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Special Workshop:

“Efficiency, Sustainability, and Justice to Future Generations”

It is still a matter of fact that the law as well the theories of justice are generally restrained to the resolution of conflicts between contemporaries and between people living in the same country. This is a crucial problem since the western way of life probably cannot be pursued in the long-term perspective and on a global scale. In particular, what will happen if China or India succeed in matching our level of economic prosperity? Can such a development be sustainable?

In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) under the chairmanship of the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland published a report entitled “Our Common Future”. In the following decades, sustainable development became the leitmotif of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – the Earth Summit – in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002).

The concept of sustainability was originally taken from the field of forestry, where it is a longstanding principle not to fell more timber than can be replenished. According to the Brundtland Report, which extended the concept of sustainability to the whole of the economy and society, development is sustainable when it “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

A key requirement of sustainable development, then, is justice to future generations. This in turn raises a number of questions: What is the philosophical justification for this demand? What bearing does sustainability have on the efficiency principle? How do we put a policy of sustainability into practice, and what is the role of the law?

For further information see also: <http://www.ivr2009.com/info.asp?infolid=17>

*Participants who would like to submit papers for this workshop concerning **Law & Economics and Law & Sustainability** are requested to contact the coordinator Prof. Dr. Klaus Mathis, University of Lucerne, klaus.mathis@unilu.ch.*