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The Politics of Ecocide after the Rome Statute

Thursday 4 June 2026 15:00 (1h 30m)

In September 2024, Vanuatu, Fiji and Samoa formally introduced an amendment criminalising ecocide to the International Criminal Court. The submission marks a new high point for state interest in ecocide as an international crime; one which, over the last few years, has gained prominence in contexts as diverse as the Association of Small Island States, the Ukraine war, EU criminal law, and the Council of Europe. This range of interests raises almost as many questions, not least how negotiations will impact on the proposed definition, and the relationship of ecocide to questions of sustainability and climate change. In addition to being, potentially, the first new crime added to the Rome Statute since the founding of the ICC, the criminalisation process is also notable for its bottom-up character in which states and social movements are seeking to criminalise ecocide in advance of a consensus on its meaning and purpose. This panel draws together scholars with an interest in ecocide from both international relations and international law to reflect on these developments, examine the consequences of diverse pathways to criminalisation, and to situate the criminalisation process within global hierarchies, fragmentation, and cross-cutting relations of legal authority.

Track Classification: Environment and Climate Politics Working Group