



## EU FORUM OF JUDGES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT UE FORUM DES JUGES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT

Following up the recommendations made during the UNEP Global Judges Symposium of 2002 in Johannesburg and the Ad Hoc Planning Meeting in January 2003 in Nairobi, the judges from Western Europe present at that meeting, decided to set up a regional forum of judges for the environment.

The objective of the Forum is to promote the enforcement of national, European and international environmental law in a perspective of sustainable development. The aim of the Forum is in particular to exchange experiences in the area of training of the judiciary in environmental law, contribute to a better knowledge of environmental law, share experiences with environmental case law and contribute to a more effective enforcement of environmental law. Every judge in the European Union and the European Free Trade Association with a special interest in environmental law can become a member of the Forum. Judges from countries that have applied for membership of the European Union may be admitted as observers. The activities of EUFJE are supported by DG Environment of the European Commission.

It was agreed at the inaugural meeting in the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg on 26 April 2004 that the early work of EUFJE was to obtain information about environmental law training facilities offered to members of the judiciary in each of the participating states, as well as particular courts or tribunals which have jurisdiction in respect of environmental cases. On 3 December 2004, EUFJE held its first Annual Conference in the Council of State of the Netherlands, in The Hague. In the following years annual conferences were held in London in 2005 (on waste legislation), in Helsinki in 2006 (on *Natura 2000*), in Luxembourg in 2007 (on criminal enforcement of environmental law), in Paris in 2008 (on soil pollution), in Stockholm in 2009 (on the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive), in Brussels in 2010 (on the Application of European Biodiversity Law at national level), in Warsaw in 2011 (on Environmental Protection and Town and Country Planning), in The Hague in 2012 (on the Role of EU Environmental Law in the Courts of the Member States), in Vienna in 2013 (on Access to Justice in Environmental Matters) and in Budapest in 2014 (on Environmental Impact Assessment).

During the Brussels Conference in 2010 the Forum brought together for the first time public prosecutors from the different members states of the EU. In doing so, the Forum was instrumental in the creation of the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE).

The Forum is involved in the activities of the Aarhus Convention (UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters), especially those of the Task Force on Access to Justice. Members of

the Forum attended the different meetings of the Task Force and were also involved in the preparation of its capacity building activities for judges in Kiev, Tirana and Almaty.

The Forum is giving also input to DG Environment of the European Commission while developing proposals for EU legislation with a particular relevance for judges, as that is the case with the access to justice proposal, the legal instrument on environmental inspections or when it is evaluating existing legislation such as the environmental liability directive.

**More information can be found on the website: [www.eufje.org](http://www.eufje.org)**