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Contribution of Moon Village to Solving Global Societal Issues (2)

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LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY: LUNAR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN RENEWABLE
INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND SPACE LAW PERSPECTIVES

Abstract

This work aims to strengthen discussions on the application of principles from international environmental law to space law. International law, as a human and social science, is based on constitutive principles and is built respecting scientific contexts. This interpretation, which is in line with the third clause of the preamble to the United Nations Charter, allows us to suggest the application of principles such as long-term sustainability and the principles of publicity and transparency, in the light of international environmental law, to space law. In the scenario of a New Space Race, it is essential, especially in order to guarantee the sustainability of human activities on the Moon, to develop legal instruments for sharing information and preventing environmental damage. The principle of long-term sustainability can be found in the UNCOPUOS Long-term Sustainability (LTS) Guidelines, which describe "development" as something more continuous than an "action" in economic, scientific, and technical terms and aim, among other things, to contribute to international cooperation in avoiding harmful contamination. The term "harmful contamination" requires further definition and clarification. The paper includes not only a legal analysis but also a transdisciplinary one to analyze its scope in order to find a definition. The principle of publicity and transparency helps to publicize the actions of different subjects of international law and opens up space for one of the great challenges of environmental law: informed participation. The aim is to guarantee information in accessible language and transparency in relation to the decisions made by governments and private companies, especially with regard to lunar exploration. Transparency is essential for everyone to follow the results of research involving new scientific discoveries and the exploitation of natural resources. It is argued that the use of the principles of long-term sustainability, publicity, and transparency in space law helps to share information and benefits, as well as prevent (perhaps irreversible) damage to the lunar environment. The application of these principles is considered a sine qua non condition for the consolidation of a collaborative governance system capable of guaranteeing the scientific advancement of research that is of great importance to humanity, as well as anticipating the risks involved in the activities, guaranteeing their sustainability, and avoiding harmful contamination of the lunar environment.