

Eco-social Synergies: Legal Challenges at the Intersection of the Environmental and Employment Realms

IX Tarragona International Environmental Law Colloquium (TIEC)

6-7 June 2024

www.tieccolloquium.com



ABSTRACT

Crossing work and planetary health: an intersectional binomial

Dr. Consuelo Chacartegui Jávega, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain.

According to the WHO definition (1946), “health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. More recently, the Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission on Planetary Health published its report “Safeguarding human health in the Anthropocene epoch” in *The Lancet* (2015). In order to build the knowledge base, expertise, and policies needed for addressing the challenges highlighted in this report, the concept of “planetary health” has been growing very quickly with the proliferation of new journals, degree programs, courses, institutes, and many other initiatives. One of them is the Planetary Health Alliance (PHA), an organization that currently brings together over 400 entities from over 60 countries.

The concept of “planetary health” is based on the understanding that human health depends on flourishing natural systems and the appropriate stewardship of them. Improving the health status of people and the planet is a key aim of planetary wellbeing. Moreover, the nexus between health and the environment has been underlined by the climate crisis. The groundwork for the field was laid by a diverse range of disciplines, including population health, medicine, and environmental sciences. Labour law has to be included.

My aim is to analyze the connections between work and planetary health from an intersectional perspective. Workers are frequently the first to be exposed to the effects of climate change, often for longer periods and at greater intensities (ILO 2023). Weather patterns have influenced levels of both outdoor and indoor air pollutants, and specific jobs are at new occupational risks, including depression, anxiety, and Post-traumatic stress disorder. Protecting and improving the health of workers could contribute to better planetary health, and vice versa.