



INTERNATIONAL
DEGROWTH AND LAW
CONFERENCE



CALL FOR PAPERS:

INTERNATIONAL DEGROWTH AND LAW CONFERENCE: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE ROLE OF LAW TOWARDS A POST-GROWTH SOCIETY

Cáceres, Spain, 11-12 May 2027

Humankind has now surpassed seven of the nine planetary boundaries, transgressing safe operating thresholds in areas ranging from climate change and biosphere integrity to novel entities and freshwater use. Far from abstract scientific thresholds, these transgressions signal a structural crisis of the development model that has shaped politics and lawmaking around the globe since the mid-twentieth century.

Yet, as the endless quest for economic growth – measured through GDP – remains on top of policy agendas, this time under the imperative of “competitiveness”, or as part of a new cycle of open rivalry between dominant powers and rush for natural resources, ever-widening cracks are appearing in this edifice. The failure of GDP growth to facilitate urgent decarbonisation and halt the ongoing biodiversity collapse – the premises of green growth theory – is now in plain sight. Moreover, the entrenched belief that GDP growth is a sine qua non for poverty reduction is being contested, as the work of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights has shown (See ‘Eradicating poverty beyond growth’, 2024; ‘A Roadmap for Eradicating Poverty Beyond Growth’, 2026). The fundamental premises of degrowth and post-growth theory are being vindicated: GDP growth for its own sake is not merely unnecessary for addressing poverty and planetary health, but constitutive of these crises.

Legal frameworks worldwide have embraced this dominant belief that GDP growth is necessary for a better tomorrow, paving the way for its continuous expansion, at the cost of environmental destruction and social regression.



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This does not come as a surprise for fields of law directly linked to the current economic system. For instance, international economic law - spanning trade, investment, and finance - is the most explicit expression of this bias, structurally oriented toward market expansion and the protection of accumulation. Yet other fields, supposedly meant to set limits to this accumulation-by-destruction, have failed. Environmental law, the body of law most apparently suited to challenging this paradigm, has historically set the acceptable conditions under which economic activity may degrade the environment, effectively treating ecological harm as a problem of calibration rather than of structural transformation. Even international human rights law has proven no more immune to this bias: its mainstream interpretation has tended to condition the realisation of economic and social rights on economic expansion.

Yet, change is underway. Degrowth imperatives and post-growth frameworks - steady-state economics, doughnut economics, well-being economy, and others - have built on decades of evidence linking economic expansion to environmental degradation, challenging the growth paradigm from within academia and social movements. Although legal scholarship has been slow to openly engage with these critiques, such research foci are gradually gaining traction. However, a significant gap remains in understanding how legal frameworks worldwide might integrate these critical theories to operate within planetary limits and how existing instruments and principles might already harbour the seeds of such transformation.



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The Scientific Committee of the **International Degrowth and Law Conference: critical reflections on the role of law towards a post-growth society** invites contributions that address the three following interrelated questions:

- *How have different legal disciplines perpetuated or attempted to distance themselves from this GDP bias and accumulation-by-destruction mentalities and policies?*
- *What theoretical, institutional and practical synergies can be drawn within and between law and post-growth frameworks – steady-state economics, degrowth, doughnut economics, well-being economy, and others – to challenge this paradigm and build legal architectures that will help us operate within planetary and social limits?*
- *How can existing instruments and principles contribute to sheltering the roots of such transformation?*

We hope this conference will show both the depth and diversity of current legal research on degrowth and post-growth and will be the occasion to connect and to create an international network.

The Scientific Committee welcomes presentations on any branch of the law, as long as the research is about law and growth-critical/degrowth/post-growth (etc.) frameworks in any geography (national, regional, international). The list below provides an indicative and non-exhaustive list of possible topics to be addressed.

Possible topics to be addressed:

- Methods and theoretical approaches to integrate degrowth/post-growth into the law.
- Case studies of degrowth/post-growth and its interplay with a legal framework from any branch of the law (e.g., administrative, human rights, environmental, competition, food, energy, municipality, European, international, Earth System, etc.)
- Degrowth/post-growth and case law.
- Translating doughnut economics into (international) legal frameworks: social floors, ecological ceilings, and the limits of existing (international) law.
- Commons-based governance (such as indigenous legal traditions), and post-growth alternatives in (international) law: lessons for reimagining the (global) legal order.
- The structural growth-dependency of the law: dismantling the legal architecture of GDP-dependent economies.



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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

I. ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Deadline: November 6th, 2026

Submission email:

Please include the following information in separate documents:

- Document 1: Anonymized abstract (300–500 words).
- Document 2: Authors' information: Name, affiliation and contact details (e-mail and phone number); Title of the abstract; A short biography (150-200 words).

Send these to the following email address: info@delaw.eu, indicating as object: **"Submission IDLC"**

The scientific committee warmly welcomes submissions from scholars at all career stages, from early-career researchers to senior academics. Please note that submissions are open to postgraduate researchers and above. Authors may submit only one abstract for consideration. We accept co-authoring although there should be only one person presenting.

The congress will be held entirely in person. Authors whose abstracts are accepted will be expected to attend and present their work in Cáceres, Spain. Regrettably, the organizing team is not in a position to offer financial assistance to participants. Attendees are kindly asked to make their own arrangements regarding travel, accommodation, and any other associated costs.

II. BLIND REVIEW AND ACCEPTANCE

Applications will be submitted to a process of blind review, and all applicants will be informed of the decision of the scientific committee by December 11th, 2026.



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REGISTRATION, VENUE & DATES

The Conference will take place in person, at the Complejo Cultural San Francisco, in Cáceres, Spain on May 11-12, 2027.

The organisers will provide coffee breaks and lunch during both conference days at no cost. We are pleased to offer an optional dinner event on Tuesday 11 May 2027.

There won't be any registration fees.

Registration opening date: 11 January 2027

**During registration, attendees will be asked to indicate whether they will attend the dinner event.*

ORGANIZING INSTITUTIONS

- Degrowth & Energy Law (DELaw) project, hosted by the Iberian Centre for Research in Energy Storage (CIIAE)
- Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
- Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
- Universidad de Granada

Conference Coordinators & Scientific Committee

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- Mariona Cardona-Vallès, Open University of Catalonia
- Ana Garcia Juanatey, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
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