

Daytime Scene in London, 1952

There is a strong nexus between environmental disasters and regulatory failures. The connection is most obvious for the BP oil spill, where weak regulation contributed to a massive spill whose ecological consequences are not yet completely known. It's also apparent in the reactor melt-down after the recent Japanese tsunami, which has resulted in radioactive releases. Environmental disasters can also cost lives such as those of workers on the Deepwater Horizon rig. But the death count can be much higher. A “killer fog” in London seventy years ago, which was caused by air pollution, killed several thousand people in a matter of days. Scientists say that a devastating heat wave in Europe, which killed upwards of thirty thousand people, was more likely than not caused by climate change. In each of these cases, regulatory failures — in climate regulation, air pollution controls, deepwater drilling, and reactor construction — opened the door to environmental disaster. To see more about this connection and its implications, see Navigating the [Intersection of Disaster Law and Environmental Law](#).