Law and Sea-Level Rise: Asian and African Perspectives

Direito e Subida do Nível do Mar: Perspectivas Asiáticas e Africanas

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

01 **Conference Themes** 1

02 **Conference Schedule** 4

03 **Session Details** 6

Session 1: Borders, Boundaries and Legal Statecraft 6

Session 2: Human Rights and Human Mobility at the Frontlines 10

Session 3: Unravelling Economic Implications 13

Session 4: Pursuing Justice before the Courts 15

04 **List of Chairs and Keynote Speakers** 22

05 **List of Speakers** 19

CONFERENCE THEMES

Session 1, titled **"Borders, Boundaries, and Legal Statecraft",** will explore the complex and evolving legal challenges posed by sea-level rise in Asia and Africa.

As coastal boundaries shift due to rising seas, questions surrounding territorial sovereignty, maritime jurisdiction, and the rights of affected populations become increasingly urgent.

This session aims to address these critical issues by examining how international law, regional agreements, and national policies intersect in the context of disappearing coastlines and submerged territories. It will also delve into the broader concept of legal statecraft, analysing how states in Asia and Africa are adapting their legal frameworks and diplomatic strategies to respond to the challenges of sea-level rise.

Additionally, the session will offer a case study on Tuvalu to enrich the discussion, while balancing environmental, social, and economic priorities. By bringing together scholars and legal practitioners, this session seeks to foster a deeper understanding of the legal intricacies involved and promote cooperation in managing the consequences of a changing coastline in some of the world's most vulnerable regions.

Session 2, under the title **"Human Rights and Human Mobility at the Frontlines",** will address the profound human rights implications and migration challenges arising from sea-level rise in Asia and Africa. As coastal communities face the imminent threat of displacement due to inundation, erosion, and loss of habitable land, the session will explore the complex legal frameworks that govern internal human mobility and the protection of displaced persons. It will highlight the urgent need to rethink and adapt international and regional human rights laws to address the specific vulnerabilities of affected populations, while also presenting innovative digital solutions to build climate resilience across vulnerable communities in Asia.

The session will examine the intersection between climate change induced migration and state cooperation, with panellists discussing the evolving concepts of climate refugees and statelessness, and the necessity of cooperative international strategies to manage cross-border and internal migration flows. This session aims to generate actionable insights and promote equitable solutions for those living on the frontlines of climate change in Asia and Africa, with a special focus on Morocco, South Asia, and India.

Session 3, titled **"Unravelling Economic Implications"**, will examine the economic challenges of sea-level rise in Africa and Asia through the lenses of investment law, trade disputes, and public debt management.

The session will explore how international investment agreements involving African states address sea-level rise, particularly through corporate social responsibility provisions linked to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The discussion will also analyse the interaction between World Trade Organization law and China's climate governance, using key trade disputes to highlight the challenges of aligning international trade with climate goals. Additionally, the impact of sea-level rise on public debt in coastal Asia will be addressed, while emphasising the strain on national budgets from climate resilience efforts and calling for a paradigm shift in debt management; including the possibility of debt cancellation. Together, these insights will underscore the need for coordinated legal and economic responses to the growing threat of sea-level rise.

Finally, Session 4, titled **"Pursuing Justice before the Courts"** will focus on how legal frameworks and strategic litigation are employed in addressing the impacts of sea-level rise and climate change, specifically in exposed regions. The concept of climate justice in South Asia, where rising sea levels disproportionately affect those least responsible for climate change will be developed further.

Using case studies from the Philippines and Indonesia, the discussion will emphasise human rights-based approaches to state accountability and strategic litigation as tools for achieving climate justice.

The legal efforts of Pacific Island nations, which are severely impacted by sea level rise will also be subjected to analysis. These nations are advocating before the International Court of Justice to clarify state obligations in protecting their sovereignty and human rights despite climate change. Concerning the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities within international environmental law, the discussion will be established around how its application might influence global mitigation efforts and ecosystem-based approaches to sea-level rise.

This session aims to highlight the role of international courts and legal mechanisms in advancing climate justice and addressing the unique challenges posed by sea-level rise.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, 3 October 2024
09:00 – 17:40 (GMT+1 Time Zone)

Time	Session | Chair	Presentations
09:00 - 09:30	Registration and Welcoming	
09:30 - 10:30	Opening and Keynote Speeches	• Fernando Loureiro Bastos & Heloísa Oliveira • Nilüfer Oral • Carlos Manuel dos Santos Serra
10:30 - 12:00	**Session 1** Borders, Boundaries and Legal Statecraft **Chair** Fernando Loureiro Bastos	**1. African States' Legal Statecraft in the Face of Rising Sea Levels** Agnes Rydberg & Lisa Otto **2. Law and Sea Level Rise: A Tuvaluan Lens** Lisepa Paeniu **3. Africa, climate change and the ocean: seeking justice at the time of global challenges** Vonintsoa Rafaly **4. Sea Level Rise and Maritime Boundaries in Africa** Maria Inês Gameiro
12:00	**LUNCH BREAK**	
13:00 - 14:30	**Session 2** Human Rights and Human Mobility at the Frontlines **Chair** Aylin Yildiz Noorda	**1. Sea Level Rise Implications for Human Mobility: Policy Analysis for Morocco** Carla Sofia Ferreira Fernandes & Fátima Alves **2. Climate Change Induced Migration: Towards a Regional Mechanism and Cooperation in South Asia** Imtiaz Ahmed Sajal **3. Enhancing Climate Resilience in Asia: Integrating Digital Inclusive Solutions with Human Rights Strategies** Murtaza Mohiqi **4. Shifting Sands: Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Laws of India** K. Sudha & Anjana Ramanathan
14:30	**BREAK**	

Time	Session | Chair	Presentations
14:50 - 16:00	**Session 3** Unravelling Economic Implications **Chair** Matteo Fermeglia	**1. Regional Perspectives in International Investment Law: Focus on African States** Ksenia Polonskaya **2. Analysing the Interplay between WTO Law and Domestic Climate Governance through the Prism of China-Involved Disputes** Shiyue Lu **3. The Tempest of 21st Century Navigating the Economic Impact of SLR on Coastal Asia's Public Debt** Vaibhavi Rane
16:00	**COFFEE BREAK**	
16:30 - 17h40	**Session 4** Pursuing Justice before the Courts **Chair** Patrícia Galvão Teles	**1. Climate justice unveiled: human rights and strategic litigation in the South Asian context** Katarina Velkov **2. Pacific Island Countries Lead on International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Climate Change with Sound Sea-Level Rise Argumentation** Johanna Gusman **3. Harmonisation of ITLOS Advisory Opinions with CBDR-RC: Implications for Ecosystem-Based Approach and Sea Level Rise** Manini Syali
17:40	Wrap up and Closing Remarks	• Patrícia Galvão Teles • Aylin Yildiz Noorda

SESSION DETAILS

SESSION 1 | BORDERS, BOUNDARIES AND LEGAL STATECRAFT

Chair: Fernando Loureiro Bastos

1. *African States' Legal Statecraft in the Face of Rising Sea Levels*

Speaker: Agnes Rydberg & Lisa Otto

Climate data projections suggest that within the next century, many low-lying areas and islands will descend into the sea. This is one of the many far-reaching implications of climate change, and one that many States, especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS), are painfully aware of.

Their voices have been particularly loud on issues of environment, State boundaries and maritime security because these are real, often both existential and immediate threats that they must navigate to secure their national interest and material future. Island States have also begun investigating where their people might resettle – in the late 2000s, the Maldives was floating the idea of buying land in India or Sri Lanka, but these proposals have understandably been largely unpopular.

This is one innovative response to climate challenges, making use of new technologies as they emerge and where we start to see SIDS staking out a position with respect to the implications of sea-level rise and international law on Statehood.

This presentation explores the international legal regimes around Statehood and State boundaries, how these would need to change to accommodate impending realities, and how African States are shaping and contributing to emerging norms to deal with an uncertain future.

2. *Law and Sea Level Rise; A Tuvaluan Lens*

Speaker: Lisepa Paeniu

Tuvalu, a small atoll nation of approximately 11,000 people, faces severe threats from climate change, including rising sea levels, coastal erosion, flooding, coral bleaching, and prolonged droughts. Recognizing its vulnerability, Tuvalu has taken bold steps to safeguard its future and redefine international norms, starting with its 2023 Constitution.

This new Constitution asserts that Tuvalu's statehood will remain intact, regardless of the physical impacts of climate change, challenging the traditional international law criteria of statehood: a permanent population, defined territory, government, and the capacity for diplomatic relations. Additionally, Tuvalu has launched the groundbreaking "Future Now" project, a three-phase initiative to create a digital version of the nation in the metaverse.

This project aims to assert Tuvaluan values in international diplomacy, protect its land from being lost to sea level rise, and ultimately build a digital nation that preserves its cultural identity and sovereignty. Tuvalu is also pursuing innovative legal strategies, such as the Fale-pili Union Treaty (2023), to secure its territorial integrity and influence global policies on statehood and maritime boundaries.

This presentation will examine Tuvalu's constitutional approach, the "Future Now" project, and various international law avenues to combat the effects of climate change, offering a critical analysis of the country's efforts to protect its people, land, and sovereignty.

3. *Africa, climate change and the ocean: seeking justice at the time of global challenges*

Speaker: Vonintsoa Rafaly

The current legal framework is struggling to address global ocean crises exacerbated by climate change, while disparities in the ability to adapt to these crises are widening. Vulnerable states and communities, particularly those with limited resources, bear the brunt of climate change impacts on the ocean.

Meanwhile, these same changes present economic opportunities, such as increased shipping routes in the Arctic, for more advantaged states.

While extensive research exists on global and environmental justice, particularly concerning small island states, the specific challenges faced by African countries in this context are less explored.

This presentation examines the role of international law in promoting justice for ocean-climate issues, focusing on how these legal structures either succeed or fail in bridging the inequality gap. By using the concept of infrastructures as an analytical tool, Vonintsoa Rafaly explores how the interconnections between different norms, institutions, and processes affect the effectiveness of legal responses, particularly in Africa.

The presentation will demonstrate how an "infrastructural" perspective can reveal the distributional effects of international law and institutions in addressing the complex intersection of ocean and climate issues.

4. Sea Level Rise and Maritime Boundaries in Africa

Speaker: Maria Inês Gameiro

The climate crisis, particularly sea-level rise, poses an unprecedented challenge to international law, threatening the principle of territorial sovereignty and raising critical questions about the stability of maritime boundaries.

As sea levels rise, the concept of fixed baselines—used to define all maritime zones under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)—faces potential re-evaluation. This could result in changes to maritime frontiers, leading to disputes between neighbouring states over their maritime boundaries. On the African continent, border disputes are not new.

From the arbitrary borders set during the Berlin Conference to the legal principle of maintaining inherited boundaries post-independence, similar debates have arisen regarding maritime boundaries.

For example, the dispute between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal over their maritime border, initially defined by colonial agreements, has already been a matter of international litigation. Many legal experts argue for maintaining stable baselines, asserting that shifting (ambulatory) baselines are unfair to states disproportionately affected by climate change, such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

The debate echoes the legal arguments made during decolonization, where stability and certainty were paramount, yet fairness remains a contested issue. This comparison offers new perspectives, enriching the ongoing discussions on how international law should adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.

SESSION 2 | HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMAN MOBILITY AT THE FRONTLINES

Chair: Aylin Yildiz Noorda

1. ***Sea-level Rise Implications for Human Mobility: Policy Analysis for Morocco***

Speakers: Carla Sofia Ferreira Fernandes & Fátima Alves

The IPCC projects that by 2100, sea levels in Morocco could rise 0.7 metres, posing a significant threat to housing, industry, and essential infrastructure. The environmental factors at play, such as coastal erosion and inundation, could trigger profound socio-economic changes.

Morocco, a hub of diverse migratory movements, faces increased risks of environmental-induced migration as sea levels rise.

In response, Morocco has implemented various strategies to manage climate change impacts and disaster risks. Sofia Ferreira Fernandes and Fátima Alves analyse relevant national policies focusing on climate change adaptation, risk management, sustainable development of coastal areas, and migration legislation to understand how sea-level rise is addressed institutionally from a human mobility perspective, contributing to climate change adaptation and sustainable development discussions.

2. ***Climate Change Induced Migration: Towards a Regional Mechanism and Cooperation in South Asia***

Speaker: Imtiaz Ahmed Sajal

Climate change is driving sea-level rise, leading to significant human displacement and migration. South Asia, home to over one-fifth of the world's population and one of the most densely populated regions, is particularly vulnerable to these impacts.

Despite this, there has been little focus on how environmental factors affect cross-border migration within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) framework. In the face of environmental disasters—whether sudden or slow-onset—people often move to neighbouring countries when livelihood options are limited on their own.

This presentation will explore the connections between climate change impacts and migration patterns in South Asia, aiming to identify a regional institutional approach to address climate-induced migration. Currently, there is no specific framework for climate-induced migration under SAARC. However, existing instruments and mechanisms related to climate impacts could serve as a foundation. The region's institutional presence is a strength, but there are significant challenges in capacity and coordination. To effectively address climate-induced migration, an integrated and coordinated regional protection mechanism under SAARC is urgently needed.

3. *Enhancing Climate Resilience in Asia: Integrating Digital Inclusive Solutions with Human Rights Strategies*

Speaker: Murtaza Mohiqi

Asia faces increasing climate risks, such as sea-level rise, which disproportionately impact vulnerable communities. This presentation explores how digital technologies and human rights frameworks can offer practical solutions to these challenges and enhance resilience. Digital solutions are vital for climate resilience, improving access to information and fostering community engagement. Integrating human rights principles ensures equity, particularly for vulnerable groups like indigenous communities, women, and marginalised populations.

Murtaza Mohiqi highlights successful initiatives across Asia. In Bangladesh, the Community Climate Change Project uses mobile apps to share climate information and support local adaptation, emphasising the participation of women and marginalised groups. In Indonesia, participatory mapping empowers communities to identify and address climate risks, promoting social inclusion and gender equity. The Green Climate Fund's Indigenous Peoples Policy respects indigenous rights in climate finance, incorporating traditional knowledge and community-led approaches.

Digital financial inclusion is also key: In India, digital payment systems have improved access to financial services for rural communities, supporting climate-resilient agriculture and livelihoods.

In the Philippines, digital learning platforms by the Climate Change Commission educate communities on climate impacts and adaptation. Mohiqi also discusses multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as Thailand's Climate Change Innovation Fund, which collaborates with government, private sector, and civil society to support innovative climate projects.

4. *Shifting Sands: Sea-Level Rise and Coastal Laws of India*

Speakers: Kavuri Sudha & Anjana Ramanathan

Sea-level rise (SLR) is primarily caused by human-induced climate change, including melting ice-sheets and ocean expansion. Current climate change laws often treat SLR as part of broader climate issues rather than a distinct legal problem. While progress has been made in connecting CO2 emissions with climate impacts, the tools to address SLR remain underdeveloped.

Key international agreements like the Paris Agreement and the UN Law of the Sea do not explicitly address SLR. Global solutions would be more effective in the prevention of SLR, nonetheless, if adaptation and mitigation of damage wouldalso be addressed at a domestic level. Courts and legal systems in the Global South, including India, are actively addressing climate justice and SLR concerns. India's Supreme Court has ruled that protection from climate change effects is part of the constitutional right to life, however, the current domestic legal regime is constantly in an influx due to corporate political pressures. With this presentation the authors will explore possible suggestions suitable to deal with the challenges highlighted, addressing the subject of sea-level rise and the coastal laws in India.

SESSION 3 | UNRAVELLING ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Chair: Matteo Fermeglia

1. *Regional Perspective in International Investment Law: Focus on African States*

Speaker: Ksenia Polonskaya

Here we delve deeper into the question of how Sea-Level Rise (SLR) issues are affected by the international investment agreements that involve African states. The corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the treaties, where at least one party is an African state, will also be examined. .

The author's preliminary research demonstrates that investment treaties do not necessarily explicitly reference SLR, but they can mention the United Nations Sustainable Goals (UN SDGs), which can include SLR considerations. Although SLR is not always explicitly mentioned, some treaties, like the Morocco-Nigeria agreement, reference the UN SDGs, that address SLR indirectly.

This presentation also explores legal interpretations of provisions related to SLR and CSR in investment arbitration. It aims to understand how African states address these issues in arbitration decisions.

2. *Analysing the Interplay between WTO Law and Domestic Climate Governance through the Prism of China-Involved Disputes*

Speaker: Shiyue Lu

How does World Trade Organization (WTO) law interact with China's climate governance through disputes involving China in the WTO dispute settlement mechanism (DSM)?

International trade can both help and hinder efforts to mitigate and adapt to sea-level rise (SLR), a consequence of climate change. China's vulnerability to SLR and its role as a major emitter and trading power, highlights its involvement in this issue. Cases like DS419, DS452 and others illustrate China's role as complainant or respondent in climate-related disputes.

The presentation will cover potential disputes related to border carbon adjustment measures. A comprehensive examination of these cases revealed to the author the effectiveness and also weaknesses of the WTO DSM in addressing climate-related disputes, reflecting the inherent opportunities and challenges in reconciling international trade obligations with climate imperatives.

3. *The Tempest of 21st Century Navigating the Economic Impact of SLR on Coastal Asia's Public Debt*

Speaker: Vaibhavi Rane

This analysis delves into the intricate relation between the rising tides of sea level—a direct consequence of global climate change, and the swelling currents of public debt within coastal Asia.

Vaibhavi Rane highlights how sea-level rise (SLR) forces nations to invest heavily in climate resilience, driving up public debt. The research critiques the Nordhaus DICE model for neglecting the uneven impact of climate change, especially on regions where adaptation capacities are constrained by economic limitations. SLR not only threatens infrastructure but also strains government budgets, leading to increased borrowing.

The author's study warns that without proactive measures, Asian economies could face an economic crisis. Therefore, Vaibhavi Rane advocates for a significant paradigm shift towards embedding climate resilience to SLR into economic planning and public debt management strategies, including the possibility of debt cancellation.

SESSION 4 | PURSUING JUSTICE BEFORE THE COURTS

Chair: Patrícia Galvão Teles

1. *Climate justice unveiled: human rights and strategic litigation in the South Asian context*

Speaker: Katarina Velkov

Climate justice relies on recognizing the disproportionate impact of climate change, where those who have contributed the least to the problem often bear the greatest consequences.

Katarina Velkov divided her presentation into three sections: conceptualising climate justice, addressing international obligations, and analysing case studies from the Philippines and Indonesia. Southeast Asia, especially coastal areas and island nations, is highly vulnerable to rising sea levels.

With this presentation the author will examine fair responsibility sharing for climate action and state accountability by using a human rights-based approach, connecting human rights, environmental governance, and inequality. Katarina Velkov aims to highlight strategic litigation as a tool for addressing climate justice issues.

2. *Pacific Island Countries Lead on International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Climate Change with Sound Sea-Level Rise Argumentation*

Speaker: Johanna Gusman

March 2024 marked a major moment for the Pacific. After nearly a year since the UN General Assembly adopted a landmark resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the obligations of States in respect of climate change, the deadline for written submissions saw record numbers of Pacific Island countries participation.

This is crucial as Pacific Islands are severely impacted by sea-level rise. These nations hold a strong moral and legal position to persuade the Court to protect their sovereignty and people. While the Paris Agreement links climate change to human rights, it has not successfully limited global warming to 1.5°C.

The Pacific is pivotal in this case, emphasising the need for legal decisions that consider socio-ecological and cultural factors.

Johanna Gusman will analyse the Pacific's unique arguments on state obligations and the legal implications of climate change-related sea-level rise.

3. *Harmonisation of ITLOS Advisory Opinions with CBDR-RC: Implications for Ecosystem-Based Approach and Sea Level Rise*

Speaker: Manini Syali

The principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) impact on developing nations and The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) call for harmonisation with environmental law principles. The principle of CBDR-RC is key to Environmental Justice in international law.

The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea noted that the UNFCCC complements but does not override the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). This raises concerns about whether applying CBDR-RC could reduce the responsibility of developing nations in addressing sea-level rise (SLR). It raises the discussion if this organisation weakens or strengthens mitigation efforts against SLR.

Manini Syali will also analyse the role of CBDR-RC in an Ecosystem-Based approach amid climate challenges.

LIST OF CHAIRS AND KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

AYLIN YILDIZ NOORDA

Aylin Yildiz Noorda is a postdoctoral researcher at the Lisbon Public Law Research Centre (LPL), University of Lisbon, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). Aylin's current research focuses on the international protection of people affected by sea-level rise, supported by the SNSF's Postdoc. Mobility Grant.

She is also a research fellow at the World Trade Institute (WTI) and the Oeschger Centre for Climate Change Research (OCCR) at the University of Bern.

Her work contributes to the intersection of climate change, human rights, and international law.

CARLOS MANUEL DOS SANTOS SERRA

Carlos Manuel dos Santos Serra is a Mozambican lawyer, consultant, university lecturer, and environmental activist, specialising in environmental law.

He has extensive experience in the areas of management, pollution, waste legislation, and local governance. Carlos Serra coordinates the Center for Environmental Law, Biodiversity, and Quality of Life and teaches both undergraduate and master's courses.

He is also a prolific author, contributing to several legislative collections and scientific articles published locally and internationally. His work is highly regarded in the fields of environmental protection and sustainable governance.

FERNANDO LOUREIRO BASTOS

Fernando Loureiro Bastos is an Associate Professor in the Legal-Political Group at the Faculty of Law, University of Lisbon. He holds a Master of Laws in International Legal Sciences (1995) and a Doctorate in Legal-Political Sciences (2005) from the University of Lisbon. His doctoral thesis, The Internationalisation of Marine Natural Resources, reflects his expertise in Public International Law.

Fernando Bastos coordinates the International and European Law Research Group at the Public Law Research Center. He serves as President of the Portuguese Society of International Law and is a full member of the International Law Association's Committee on International Law and Sea-Level Rise. Additionally, he is President of the Institute for Legal Cooperation at the Faculty of Law, University of Lisbon.

MATTEO FERMEGLIA

Matteo Fermeglia is an Assistant Professor of Climate Law and Governance at Amsterdam University, Faculty of Humanities. His main research interest lies in the interplay between international investment law and the climate change legal regime. In 2017, he was a visiting scholar at Columbia Law School, where he collaborated with the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law and the Columbia Centre for Sustainable Investments.

He regularly co-authors internationally peer-reviewed journal articles in the field of environmental and climate law, and was awarded the Raúl Estrada-Oyuela Award for Emerging Scholars in Climate Law in 2017 by Lexxion publishers.

NILÜFER ORAL

Nilüfer Oral is an elected member of the United Nations International Law Commission and co-chairs the Study Group on Sea-Level Rise in relation to international law.

She is the director of Centre for International Law (CIL), National University of Singapore (NUS). Nilüfer has served as a legal advisor to the Turkish Foreign Ministry on law of the sea and as a climate change negotiator.

Being an elected member of The Hague Academy of International Law Curatorium, her expertise in international law is recognised globally.

PATRÍCIA GALVÃO TELES

Patrícia Galvão Teles is an Associate Professor at the Autonomous University of Lisbon and a researcher at Lisbon Public Law, OBSERVARE, and IPRI-NOVA.

Patrícia is currently an elected member of the United Nations and serves as Director of the Legal Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Previously, she acted as legal advisor to the Permanent Representation of Portugal to the European Union in Brussels.

Patrícia Galvão Teles holds a law degree from the University of Lisbon and completed her master's and doctorate in International Law at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

Being an elected member of The Hague Academy of International Law Curatorium, her expertise spans international law and diplomacy.

LIST OF SPEAKERS

AGNES RYDBERG

Agnes Rydberg is a Lecturer in International Law at the University of Sheffield and Deputy Director of the Sheffield Centre for International and European Law. Agnes holds a Ph.D. in Public International Law and an LL.M. in International Human Rights Law from Queen Mary University of London. The speaker is pecialized in public international law, international environmental law, climate change law, and the law of treaties. Currently, Agnes is a member of the legal team, advising the Republic of the Marshall Islands on their participation in the climate change advisory proceedings before the International Court of Justice.

We could also enhance her participation as one of the editors of a series on Principles of International Environmental Law published by Edward Elgar. The most recent publications include her forthcoming monograph The Precautionary Principle in International Environmental Law.

CARLA SOFIA FERREIRA FERNANDES

Carla Sofia Ferreira Fernandes is a researcher at the Centre for Functional Ecology: Science for People & the Planet and integrates the Department of Life Sciences at the University of Coimbra. She is a member of TERRA Laboratory, which focuses on environmental and ecological studies. In addition to her research work, Carla is a lecturer at SIST - Cardiff Met University Associate College of Morocco.

Her academic background and expertise contribute to advancing scientific knowledge in ecology and environmental sciences. Her work bridges both Portuguese and international academic institutions. She is committed to promoting sustainability and environmental awareness through research and education.

FÁTIMA ALVES

Fátima Alves holds a PhD in Sociology and has been an Associate Professor at Universidade Aberta since 2000, where she teaches Sociology and Social Sciences.

She coordinates the PhD in Intercultural Relations and has led several academic programs, including the Degree in Social Sciences and the Master in Intercultural Relations. The speaker is a senior researcher at the Centre for Functional Ecology (CFE-UC) at the University of Coimbra, where she founded and leads the Research Group on Societies and Environmental Sustainability.

With over 114 publications and participation in 18 research projects, she has made significant contributions to socio-ecological studies, sustainability, and health. Her work spans international collaborations, interdisciplinary research, and development cooperation, and she has supervised numerous MSc and PhD theses. Fátima Alves is also a member of several research networks and the Scientific Council of the UNESCO Chair in Biodiversity and Conservation for Sustainable Development.

IMTIAZ AHMED SAJAL

Imtiaz Ahmed Sajal is an Assistant Professor of Law at Dhaka International University in Bangladesh. Previously, he served as a Lecturer in Law at Bangladesh Army International University of Science and Technology (BAIUST) and Uttara University.

Imtiaz earned his LLB from the Department of Law, University of Dhaka, where he became involved in human rights and environmental activism.

He later pursued an LLM in International Law at South Asian University, New Delhi, with the prestigious President's Scholarship. The speaker has participated in international programs, including the WIPO-Korea Summer School, and a winter course of The Hague Academy of International Law.

He has contributed to the legal community through research and publications on human rights, environment, and legal issues. Currently, he is also serving as an honorary Editor-in-Chief of Bangladesh Law Digest (BDLD). As an academician and a lawyer, Sajal would like to contribute to his country and Global South as a whole through his research and advocacy.

JOHANNA GUSMAN

Johanna Gusman is an interdisciplinary legal scholar in human rights.

She has served as a Visiting Research Scholar at Georgetown University Law Center, Australian National University, Oxford University (Mansfield College) hosted by the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights in its inaugural class examining novel ways to facilitate access to justice and most recently worked with the University of Melbourne Climate Futures Environmental Research Hub.

Previously, she worked around the globe with the World Health Organization as a focal point on the cross-section of gender, human rights, and corporate accountability. She served as a Fulbright Public Policy Fellow to Samoa assisting the Ombudsman's Office in its first ever State of Human Rights Report. Johanna received a B.Sc. in Microbiology from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and a M.Sc. in Biophysics and Physiology from Georgetown University. She was awarded the Gates Public Service Law Scholarship at the University of Washington and graduated with a concentration in international law.

KAVURI SUDHA

Kavuri Sudha, an alumnus of Acharya Nagarjuna University, Andhra Pradesh, has over 23 years of teaching experience at DSNLU and at Montessori Mahila College of Law in Vijayawada. She practised law in Vijayawada from 2003 to 2009 and specialises in teaching environmental law, international environmental law, and administrative law. Her research focuses on environmental law, social justice, sex trafficking, and land laws. Sudha's notable publications include her book Prostitution Laws: An Enigma and Some Dilemmas (2016), and she has co-edited several books on environmental law.

She is the Project Director of an ICSSR-sponsored research project on land records digitization in Andhra Pradesh. Kavuri has also organised multiple national seminars and webinars on legal topics related to water management, land rights, and gender justice. In addition to her academic work, she is a founding member of the Human Rights Forum (HRF), a human rights organisation in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

KATARINA VELKOV

Katarina Velkov is a researcher and doctoral candidate in the International Joint PhD in Human Rights, Society, and Multi-level Governance at the Human Rights Center "Antonio Papisca" in the University of Padova. She was a visiting scholar at the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona within the research group in International Public Law and International Relations, and at the University of Nicosia in Cyprus within the Department of Law. Her research and recent publications intersect human rights, climate justice, the role of states, and corporate accountability. Her doctoral thesis critically examines the connections between climate change-induced migration and rights protection, emphasising the growing influence of climate litigation.

It proposes a novel conceptual framework that reconceptualizes the distribution of burdens in climate migration governance and outlines a roadmap for action.

KSENIA POLONSKAYA

Ksenia Polonskaya is an Assistant Professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada and a fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), where she focused on policy-oriented legal research in international investment and trade law.

She completed her PhD at Queen's University, with a dissertation on combating frivolous claims in investor-state dispute settlement.

Ksenia holds an LLB from Kuban State University in Russia and an LLM from the University of Toronto.

She currently teaches a course on legal obligations and international economic law. Her research interests include investor-state arbitration, international trade law, and private law theory, with publications in international investment and public international law. Currently, the speaker is exploring topics such as investment arbitration reform, gender equality in international institutions, and regional trade perspectives.

LISA OTTO

Lisa Otto is an Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the NRF-SARChI Chair in African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), as well as co-editor in chief of the journal African Security Review.

She holds a D.Litt et Phil in Political Studies from UJ and a MA in International Peace and Security from King's College London.

She has specialised in African issues related to conflict, security, foreign affairs, and diplomacy and has developed specific expertise in maritime security and ocean politics as well as climate change in this context. Some of her recent work includes the chapter 'Climate Migration from Small Island Developing States: The Case of the Maldives' in the forthcoming volume Global Challenges in Maritime Security: Sustainability and the Sea, published by Springer, which she co-edited with Anja Menzel.

LISEPA PAENIU

Lisepa Paeniu has been serving as a Legal Officer at the Pacific Community (SPC) in New Caledonia since May 2024. She is also the co-founder and a Board Member of Te Alofilima Alofa NGO in Tuvalu, established in February 2021.

Paeniu holds a Master's degree in Environmental Law and Sustainable Development from the University of New South Wales, completed in 2021 and also another Master of Laws in International Human Rights Law at the University of Notre Dame Law School in 2015, becoming Tuvalu's first lawyer to receive a Foreign Fulbright Award. Her interests focus on climate justice, the intersection of Western legal norms with customary law, and anti-corruption law in the Pacific, particularly in Tuvalu.

Lisepa is committed to addressing critical legal challenges in the region through her work and advocacy.

MANINI SYALI

Manini Syali is working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Policy and Management of the Energy and Resources Institute at the School of Advanced Studies in Delhi, India.

Manini's doctoral research, completed at the GGS Indraprastha University, suggested alternative discourses on applying the Convention on Biodiversity in transboundary ecosystems. The speaker also has an LLM in International Law from the South Asian University and has participated in numerous international conferences and seminars by institutions, including the UN Office of Outer Space Affairs, YOUNGO- UNFCCC Secretariat and the Asian Society of International Law. She has also been associated with Oxfam as a Youth Basin Ambassador for their Transboundary Rivers of South Asia initiative.

MARIA INÊS GAMEIRO

Maria Inês Gameiro is an Assistant Professor at Lusófona University and a Visiting Professor at ISCTE. Maria, holds a PhD in Law from NOVA School of Law, a master's degree from the Portuguese Catholic University, and a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon.

Maria Gameiro has conducted research at institutions like the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, focusing on the law of the sea. The speaker was part of the Cabinet of the Minister of Economy and Maritime Affairs of the Government of the Portuguese Republic, between 2022 and 2024, after having been part of the Cabinet of the Minister of the Sea between 2019 and 2022.

Previously, she participated as a consultant to various bodies, including the Council of Europe and has collaborated in several national and European research projects.

Her published articles and book chapters focus on her areas of work such as public international law, environmental law, law of the sea as well as the new fields of biotechnologies and food law, in connection with intellectual property law.

MURTAZA MOHIQI

Murtaza Mohiqi is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Law, University of Agder, Norway. He is also a legal columnist, and human rights researcher, possessing experience in human rights and private law at both domestic and international levels.

Murtaza's extensive research efforts focus on comprehensively examining multifaceted human rights aspects related to diverse demographic groups, including women, children, minorities, immigrants, and individuals with disabilities.

He is a doctoral candidate in private law (including Islamic jurisprudence, civil law) and at the same time continues his research as an assistant professor with the Human Rights and Multiculturalism master's program at the University of South-Eastern Norway.

His research also covers the intersection of Artificial Intelligence and human rights.

RAMANATHAN ANJANA

Ramanathan Anjana graduated with an LLM in European and International Human Rights Law from Leiden University in 2019, where her thesis explored anti-discrimination strategies concerning Roma communities in Europe and Dalits in India.

She earned her BA.LLB (Hons.) from DSNLU, Visakhapatnam, and worked as an Associate at Varuna Law Associates, Hyderabad, for 18 months, focusing on civil and corporate litigation. Anjana also served as a Legal Trainer for an EU Advocacy programme addressing female foeticide and sex selection in India, conducting legal awareness camps for rural women. Her research interests include Adivasi rights, violence against Dalits, and human rights violations of marginalised communities. Currently, she assists Dr. Eduardo S Catalan at Leiden Law School in researching retrogressive measures concerning the right to health under ICESCR.

Ramanathan Anjana views education as a continuous process of learning, unlearning, and relearning.

SHIYUE LU

Shiyue Lu is an Assistant Researcher at the Lisbon Public Law Research Centre and a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Law, University of Lisbon, with a scholarship granted by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).

Her research focuses on dispute settlement in public international law, and she has contributed to several articles, projects and presentations in this field.

As a member of the Portuguese Branch of the International Law Association (ILA), she has served as a rapporteur at the ILA's 80th Biennial Conference (Lisbon, June 2022) and at the Law of the Sea Conference at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law (Cambridge, March 2024).

VAIBHAVI RANE

Vaibhavi Rane is pursuing a PhD in Sovereign Financing at Symbiosis International University at Pune, India.

Currently, she serves as an Assistant Professor of Law at the Manohar Parrikar School of Law, Governance and Public Policy at Goa University. Previously, she taught for two academic terms at Vidya Vikas Mandal's Govind Ramnath Kare College of Law in Madgaon, Goa. Vaibhavi's LLM thesis focused on Neo-colonization and investment, with the goal of establishing a new International Investment Framework. She is well-versed in the current political landscape and socio-legal dynamics. As an advocate of Alternative Dispute Resolution methods, the speaker strongly believes that mediation is the way forward.

VONINTSOA RAFALY

Vonintsoa Rafaly defended her thesis in January 2020 at the University of Nantes (France). Her research explores the ongoing change in law of the sea, both on the legal and the institutional aspect.

Her fields of interest are related to the consideration of common interest in the evolution of the law of the sea and ocean governance and its impact on states cooperation in the protection and conservation of the marine environment and resources.

This would be experimented through the concept of ‘socialisation’ in the law of the sea, analysing the interplay between states and non-states actors and different regimes (global, regional and sub-regional levels). Currently she is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Political Science, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.



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