



Interest Group on the Law of the Sea

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

I. Governance

LAWSEA IG is one of the 22 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 includes: Gabriela Oanta (University of A Coruña), Irini Papanicolopulu (SOAS University of London/University of Milano-Bicocca), Efthymios Papastavridis (National & Kapodistrian University of Athens), and Andrea Longo (University of Basel).

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 more than 2.240 followers on our X (Twitter) account. However, as of the beginning of this year, we decided to progressively abandon X (Twitter) and opened a LinkedIn account, for we noticed that most of the law of the sea and ocean governance practitioners, academics and institutions have moved their online activity there. We plan to remain active here for the time being – we reached about 600 followers in just a few months. In addition, 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

This year we unanimously decided to hold the pre-Annual Conference workshop in person only, as opposed to the pre-Research Forum one which took place online. Below is a description of the two events.

1. Pre-Research Forum workshop (online): **Permacrisis at Sea: Navigating Ocean Dualities**

LAWSEA IG organised a pre-Research Forum online webinar on 18 March 2025 titled: *'Permacrisis at Sea: Navigating Ocean Dualities'*. The theme was chosen in accordance with the RF core theme, *'International Law in the Age of Permacrisis'*. A call for abstracts was circulated, resulting in the selection of 8 speakers. In addition to the quality of the proposal and originality of the idea, we placed particular emphasis on geographical and gender representation. The 8 participants were divided into two panels.

The first panel addressed the sub-theme “Maritime Perspectives on Humans, Rights, and Crisis”, and was chaired by Dr Andrea Longo. This session featured contributions by: Dr Lyna Maaziz, Université Paris-Panthéon-Assas (France): *The Global South's 'Right to Development' and the Sea*; Paulo Henrique Reis, University of São Paulo (Brazil): *Climate Change and Ocean Governance: What is the Role of Private Actors?*; Kalypso Sofia Sdrali, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece): *Gendering places of safety: SAR and safe disembarkation*; Anurag Sarthi, University of Delhi (India) and Gabriela Michael, Indian Maritime University (India): *The Human Rights of Stowaways: A Study of Legal Barriers and Opportunities for Redress*.

The second panel focused on “The Global Divide at Sea” and was chaired by Prof. Gabriela Oanta. It featured the following contributions: Ayoub Omar Dada, University of Sultan Moulay Slimane (Morocco): *Les Délimitations Maritimes en Méditerranée : Facteurs de Conflit et Défis Diplomatiques*; Giselle Amorim, University of São Paulo (Brazil): *Offshore Renewable Energy and the Law of the Sea: A Construction for MERCOSUR*; Drishti Alagh, Lund University (Sweden): *Navigating the Complex Seascape to bridge the Global Divide and chart a course for Solidarity: A Critical Analysis of Universal Jurisdiction in the context of Maritime Piracy*; Kusha Grover, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law (India) and Dr Sudhir Verma, VIT-AP University (India): *Sea Level Rise as 'Permacrisis' affecting SIDS: Mainstreaming the Global South in the making of Customary International Law of the Sea*.

Each Chair shared some comments and reflections for the speakers, and the discussions that followed were lively and drew attention to key issues not only for the LoS, but also for international law more broadly. We would like to thank all speakers, chairs, virtual and in person attendees for their participation.

2. Pre-Annual Conference workshop (in person only) **'Reconstructing International Law of the Sea'**

LAWSEA IG organised a pre-conference workshop on 10 September 2025 titled *'Reconstructing International Law of the Sea'*. This workshop was part of the 2025 ESIL Annual Conference taking place immediately after at the Freie Universität Berlin and, as such, it drew inspiration from the AC core topic. On this occasion too we organised a call for

abstracts. 7 speakers were selected not only on the basis of the quality and originality of their proposals, but also taking into account geographical and gender balance.

The workshop was opened by Dr Andrea Longo, who shared some reflections in line with the chosen theme. The programme featured two panels. We invited Dr Jessica Schechinger (UiT-The Arctic University of Norway) to chair the first panel. This explored the topic of judges and scholars as agents of reconstruction. This featured the following contributions:

Dr Abdulkadir Gülçür, Adana Science and Technology University (Turkey): *Reconstructing the Jurisdictional Role of ITLOS in the Age of Crises: From State Consent to Common Interests*; Saba Ishknelidze, University of Glasgow (United Kingdom): *A Decade On: Revisiting the Legality of ITLOS's Advisory Jurisdiction Post-SRFC Opinion*; Youlin Zhao, Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium): *Reconstructing International Fisheries Law for a Changing Ocean: Adjudicating Climate Impacts and Fisheries Governance*; Dimitris Panousos, European University Institute (Italy): *Rethinking Reconstruction: Legal Scholarship and the Future of the Law of the Sea*.

The second panel was chaired by Prof. Efthymios Papastavridis and featured three contributions: Dr Nicolas Kempf, University of Montreal (Canada): *The ISA, Universality, and Conservation – An impossible debate?*; Professor Maria Esther Salamanca-Aguado, University of Valladolid (Spain): *The International Regime of Deep-Sea Mining at a Crossroads*; Marina Sim, University of Paris-Nanterre (France) / Free University of Brussels (Belgium): *Exploration and Exploitation of Resources in Disputed Maritime Areas: The Role of Investment Arbitration*.

III. Plans for the future

We plan to organise other activities during 2025/2026 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.

27 September 2025

For ESIL LAWSEA IG
Andrea Longo,
Gabriela Oanta,
Irin Papanicolopulu,
and Efthymios Papastavridis,

