

Final Conference of the Sustainable Ocean Project

Accommodating Multiple Interests at Sea

Utrecht, 3-4 September 2020

Call for abstracts

Oceans are increasingly under pressure; be it for the multiplication and diversification of economic activities performed at sea, for the consequences of climate change, or the worsening of their environmental health. Several international bodies and a plethora of international instruments regulate, influence, and shape what is happening in the oceans. Moreover, actors at different levels of governance participate in what is commonly called ocean governance. However, what is ocean governance? What are the different actors and instruments involved? How do they interact in dealing with ocean affairs? Those are some of the questions that the Sustainable Ocean project (ERC grant agreement No 639070) has been dealing with since 2015 in order to answer the overarching research question: how can the law contribute to the sustainable use of the ocean and strike a balance between competing interests at sea?

The Sustainable Ocean Project is now pleased to announce its final conference, to be held in Utrecht on 3-4 September 2020. The Sustainable Ocean research team will there present its final results, which will then be discussed and, hopefully, challenged by the participants to this closing event. Three distinguished keynote speakers have already confirmed their participation: Prof. Jutta Brunnée (University of Toronto), Prof. Malgosia Fitzmaurice (Queen Mary University), and Prof. Catherine Redgwell (University of Oxford).

Against the backdrop of the above-mentioned overarching research question, the conference wants to focus on the different legal mechanisms through which competing interests can be balanced when there is an element of novelty to the considered factual scenario. The novelty can consist of new uses and users (e.g., geoengineering, renewable energy, restoration activities), or of the development of new technologies for 'old' uses (e.g., the navigation of unmanned vessels, the use of drones for maritime surveillance), or of the progressive development of knowledge (e.g., consequences of climate change on the oceans, the existence of life in the deepest waters).

The Sustainable Ocean Project has identified four themes/legal mechanisms through which this balance of emerging interests with interests that are already accommodated by the existing legal framework comes to the fore. The conference will be structured around these four interrelated themes, and participants are thus invited to submit abstracts on the following topics:

1. Due diligence as obligation and/or balancing standard;
2. Balancing principles in international law interpretation;

3. The role of regionalism in the accommodation of multiple interests;
4. The role of state consent and the participation of other actors in international law-making and law implementation.

Submission of abstracts

Please submit an abstract of max. **500 words**, accompanied by a selected bibliography of max. 10 references, by **30 March 2020**, to sustainableocean@uu.nl.

Applicants will be informed about their submission by **30 April 2020**. In addition to the abstract, the submission should contain the author's name and affiliation, and the author's contact details. Co-authored proposals are also welcome.

The organisers will consider after the conference the **publication** of a selected group of the papers in the special issue of a journal. The length of the final papers is to be between 7.000 and 9.000 words, footnotes included. Please indicate in the abstract whether you would be interested in participating in the subsequent publication project.

Travel and accommodation costs of successful applicants will be covered by the organisers.

For any query, do not hesitate to contact us at: sustainableocean@uu.nl. For further information about the Sustainable Ocean Project, please check our website: <https://www.uu.nl/en/research/sustainable-ocean>.