate finance
- Human Rights
- REDD+/Forests
- Indigenous Peoples' rights
- EU Law and Regulation

For more information about LRI please visit www.legalresponse.org