



Call for Papers, 2025 ESIL Research Forum, Interest Group on the Law of the Sea

Permacrisis at sea: navigating oceans dualities

On occasion of the 2025 ESIL Research Forum, to be held in Catania (Italy) on 20 and 21 March 2025, the ESIL Interest Group on the Law of the Sea will convene a workshop on “**Permacrisis at sea: navigating oceans dualities**”. The workshop will take place on **Tuesday, 18 March 2025, from 4 to 6 pm (CET)**.

Theme

The sea covers 73 % of the Earth. For thousands of years, the ocean has served as a route for global trade and for the movement of people. Today, an overwhelming majority of goods are transported via the sea by ships (approximately 80 % of global trade), making the entire world population extremely dependent on the regular development of sea traffics. Likewise, the sea has always served as route for territorial expansion, migration, and escape, as evidenced by the historic slave trade and by today’s migration flows by sea, amongst others. Additionally, in more recent times we have become increasingly reliant on the sea also to carry out our simplest everyday activities on the Internet such as sending emails or making videocalls with friends and colleagues. Our communications industry significantly rests on a vast web of underwater cables, and so does our energy sector rely on massive infrastructures such as pipelines laid on the seafloor, powering our daily consumption of energy worldwide.

The above cursory overview shows the critical role that the sea plays for the growth and development of human societies. Yet, it also shows how vulnerable we are before the unpredictability of nature or world-scale disruptive events. By way of example, the Covid-19 pandemic’s disruption of global shipping produced a huge impact on world prices and severely affected consumers’ socio-economic and food security for months. Similarly, incidents such as the 2021 Suez Canal obstruction or the Red Sea Houthi attacks shook up the global shipping sector, and so did the November and December 2024 disruptions of sea cables in the Baltic Sea with regard to the energy sector. By the same token and looking ahead of time, sea-level rise is likely to continue causing a massive displacement of populations in the future decades in light of the future disappearance of Small Island Developing States, creating unprecedented humanitarian crisis and undermining the lives of thousands of individuals.

Against this background, the ESIL Law of the Sea Interest Group organises a pre-Conference workshop on the theme of the Catania Research Forum as applied to the sea, and invites abstracts unpacking the above theme from different angles, including:

- **The sea as source of crisis:** armed conflict at sea and security crisis; global trade crisis; marine biodiversity and climate change crisis at sea; energy crisis and the sea; health crisis and the sea; migration crisis and tragedies unfolding at sea; lack of human rights enforcement at sea; *others*.
- **The sea as a source of rights and possible solutions:** new renewable energies from the sea; the sea as escape route; the sea as a source of food and economic security; the sea as solution to climate change; marine biodiversity as source of health and ecosystem services; the sea as a source of transformative change; *others*.

Paper submission procedure

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, jp14@soas.ac.uk, papastavridis@academyofathens.gr, and a.longo31@campus.unimib.it. 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 or in the ESIL Conference Proceedings according to the ESIL rules.

Timeline

The deadline for the submission of abstracts is **16 February 2025**. Successful applicants will be informed by **24 February 2025**. The deadline for the submission of the papers of accepted abstracts will be communicated at a later stage