

**49<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**ENVIRONMENT  
AND THE LAW:  
PROTECT OR DEVELOP—  
IS THERE A CHOICE?**



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**Program**

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**OCTOBER 28–30, 2025 | VANCOUVER & ONLINE**

**49<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

## Environment and the Law: Protect or Develop—Is There a Choice?

CIAJ's 49th Annual Conference on Environment and the Law will critically examine the intersection of environmental crises, legal implications, and human rights.

Vital to the discussion will be the issues of climate change, land rights, and Indigenous people. This conference will foster dialogue aimed at understanding and addressing these issues, encouraging participants to contribute to crafting forward-thinking solutions.

Together, we will explore the means to shape a legal environment that respects human rights, acknowledges the reality of environmental crises, and work toward a more sustainable and equitable future.

Join in the discussions and have your say in a dynamic program of interactive workshops, inspiring panels and stimulating debates.

**START TIME ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT TIME ZONES IN CANADA**

**Note:** The time zone used in the program is Eastern Time.

PT: 06:00 am

MT: 07:00 am

CT: 08:00 am

ET: 9:00 am

AT: 10:00 am

NT: 10:30 am

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**LANGUAGE, ACCREDITATION AND COMPENSATION**

Bilingual program with simultaneous interpretation.

Participation in this program is accredited in provinces where CLE requirements for lawyers are mandatory.

- Substantive hours: 13h45

For provinces where professional hours apply:

- Substantive hours: 11h45
- EDI hours: 2h

Participation in this program is approved under Section 41 (1) of the *Judges Act*.



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## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**The Honourable Leonard Marchand,  
Chief Justice of British Columbia  
Chief Justice of Yukon's Court of Appeal**

The Honourable Leonard S. Marchand was appointed Chief Justice of British Columbia in 2023. Previously, he served as a judge on the British Columbia Provincial, Supreme, and Appeal courts. As a lawyer, Chief Justice Marchand worked, among other things, on Indian Residential School survivor claims. He is Syilx and a member of the Okanagan Indian Band. He graduated law school from the University of Victoria in 1994.

From the Syilx nation and a member of the Okanagan Band, he brings unique expertise on the integration of indigenous knowledge and environmental law, which is essential for rethinking the balance between protection and development.

## CO-CHAIRS

- **The Honourable Justice Julie Dutil**, Court of Appeal of Quebec, CIAJ's President (Quebec, QC)
- **The Honourable Justice Peter Willcock**, Court of Appeal for British Columbia, CIAJ upcoming president (Vancouver, BC)

## MEMBERS

- **Karen Campbell**, Executive Director, BC Law Institute (Vancouver, BC)
- **Christina Cook**, In House Counsel, BC First Nations Justice Council (Vancouver, BC)
- **The Honourable Justice Julie Dutil**, Court of Appeal of Quebec, CIAJ's President (Quebec, QC)
- **Jaimie Graham**, Legal Counsel, Alberta Utilities Commission (Calgary, AB)
- **Archana Medhekar**, Lawyer, Mediator, Peacebuilder, Chair of the Women in Mediation Action Group of Mediator's Beyond Borders International (Toronto, ON)
- **Hong Nguyen**, Director and General Counsel Transport Canada Regulations Section, Legislative Services Branch, Department of Justice (Ottawa, ON)
- **The Honourable Justice Peter Willcock**, Court of Appeal for British Columbia, CIAJ upcoming president (Vancouver, BC)
- **Lise Bujold**, Assistant Executive Director, CIAJ (Montreal, QC)
- **Christine O'Doherty**, Lawyer and Executive Director, CIAJ (Montreal, QC)
- **Sara-Ann Savoy**, Event Coordinator, CIAJ (Montreal, QC)
- **David Lazzam**, Lawyer, CIAJ (Toronto, ON)

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**9:00–10:00 AM    Registration and Coffee**

**10:00–10:45 AM    Opening Ceremony and Land acknowledgment**

The opening of the conference will honour the Indigenous traditions of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, on whose traditional territory we gather. Participants can expect a moment of reflection that may include elements such as a pipe ceremony, traditional songs, drumming, or prayers, helping to set a respectful and thoughtful tone for the gathering.

**10:45–11:00 AM    Welcome Remarks and Introduction**

*Co-Chair:*

- *The Honourable Justice Julie Dutil, Court of Appeal of Quebec, CIAJ's President (Quebec, QC)*

**11:00–11:30 AM    Keynote Presentation**

*Keynote Speaker:*

- *The Honourable Leonard Marchand, Chief Justice of British Columbia, Chief Justice of Yukon's Court of Appeal (Vancouver, BC)*

**11:30–1:00 PM    Lunch**

**1:00–2:30 PM    Panel 1 | Important Developments in Environmental Law**

The ambit of “environmental law” bridges numerous pressing topics across the fields of legal practice, policy, and beyond. To ground the conversations of the next three days, Panel 1 therefore brings together practitioners at the cutting edge of “environmental law” to describe the debates, conventions, and challenges that currently shape climate litigation. From the groundbreaking constitutional principles forwarded in *Mathur v Ontario* to the procedural realities of charting a course through court processes, you will leave Panel 1 with a clear understanding of how Canadian environmental law, in its current iteration, works.

*Moderator:*

- *Mélanie Chartier, Commissioner, Canada Energy Regulator (Vancouver, BC)*

*Speakers:*

- *Aaron Bruce, Founder and Principal, Aaron Bruce Law (Vancouver, BC)*
- *Karen Campbell, Executive Director, BC Law Institute (Vancouver, BC)*
- *Darryl Robinson, Professor, Queen's University Faculty of Law (Kingston, ON)*

**2:30–2:45 PM    Health Break**

**2:45–4:30 PM**

**Panel 2 | The Science of Climate Change**

Public and legal understandings of climate change have been stymied not only by a lack of awareness, but by concerted efforts to downplay, mischaracterise, and outright deny the impact of humanity on the environment, and in turn how a shifting climate has and will harm our societies. We therefore conclude Day 1 with a series of talks from scientific experts, who each offer concrete explanations of how our ecological impact results in environmental damage, and in turn human suffering.

*Moderator:*

- *Julie Gelfand, Distinguished Fellow of the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy, Former federal Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (Toronto, ON)*

*Speakers:*

- *Gemma Boag, Director General, Freshwater Policy and Engagement, Canada Water Agency (Ottawa, ON)*
- *Micaela Martinez, Environmental Justice Officer, Commission for Environmental Cooperation - CEC (Montreal, QC)*

**5:00–7:00 PM**

**Reception**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2025**

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**8:00–8:45 AM      Registration and Breakfast**

**8:45–9:00 AM      Opening Prayers**

**9:00–9:45 AM      Indigenous Approaches to Environmental Law**

Indigenous legal traditions have, for thousands of years, governed First Nations' relationship with the environment. As groups seek to undo the insidious effects of colonialism, some Indigenous nations have sought to recover and revitalize their legal orders to implement culturally, economically, and ecologically sustainable laws relating to the environment.

*Speaker:*

- *Aimée Craft, Chair of the Clean Environment Commission (CEC), University Research Chair Nibi miinawaa aki inaakonigewin (Indigenous governance in relationship with land and water), Professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law (Common Law) (Ottawa, ON)*

**9:45–11:00 AM      Indigenous Law**  
*Workshop/Presentation*

*Facilitators:*

- *TBC*

**11:00–11:15 AM      Health Break**

**11:15–12:30 PM      Panel 3 | International Perspectives**

Whether through international law, other states, or Indigenous communities, Canada can develop new environmental law ideas and practices by comparing ourselves with our neighbours, Indigenous Nations, and fellow global citizens. Panel 4 unites speakers from around the world to present ideas from their own jurisdictions and cultures.

*Moderator:*

- *Mark Benton, Vice-Chair, National Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters (Vancouver, BC)*

*Speakers:*

- *Esteban Salcedo, Legal Officer, Commission for Environmental Cooperation (Montreal, QC)*

**12:30–1:30 PM      Lunch**

**1:30–2:45 PM**

**Panel 4 | Defining the Public Interest on Public Lands: Indigenous, Governmental and Proponents Perspectives**

What does it mean to serve the public interest on lands that hold deep significance for Indigenous Nations and are governed by overlapping legal systems? This panel explores how Indigenous and governmental environmental laws define, interpret, and act on the notion of public interest in the context of public land management. Panellists will examine areas of convergence, conflict, and innovation, highlighting how decisions about resource use and environmental protection reflect differing legal traditions, values, and priorities.

*Moderator:*

- *Jaimie Graham, Legal Counsel, Alberta Utilities Commission (Calgary, AB)*

*Speakers:*

- *Merle Alexander, KC, Principal, Miller Titerle + Company (Victoria, BC)*
- *Dani Bryant, Partner, Fasken (Vancouver, BC)*
- *Casey Macaulay, Registrar & Director of Act Compliance, Forest Professionals BC (Vancouver, BC)*

**2:45–3:00 PM**

**Health Break**

**3:00–4:15 PM**

**Discussion | Can we balance environmental protection with economic development?**

To some, environmental protection must, and can, go hand-in-hand with the model of economic growth which has dominated our society since at least WW2. For others, our current economic models are fundamentally incompatible with a carbon-neutral, restorative relationship with our ecology. To conclude Day 2, CIAJ is proud to host a debate.

*Moderator:*

- *The Honourable Justice Peter Willcock, Court of Appeal for British Columbia, CIAJ upcoming president (Vancouver, BC)*

*Speakers:*

- *Kevin Jardine, Deputy Minister, Deputy Minister's Office, Ministry of Environment and Parks (Victoria, BC)*
- *Roy Millen, Partner, Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP (Vancouver, BC)*

**4:30–5:00 PM**

**CIAJ AGM**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2025**



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<b>8:00–8:45 AM</b>	<b>Registration and Breakfast</b>
<b>8:45–9:00 AM</b>	<b>Opening Prayers</b>
<b>9:00–10:30 AM</b>	<b>Panel 5   Environmental Law and Climate Justice</b> Climate change and environmental degradation are, and will continue, to be problems that disproportionately affect disadvantaged populations, and that have special resonance with young people whose futures will be jeopardised if they are left unaddressed. Panel 5 therefore focuses on how climate change interacts with social (in)justice and brings together individuals and groups who are taking steps to protest institutional inaction and effect meaningful change.
Moderator:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doug LePard, O.O.M, M.A., <i>Former Chief Officer (Retired) of the Metro Vancouver Transit Police, Independent Criminal Justice Sector Consultant (New Westminster, BC)</i></li></ul>
Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Micaela Martinez, <i>Environmental Justice Officer, Commission for Environmental Cooperation - CEC (Montreal, QC)</i></li><li>• Chris Russill, <i>Professor, Faculty of Public Affairs and School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University (Ottawa, ON)</i></li><li>• Dr. Suzanne Simard, <i>Professor of Forest Ecology, University of British Columbia, Author of "Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest" (Vancouver, BC)</i></li></ul>
<b>10:30–11:00 AM</b>	<b>Health Break</b>
<b>11:00–12:00 PM</b>	<b>Where do we go from here?</b>
Moderator:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The Honourable Justice Julie Dutil, Court of Appeal of Quebec, CIAJ's President (Quebec, QC)</i></li></ul>
Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jay Chalke, <i>Ombudsperson of British Columbia (Victoria, BC)</i></li><li>• Catherine Choquette, <i>Full Professor, Faculty of Law, Université de Sherbrooke (Sherbrooke, QC)</i></li></ul>
<b>12:00–12:15 PM</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b>
Co-Chair:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>The Honourable Justice Julie Dutil, Court of Appeal of Quebec, CIAJ's President (Quebec, QC)</i></li></ul>
<b>12:15–12:30PM</b>	<b>Prayers from the Elders</b>
<b>1:15–4:30 PM</b>	<b>Activity/Excursion to be confirmed</b>

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DECADES OF EXCELLENCE

# CIAJ IN 2025

CIAJ marks more than 50 years of leadership in the advancement of the administration of justice in Canada. Since 1974, the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice has brought together legal professionals through its annual events, webinars, and publications, reaching a diverse and influential audience.

## OUR MISSION

To promote excellence in justice through knowledge, learning and the exchange of ideas.

### COMMUNITY

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in shaping  
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justice.

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experts



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### INDEPENDENT & PAN-CANADIAN



CIAJ is a multidisciplinary,  
independent, pan-Canadian,  
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justice system.



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# Planting the Seeds of Justice

Imagine a space where concrete solutions emerge to address the complex challenges of our Canadian justice system. This is what the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice (CIAJ) is all about.

**Founded in 1974, CIAJ's mission is to promote excellence in justice through knowledge, learning and the exchange of ideas.**

CIAJ acts as a conduit for change. As a non-profit and independent organization, we bring together individuals and institutions from diverse expertise—judges, lawyers, academics, policymakers, as well as social workers, law enforcement, and engaged citizens— to improve the administration of justice across Canada. Our multidisciplinary approach enables us to break down silos and mobilize diverse perspectives across a wide range of sectors, tackling fundamental issues in depth. Together, we develop concrete solutions tailored to the real needs of Canadians.

**We are much more than event organizers:** we are a driving force for change. At CIAJ, we build bridges where none existed before, ensuring that the justice system reflects the complexity, diversity, and aspirations of our society.

## Join CIAJ: develop yourself, shape a better world, and make a difference.

By becoming a member of CIAJ, you join a community committed to transforming justice. Together, we have the power to influence policy, improve access to justice and build a more equitable system. Join us today to be part of this essential change.

**JOIN CIAJ**

## Contact us

Please contact us for more information about our organization, the benefits of membership and how you can assist us with our mission.

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**ABOUT CIAJ**

NOVEMBER 18–20, 2025 | OTTAWA, ON

## Conference on Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Independence



The rule of law is a foundational principle of society, essential for the flourishing of democracy. It creates an environment where governance is just, transparent, and accountable, fostering public confidence. However, when this confidence erodes, the community's willingness to engage with the legal system diminishes, threatening the very fabric of democratic institutions.

CIAJ Conference on Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Independence is a **multidisciplinary event** designed to bring together **actors from civil society**—including legal, political, and social stakeholders—to critically examine **the principles that uphold social stability and the rule of law**. Our goal is to deepen understanding of these essential tenets and identify actionable strategies **to enhance public trust in legal institutions**.

The conference will address **the rising tide of global authoritarianism and its impact on democratic governance**. By bringing together diverse perspectives and fostering open dialogue, we aspire to cultivate innovative solutions that promote **transparency, accountability, and resilience in the face of emerging challenges**. Join us in this critical conversation to strengthen our commitment to democracy and the rule of law on a global scale.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)



**HONORARY CHAIR**

**The Right Honourable  
Richard Wagner, PC,  
Chief Justice of Canada**

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**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Jason Stanley,  
Philosopher**

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