



**European Society of International Law**

**Interest Group on “International Environmental Law”**

**International Conference**

**Consumer Policy in a Comparative Perspective:  
New Challenges in Chinese, European, and International Law**

**29-30 June 2017**

**Faculty of Law of the University of Macau (Macau, China)**

#### **I. The Theme**

On 21 November 2013 China and the European Union launched negotiations for a comprehensive EU-China Investment Agreement. China is the EU's second trading partner and the EU is China's biggest trading partner. The agreement aims at progressive liberalisation of investment and the elimination of restrictions for investors to each other's market, providing a more secure legal framework to investors of both sides. The European Union is a single market economy populated by approximately 500 million high-income consumers and a qualified labour force. On the other hand, Chinese policy over the last years has shifted from an export-led growth model to one that focuses more on the domestic market, with the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasizing the importance of moving towards an 'ecological civilization'. The construction of an ecological civilization requires a global effort to improve people's well-being while guaranteeing the future of the country. This concept balances economic development and environmental protection, putting ecological civilization on an equal footing with the civilizations of politics, economy, society, and culture. These different dimensions relate to diverse societal aspirations and concerns and must be addressed by Chinese policymakers. While the European Union is a well-established market economy with a high level of consumer protection, China is rapidly turning into a fully-fledged consumer society, raising new problems and challenges. In 2015 and 2016 the Faculty of Law of the University of Macau hosted two conferences on Consumer Policy in China. This third conference continues the debate on a wide range of issues that have a direct or indirect impact on consumer protection. The goal is to promote a discussion about how to strike a proper balance between economic development and consumer protection in modern-day China. The on-going negotiations for a comprehensive EU-China Investment Agreement provide an eloquent example of

how consumer policy is deeply intertwined with varied fields of Law and impacted by national and international legal frameworks. Consumer policy thus requires a holistic approach that balances trade and investment promotion policies with the protection of societal concerns such as the safeguard of consumer interests and environmental protection.

## **II. Topics**

The organizing committee welcomes proposals on any topic relating to the general theme. The scope of the conference is interdisciplinary and submissions from backgrounds other than Law are especially welcome. Subject areas may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) International, European, and Chinese law and consumer protection
- b) UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection and how those Guidelines have influenced national legislations in different parts of the world, namely China
- c) Contemporary Issues of consumer protection in China, Europe, and worldwide
- d) How consumer policy in China has aligned with international and European standards
- e) Asian perspective on consumer protection and consumer rights
- f) Access to water and food
- g) Product safety
- h) Services of general economic interest
- i) Environmental protection
- j) E-commerce
- k) Trade, investment, and consumer protection
- l) Resolution of consumer disputes

## **III. Submission Guidelines**

Abstracts in English should be no more than 800 words long and contain the name, institutional affiliation and contact details of the author. A copy of the author's CV, including a list of relevant publications, should also be attached. Submission should be sent **by 15 May 2017** in Word or PDF format to [fernandodsimo@umac.mo](mailto:fernandodsimo@umac.mo) and [pdfarah@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:pdfarah@mail.wvu.edu).

#### IV. Publication

The organizers have publication plans for the presented papers. The precise format of publication will be discussed during the conference. Therefore, all selected contributions must be original and not published elsewhere. Some funding will be available to defray the expenses with transportation and accommodation of participants subject to the presentation of a **final full paper by 31 September 2017**.

#### V. Organizing Committee

Fernando Dias Simões (University of Macau)

Paolo Davide Farah (West Virginia University & gLAWcal – Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development, UK)

Julien Chaisse (Chinese University of Hong Kong)

This conference is jointly organized by the Faculty of Law of the University of Macau, the European Society of International Law (ESIL) Interest Group on “International Environmental Law”, and gLAWcal – Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development (United Kingdom). The conference is part of the research project led by Professor Fernando Dias Simões entitled ‘Consumer Policy in China: Protecting the Citizens, Strengthening the Domestic Market and Building an Ecological Civilization’ (Research Project funded by the University of Macau, Project Reference MYRG2015-00219-FLL).



澳門大學  
UNIVERSIDADE DE MACAU  
UNIVERSITY OF MACAU