

Summary Report: RIGHydro Thematic Panel at the 2024 AHRI Conference

As part of the RIGHydro project activities, the University of Copenhagen Delegation (KU Delegation, the Lead Partner for the RIGHydro project), composed of scholars from the **Centre for Climate Change Law and Governance (CLIMA)** and the **Department of Anthropology**, achieved a significant milestone during its visit to the prestigious **Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI)** on Friday, 13th September 2024. The visit took place during the renowned Annual Conference of the Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI), held in Lund, Sweden.



Co-led by Associate Professor **Beatriz Martinez Romera** (RIGHydro PI), and Associate Professor **Simon Westergaard Lex** (RIGHydro Co-PI), the delegation included Dr. **Viktor Weber**, and Dr. **Meng Zhang** (RIGHydro researcher). The KU delegation was warmly welcomed by the RWI team, headed by its Executive Director **Peter Lundberg**. Other distinguished RWI attendees included Acting Research Director Dr. **Morten Koch Andersen** and Associate Professor **Radu Mares**, who leads the Business and Human Rights thematic area.

Strengthening the Human Rights-Climate Change Nexus

The discussions between the KU delegation and RWI emphasized the growing importance of the intersection between human rights and climate change. Both institutions explored future collaborations and concrete projects that could address the pressing global challenges in these fields. This exchange is expected to deepen cooperation between the two institutions, fostering innovative solutions for a more sustainable and just future.

Thematic Panel on Citizen Engagement in Green Energy Transition



As part of its engagement at the AHRI conference, the RIGHydro project team organized a thematic panel titled “*Citizen Engagement in Green Energy Transition*,” aligning with the conference’s overarching theme: “*Human Rights in a Polarized World — Realizing Human Rights in the Green and Just Transition*.” This panel was a notable highlight of the conference, drawing participation from scholars, policymakers, and stakeholders from across the world.

In addition to scholarly members of the KU delegation, panelists included senior policy officers such as **Mihai Tomescu** from the European Environmental Agency, and **Bernardo Busel Niedmann** from the Danish Energy Agency. The panelists addressed critical topics like citizen participation in shaping the EU’s renewable energy future, the role of public protests in Denmark’s energy transition, and lessons learned from international cooperation on renewable energy infrastructure.

The panel, chaired by Associate Professor Beatriz Martinez Romera, featured four insightful presentations, followed by an engaging panel discussion. The event not only underscored the role of citizens as changemakers in the green transition but also provided a platform for sharing best practices and innovative ideas in green energy governance.

Paving the Way for Future Collaboration



The KU delegation's participation in the AHRI conference and its collaboration with RWI mark a significant step forward for both institutions. This activity is part of the **RIGHydro project**, funded by **Innovation Fund Denmark** and **MissionGreenFuels**. This project aims to drive innovation in the fields of green hydrogen deployment, with a particular focus on regulatory innovation to incentivize green hydrogen in Europe and beyond.

The 2024 AHRI conference, held in celebration of RWI's 40th anniversary, provided an ideal venue for the RIGHydro team to showcase its research and the project, foster collaboration, and expand its network. This visit and thematic panel have set the stage for future joint initiatives between KU and RWI, paving the way for impactful contributions to the global dialogue on climate change and human rights.

- **Programme of the RIGHydro Thematic Panel:**

Citizen Engagement in Green Energy Transition

Chairperson: Beatriz Martinez Romera
(University of Copenhagen)

- **Mihai Tomescu** (European Environmental Agency)
Citizens as change-makers: shaping the EU's energy future through renewables
- **Simon Westergaard Lex & Viktor Weber** (University of Copenhagen)
The right to resist: Protest as public engagement in the Danish renewable energy transition
- **Bernardo Busel Niedmann** (Danish Energy Agency)
Consenting process for renewable energy infrastructure development: Lessons learned from international cooperation
- **Meng Zhang** (University of Copenhagen)
Governance Innovation or Imagination? Navigating the EU's Leading Role towards a Climate Club of Green Hydrogen in a Polarized World