



**THE FIRST CALL TO THE CONFERENCE
ENERGY LAW, ENVIRONMENT AND INVESTMENTS
IN THE CONTEXT AND AFTER COVID-19 VIRUS**

December 8th and 9th, 2020, webinar

Dear colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to the Conference: **ENERGY LAW, ENVIRONMENT AND INVESTMENTS IN THE CONTEXT AND AFTER COVID-19 VIRUS**, which is going to be held on December 8th and 9th, 2020.

The Serbian Energy Law Association (UPES) was founded in June 2018 with the goal of linking experts in the field of energy law and energy related legislation in the Republic of Serbia, the region and Europe. Practical objectives of the UPES's work are the following: acquiring new knowledge in energy law and energy related legislation, exchange of experience in performing energy activities and contracting of investment projects, protection against all types of risks and protection in all other areas in which lawyers, engineers and economists are involved. UPES is a member of the European Federation of Energy Law Associations - EFELA.

After two very successful annual conferences, organized by UPES with the topics: energy market and the fourth energy package of the European Union, this year's main topics are:

- 1) Energy Law, Energy Consumers and Environment in the context and after COVID-19 virus,
- 2) Energy Law, Investments and Environment in the context and after COVID-19 virus.

This year, Conference is going to be held in the form of a webinar with two sessions, on two consecutive days, each lasting two hours. Participants at the Conference and its panels shall be lawyers and other respected energy experts from the Republic of Serbia and abroad, members of the European Federation of Energy Law Association - EFELA, national associations of energy law, representatives of professional associations, professionals of significant commercial entities of energy industry from the Republic of Serbia and abroad, representatives of institutions in the field of energy and other energy related institutions.

This Conference promotes the goals of the UPES. Your active participation and discussion will contribute to the affirmation and better understanding of this important legal area.

Please find the focus of the conference below while a detailed program of the Conference will be available soon.

Kind regards,

Branislava Lepotic Kovacevic, PhD
President of UPES

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Day One, December 8, 2020 - First Session: **ENERGY LAW, ENERGY CONSUMERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE CONTEXT AND AFTER THE COVID-19 VIRUS**

As consumers are looking forward to the end of pandemic and return to the sort of business as usual and their everyday lives, it is getting apparent that post- COVID-19 virus World is going to be very different from our experiences. People are learning about interactions between COVID-19 virus impacts (deaths, infections) and air pollution, respiratory disease and other medical conditions. There is now substantial evidence that communities exposed to the indoor and outdoor pollution (including NOx, particulates and sulfur dioxide) are more at risk of COVID-19 virus. All these contribute to the public being more sensitive to air quality issues. Some pollution may come from neighboring countries and bring International convention on cross border pollution into spotlight.

It is obvious that also the energy sectors are not going to remain untouched by the ongoing pandemic. The aim is to explore the impact of the pandemic on the changes of consumers' behavior and actions in the energy sectors and markets, and to outline the opportunities to turn out challenges into opportunities. As renewable energy is getting more affordable, a number of consumers may see an opportunity to generate their own, clean, secure and renewable energy. Solar PV and small scale wind energy are already paving a way for a number of (small or large) businesses and households to avoid uncertainties of energy markets and energy taxes by investing into their own generation. Others are looking to bypass public transport (with associated infection risks) as well as conventional fossil fuel vehicles; and make use of electric vehicles. How would all these work in practice? How is the increased use of electricity in transport going to affect the consumers' behavior, expectation as well as the energy and transport sectors of tomorrow? What are the legal consequences and requirements? Is there a role for public intervention or regulation or support? Is there a need for law to prevent risks and open opportunities?

Day 2, December 9, 2020 - Second Session: **ENERGY LAW, INVESTMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE CONTEXT AND AFTER THE COVID-19 VIRUS**

Energy policy is growing greener. Governments are looking to “green recovery”: to public investments to jump-start their economies out of COVID-19 virus recession, attracting foreign investments to support transition to renewable energy or institutional financial support for these purposes. At the same time, governments are looking at introducing tax emissions and imported goods that are carbon intensive. Cross border trade is set for massive turmoil if or when carbon border adjustment taxes get into play. Republic of Serbia exports to the EU could be at great risk taking into account very high carbon intensity of Republic of Serbia's economy versus the EU average carbon intensity. It seems that we are facing remarkable need for investment into resilient and climate-neutral energy production.

The aim is to explore the changes that the energy sectors will have to undertake in order to align with the 2050 European targets for carbon-neutral continent. What would be the impact of the EU Climate Law and the carbon pricing mechanisms on the energy sectors in Europe and beyond? From where investments to finance the energy transition may come from? How these intended investments are going to cope with legal and regulatory uncertainty? Who are the consumers that are going to underwrite these investments? Is there certainty that phase-out of fossil fuel energy production is going to create a new marketplace for new and more sustainable investments? What is the actual challenge for the energy law profession?

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