

ENVIRONMENTAL HEROES

The following grassroots advocates are coming to Eugene next week to participate in the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide. Some of these pioneering attorneys have been active in the ELAW network for many years. Others are newcomers. All of them have a passion for conserving our natural environment, speaking out for disadvantaged communities, and challenging environmental abuses.

Fifty environmental defenders from 25 countries will gather in Eugene and Yachats next week.

Fernando Ochoa wants to collaborate to protect gray whale breeding grounds from cruise ship docks, marinas, and other developments on Mexico's Baja Peninsula.

Tamar Gannot of Tel Aviv wants help cleaning up contaminated sites in Israel.

Irina Bogdan will arrive from Khabarovsk with challenging work to protect native forests in the Russian Far East.

Beto Barandiaran from Peru will share progress cleaning up La Oroya — one of the ten most polluted cities in the world.

Ipat Luna from the Philippines will collaborate on her work protecting coral reefs.

Maurice Makoloo from Kenya will work with colleagues from around the world who are designing legal tools to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Annie Kajir from Port Moresby will report on efforts to protect indigenous peoples and lands from lawless logging in Papua New Guinea.

Gines Ruiz is traveling from Murcia to collaborate on work to protect the coast of Spain from sprawling urban development.

Zhang Jingjing will arrive from Beijing to draw inspiration and share her work giving communities in China a voice in cleaning up rivers.

These environmental heroes will join colleagues from around the world for the 16th Annual Meeting of the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (ELAW). I am thrilled to welcome these heroes to Eugene.

This year, we will board a biodiesel-powered bus for Yachats on February 25 and spend four rich, productive days collaborating to build a sustainable future.

Our visitors will return to Eugene on March 1 to take part in the 25th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at the University of Oregon.

Some ELAW partners will catch their first glimpse of snow-covered mountains, others will touch the Pacific Ocean for the first time. Many will stay with host families in Eugene and form lasting friendships. We will learn a lot from them and their pioneering victories for the environment.

Bringing environmental advocates to Eugene for ELAW's Annual Meeting is challenging, exciting, inspiring, and rewarding. Our partners will leave rejuvenated, knowing they are part of a worldwide community of committed advocates working together to protect the planet we all share.



Bern Johnson
Executive Director
Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide



Don Anton Australia

Don has been practicing and teaching international and environmental law since 1988. He left the U.S. in 1994 to join his wife in Australia and is currently on the faculty at Australian National University. He says: "After the first Earth Day, I remember my mother taking me to downtown St. Louis to join the Coalition for the Environment. Although I was young (born in 1960), I was profoundly influenced by the counter culture and wanted to be a part of the expanding movement for civil rights, human rights, and care for the environment. In law school it became clear that the law is not neutral and has a tendency to protect entrenched hierarchies. But, there were lawyers who pursued real justice. I wanted to be a part of that: lawyers as heroes."



Tom Holden Australia

Tom is a scientist working at the Environmental Defenders Office in New South Wales (www.edo.org.au/edonsw). He holds a bachelor of science and a bachelor of arts from the University of New South Wales and a masters of environmental law from the University of Sydney. He has volunteered with the Australian Conservation Foundation in Sydney and worked as an intern with the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in New Zealand.



Antoinette Moore Belize

Antoinette is an outspoken advocate for the human rights of disadvantaged communities in Belize. She was a member of the legal team representing the Sarstoon Temash Institute of Indigenous Management (SATIIM) in a lawsuit that challenged a government decision to prospect for oil in Sarstoon-Temash National Park. Late last year, the Supreme Court ruled that the permission to prospect was in violation of the law, and required that an Environmental Impact Assessment be prepared. Antoinette has her own private practice and has been a long standing member of the Belize Institute of Environmental Law and Policy (BELPO).



Fernando Dougnac Chile

Fernando is famous in Latin America and around the world for taking on multinational exploiters of natural resources, and winning. In 1985, he won the country's first environmental lawsuit, protecting a Biosphere Reserve from destruction by Chile's military government. In 1998, he founded FISCALIA del Medio Ambiente (FIMA), Chile's premier public interest environmental law organization. Following a FIMA legal challenge, Boise Cascade canceled plans to log Chile's old-growth forests. Fernando was the first environmental lawyer to use Chile's constitutional right to a healthy environment to protect the ancient forests in TIERRO DEL FUEGO. Fernando works to defend the rights of the Aymara indigenous people of northern Chile and the Rapa Nui of Easter Island. He has collaborated with ELAW for more than ten years.



Maria Fernanda Pinochet Olave Chile

Fernanda is a staff attorney at Chile's leading environmental law organization, FISCALIA del Medio Ambiente (FIMA). She directs projects that empower indigenous communities, protect natural resources, and promote sustainable agriculture and rural development. She also teaches law at La Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano in Santiago. Fernanda took the lead in organizing ELAW's 2006 Annual Meeting in Valparaiso.



Zhang Jingjing China

The press calls Zhang "a dead ringer for Erin Brockovich" (China's 'Brockovich' works for poor, environment, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, March 1, 2006). Zhang is an attorney at the Center for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (www.clapv.org). She helped win one of the biggest environmental settlements in Chinese history when a court in China's Fujian province ordered the Rongping Lianying Chemical Factory to compensate more than 1,600 villagers. Toxic releases of chromium and chlorate from Rongping's chlorine plant have polluted waterways, rice paddies and bamboo groves.

