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STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL LAW: LEGAL PERSPECTIVES ON GREENING EUROPE

MELITA CAREVIĆ

THE EU'S PATH TO CLIMATE NEUTRALITY AND THE ROLE OF CARBON REMOVALS

Abstract

The EU's climate neutrality target, which requires balancing greenhouse gas emissions with carbon removals to reach net-zero levels, has become legally binding with the adoption of the European Climate Law. The EU relies on the use of natural and artificial carbon sinks in order to neutralize greenhouse gas emissions that will continue to take place on its territory and thereby achieve its climate neutrality target by 2050 at the latest.

Carbon removals play a critical role in this process, encompassing natural solutions like afforestation and wetlands restoration, as well as innovative technologies such as carbon capture and storage. The most recent measure is the Union's legal toolkit of carbon removals is the Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming (CRCF) Regulation (EU/2024/3012), which represents a voluntary framework certifying carbon removals, carbon farming and carbon storage. However, for the time being carbon removals face significant challenges, including scalability, verification, and integration into existing climate policies and overreliance on these measures can significantly jeopardise the achievement of Union's long-term neutrality goal.

Bio

Melita Carević (LL.M. Ann Arbor, Michigan, Ph.D. Zagreb) is an associate professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, at the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence "EU Global Leadership in the Rule of Law", where she teaches European Public Law, EU Internal Market Law and EU Climate Change Law at the graduate level as well as EU Internal Market Law and EU Competition Law at the post-graduate level. She is also the holder of the Jean Monnet Module "Climate Change Law in the EU", which runs from 2022 until 2025.



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