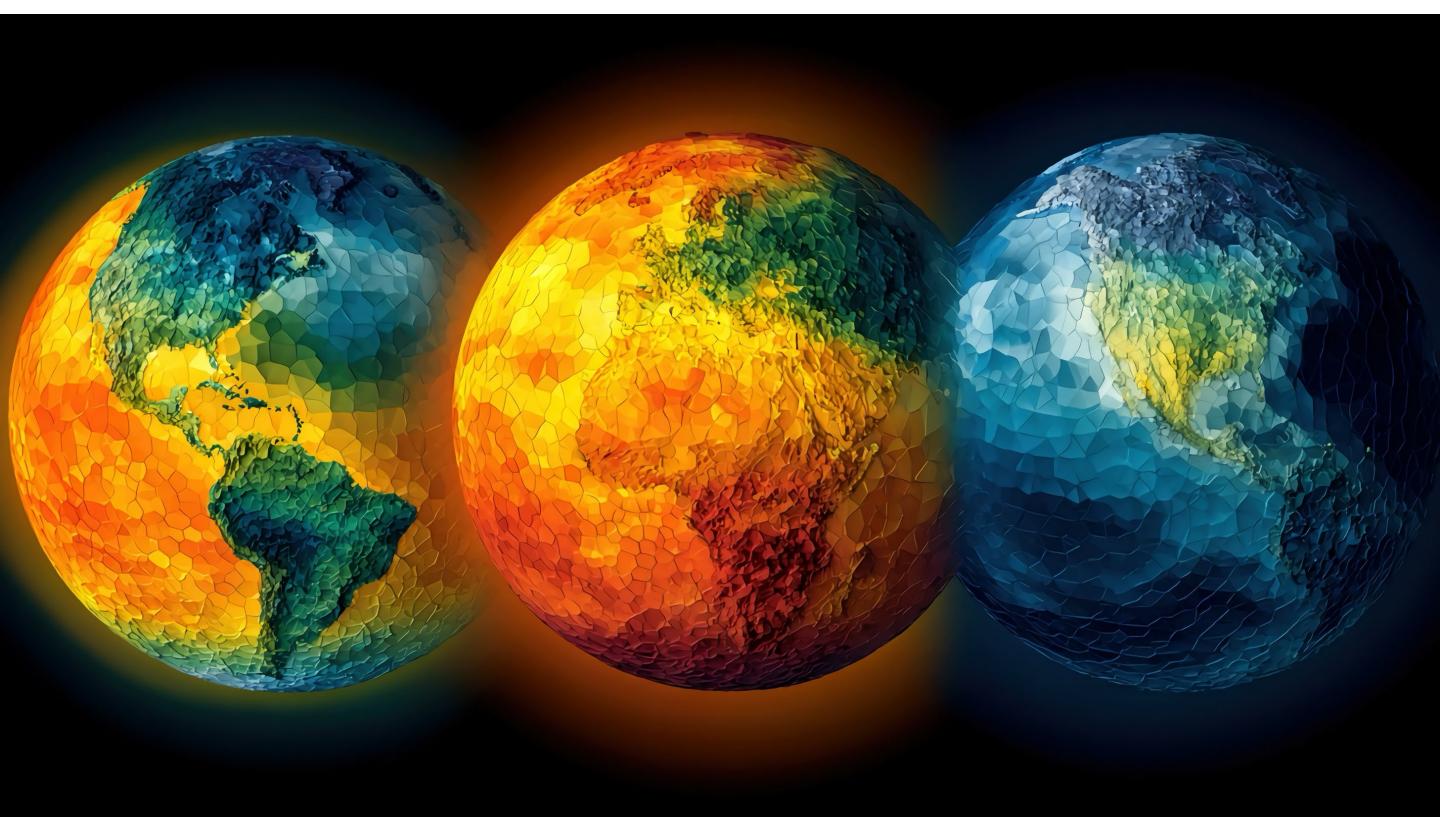




THE UNIVERSITY OF  
SYDNEY

# Reclaiming Law at the Science–Policy Interface

Program



Monday 8 September 2025

**Location:** [Sydney Law School](#), Boardroom, Level 4, New Law Building (F10)  
Eastern Avenue, Camperdown

**Zoom link:** <https://uni-sydney.zoom.us/j/83106584393>  
Meeting ID: 831 0658 4393



## About this workshop

This workshop is part of a broader project examining how legal knowledge is taken up, and sometimes constrained, within global environmental assessments such as the IPCC and IPBES. These institutions often treat law as an instrumental tool, valued for its capacity to implement and organise, but seldom as a normative discipline in its own right. Legal reasoning, plurality, and contestation are largely absent, leading to a form of epistemic exclusion: law is included, but not on its own terms.

The workshop aims to rethink this dynamic. It brings together scholars from law, environmental science, philosophy, and policy to examine law's generative role in shaping just, legitimate and transformative environmental governance. We'll explore how law is currently engaged in assessment processes, what is lost when it is reduced to instrumentality, and what becomes possible when its full disciplinary range is brought back into view.

The program will feature two panel discussions and a collaborative roundtable.

**Each activity will begin with a few short reflections (5–10 minutes each) from invited participants, followed by an open discussion with all attendees.**



Time	Description
8.30-11am	<p><b>Session 1</b></p> <p><b>Panel 1: The Scientification of Law</b> – What happens to law when it is absorbed into the institutional logics of science?</p> <p><i>Reflections from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professor Lauren Richards, La Trobe University</li><li>• Associate Professor Kate Owens, The University of Sydney</li><li>• Professor Brendan Mackey, Griffith University</li></ul> <p><b>Short break</b></p> <p><b>Roundtable: Methodologies for Transformative Knowledge–Policy Interfaces</b> – What interdisciplinary tools and practices enable richer collaboration?</p> <p><i>Reflections from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professor Winston Chow, Singapore Management University, Co-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Working Group II on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability for AR7</li><li>• Professor Peter Stoett, Ontario Tech University, Co-Chair IPBES Assessment on Invasive Alien Species and Their Control</li><li>• Dr. Mariaelena Huambachano, Assistant Professor, Syracuse University</li></ul>
11-11.30am	Morning tea
11.30am-1pm	<p><b>Session 2</b></p> <p><b>Panel 2: Reclaiming Legal Reasoning and Normative Authority</b> – How can legal reasoning, plurality, and contestation be re-centred in global environmental assessments to complement scientific expertise?</p> <p>Building on earlier discussions, this panel examines ways to reclaim law's distinctive normative authority, beyond instrumentality, to help shape just, legitimate, and transformative pathways for environmental governance.</p> <p><i>Reflections from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr Paul Govind, Macquarie University</li><li>• Dr Michelle Lim, Singapore Management University</li></ul>
1pm	Workshop close and lunch