

Sheppard Mullin Launches Global Climate Change Practice

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Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP announced today the launch of its Global Climate Change practice led by partners Randolph C. Visser and M. Elizabeth McDaniel. Visser and McDaniel are experienced practitioners in the environmental, energy and litigation practice fields, and bring a depth of expertise to this rapidly evolving area of law.

With Visser and Mc Daniel, partners Polly Towill and Stephen J. O'Neil will be charged with leading the litigation side of the practice. They will be joined by close to 50 other attorneys in the specialization and the practice group will encompass most Sheppard Mullin offices, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., San Diego and Shanghai.

Sheppard Mullin's Global Climate Change Practice consists of a team of attorneys who counsel, and advocate for, clients across a wide array of industries and practice areas impacted by climate change regulation including industrial, energy and natural resources development, "Green" architecture and land use and re-use, regulatory compliance, renewable energy and energy infrastructure projects, corporate disclosure and governance, carbon markets, California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") and toxic tort litigation, and government relations. The team assists clients to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities presented them by regulatory and corporate responses to climate change.

"We recognize that global climate change has become an important and complex environmental imperative that will change the way businesses operate," observed Visser. "Importantly, California's Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 is one of the first environmental laws looking to prevent a future cataclysmic environmental event rather than one resulting from a past environmental disaster such as Bhopal or Times Beach. That signifies progress in our thinking on the subject."

"Climate change will lead to additional governmental regulation, and litigation affecting a wide array of industries has already begun," continued Visser. "As pressure to curb greenhouse gas emissions increases around the world, companies must grapple with developing new policies to manage their own emissions and related regulatory and litigation risks. We are well suited to guide them through that process."

The interdisciplinary practice team is focused in concentrated areas of specialization: Policy Monitoring; Rulemaking and Advocacy; Regulatory Compliance; Carbon Projects, Finance and Trading; Project Development; Corporate; Land Use; Litigation. Given the mix of inter-related policies and the legal and scientific skills required to address them, the firm will be partnering with other expert policy, strategy and technical environmental consulting professionals, allowing us to provide a full service climate change team.

Visser is a member of the Construction, Environmental, Real Estate and Land Use Litigation practice group in the firm's Los Angeles office. He specializes in environmental compliance, government contracts counseling and environmental enforcement defense and administrative and judicial litigation. Visser has significant experience and expertise in CEQA, NEPA, Proposition 65, and federal, state and local environmental, water and air quality laws, including particularly the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Regional Clean Air Incentives Market Program and other market incentive environmental programs.

McDaniel is a member of the Construction, Environmental, Real Estate and Land Use Litigation Practice Group in the firm's San Francisco office. She has been a litigator for more than twenty years, with an emphasis on environmental and real estate issues and California's Proposition 65. McDaniel has represented entities in both state and federal court, and she has had both jury trial and bench trial experience. She holds a certificate in hazardous materials management from U.C. Berkeley, and she counsels clients on a wide variety of environmental compliance issues, including air quality and hazardous substance handling. McDaniel also assists with transactions involving contaminated property.

Towill is a member of the Business Trial practice group in the firm's Los Angeles office, and leader of the Toxic Torts and Products Liability team. She has extensive experience in litigating complex business issues in state and federal courts. Towill's varied practice includes representing clients in fraud actions, actions involving breach of contract and unfair business practice claims, toxic tort litigation, product liability matters and in performing internal investigations and audits. She also has significant experience with government contract litigation, including defending contractors in False Claim Act actions.

O'Neil is based in the firm's Los Angeles office, where he specializes in environmental law and complex environmental litigation. He has extensive experience in environmental counseling and in environmental and toxic tort litigation. O'Neil has advised major oil companies in environmental regulatory matters, and he regularly counsels clients on the environmental implications of the purchase or sale of real property. He has tried or arbitrated numerous environmental cases, and he has extensive experience in managing large, complex environmental cases and conducting depositions and discovery.

About Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP

Sheppard Mullin is a full service AmLaw 100 firm with 490 attorneys in 10 offices located throughout California and in New York, Washington, D.C. and Shanghai. The firm's California offices are located in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Century City, Orange County, Del Mar Heights and San Diego. Founded in 1927 on the principle that the firm would succeed only if its attorneys delivered prompt, high quality and cost-effective legal services, Sheppard Mullin provides legal counsel to U.S. and international clients. Companies turn to Sheppard Mullin to handle a full range of corporate and technology matters, high stakes litigation and complex financial transactions. In the U.S., the firm's clients include more than half of the Fortune 100 companies.