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## In-House Memorandum

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### Landmark Recognition – Climate Change Justice Report

The International Bar Association Task Force on Climate Change, Justice and Human Rights recently released a report recommending recognition for a new universal human right – to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

It stands as a landmark for international climate action within the legal profession and highlights a deep concern by the International Bar Association as to the impact on justice and human rights for those made vulnerable by climate change.

Among its detailed analysis and extensive insight, the report discusses in detail how national and international laws often hinder effective climate action.

The report is far reaching and proposes over 50 recommendations to advance climate change justice across the short, medium and long term, including legal measures for individuals and law societies, directed to communities, states and corporations, through:

- international dispute resolution structures for climate change issues;
- greener bilateral investment treaties, free trade agreements and WTO guidelines;
- establishing a cumulative carbon budget to achieve a 2°C temperature rise limit;
- increasing corporate responsibility to recognise climate change impacts; and
- highlighting climate justice concerns for developing countries through the UN Universal Periodic Review (UPR);

“The report contains several dozen specific recommendations that can, and should, be taken by the legal community, the United Nations, national governments, corporations and others”, Incoming IBA president David Rivkin said<sup>1</sup>.

Other recommendations include measures to build institutional capacity and knowledge, broaden legal standing for climate change affected individuals, construct new legal standards for remedy and relief in matters caused by greenhouse gas emissions and refresh standards of liability.

The report stands as one of the first and most important movements towards the recognition of climate change as a human rights issue that requires a specific response in law at an international and national level.

Cameron Algie  
31 March 2015

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legalbusinessonline.com/features/ga-david-rivkin-iba-president/67984>, accessed 19/3/15.

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