

The Center for Energy and Environmental Security

is pleased to announce the following event:

Defending Indigenous Rights to Lands and Natural Resources: Native Peoples' Environmental Struggles in the Americas, Russia, and Central Africa.

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The Wittemyer Courtroom, Wolf Law Building
University of Colorado Law School

Co-sponsored by:

The Center for Energy and Environmental Security
and the University of Colorado Department of Anthropology

As the culminating event of its biennial Global Advisors Retreat, the Global Greengrants Fund cordially invites the University of Colorado community and the general public to attend a panel discussion on the topic of indigenous peoples and their enduring efforts to defend their lands, natural resources, and most basic human rights. The panel consists of two Global Greengrants Fund Regional Advisors: Alexander Arbachakov of the Russian Taiga Research and Protection Agency and Samuel Nnah Ndobe of the Center for Environment and Development based in Yaounde, Cameroon, as well as John E. Echohawk, Executive Director of the Boulder-based Native American Rights Fund.

Throughout the world, indigenous peoples are fighting to defend their ancestral territories and natural resources from internationally-financed development schemes, unlawful land seizures and unsustainable and environmentally unsound resource extraction. Against formidable odds, they are seeking legal recognition of their territorial rights, demanding that they be consulted on development projects, and advocating for dramatic reform in the policies of the governments and multilateral banks that incorporate these rights. Join us for a discussion with three activists who will share how indigenous peoples and their organizations in the Americas, the Congo Basin, and Siberia are protecting their lands and forests and promoting sustainable livelihoods rooted in their cultures and traditional knowledge. The panel discussion will be followed by a question and answer period.

Speaker Biographies

Alexander Arbachakov, Taiga Research and Protection Agency, Russia

Alexander Arbachakov, a member of the Shor tribe of Siberia, is an expert in forest ecology and wildlife conservation. He graduated from the Forestry Department of the Technological Institute of Siberia in 1986. After graduation, he worked as a forestry officer in the forest division of Mezhdurechensk, in the "Kuznetskiy Alatau" nature reserve and in 1992 began work as a specialist on flora and fauna for the Committee on Ecology and Natural Resources. In 1999 Alexander helped found the non-governmental Agency for Research and Protection of Taiga (AIST) and from 1998 until 2000 he worked as an information coordinator for the "Sacred Earth Network" (SEN) in Southern Siberia. He also participated in working meetings of the World Bank in Washington, DC and Yoensu, Finland on the issue of a new Forestry Policy for Eastern and Central Europe. Alexander serves as an Advisor on the Global Greengrants Fund's Russia Advisory Board.

John E. Echohawk, Native American Rights Fund (NARF), Boulder, CO, USA

John Echohawk, a Pawnee, is the Executive Director of the Native American Rights Fund. He was the first graduate of the University of New Mexico's special program to train Indian lawyers, and was a founding member of the American Indian Law Students Association while in law school. John has been with NARF since its inception, having served continuously as Executive Director since 1977. He has been recognized as one of the 100 most influential lawyers in America by the National Law Journal since 1988 and has received numerous service awards and other recognition for his leadership in the Indian law field.

Samuel Nnah Ndobe, Center for Environment and Development, Yaounde, Cameroon Samuel Nnah Ndobe received his university training in Agricultural Engineering, with a specialization in Economics and Rural Sociology. Samuel's work with the Center for Environment and Development in Cameroon focuses on forestry, livelihoods, indigenous peoples (primarily Pygmies) and non-timber forestry products. His work is often in response to intense multi-national logging efforts in Central Africa and the World Bank policies that promote this form of rapid deforestation without consideration of local ecological, social and economic needs. Samuel has contributed to a number of reports and documentaries on logging, wildlife poaching, and livelihoods. He also serves on the Global Greengrants Fund's International Financial Institutions Advisory Board.

We look forward to seeing you there!