

CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW | MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
BIODIVERSITY LAW SPECIALIST GROUP | IUCN WCEL

TOWARDS A BIODIVERSITY LAW - THE CHANGING NATURE OF WILDLIFE LAW

Law and Nature Dialogue
Webinar Series

Prof. Colin Reid | 18 May 2022, 5pm (AEST/Sydney time)

Session Chair : Associate Professor Peter Davies

Drawing primarily on experience within the United Kingdom, this paper considers features of the development of wildlife law. It has evolved from simply restraining the most directly harmful conduct directed against a few favoured sites and species towards a more holistic approach. This has required the law to become more pervasive, applying in ever more situations, and more positive, as shown by the change in terminology from protection to conservation. Greater priority has been shown to conservation matters and this has required the participation of a wider range of parties, not just a private arrangement between landowners and conservation bodies. In dealing with an uncertain and dynamic world, the law has also had to adopt a precautionary and proactive approach, with the impact of climate change now placing particular emphasis on the latter. New strands are appearing with a role for what can be called “privatisation”, placing greater emphasis on private arrangements such as biodiversity offsetting and covenants as opposed to direct regulation. At the same time there is a risk of polarisation and politicisation, as arguments between different views on controversial issues, such as hunting, become more heated and conservation laws are a target for those seeing deregulation.

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Prof. Colin Reid

Prof. Colin Reid is Professor of Environmental Law at the University of Dundee where he has worked since 1991. He has taught and written on various environmental law and public law themes, including access to environmental information (book due later in 2022, *Uncovering the Environment*). In biodiversity law he has written books on *Nature Conservation Law* (three editions) and (with W. Nsoh) *The Privatisation of Biodiversity? New Approaches to Conservation Law*, which considers the role of legal mechanisms such as payment for ecosystem services, biodiversity offsets, conservation easements and taxation in furthering conservation. He served on the Scottish Government Review of Grouse Moor Management and is Convener of the Legislation, Regulation and Guidance Group of the Partnership Against Wildlife Crime: Scotland (PAWS). He is a Patron of the UK Environmental Law Association and in recent years has been busy with work, including as adviser to the Scottish Parliament, on the consequences of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union on environmental governance and devolution in the UK.

