

**IRMA S. RUSSELL,
PROFESSOR AND
EDWARD A. SMITH
CHAIR, UNIVERSITY OF
MISSOURI – KANSAS
CITY SCHOOL OF LAW**

CLIMATE CHANGE UNDER THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION ...WHAT DOES AN ALL OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH MEAN?

*MARRIOTT OVERLAND PARK, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS
OCTOBER 25, 2021 (10:00AM)*

CONSIDERING THE CRISIS



- Climate change / disruption
- Deforestation
- Pollution
- Loss of biodiversity
- Melting polar ice caps
- Rising sea levels
- Oceanic dead zones
- Explosive population growth
- Collapse of insects and pollinators
- Visualize children here



The Sustainability Imperative

Government & Corporate Responsibility



THE SUSTAINABILITY IMPERATIVE

- Sustainability
 - U.S. Constitution Preamble: “secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity”
 - “Our Common Future” (1987 U.N. Brundtland Report) Defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”
 - Public Trust Doctrine

MANY REMEDIAL APPROACHES

ASSESSING CHANGE

- Upcoming COP-26
- Physical & Social cost of greenhouse gases
- impact of GHG on rulemaking and cost benefit analyses
- expectations of actions by EPA as part of the all of government approach

THE CRISIS

U.S. has entered unprecedented climate territory, EPA warns

WASHINGTON POST (May 13, 2021)



Heightened duties of lawyers

- A lawyer is a “public citizen with special responsibility for the quality of justice”
- ABA MRPC – Preamble para. [1]



HOW DOES THE
SUSTAINABILITY IMPERATIVE
- TO MAINTAIN A LIVABLE
CLIMATE / PLANET AFFECT
LAWYERS?

1.3 million lawyers:

What if they took climate changes seriously?

How would this change business as usual?

John Kerry: We are all environmental lawyers now



▶ Thanks!

Email me with questions and comments

Professor Irma S. Russell

Edward A. Smith/ Missouri Endowed Chair

in Law, the Constitution, and Society

University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law

816-235-6486

russelli@umkc.edu