THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

2019 AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS' ADDRESS

Power Blackouts and Climate Justice: what are the solutions?

When
WEDNESDAY 7 AUGUST 2019
6-7.30PM

Where
The University of Sydney

More information
Law.events@sydney.edu.au

Register
Complimentary, however registration is essential.

For more information, visit **sydney.edu.au/law**

The Australian Centre for Climate and Environmental Law (ACCEL) is affiliated to the Sydney Environment Institute, The University of Sydney.

SPEAKERS:
Professor Daniel Farber, University of California
Professor Robert M. Cerchick, Loyola University New Orleans
CHAIR: Professor Rosemary Lyster, Sydney Law School

About the Address

When electricity infrastructure is lashed by tornadoes, swamped by rains or exposed to bushfires, there's at least one predictable moment in the chaos: the lights go out. The widespread loss of electricity — essentially a disaster within a disaster — can force a whole region to its knees. In many countries around the world extreme weather events since 2006 have left millions of people without power. Hospitals, schools and businesses have shut down, families have steamed in impossible heat or frozen in the cold, emergency services have been paralysed and the batteries in millions of Androids and iPhones have died. Repairing the grid can take months. The ageing power grids in many countries leave us more susceptible to risks like these. And the growing intensity of floods and storms on account of climate change make things even worse. This event will discuss cases like Hurricanes Katrina, Sandy, Harvey and Irma, as well as the Queensland floods and Victorian bushfires, to show that the power sector in all parts of the world needs to become smarter and more resilient, even as it struggles to cut carbon emissions. But finding the way forward is difficult. For the most part, electricity networks were never designed to be nimble and spry. Instead, they were meant to be static and stable. But with wise investment and proper planning, nations can have more of both. To see how, we will briefly describe the basics of power-grid design and show the many ways that disasters related to climate change threaten the distribution and supply of electricity. We will then examine the role of law and policy to green, harden and smarten the grid.

Professor Daniel Farber
Title of presentation: 'Heat, Drought, and Fire: Climate Threats to the Grid'

Professor Robert M. Verchick
Title of presentation: 'Lights Out: Energy, Resilience, and Fairness'