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WINS Seminar

Date of presentation:
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Title of presentation: Cities and Climate Change - Challenges for International Law in the Anthropocene

Abstract

Over the last couple of years, cities have become more assertive as global and transnational actors. In particular, some cities and their associations have challenged the traditional exclusive role of states in international relations. In the climate change context, associations such as 'C40 - Climate Leadership Forum' have argued that 'states talk, cities act'. Through networking cities, the argument goes, remedy some of the deficits of the mostly state-driven climate change regime. In his talk, Helmut Aust will analyse how cities have positioned themselves as relevant actors in the climate change regime and whether, and if so how, this process is accommodated in the discipline of international law. He will argue that cities have successfully established themselves as relevant actors in this field. This process has challenged some traditional notions of international law. At the same time, this process also creates its own legitimacy issues.

Short bio

Helmut Philipp Aust, Dr. iur., is a Professor of Law at the Freie Universität Berlin, Department of Law. He has previously held teaching and research positions at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München and at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He was also a Visiting Fellow at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law, University of Cambridge and a Visiting Scholar at Melbourne Law School. His research areas lie in the fields of public international law, EU law and German as well as comparative constitutional law. He is the author of "Complicity and the Law of State Responsibility" (CUP 2011) and "Das Recht der globalen Stadt" (Mohr Siebeck 2017, forthcoming) as well as co-editor of "The Interpretation of International Law by Domestic Courts" (OUP 2016).