



## Interest Group on the Law of the Sea

### ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

#### I. Governance

LAWSEA IG is one of the 21 [Interest Groups of the European Society of International Law](#), that aims to provide a forum for those involved in, or interested in, international law of the sea matters. Its Coordinating Committee has been partially renewed following the June-July 2024 elections, with [Andrea Longo](#) (SOAS University of London) replacing Jessica Schechinger and joining [Gabriela Oanta](#) (University of A Coruña), [Irina Papanicolopulu](#) (SOAS University of London), and [Efthymios Papastavridis](#) (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens). We thank Jessica for her service the past six years!

LAWSEA IG maintains a presence in the academic community, especially by participating in and organising events in the context of the ESIL Annual Conferences and ESIL Research Fora. We are collaborating intensively, via email and (virtual) meetings, to organize activities allowing our IG members to meet, in person or remotely, to exchange ideas and discuss challenging LoS topics.

Our IG also has a strong web presence to inform and reach as many LoS scholars as possible. Our online presence developed further; we have a [website](#), and we have now more than 2.240 followers on our [X \(Twitter\) account](#). We plan to remain active, and we keep on encouraging our IG members to contact us for disseminating upcoming law of the sea events, seminars, publications, news items, etc. We believe and hope that our online presence is allowing for thoughtful discussion amongst the members of the IG and the wider LoS community.

#### II. Events

##### 1. Online webinar ‘**The ICJ Judgment in Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (2023)**’

LAWSEA IG co-organised an online webinar with the Australia and New Zealand Society of International Law’s Oceans and International Environmental Law IG on 30 April 2024 titled ‘*The ICJ Judgment in Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast (2023)*’.

The event was chaired by Dr Efthymios Papastavridis (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens) and Dr Bruno Arpi (University of Tasmania). Three speakers addressed the ICJ judgment of 2023 in the case of *Question of the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf between Nicaragua and Colombia beyond 200 nautical miles from the Nicaraguan Coast* from different perspectives, namely: Judge Frida María Armas Pfirter (International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea), Professor Donald Rothwell (Australian National University), and Dr Hilde Woker (Leiden University). The event unpacked the most relevant legal aspects of the April 2023 ICJ judgment, including the question whether States can have a Continental Shelf overlapping with another State's Exclusive Economic Zone, as well as issues concerning the creation of international customary law, the law of maritime delimitation. The recording of the event is available on YouTube, on the [ESIL Lecture Series & Events channel](#).

## 2. Webinar “New Maritime Technologies: Challenges and Opportunities”

LAWSEA IG organised a pre-conference hybrid [workshop](#) on 4 September 2024 titled ‘*New Maritime Technologies: Challenges and Opportunities*’. This workshop was part of the 2024 ESIL Annual Conference, which was organised by the University of Vilnius.

This webinar was chaired by Dr Akis Papastavridis (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens) and Dr Jessica Schechinger (UiT-The Arctic University of Norway) and counted also on the support of Dr Felicity Attard (University of Malta) as discussant. Five highly topical issues were addressed by five speakers, who were divided into two sessions to make the event more interactive. These issues tackled were: ‘*Underwater data centers – a climate change solution or additional environmental threat?*’, by Agnieszka Starczewska (University of Warsaw); ‘*The human shipmaster and the mastership of law in the era of autonomous navigation: a change in three turns*’, by Dr Alexandros Ntovas (University of Southampton); ‘*Implementing the common heritage of humankind principle: employing advanced robotic manipulator technologies in deep-sea research within the BBNJ framework*’, by Gulnur Erol (University of Brighton); ‘*La collecte des données marines à l’épreuve de la Convention des Nations Unies sur le droit de la mer*’, by Dr Montassar Ben Salem (Université Tunis-El Manar); and ‘*SMART submarine cables: challenges and opportunities*’, by Dr Youri van Logchem (UiT-The Arctic University of Norway).

The webinar could be followed online as well by other members of the SEALAW IG, who could not be in Vilnius on the occasion of the ESIL annual conference.

## III. Plans for the future

We plan to organise other activities during 2024/2025 academic year, which we will inform you about in due course. At the same time, we strongly encourage all IG members to contact us with any ideas on possible LoS activities and any opportunities for co-operation.

14 October 2024

*For ESIL LAWSEA IG*  
Andrea Longo,  
Gabriela Oanta,  
Irina Papanicolopulu,  
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