



**Call for Papers**  
**Workshop of the ESIL Interest Group on the Law of the Sea at the 2023 ESIL Annual Conference**  
**Aix-en-Provence, 30 August 2023**  
**“Is the Governance of the Oceans Fair? The New BBNJ Treaty and Other Related International Instruments”**

On occasion of the [2023 ESIL Annual Conference](#), to be held in Aix-en-Provence from 30 August to 2 September 2023, the ESIL Interest Group on the Law of the Sea will convene a workshop on “Is the Governance of the Oceans Fair? The New BBNJ Treaty and Other Related International Instruments”, which will take place on Wednesday 30 August 2023 (from 13:00-16:00).

**The topic**

In line with the general theme of the ESIL Annual Conference, the workshop will explore the issue of fairness in the (new) instruments and institutions governing the oceans, in particular maritime areas beyond national jurisdiction. It is a truism that, being subject to no State’s sovereignty or sovereign rights, these areas are under-regulated or poorly regulated, while at the same time they face significant and urgent governance challenges, including concerning the protection of marine biodiversity, climate change, ocean acidification, sustainable use of natural resources, maritime security et al. The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and its Implementing Agreements (1994-1995) include few provisions which may address some of the above-mentioned challenges, and they establish various institutions and mechanisms to oversee some of these ocean governance matters. The question, however, is not only whether these provisions or institutions are fit for purpose, but, more pertinently here, are they fair?

Very recently, on 4 March 2023, the long-anticipated agreement on the sustainable use and the protection of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (‘BBNJ treaty’) was unofficially adopted at the UN. The BBNJ treaty aims exactly at covering some of the gaps in ocean governance law, including those related to marine protected areas, bioprospecting of marine genetic resources, and capacity building. The new treaty will establish many institutions and will be added to the long list of other global and regional instruments that are mandated to regulate the oceans. The question remains, however, how fair the new treaty is, particularly in relation to the benefit-sharing of marine genetic resources, the decision making concerning marine protected areas, or technology transfer. More generally: is the new BBNJ treaty a step forward in supporting a more fair approach to the governance of oceans spaces for the benefit of humanity, or does it just perpetuate old patterns?

**Paper submission procedure**

We invite scholars to submit abstract of papers for discussion at the Workshop, focusing on the above issues, broadly considered. Paper abstracts may be submitted in English or French in accordance with the timeline as set out below. Co-authored paper proposals are accepted. Submissions must not exceed 500 words, and have to be submitted to the following email addresses: [gabriela.oanta@udc.es](mailto:gabriela.oanta@udc.es), [ip14@soas.ac.uk](mailto:ip14@soas.ac.uk), [jessica.schechinger@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:jessica.schechinger@glasgow.ac.uk), and [papastavridis@academyofathens.gr](mailto:papastavridis@academyofathens.gr).



In addition to the abstract, each submission should contain a separate file with the following information: the author's name and affiliation; a short CV; a list of publications; author's contact details, including email address and phone number; and whether the author is an ESIL member.

The final papers should be unpublished, in an advanced stage of completion, and could be included in the ESIL SSRN Conference Paper Series and in the ESIL Conference Proceedings according to the ESIL rules.

### **Timeline**

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is **midnight 20 April 2023, Brussels time**. Successful applicants will be informed by **30 April 2023**. The deadline for the submission of the papers of accepted abstracts is **15 August 2023**. The deadline for the submission of final papers for potential publication is **30 October 2023**.

### **Funding**

The Interest Group is unable to provide funding for travel and accommodation. Selected speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. Some [ESIL travel grants](#) and [ESIL carers' grants](#) will be available to offer partial financial support to speakers who have exhausted other potential sources of funding.

Please see the ESIL website for all relevant information about the conference.

All participants at ESIL Interest Group workshops are required to register for the Annual Conference. There will be an option to register just to attend the IG workshops; however, all participants are warmly invited to attend the entire event.

### **ESIL Young Scholar Prize (YSP)**

Selected speakers should indicate their interest in being considered for the ESIL Young Scholar Prize, if they meet the [eligibility conditions](#) as stated on the ESIL website. The ESIL Secretariat must be informed of all selected speakers who wish to be considered for the Prize before 30 April.

The Coordinating Committee of the ESIL IG on the Law of the Sea