

The issues that companies must address under sustainability slogan are diverse, and the stakeholders involved are also varied. Stakeholders seek to realize their rights through legal means, including litigation, with that they intend to encourage companies' efforts toward sustainability. Currently, various parties with differing attributes are initiating various lawsuits under the name of “climate litigation”, “Environmental litigation”, “greenwashing litigation” or “human rights litigation”. There are not many articles that scrutinize the problems of possible conflicts or of contradictory prioritization of remedies across jurisdictions, among stakeholders, or between laws and case law.

This paper attempts to clarify the geographic and sectoral characteristics of stakeholder lawsuits related to climate and human rights. A careful classification of lawsuits reveals that the types of lawsuits brought to various industries significantly differ, and there are also specific trends in remedies based on country and region. Therefore, while it can be theoretically posited that claims by diverse stakeholders may become entangled, at least at present, individual companies are likely to face only specific types of lawsuits.

However, if the number of lawsuits, the likelihood of winning, and the amount of damages increase in the further with the rising awareness of climate change and human rights, the legal costs for companies will rise. There may also be instances where remedies for certain stakeholders in a specific region impact a company's overall viability or its capacity to distribute benefits to other stakeholders in other parts of the world. Therefore, development of laws to remedy domestic stakeholders will need to progress while ensuring consistency with international frameworks. Japan is not particularly active in climate change or consumer lawsuits. On the other hand, regarding the fact that residents are using their status as shareholders to bring lawsuits against nuclear power plants, it might be that, institutionally, claims by shareholders are relatively easy to exploit.

Additionally, as individual countries try to promote sustainability by encouraging diverse private lawsuits, it may be necessary to engage in international discussions regarding the overall efficiency of litigation-fueled sustainability pressures to prevent overlaps or gaps in remedies.