



2026 ESIL Research Forum

Interest Group on International Legal Theory and Philosophy

Normalizing Sustainability

Theoretical Perspectives on Stability and Change in International Law

(8 April 2026, 11:00 – 15:00 CET, Online)

“Sustainability” has become one of international law’s most successful travelling concepts. From climate treaties and trade agreements to peacebuilding mandates, investment contracts and human rights reporting, the language of sustainability offers an apparently self-evident orientation for governing the planet. Yet the concept’s very plasticity invites further investigation.

This workshop approaches “sustainability” as a site of translation between disciplines and forms of expertise. The full program can be seen below, and attendance is open to all EISL members. **To attend the workshop, please [register here](#).**

11:00 – 11:15 Opening Remarks (Nina Mileva, University of Groningen)

11:15 – 13:00 *Panel I: Sustainability as Form in International Law*

Chair: Kevin Crow (Asia School of Business)

Claudia Milli (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice) – Sustainability, Stability, and Legal Transformation: Economic Epistemologies and the Juridification of International Law
Commentator: Nevena Jevremović

Nevena Jevremović (University of Aberdeen) – The Rhetorical Forms of Sustainability through the Lens of Sustainable Consumption and Production
Commentator: Güzide İrem Can

Güzide İrem Can (University of Szeged) – The Transformation of Contractual Liability through Sustainability Clauses
Commentator: Luca Tenreira

Luca Tenreira (European University Institute) – What Counts as Sustainability: Ethnographic Lessons from Livelihoods along the East African Pipeline
Commentator: Claudia Milli

13:00 – 13:30 Break

13:30 – 15:00 *Panel II: Sustainability as Structure in International Law*

Chair: Kostia Gorobets (University of Groningen)

Judith van Veldhuizen (European University Institute) – International Law and the Sustaining of Unsustainability: the Case of ‘Unstable Norm Structures’

Commentator: Dobrosława C. Budzianowska

Dobrosława C. Budzianowska (University of Wrocław) – From Legal Obligation to Regulatory Coordination: Tracing Governance Models and Legal Structure in the Law of Sustainability

Commentator: Edward S. Koellner

Edward S. Koellner (University of New Hampshire, Franklin Pierce School of Law)– The Dashboard Peace: What Metrics Start Standing in for Responsibility

Commentator: Judith van Veldhuizen