

Climate Change

CALI Lessons:

Climate Change 1: Introduction to Climate Change

Climate change is the major emerging environmental law problem of the 21st century. However, understanding the legal issues surrounding climate change, both internationally and domestically, will be easier if you have a basic comprehension of what climate change is.

This lesson, the first in a series, presents an overview of what climate change is and why it matters to environmental law. In particular, this lesson will look at the causes of climate change and the impacts that it is having and will have on the environment.

Lesson Completion Time: 30-45 minutes

Author: Robin Craig, Attorneys' Title Professor and Associate Dean for Environmental Programs, University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law

Climate Change 2: Mitigation: The International Dimension

Climate change mitigation refers to methods to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and/or to reduce the growing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This lesson looks at the international framework for addressing climate change mitigation, as established in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its protocols.

This lesson assumes that the student has a basic familiarity with climate change but little or no exposure to the UNFCCC. The lesson consists of 15 questions.

Lesson Completion Time: 30-45 minutes

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Climate Change 3: An Introduction to and Overview of Climate Change Adaptation

This lesson is the third in the climate change series. It is designed to introduce students to the concept of climate change adaptation -- that is, the processes whereby humans respond to the ecological changes that climate change is causing.

This lesson is the companion lesson to "Climate Change 2: Climate Change Mitigation," which covers the concept of alleviating climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. Students will benefit from completing these lessons in order.

Lesson Completion Time: 45 minutes

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Climate Change 4: Addressing Climate Change Through the Common Law

As of the beginning of 2010, Congress had not enacted comprehensive federal legislation to address climate change. Nevertheless, a number of plaintiffs--mostly non-governmental organizations, or NGOs--have been using litigation to attempt to educate the public and prompt effective responses.

This lesson examines the litigation that has used common law to address climate change, reviewing both the theories used and the success of those cases. It consists of 16 questions and assumes that students are unfamiliar with most of the common-law climate change litigation; no prior knowledge of the specific cases is required. However, students should have a general familiarity with certain basic common-law causes of action, especially nuisance.

Lesson Completion Time: 30-45 minutes

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Climate Change 5: Addressing Climate Change Through Existing Environmental Statutes

This is the last of five CALI lessons on climate change. It explores the ways in which litigants and agencies have tried to use existing federal environmental statutes -- the Clean Air Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, and the Clean Water Act -- to address climate change.

If you are unfamiliar with climate change, you should complete the CALI lessons entitled Climate Change 1, Climate Change 2, and Climate Change 3 before attempting this lesson. Climate Change 4, which discusses the use of common law to address climate change, is interchangeable in sequence with this lesson.

This lesson assumes that the student has a basic familiarity with the federal environmental statutes discussed above. However, it does not assume that the student knows the relevant cases.

Lesson Completion Time: 30-45 minutes

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