

# Sonya Ziaja

University of Baltimore School of Law  
1401 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, Maryland, 21201  
[sziaja@ubalt.edu](mailto:sziaja@ubalt.edu)

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## Academic Experience

2020 – present **Assistant Professor, University of Baltimore School of Law**, Baltimore, Maryland  
Courses: Climate Adaptation, Law, and Equity; Environmental Law; Property  
Activities: Review Editor, *Frontiers in Climate, Climate Law and Policy*  
Faculty Advisor to the Environmental Law Society

2021, Summer **Michigan International and Comparative Research Scholar**  
**University of Michigan Law School**, Ann Arbor, Michigan

## Education

2017 **University of Arizona**, School of Geography and Development  
**PhD, Geography**

Dissertation: “A Series of Tubes: Misunderstandings in Hydropower Governance and Optimization Modelling,” examining the misapprehension of water and energy law in computer models used for hydropower planning in California · Committee: Carl Bauer (Chair), Helen Ingram, Edella Schlager, and Diana Liverman.

Carson Earth Fellow for Climate Science Communication (2013-2014) ·  
Renewable Energy Network Fellow (2013-2014) ·  
Water Sustainability Fellow (2013-2014)

2015 Paris Climate Accord (UNFCCC COP 21): Delegate for University of Arizona  
(NGO – Observer) · Adjunct delegate for the State of California.

2012 **University of Oxford**, School of Geography and Development  
**MSc, Water Science, Policy, and Management**

Thesis: “Ruled by Capture: *Edwards Aquifer Authority v. Day* and Groundwater Governance in Texas” · Environmental Representative to Governing Body of Wolfson College · Chair, Environment and Ethics Committee, Wolfson College.

2009 **University of California**, Hastings College of the Law  
**JD, Environmental Law**

Journal: Managing Editor, *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly* · Chair, Environmental Law Society (2007-2008) · Co-Chair, Clara Foltz Feminist Association (2007-2008) · Volunteer, Hastings Homeless Legal Services · Public Interest Law Program Fellowship · Hastings Public Interest Law Foundation Grant.

2004 **University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor  
**BA, Medieval and Early Modern Studies**

Thesis: “Calculated Cuisine: Timurid Banqueting and the Image of Kingship” · Contributing Researcher, “What Do Survivors of Human Rights Violations Want? An

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Analysis of Testimony Transcripts from Public Hearings of South Africa's Truth & Reconciliation Commission", presented at the 2001 meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies.

### **Bar Admission**

March 2010    California, 270643

### **Selected Articles and Academic Blogs**

Ziaja, S. "How Algorithm Assisted Decision Making Is Influencing Environmental Law and Climate Adaptation," 38 *Ecology Law Quarterly* (forthcoming 2021-22).

Ziaja, S. "Lessons on Race and Place-Based Participation from Environmental Justice and Geography," *Symposium on Racism in Administrative Law, Yale Journal on Regulation, Notice and Comment Blog* (Aug. 16, 2020), <https://www.yalejreg.com/nc/lessons-on-race-and-place-based-participation-from-environmental-justice-and-geography-by-sonya-ziaja/>.

Ziaja, S., "Role of Knowledge Networks and Boundary Organizations in Coproduction: A Short History of a Decision Support Tool and Model for Adapting Multiuse Reservoir and Water-Energy Governance to Climate Change in California," 11.4 *Weather, Climate, and Society* 823-849 (2019).

Ziaja, S., "Rules and Values in Virtual Optimization of California Hydropower," 57 *Natural Resources Journal* 329 (2017), available at <http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3979&context=nrg>.

Sugg, Z., Sonya Ziaja, and Edella Schlager, "Conjunctive Groundwater Management as a Response to Social Ecological Disturbances: A Comparison of Four Western U.S. States," *Texas Water Journal* (2016), available at <https://journals.tdl.org/twj/index.php/twj/article/view/7019>.

Ziaja, S. and Chris Fullerton, "Judging Science: The Rewards and Perils of Courts as Boundary Organizations," 21.2 *Hastings Environmental Law Journal* 217 (2015), available at [https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings\\_environmental\\_law\\_journal/vol21/iss2/8/](https://repository.uchastings.edu/hastings_environmental_law_journal/vol21/iss2/8/).

Ziaja, S., "Homewrecker 2.0: An Exploration of Liability for Heart Balm Torts Involving AI Humanoid Consorts," in Mutlu & Bilge eds, *Lecture Notes on Artificial Intelligence*, Springer (2011), available at [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-642-25504-5\\_12](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-642-25504-5_12).

Ziaja (n. Palay), S., "Muddy Waters: Congressional Consent and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Resources Compact," 36 *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly* 717 (Note, Spring 2009), available at <https://www.hastingsconstitutionallawquarterly.org/vol31-45/>.

### **Selected Book and Treatise Chapters**

Sugg, Ziaja, and Schlager, "Conjunctive Management of Surface Water and Groundwater Resources" in

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Mary K. Sahs, ed., *Essentials of Texas Water Resources, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition* (State Bar of Texas, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section) (2020).

- Update 2021 (forthcoming).

Moñuz Melendez, G., Sonya Ziaja, and Guido Franco, “Water-energy nexus in semiarid regions and coastal cities of California and Baja California,” in Gian Carlo Delgado Ramos, ed., *Climate Change-Sensitive Cities: Building Capacities for Urban Resilience, Sustainability, and Equity* (National Autonomous University of Mexico Research Program on Climate Change, 2017).

### **Selected Government Reports**

Bedsworth, L., Guido Franco, Dan Cayan, Leah Fisher, and Sonya Ziaja, *Statewide Summary Report, California’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment* (State of California, 2018), available at <http://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/state/docs/20180827-StatewideSummary.pdf>.

Ziaja, S. and Guido Franco, “Climate Adaptation and Resiliency” in *2016 Integrated Energy Policy Report Update* (California Energy Commission, 2017), available at [http://www.energy.ca.gov/2016\\_energypolicy/](http://www.energy.ca.gov/2016_energypolicy/).

Rockman, M., Marissa Morgan, Sonya Ziaja, George Hambrecht, and Alison Meadow, “Cultural Resources Climate Change Strategy” (National Park Service, 2016), available at [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/upload/NPS-2016\\_Cultural-Resoures-Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/upload/NPS-2016_Cultural-Resoures-Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf).

Ziaja, S., Guido Franco, Alex Barnum, Susan Wilhelm, and David Stoms, “Climate Change Research Plan for California” (California Energy Commission, 2015), available at [http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/climate\\_action\\_team/reports/CAT\\_research\\_plan\\_2015\\_briefing.pdf](http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/climate_action_team/reports/CAT_research_plan_2015_briefing.pdf).

### **Selected Presentations, Lectures, and Conferences**

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Sabin Colloquium on Innovative Environmental Law Scholarship, University of Columbia Law School, New York, NY (Zoom)  
Juried Selection, Presentation, “How Algorithm Assisted Decision Making Is Influencing Environmental Law and Climate Adaptation” (May 21, 2021).

University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law, Tucson, AZ (Zoom)  
Invited Lecturer, Environmental Law and Research Seminar (Prof. Justin Pidot, Kirsten Engle, and Priya Sundarashan) (April 23, 2021).

University of Michigan Law School Junior Scholar Conference, Ann Arbor, MI (Zoom)  
Juried Selection, Presentation, “How Algorithm Assisted Decision Making Is Influencing Environmental Law and Climate Adaptation” (April 17, 2021).

California Western School of Law, San Diego, CA  
Guest Lecturer, Natural Disaster Seminar (Prof. Kenneth Klein) (February 21, 2019).

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Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy, San Jose, CA

Invited Participant, “Sustainable Groundwater Management: The Path Forward” (October 7-10, 2018).

Local Government Coalition, Civic Spark Orientation, Sacramento, CA

Invited Speaker, “Adaptation/Resilience and Equity: Perspectives and Tools for Equitable Climate Adaptation” (September 13, 2017).

Association of American Geographers, Legal Geographies, San Francisco, CA

Presenter, “Adaptation Lessons from the History of Hydroelectricity Governance in California” (April 1, 2016).

The Federation of Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP), Asilomar, CA

Invited Speaker, “Science Informed Policy in California’s Energy System” (July 16, 2015).

California Climate Science Symposium, Sacramento, CA

Moderator, Water Resources in California: Drought, Extreme Events, and Management Options (August 24, 2015).

University of Arizona, School of Geography & Development, Tucson, AZ

Guest Lecturer, Science and Decision-making (Prof. Connie Woodhouse) (2014).

University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law, Tucson, AZ

Guest Lecturer, Economics, Law, Environment and Governance (Profs. Carol Rose and Kirsten Engle) (March 1, 2013).

### **Other Professional Experience**

2017-2020 California Public Utilities Commission, Public Advocates Office, San Francisco, CA  
*Climate and Energy Research and Analysis (Public Utilities Regulatory Analyst V)*

Provide expert testimony in ALJ proceedings on the use of credits in carbon markets by publicly traded utilities · Develop research on climate change adaptation, energy storage, and regulation · Lobby Commissioners on energy and climate policy · Advocate and negotiate for ratepayer sensitive adaptation guidance for investor-owned energy utilities.

2014-2017 California Energy Commission, Research and Development Division, Sacramento, CA  
*Research Lead for the Climate-Water-Energy Nexus (Electrical Gener. Sys. Specialist)*

Developed and managed energy and climate change as well as energy-water research portfolio responsive to California’s regulatory and policy objectives · Represented the Energy Commission in government and academic energy partnerships · Supervised graduate and undergraduate interns in research in energy policy, including partnerships through UC Davis and the Mandela Fellowship, Young African Leadership Initiative.

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- 2013-2014 University of Arizona, Institute of the Environment, Tucson, AZ  
*Renewable Energy Network Fellow*
- Conducted research on the decommissioning of a major source of energy for Arizona's water delivery system and its implications for public health and job security in the Navajo Nation.
- 2013 University of Arizona, Institute of the Environment, Tucson, AZ  
*Graduate Research Assistant*
- Collaborated with National Parks Service staff to develop policy guidance for cultural resources and climate adaptation.
- 2012 University of Arizona, School of Geography and Development, Tucson, AZ  
*Graduate Student Instructor*
- Taught *Introduction to Geography* to diverse undergraduate students.
- 2009-2010 University of California, Hastings College of the Law, San Francisco, CA  
*Graduate Research Fellow*
- Conducted research under Professor Jaime King on constitutional consequences of regulating emergent genetic testing technologies.
- 2009-2010 Bay Area Legal Aid, Oakland, CA  
*Legal Volunteer*
- Advised and advocated for low-wage and unemployed clients to obtain needed social services and benefits.
- Spring 2009 Center for Biological Diversity, San Francisco, CA  
*Legal Intern*
- Legal research and writing to support litigation and efforts to protect wildlife under the Endangered Species Act.
- Autumn 2008 Hon. Marilyn Hall Patel, United States District Court, N.D. Cal., San Francisco, CA  
*Judicial Extern*
- Wrote bench memoranda and drafted opinions in civil litigation.
- Summer 2008 The Asia Foundation, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia  
*Law and Policy Associate*
- Conducted research to support environmental justice efforts in Mongolia · Participated in multi-stakeholder mediation and negotiation over mining and water rights.

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Spring 2008 Sierra Club Environmental Law Program, San Francisco, CA  
*Legal Intern*

Conducted legal research and writing in support of environmental and public health litigation.

Summer 2007 Hon. Michael Daly Hawkins, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit,  
San Francisco, CA  
*Judicial Extern*

Wrote bench memoranda and drafted opinions in appellate litigation, including *Nw. Env'tl. Advocates v. EPA*, 537 F.3d 1006 (9th Cir. 2008) (scope of the Clean Water Act, applied to ballast water).

Summer 2006 National Wildlife Federation, Great Lakes Natural Resource Center  
Ann Arbor, MI  
*Great Lakes Policy Intern*

Coordinated strategy for Great Lakes restoration campaign.