



Maxine Burkett

Emerson Collective Professor of Climate, Environment, and Society
Environmental Social Sciences

 Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Maxine Burkett is the Emerson Collective Professor of Climate, Environment, and Society at Stanford University's Doerr School of Sustainability and the Faculty Director of the Stanford Center for Just Environmental Futures. Burkett's research examines the relationship between environmental change and inequity and its impact on frontline communities, both domestic and international. With a background in law and diplomacy, her areas of expertise include climate change (international, national, subnational law and policy), ocean and coastal law, climate-related migration, and climate change and human security.

Professor Burkett most recently served as a Professor Law at the William S. Richardson School of Law as well as in senior roles at the White House and the State Department. At the State Department she oversaw the formulation and implementation of U.S. policy on a broad range of international issues concerning the oceans, the Arctic, the Antarctic, and marine conservation in her role as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Fisheries, and Polar Affairs. She also served as a Senior Advisor to Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, where her portfolio included climate-related migration, climate security, bilateral relationships with island nations, and Indigenous Peoples' engagement. From 2021-2023, Burkett was also a Visiting Professor at Harvard Medical School's Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, where she advanced research on climate justice and public health.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Environmental Social Sciences

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Assistant Director for Climate, Ocean, and Equity, The White House, Office of Science & Technology Policy, (2023-2024)
- Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Fisheries and Polar Affairs, State Department, (2022-2023)
- Senior Advisor, Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, (2021-2022)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Distinguished Public Service Award, United State Coast Guard (2023)
- Individual Superior Honor Award, Department of State (2022)
- President's Leadership Workshop, The White House (2022)
- Bicentennial Medal, Williams College (2016)
- Wayne Morse Chair of Law and Politics, University of Oregon (2010)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Contributing Author, Fourth National Climate Assessment: Hawai'i and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands (2018 - 2018)
- Member, American Law Institute (2018 - present)
- Member Scholar, Center for Progressive Reform (2015 - present)
- Member Scholar, International Law Association (2009 - present)
- Member, American Bar Association (2005 - present)
- Member, Hawai'i State Bar Association (2005 - present)
- Co-Rapporteur, International Association, Committee on International Law and Sea Level Rise (2019 - 2021)
- Member, Federal Advisory Committee for the Sustained National Climate Assessment (2016 - 2017)
- Contributing Author, Third National Climate Assessment: Hawai'i and U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands (2014 - 2014)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- J.D., Berkeley Law, University of California (2002)
- B.A., Williams College (1998)

Teaching

COURSES

2025-26

- Climate Displacement, Migration, and Mobility: CSRE 234, EBS 234, ESS 234, HUMRTS 224 (Win)
- Climate Migration Lab: EBS 233 (Spr)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Rwaida Gharib