



13th EELF Conference 2026

Climate Change Mitigation and EU Law: Towards a Just and Competitive Sustainable Transition

26–28 August 2026, Copenhagen, Denmark

Call for Abstracts

Building upon the longstanding tradition of the European Environmental Law Forum (EELF) in fostering interdisciplinary and cross-jurisdictional dialogue, the **Centre for Climate Change Law and Governance (CLIMA) at the University of Copenhagen** is pleased to host the 13th EELF Conference. The 2026 Conference will examine how EU climate law can steer a *clean, just, and competitive* transition toward climate neutrality in an era characterized by geopolitical turbulence, intensifying global competition, rapid technological disruption, and growing societal demands for fairness.

The EU continues to position itself as a global leader in climate change mitigation. Its ambitious climate targets — reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, 90% by 2040, and achieving climate neutrality by 2050 — are supported by an unprecedentedly comprehensive legal and policy framework. These include, inter alia, the European Green Deal, European Climate Law, the Fit for 55 package, the EU ETS and ETS2 reforms, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Renewable Energy Directive (RED III), the Energy Efficiency Directive, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), EU Taxonomy, the EU Battery Regulation, the EU Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) and the Clean Industrial Deal.

At the same time, the EU's climate mitigation architecture faces extraordinary pressure. Geopolitical turbulence, security concerns, trade tensions, shifting global supply chains, inflationary shocks, and emerging technologies such as AI are reshaping Europe's socio-economic and political landscape. The question is therefore increasingly urgent: **How can the EU ensure that its transition towards climate neutrality is not only sustainable, but also strategic, and globally competitive?**

Against this backdrop, the **13th EELF Conference 2026** invites contributions that focus on new challenges for EU law in a clean, just and competitive transition towards climate neutrality. Particular attention will be devoted to the following (non-exhaustive) themes:

1. EU Climate Mitigation Law and the International Context

How does EU climate mitigation law interact with its international obligations under the Paris Agreement and beyond? Can the EU's increased ambition contribute to global norm diffusion, or does it risk regulatory fragmentation? How should the EU respond to major emitters' diverging climate pathways, including the United States, China, and emerging economies? What are the implications for climate diplomacy, global carbon markets, international climate clubs, or the WTO system? Can the EU maintain leadership while ensuring coherence between internal measures (e.g. CBAM, ETS linkage) and international cooperation?

2. EU Climate Mitigation Law and Strategic Autonomy

How can climate policies support the EU's quest for greater strategic autonomy? What is the role of the Net-Zero Industry Act, Critical Raw Materials Act, and industrial policy tools in securing climate-relevant supply chains? How should the EU balance decarbonization, energy security, and industrial competitiveness? To what extent can climate mitigation law reinforce or undermine the EU's geopolitical resilience, including in the fields of hydrogen diplomacy, external energy partnerships, and green technology deployment?

3. Climate Law and Sustainable Business/Finance

How effective is the EU's Sustainable Finance framework — taxonomy, CSRD, CSDDD, and SFDR — in accelerating climate mitigation? Are current disclosure and due diligence obligations suited to shift capital toward climate-neutral activities? How can EU law incentivize corporate transition pathways, climate-compatible business models, or the integration of climate risk into financial supervision? Does the EU need stronger obligations for high-emitting industries or financial institutions to align with the climate-neutrality objective?

4. Interface of Climate Law and Competition Law

What are the appropriate boundaries between climate ambition and the rules on State aid, antitrust, and merger control? Can competition law accommodate climate-oriented cooperation between firms without undermining market integrity? How should the EU design climate-related State aid rules while preserving a level playing field? Can merger control internalize climate harms or benefits? What lessons emerge from recent “green antitrust” developments?

5. Interface of Climate Law and Economic Law

How does EU climate mitigation interact with trade law, investment protection, and the evolving landscape of economic governance? What are the implications of CBAM for WTO compatibility, just transition concerns in third countries, and global supply chains? Is the EU's trade policy sufficiently aligned with its climate objectives? Should climate conditionalities be embedded more strongly in FTAs and BITs, or public procurement rules?

6. EU Just Transition and Climate Mitigation

How can law ensure that Europe's transition leaves no person, region, or sector behind? What are the legal and governance challenges related to burden-sharing, energy poverty, regional transformation, and labour market adjustments? How effective are instruments such as the Just Transition Fund or Social Climate Fund? And how should climate law internalize distributive justice, intergenerational equity, and fairness in decision-making?

7. Interactions between Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

How can EU law better coordinate mitigation and adaptation policies, which often overlap in sectors such as land use, infrastructure, agriculture and nature protection? Do existing instruments, such as the European Climate Law, the Climate Adaptation Strategy, LULUCF, Water and Nature Restoration rules, promote coherence or generate trade-offs? How can the EU mitigation actions, and revenues, contribute to Loss and Damage? How should the EU address conflicts such as land competition between renewable energy and nature-based adaptation, or afforestation measures that undermine ecosystem resilience? Can adaptation actions (e.g. wetland restoration, resilient forests, soil protection) also serve mitigation goals? Should the EU introduce stronger requirements for integrated climate planning and climate-proofing across governance levels?

8. Circular Economy and EU Decarbonization

How do circular-economy instruments support climate mitigation across sectors such as agriculture, industry, manufacturing, forestry, and waste management? Can the EU's circular-economy agenda reduce material consumption, enhance resource efficiency, and limit embedded emissions? What are the legal, economic, and monitoring challenges in integrating circularity into sectoral decarbonization pathways?

9. Renewable Energy Transitions and the EU's Competitiveness

How is the EU deploying renewable energy at sufficient scale and speed to remain globally competitive? Are permitting reforms, grid expansion rules, and renewable support schemes adequate? What role can hydrogen, offshore wind, solar PV manufacturing, or energy-system integration play? How can EU law respond to global competition from the U.S. Inflation Reduction Act and China's industrial leadership?

10. Hard-to-Abate Sectors: Shipping and Aviation Decarbonization

Are EU measures such as FuelEU Maritime, ReFuelEU Aviation, ETS extension, and alternative fuels mandates sufficient to decarbonize shipping and aviation? How should the EU reconcile its climate goals with international mechanisms emerging under the IMO and ICAO? What technological, financial, and legal barriers persist, and how can they be addressed?

11. Climate Mitigation in the Arctic

How does climate mitigation intersect with the EU's engagement in the rapidly changing Arctic region? What are the implications for shipping routes, extractive activities, biodiversity protection, and Indigenous communities? Can EU law meaningfully contribute to safeguarding Arctic ecosystems while supporting global climate-neutrality objectives?

Submission Guidelines

Abstracts should be sent to mzh@jur.ku.dk by 10 April 2026.

Submissions shall include:

- **Title**
- **Name(s) of speaker(s) and affiliation**
- **300–350 words abstract + 3 main take-aways for the audience from your presentation**
- **A short biography of 100–150 words**
- **Please kindly indicate if you are aiming to contribute to the conference proceedings**

Conference Fee

350 EUR (early bird 290 EUR)

Fee includes access to the full conference programme, catering, conference dinner, and excursion.

Conference Proceedings

The proceedings of this conference will be published on [Journal for European Environmental & Planning Law \(JEEPL\)](#) and [Climate Law](#) as special issues which will be published as issues 1 or 2 of 2027. The publications of the contributions will be subject to the standard peer review process of the two journals.

Organization Committee

Dr. Beatriz Martinez Romera: Associate Professor of Climate and Environmental Law, Head of Centre, Centre for Climate Change Law and Governance (CLIMA), University of Copenhagen; Editor-in-chief of *Climate Law*

Dr. Lorenzo Squintani: Professor of Energy Law, Director of the Wubbo Ockels School for Energy and Climate, University of Groningen; Editor-in-chief of the *Journal for European Environmental & Planning Law (JEEPL)*

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Further information

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