



European Society of International Law

Interest Group on “International Environmental Law”

Pre-conference workshop to be held on “A global effort to promote long-term sustainability of space environment in the context of outer space commercialization” on the occasion of the 16th Annual Conference of the European Society of International Law, Stockholm (Sweden), 9-11 September 2021.

Call for Papers

A global effort to promote long-term sustainability of space environment in the context of outer space commercialization

Outer space constitutes a finite resource that is being used by an increasing number of states, international organizations and non-governmental entities. In this context, Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, adopted by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2019, emphasise that the proliferation of space debris, the increasing complexity of space operations, the emergence of large constellations and the increased risks of collision and interference with the operation of space objects may affect the long-term sustainability of space activities. Addressing these risks requires international cooperation by states and international organizations.

Against the background of the global effort to avoid harm to the space environment and to ensure safety of space operations, special attention should be given to the commercialization of space activities. As the cost of commercial space exploration continues to decline, outer space is becoming more accessible to a range of actors, eroding the previous state monopoly. The commercialization of outer space activities seems to be unstoppable.

However, international space law, elaborated by the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the 1960s and 1970s, is based on the concept of state responsibility, enshrined in Art. VI of the Outer Space Treaty. Pursuant to the OST, international responsibility for national activities, whether such activities are carried out by governmental agencies or by non-governmental entities, is borne by state parties to the treaty. Hence, current international space law appears to be ill-equipped to effectively address the increased commercialization of outer space activities which brings with it a growing role for private actors. Space activities of non-state actors are primarily governed by national space laws. What steps should be taken to ensure long-term sustainability of space environment in the context of outer space commercialization?

The IG on International Environmental Law invites contributions addressing the global effort to promote long-term sustainability of space environment in the context of outer space commercialization.

- Outer space activities as a question of natural resource use
- Legal aspects of commercial space activities
- Non-state actors in the context of the international framework for space activities

- Non-state actors in the context of national space policies
- Permits and licences for space activities
- Liability for launching space objects
- Non-state actors and on-orbit activities
- Mitigating space debris
- Legal and regulatory considerations of small satellite projects
- Effective mechanisms to settle disputes in outer space
- Interactions among non-state actors
- Applicability of national space law in the area beyond national jurisdictions
- Sustainability of commercial space activities

This call is open to academics, as well as practitioners of international organizations and NGOs working in these areas. The objective of this meeting to optimize research impact of our participants by engaging the different communities of practice in law, political science and space science.

Eligibility: All Members of the ESIL Interest Group on International Environmental Law, the members of other ESIL IGs and also the non-ESIL members (ESIL membership might be required if the abstract is selected) are invited to submit abstracts.

Applications: The following must be submitted to esiligintenvlaw@glawcal.org.uk by **15 June 2021**:

The author's name and affiliation;

- A 500-700-word abstract, including references [Word file and PDF]
- The author's CV, including a list of relevant publications;
- The author's contact details, including email address and phone number;
- Information regarding ESIL membership

Multiple abstracts from the same authors will be considered, but only one can be selected. Co-authored multidisciplinary papers are also welcomed. Applicants will be informed of the selection committee's decision no later than **15 July 2021**.

The Organizers are unable to provide funding for any cost related to the participation at the pre-conference workshop.

Publication opportunities: The organizers have publication plans for the presented papers. The precise format of publication will be discussed during the pre-conference workshop.

Organizing Committee

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