INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW CONFERENCE

MEDITERRANEAN MARITIME LAW COLLOQUIUM

"HALF A CENTURY SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE 1976 BARCELONA CONVENTION AND ITS PROTOCOLS"

TRANSPORT LAW DE LEGE FERENDA 2026



INTER-UNIVERSITY CENTRE, DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

7 – 10 September 2026

HRVATSKO DRUŠTVO ZA POMORSKO PRAVO

INTER UNIVERSITY CENTRE DUBROVNIK

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7th – 10th September 2026

PARTICIPATING ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS:

Adriatic Institute of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Zagreb, Croatia
City University - London, the United Kingdom
International Maritime Law Institute, Malta
Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan
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University of Zagreb, Croatia
World Maritime University, Malmö, Sweden

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW CONFERENCE

DUBROVNIK, 7 - 10 September 2026

7th September 2026

Dear colleagues and friends,

On behalf of the Croatian Maritime Law Association, it is our great pleasure to welcome you to Dubrovnik and to the 2026 edition of the International Maritime and Transport Law Conference: Transport Law De Lege Ferenda!

This year's programme covers a wide range of issues at the heart of contemporary maritime law. We will reflect on the past fifty years of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols and consider the ongoing challenge of safeguarding the Mediterranean. At the same time, we will look to the future of shipping by discussing decarbonisation, new technologies, artificial intelligence, autonomous vessels, digitalisation, and new forms of transport documentation. Alongside these hot topical issues, the Conference will also address the enduring foundations of maritime law, including maritime liens and mortgages, limitation of liability, carriage of goods and passengers, marine insurance and much more.

As always, our event will bring together distinguished scholars, practitioners, and experts from different jurisdictions and generations, providing an opportunity for stimulating exchanges of views.

We are particularly pleased that the Conference will also provide the perfect opportunity to promote the book "*Regulating Unmanned Vessels: Emerging Solutions"*, which was published by Informa Law from Routledge in May 2026. This publication is the outcome of the *Maritime Law Colloquium, 'In Search of a Regulatory Approach to Autonomous Vessels'*, which was part of the IMTLC 2024. We are therefore delighted that many of the contributors to this collective volume will be attending this year's event.

Dubrovnik's rich maritime heritage reminds us that maritime law has always evolved in response to changing technologies, economic realities, and the needs of those who navigate and trade across the seas. Today, as the maritime world undergoes profound environmental and technological transformation, Dubrovnik provides an inspiring setting in which to reflect on the past, present and future of maritime law.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the staff at the IUC Dubrovnik, the organising task force, and all the speakers, moderators, and participants.

We wish you enjoy your stay in Dubrovnik!

President of Croatian MLA
Gordan Stanković



Secretary General
Igor Vio



INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW CONFERENCE

MEDITERRANEAN MARITIME LAW COLLOQUIUM "HALF A CENTURY SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE 1976 BARCELONA CONVENTION AND ITS PROTOCOLS"

Monday, 7th September 2026

09:00 **Opening Ceremony**

09:15 **Session 1: Regional Approach in Pollution Prevention – Legal Framework** *(Chair: Aref Fakhry)*

Maja Seršić: The UNEP Regional Seas Programme – The Particular Case of the Mediterranean

Daria Povh Škugor: Fifty Years of UNEP MAP – Barcelona Convention for a Sustainable and Resilient Mediterranean

Lilia Khodjet el Khil: The Barcelona Convention at 50 – Advancing the International Maritime Environmental Law in the Mediterranean through Regional Cooperation

11:00 *Discussion*

11:15 ***Coffee break***

11:45 **Session 2: National Implementation – Contemporary Solutions** *(Chair: Mitja Grbec)*

Wafa Harrar Masmoudi: The Application of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in Tunisia – From Legal Effectivity to Tangible Effectiveness

Ilaria Tani: From Framework to Practice – Italy and the Barcelona Convention in Context

Murat Sümer: Implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in Türkiye

13:15 *Discussion*

13:30 ***Welcome Reception at the Inter-University Centre***

14:30 **Session 3: Barcelona Convention – Application and Challenges** *(Chair: Igor Vio)*

Mitja Bricelj: Barcelona Convention, Slovenia and the EUSAIR Process

Aref Fakhry: Barcelona Convention and Armed Conflict – A Tale of Legal Resilience

Mitja Grbec: The Compliance Committee and Its Role within the Barcelona Convention System

16:00 *Discussion*

16:15 *Final Remarks*

17:00 ***Sightseeing: Guided walking tour – Old Town*** *(departure from the IUC)*

Tuesday, 8th September 2026

KEYNOTE SPEECHES SESSION

(Chair: Jasenko Marin)

09:00 Rhidian Thomas: Maritime Liens and Mortgages – The Centenary of the Quest for a Unifying International Convention

09:45 Časlav Pejović: Chinese Maritime Code 2025 – Contracts on Carriage of Goods by Sea

10:30 *Discussion*

10:45 ***Coffee break***

SESSION 1: MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

(Chair: Rhidian Thomas)

11:15 Jasenko Marin: Liability of Multimodal Transport Operators – The Interplay between Contractual Terms and Mandatory Law

Zoran Tasić: How Onerous "Pay to Be Paid" Clause is in Marine Insurance? The Case of MS Amlin Marine NV v King Trader Limited & Others (Court of Appeal, 2025)

Iva Tuhtan Grgić – Zuzanna Pepłowska-Dąbrowska: Is it a Sea Carriage or a Holiday? Comments on the CJEU Case MH v Costa Crociere SpA

12:45 *Discussion*

13:00 ***Lunch at the Atrium Restaurant***

SESSION 2: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN SHIPPING INDUSTRY

(Chair: Murat Sümer)

14:00 Daniele Casciano – Filippo Lorenzon: Crude Oil and Products Trading at a Difficult Time – Is the Law of Commodities Plying Through Dire Straights?

Vlatka Butorac Malnar – Marijana Liszt: Legal Implications of Public Interest Relating to Mainland Cabotage

Ceren Cerit Dindar: From "Sail Fast, Then Wait" to the "Blue Visby Solution" – Decarbonizing Charterparty Practices

15:30 *Discussion*

15:45 ***Coffee break***

SESSION 3: NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN MARITIME TRANSPORT

(Chair: Zuzanna Pepłowska-Dąbrowska)

16:15 Manuel Alba Fernandez: Something Old, Something New – The Integration of Emerging Technologies in Maritime Law

Raphael Esu: Digital Twins and Rethinking Good Weather in Speed and Consumption Warranties

Mihael Mišo Mudrić: ISO 42001:2023 – AI Risk Management System in Shipping

Luci Carey: Carriage of Passengers by Sea and MASS – The Legal Challenges for Crewless Passenger Vessels

18:15 *Discussion*

19:00 ***Cable car to Srđ – Dubrovnik panorama*** *(departure from the IUC at 18:45)*

Wednesday, 9th September 2026

KEYNOTE SPEECH

09:00 Norman Martinez: Fifty Years of the LLMC 1976 and Thirty Years of the 1996 Protocol

SESSION 4: NEW FORMS OF TRANSPORT DOCUMENTS

(Chair: Časlav Pejović)

09:45 Liang Zhao: Electronic Bill of Lading – Chinese and Comparative Law Perspective

Patrick Vlačič: Latest Developments Related to the Electronic Bill of Lading

10:45 *Discussion*

11:00 ***Coffee break***

SESSION 5: GREEN SHIPPING, MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

(Chair: Zoran Tasić)

11:30 Božena Bulum – Marija Pijaca – Gorana Jelić Mrčelić: Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Aquaculture and Contemporary European Union Decarbonisation Strategies

Axel Luttenberger: Marine Conservation under the Nature Restoration Law

Pia Rebelo: Decarbonisation Updates in Shipping – Where Are We Now?

Petra Perišić: Climate Change, Marine Environmental Vulnerability and the Law of the Sea – Interpreting State Obligations in the ITLOS Advisory Opinion

13:30 *Discussion*

14:00 ***Lunch at the Atrium Restaurant***

15:00 **Book promotion**: "*Regulating Unmanned Vessels – Emerging Solutions"* edited by Zuzanna Pepłowska-Dąbrowska and Igor Vio, Informa Law from Routledge, 2026 *(Časlav Pejović)*

16:00 ***Coffee break***

TRANSPORT LAW DE LEGE FERENDA 2026

(Chair: Iva Tuhtan Grgić)

16:30 Ante Vojković: Liability and Compensation in the Event of an Incident Caused by Alternative Fuels

Maša Štampić – Nour Nohra: Maritime Labour Convention after 20 Years: From Policy to Practice
- Closing the Gap between Legal Protection and Effective Implementation

Aleksa Martinović: Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution by Ships under UNCLOS with Special Reference to Montenegrin Legislation

Azra Kulenović: Critical Underwater Infrastructure in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction – Legal Challenges under UNCLOS and the BBNJ Agreement.

18:30 *Discussion and Final Remarks*

18:45 **Closing Ceremony**

20:30 ***Dinner at the Orhan Restaurant***

Thursday, 10th September 2026

10:00 Visit to the Institute for Historical Sciences of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts at the Sorkočević-Sorgo Palace *(departure from the IUC at 9:30)*

11:00 ***Sightseeing: Boat trip to the Elafiti Islands with lunch*** *(departure from the Port of Gruž)*

17:00 ***Return from the Elafiti Islands Tour*** *(arrival to the Port of Gruž)*

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

AND ABSTRACTS

MEDITERRANEAN MARITIME LAW COLLOQUIUM "HALF A CENTURY SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE 1976 BARCELONA CONVENTION AND ITS PROTOCOLS"

Part I. Regional Approach in Pollution Prevention – Legal Framework

Maja Seršić, PhD
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law,
Zagreb, Croatia

Maja Seršić is a Full Professor with Tenure and head of the International Law Department at the Law Faculty of the University of Zagreb, Croatia. She is teaching Public International Law and her special fields of interest include law of the sea, environmental law, law of international responsibility and law of armed conflict. She is author/co-author of six books and more than hundred articles and book chapters on various topics. Her lecture *"Article 51 of the United Nations Charter and War against Terrorism"* is available at the UN Audio Visual Library on International Law. Her professional affiliation include (former) membership to European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe, Permanent Court of Arbitration (disputes relating to natural resources and/or environment) and European Science Foundation (ESF), Standing Committee for the Social Sciences. Professor Maja Seršić served as the co-agent/agent for Croatia before both the International Court of Justice and Arbitral Tribunals. She is member of the International Law Association, Croatian Association of International Law, Croatian Maritime Law Association, and Croatian Academy of Legal Sciences. She is member of the Editorial Boards of the Maritime Safety and Security Law Journal and Grassroots Journal of Natural Resources. She has participated as invited lecturer at various postgraduate courses and as a speaker at numerous international conferences.

The UNEP Regional Seas Programme: The Particular Case of the Mediterranean

The most comprehensive regional activities after the Stockholm Conference were initiated by the UNEP. Within its *Regional Seas Programme* the UNEP initiated and coordinated activities of the coastal States of 18 regional seas. The development of the regional regime for the protection of the Mediterranean was initiated in 1975 when the Mediterranean coastal States under the auspices of the UNEP adopted the Action Plan for the Protection and Development of the Mediterranean Basin (MAP). MAP is oriented towards comprehensive search for the protection and development of the whole Mediterranean Basin, while the Barcelona Convention and its protocols form the legal component of the MAP (one of its four components). In the 1980's the second genera tion environmental problems required new approaches. The impact of the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro, together with the entering into force of the 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention, led the Mediterranean coastal states to initiate actions for more effective environmental protection and sustainable development in the Mediterranean. The new MAP and the amended Barcelona Convention and Protocols were adopted in 1995. Among seven protocols to the Barcelona Convention the 2008 Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol was the most important for the new approach, establishing a common framework for sustainable development, urban planning and habitat protection along the Mediterranean coasts.

Daria Povh Škugor, M.Sc.
UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for Coastal Management
Split, Croatia

Daria Povh Škugor is the Director of the Priority Actions Programme / Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC), the UNEP/MAP Regional Activity Centre for Coastal Management, based in Split, Croatia. With more than 20 years of experience in integrated coastal management, and a particular focus over the past 15 years on climate change adaptation and coastal resilience, she has contributed to advancing integrated approaches to coastal planning and governance across the Mediterranean. Her work supports countries in translating science and policy into practical solutions for more sustainable and resilient coastal development. Throughout her career, Ms. Povh Škugor has led international initiatives that bring together governments, scientific institutions, international organisations and local stakeholders to address complex coastal challenges. Together with her team, she initiated several flagship PAP/RAC initiatives, including the Coast Day awareness campaign and the MedOpen virtual training programme, and led the first Coastal Plan dedicated to climate change adaptation, recipient of the overall MedAdapt Award. Ms. Povh Škugor serves on the Advisory Board of the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC). She holds a B.Sc. degree in Coastal Economy from the University of Split and a M.Sc. in Coastal Zone Management from the University of Ulster, United Kingdom. Her work focuses on creating the conditions for collaborative governance by connecting science, policy and society to enable resilient and sustainable Mediterranean coasts.

Fifty Years of UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention for a Sustainable and Resilient Mediterranean

The fiftieth anniversary of the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the thirtieth anniversary of the post-Rio Barcelona Convention mark a significant milestone in regional environmental cooperation. Since its establishment in 1975 under UNEP's Regional Seas Programme, UNEP/MAP has evolved into one of the world's most comprehensive regional governance frameworks for the protection of the marine and coastal environment. Supported by a progressively strengthened legal framework, an effective institutional architecture, and a unique network of Regional Activity Centres, the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system has demonstrated remarkable resilience, enabling its 22 Contracting Parties to sustain cooperation and advance coordinated action for the protection and sustainable development of the Mediterranean despite a complex geopolitical context. This anniversary provides an opportunity not only to celebrate five decades of achievements, but also to reflect on lessons learned and reinforce regional cooperation in response to accelerating climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and increasing pressures on Mediterranean ecosystems and coastal communities. Over the past fifty years, the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system has strengthened regional governance, promoted science-based decision-making, fostered a shared Mediterranean environmental culture, expanded strategic partnerships, and supported tangible progress in pollution prevention, biodiversity conservation, integrated coastal zone management, environmental monitoring and assessment, and sustainable development. Looking to the future, continued progress will depend on strengthening the implementation of existing commitments, enhancing institutional effectiveness, addressing emerging environmental challenges, supporting the regional implementation of global environmental agreements, and fostering stronger engagement across sectors and stakeholders. Building on fifty years of cooperation, solidarity, and innovation, UNEP/MAP remains uniquely positioned to advance integrated, science-based and inclusive approaches that will contribute to a healthy, climate-resilient, and sustainable Mediterranean for present and future generations.

Lilia Khodjet El Khil, PhD
Independent consultant
Tunis, Tunisia

Lilia Khodjet El Khil is an independent consultant specialising in international maritime environmental law, marine environmental governance, programme management and technical cooperation. She has over twenty years of international experience designing and implementing marine environmental programmes and supporting the implementation of international legal instruments across the Mediterranean and globally. From 2019 to 2025, she served as Technical Project Manager at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), leading global technical cooperation initiatives on the prevention and management of invasive aquatic species, with a particular focus on ships' biofouling, policy development, capacity-building and regional cooperation. Earlier in her career, Dr. Khodjet El Khil spent nine years at the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), contributing to regional cooperation on ship-source pollution and marine environmental protection. She subsequently worked for nine years in Canada's maritime private sector with the Shipping Federation of Canada and Canada Steamship Lines, where she held senior roles in environmental management, sustainability and government relations. She holds a PhD in Maritime Law, with research focusing on the prevention of ship-source pollution and the protection of the Mediterranean marine environment. Her work combines legal and policy expertise with practical experience across international organisations and the maritime industry.

The Barcelona Convention at 50: Advancing the Effectiveness of International Maritime Environmental Law in the Mediterranean through Regional Cooperation

Fifty years after its adoption, the Barcelona Convention remains one of the world's most developed regional seas agreements. This presentation critically examines its contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of international maritime environmental law in the Mediterranean, arguing that, from a maritime perspective, the Barcelona Convention's greatest contribution has not been the development of new maritime legal obligations, but rather the strengthening of the effectiveness of existing international instruments through regional cooperation, institutional support, capacity-building and coordinated implementation. In this respect, the Barcelona Convention system has complemented the global regulatory framework developed under the International Maritime Organization by helping translate international commitments into practical action at the regional level. Drawing on examples from the implementation of international instruments addressing pollution from ships, preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents, and ballast water management, it examines how regional cooperation mechanisms have facilitated more effective implementation, strengthened institutional capacities and promoted the exchange of knowledge and best practices among Mediterranean States. It also considers how the Barcelona Convention's regional cooperation mechanisms can continue to support emerging and evolving maritime environmental challenges in the Mediterranean region, including shipping decarbonisation, the management of ships' biofouling, underwater noise and the implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement). By examining fifty years of regional cooperation through a maritime lens, the presentation assesses both the contribution and limitations of the Barcelona Convention system in supporting the implementation of international maritime environmental law and considers how its regional cooperation mechanisms can be further strengthened to ensure their effectiveness in addressing emerging environmental and regulatory challenges.

Part II. National Implementation – Contemporary Solutions

Wafa Harrar Masmoudi, PhD
Faculty of Legal, Political and Social Sciences
University of Carthage, Tunisia

Wafa Harrar Masmoudi is a Full Professor of Public Law at the Faculty of Legal, Political and Social Sciences of Tunis - University of Carthage. Her expertise lies in International Law and International Relations, particularly Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, Human Rights, and the analysis of Public Policy and Governance. Her scholarly work and publications focus on International Law, Constitutional Law, Human Rights, and especially intersection of the Health Law and Ethics. Professor Harrar Masmoudi is a member of the National Medical Ethics Committee and serves as a peer reviewer for the Tunisian Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation. She also possesses recognized expertise in the evaluation and audit of Quality Management Systems, having obtained certification as Lead Implementer. In addition, she is specialized in performance management and educational and institutional evaluation, and regularly delivers training activities in collaboration with national and international organizations. She currently serves as Director of the Master's Research Program in Anglo-Saxon Law (Common Law) at the Faculty of Legal, Political, and Social Sciences of Tunis. She is also an elected member of the Faculty's Scientific Council and a member of the Laboratory for the Law of International Market Relations and Negotiations (DRIMAN) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, University of Tunis El Manar.

The Application of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in Tunisia From Legal Effectivity to Tangible Effectiveness

The incorporation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols into the Tunisian legal order raises a question that reaches beyond the confirmation of their reception: whether the effectivity these instruments acquire upon entering domestic law can, of itself, secure the environmental finality they enshrine, or whether that finality escapes the norm and remains hostage to the conditions of its actualization. This study addresses that interrogation through the doctrinal opposition, between effectivity - the orderly operation of the legal-application process, itself measurable - and effectiveness - the tangible amelioration of the marine and coastal environment. The first movement establishes that the reception is achieved yet relative. The Convention and its Protocols enjoy a formal existence and a supra-legislative authority, but their applicability remains mediated by a fragmented apparatus of framework and sectoral transposition, and their substance is unevenly appropriated - the reception of the precautionary and polluter-pays principles and of environmental impact assessment contrasting with the near-collapse of the transboundary criteria and the structural under-endowment of the institutional machinery. Legal effectivity thus proves real in its formal dimension and deficient in its organic one. The second movement establishes that the resulting effectiveness remains conditional. The coercive apparatus, though operative through the administrative policing of the public maritime domaine, is confined by scarce means and enfeebled by a dormant jurisdiction, while the participatory dimension, still nascent, awaits the consolidation that the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol and the emerging discipline of legal indicators may furnish. The environmental finality therefore transcends the normative act that consecrates it and remains subordinate to the coercive and participatory conditions of its actualization. The study concludes that effectivity operates as a necessary yet insufficient antecedent of effectiveness, and that the passage from the one to the other in Tunisia depends less upon the proliferation of norms than upon the coercive intensity and the participatory density of their application.

Ilaria Tani, PhD
University of Milano-Bicocca
Italy

Ilaria Tani is an Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Milano-Bicocca, where she teaches Law of the Sea, Maritime Law, and Ocean Affairs Law and Policy. She is also an Attorney-at-Law admitted to the Milan Bar. Before joining academia full time, she served as Associate Legal Officer at the United Nations Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), Office of Legal Affairs, in New York. Her research focuses on the law of the sea, with particular attention to maritime boundaries, the governance of the undersea domain, and the legal implications of hydrographic and marine geospatial information. She currently serves as Scientific Adviser to the Italian Navy General Staff, Liaison Legal Counsel to the International Hydrographic Organization, and Lead of the Policy and Legal Task Team within the UN-GGIM–IHO Joint Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information. She is the author of various publications on the law of the sea and co-editor, with Mitja Grbec and Tullio Scovazzi, of *Legal Aspects of Transboundary Area-Based Conservation in the Mediterranean Sea: An Adriatic and Ionian Perspective* (Routledge, 2023); with the Hydrographic Institute of the Italian Navy (IIM), of *The Atlas of Maritime Limits and Boundaries in Central Mediterranean: Legal Texts and Illustrative Maps* (IIM, 2020 - updated edition forthcoming); and more recently, with Attila Tanzi, of *La dimensione sottomarina. Diritto, professioni, prospettive* (Giappichelli, 2026).

From Framework to Practice: Italy and the Barcelona Convention in Context

The effectiveness of a regional environmental agreement cannot be assessed solely by examining its formal incorporation into domestic law. The presentation considers Italy's implementation of the Barcelona Convention as a differentiated process in which treaty obligations interact with European Union law, national and regional competences, spatial planning instruments, and subregional cooperation. Two examples illustrate distinct patterns of implementation. The first concerns integrated coastal zone management. Italy's recent ratification of the ICZM Protocol formally consolidates a process that had already developed through regional coastal policies, Coastal Area Management Programmes and the increasing consideration of land-sea interactions within maritime spatial planning. This experience raises the broader question of what formal ratification adds when significant implementing practice has preceded it. The second example is the Pelagos Sanctuary. Established through an agreement between France, Italy and Monaco and subsequently included in the List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance, the Sanctuary shows how the Barcelona system can reinforce and extend the effects of a pre-existing subregional arrangement. At the same time, its complex institutional structure reveals the continuing difficulties of securing coherent management, monitoring, and enforcement across jurisdictions. These developments are contrasted with Italy's continuing non-ratification of the Offshore Protocol. The comparison indicates that Italian implementation is substantial but uneven across the different components of the Barcelona system. The presentation argues that Italy's experience is best understood not as a linear process of treaty transposition, but as a multi-layered interaction between formal commitments, domestic practice, and regional governance.

Murat Sümer, PhD
IMO International Maritime Law Institute
Malta

Murat Sümer is The Nippon Foundation Assistant Professor in International Maritime Law at the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI), where he also serves as the Coordinator of Academic Affairs. He joined the Institute in 2019. Dr Sümer lectures on the public aspects of international maritime law at IMLI`s Master`s programmes and specialized courses. He holds a PhD in Public International Law from the Faculty of Law at Maastricht University. Murat has two Master`s degrees from IMLI and the National Defence Institute. Before joining IMLI, Murat served as a Legal Adviser and Career Diplomat at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) between 2008-2019. During his diplomatic tenure, he held various positions, including Alternate Permanent Representative to the IMO in London and Head of the Maritime Section at the MFA. He has published numerous articles on the public aspects of international maritime law in peer reviewed journals. He is a member of the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) Pool of Experts; Ocean Expert directory of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO; the IMO Roster of Experts; the Maritime Law Association (Türkiye) and the Turkish Bar Association.

Implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols in Türkiye

The Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution (Barcelona Convention) was adopted on 16 February 1976 and entered into force in 1978. Since then, it has evolved into the principal regional legal framework for the protection of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment through the adoption of additional Protocols and the 1995 amendments, which entered into force in 2004. This presentation examines the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and the Protocols binding upon Türkiye fifty years after the Convention's adoption. It proceeds on the basis that the implementation of a treaty by the States Parties extends beyond ratification. Moreover, it explores how the obligations arising under the Convention have been incorporated into the Turkish domestic legal framework and given practical effect for effective implementation. The presentation first outlines Türkiye's participation in the Barcelona Convention system before examining selected areas of implementation, including the incorporation of treaty obligations into domestic legislation, the institutional framework responsible for implementation, and other relevant administrative mechanisms. This analysis is based on official UNEP/MAP documentation, legislation and policy documents, legal scholarship, and recent studies concerning the implementation of the Convention. Implementation cannot be assessed solely by reference to treaty participation or legislative incorporation. It also requires consideration of the mechanisms through which treaty obligations are given practical effect. In light of the foregoing, the presentation offers a comprehensive assessment of Türkiye's implementation of the Barcelona Convention.

Part III: Barcelona Convention – Application and Challenges

Mitja Bricelj, PhD
Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Mitja Bricelj holds a PhD in *Regional Governance of Water and Marine Resources* and has been working at the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia since 1990. For more than three decades, his professional work has focused on developing integrated and adaptive ecosystem-based governance of connected river basins, coastal zones and marine ecosystems through international agreements, European legislation and regional cooperation frameworks. Since 1991, he has served as Slovenia's National Focal Point for the Barcelona Convention and has actively contributed to the evolution of the UNEP/MAP system from a regional marine protection framework towards integrated ecosystem governance of the Mediterranean. He participated in UNEP/MAP expert groups contributing to the preparation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol and the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp). Based on these experiences, Slovenia became the first Mediterranean country to ratify the ICZM Protocol in 2008 and was recognised by PAP/RAC in 2025 as an example of best practice in its implementation. Since 2011, he has served as Coordinator of Thematic Steering Group 3 (Environmental Quality) of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), promoting synergies between marine environmental protection, integrated coastal zone management, maritime spatial planning, ecological connectivity, and green and blue infrastructure as instruments for ecosystem-based governance of the Adriatic. Representing Slovenia, he chaired the Barcelona Convention twice (2004–2007 and 2023–2025). During Slovenia's most recent Presidency, he promoted stronger links between regional seas governance and macro-regional cooperation, including the Source-to-Sea approach connecting the Danube Basin, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. This cooperation was recognised in the MED 50 Declaration adopted in the framework of UNOC-3, highlighting the importance of interregional cooperation for strengthening resilience and improving the health of the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem. Dr. Mitja Bricelj is a founding member of the International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC), established under the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB), and currently serves as its Chair. Through this role, he promotes adaptive transboundary water governance by linking river basin management, flood risk management, sustainable navigation, ecosystem restoration and marine protection objectives. He has contributed to international legal and policy publications addressing ecosystem-based governance of coastal and marine resources, integrated coastal zone management and sustainable development of regional seas. Selected publications include the chapter *"Ecosystem Approach for Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Resources"* in *International Environmental Law: Contemporary Concerns and Challenges*, edited by Vasilka Sancin (Gospodarski vestnik, Ljubljana, 2012, pp. 57–70), and the chapter *"The Sustainable Development of Wider Mediterranean: Multi-stakeholder Settings, Ecosystem Approach and Maritime Spatial Planning"* in *Legal Aspects of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Sea: An Adriatic and Ionian Perspective* (Routledge, 2023, pp. 207–215). His professional work focuses on strengthening synergies between international maritime and environmental law, European Union policies and regional cooperation mechanisms to advance adaptive ecosystem governance within ecologically meaningful management units, connecting rivers, coasts and seas through the Source-to-Sea approach.

Slovenia, EUSAIR and the Future of Ecosystem-Based Governance of the Mediterranean

The Barcelona Convention, adopted in 1976 as the first Regional Seas Convention under the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, established a pioneering legal and institutional framework for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea and became a global reference for regional marine governance. Following the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and Agenda 21, the Convention evolved from a pollution control instrument towards an integrated framework for the protection of the marine environment and coastal regions. The revised Convention, together with the ICZM Protocol (2008) and the Ecosystem Approach (EcAp), created a unique regional governance model linking terrestrial, coastal and marine systems and supporting the implementation of global commitments on climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. After five decades of implementation, the Barcelona Convention demonstrates the potential for stronger synergies between international maritime law, multilateral environmental agreements and the European Union legal and policy framework. The challenge for the future is not the creation of new legal instruments, but their coordinated implementation through adaptive ecosystem governance within ecologically meaningful management units. Drawing on Slovenia's experience within the Barcelona Convention and the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR), this presentation explores how regional and macro-regional cooperation can strengthen ecosystem-based governance of semi-enclosed seas. Particular attention is given to the Source-to-Sea approach and the emerging synergies between EUSAIR, the Danube Strategy (EUSDR), the Alpine Strategy (EUSALP) and the European Ocean Pact. The presentation argues that connecting river basins, coastal zones and marine ecosystems through ecological connectivity, green and blue infrastructure and adaptive governance provides a strategic pathway for improving resilience and the health of the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem during the next fifty years of the Barcelona Convention.

Aref Fakhry, PhD
World Maritime University
Malmö, Sweden

Aref Fakhry is an Associate Professor at the World Maritime University (WMU), a global centre of education and research in maritime affairs established by the IMO in Malmö, Sweden. A lawyer specializing in maritime law and policy, he possesses extensive international expertise in the law of the sea, ocean policy design, port state control, maritime security, and public administration. After receiving his legal education in Canada, where he also obtained a Master of Marine Management Degree from Dalhousie University, he practised shipping and insurance in a leading law firm. Afterwards he initiated an international career that took him to the European Commission in Brussels, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva, as well as the IMO International Maritime Law Institute in Malta. He pursued his doctoral studies at the University of Southampton, specialising in the doctrine of frustration in relation to the capture of vessels by pirates. Throughout his academic and professional career, Dr. Fakhry has advised international organizations, governments, and academic institutions on regional sea governance and marine environmental regulation. His ongoing research examines legal resilience, maritime security frameworks, regional sea conventions, and the complex legal dimensions of marine environmental protection during geopolitical instability. At WMU, he leads lectures, designs postgraduate curricula, coordinates field studies, and co-directs international conferences focused on contemporary issues in ocean and maritime law.

Barcelona Convention and Armed Conflict – A Tale of Legal Resilience

This presentation examines the legal endurance and practical implementation of the 1976 Barcelona Convention and its Protocols during or in the context of armed conflict. While regional marine environmental regimes are primarily conceived for peacetime governance, recurring hostilities across the Mediterranean basin repeatedly test the applicability, legal elasticity, and operational effectiveness of these legal instruments. This study provides a comparative legal analysis of selected case studies drawn from three distinct sub-regions: the Eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans, and Northern Africa. Through these empirical instances, the presentation evaluates how treaty obligations persist, adapt, or suffer strain when geopolitical turbulence intersects with coastal and maritime protection. A central dimension of this inquiry focuses on the geographical scope of application of the amended Barcelona Convention, particularly regarding occurrences on the coast and terrestrial-marine interactions. By dissecting core treaty provisions—including those addressing land-based sources of pollution, emergency response protocols, and integrated coastal zone management—the analysis elucidates how spatial definitions dictating the Convention's reach function during military hostilities. In particular, it scrutinizes how state responsibility and regional environmental safeguards operate when military operations impact fragile coastal ecosystems. Ultimately, the presentation demonstrates the structural resilience of the Barcelona Convention framework, arguing that its foundational mechanics, institutional adaptability, and regional cooperation architecture provide indispensable legal anchors for marine environmental protection even amidst active armed conflict.

Mitja Grbec, PhD
Law Office Grbec
Faculty of Management of the University of Primorska
Koper, Slovenia

Mitja Grbec is currently an attorney-at-law in the port town of Koper/Capodistria, Slovenia (Law Office Grbec), an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Management of the University of Primorska (Koper, Slovenia), a visiting lecturer at the IMO International Maritime Law Institute in Malta, and the Secretary-General of the Maritime Law Association of Slovenia. He graduated in law at the Faculty of Law of the University of Ljubljana. He completed his LLM and Ph.D. studies in international maritime law at the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMO IMLI) in Malta. He has held several positions both in the academia and corporate sector, including that of a permanent lecturer at the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMO IMLI) in Malta, Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Maritime Studies and Transportation (University of Ljubljana, Slovenia), member of the Supervisory Board of the company Slovenian Railways d.o.o. and President and Vice-President of the Maritime Law Association of Slovenia. Among other, he is the author of the book *'Extension of Coastal State Jurisdiction in Enclosed or Semi-enclosed seas: A Mediterranean and Adriatic Perspective'*, published by Routledge (London, New York) in 2014 and reprinted in the paperback version in 2015. He is also the co-editor and one of the authors of the book "*Legal Aspects of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean: An Adriatic and Ionian Perspective*" published by Routledge (London, New York) in 2023. He has been also appointed as a Titulary Member of the *Comité* Maritime International (CMI).

The Compliance Committee and Its Role within the Barcelona Convention System

This presentation examines the role of the Compliance Committee under the Barcelona Convention system as a facilitative, non-adversarial and preventive mechanism for promoting compliance with the Convention and its Protocols. The Committee is not a court or dispute-settlement body, but an expert body assisting Contracting Parties in identifying, understanding and addressing actual or potential difficulties in implementation. The presentation will outline the Committee's mandate, procedures and safeguards, including independence of members, due process, transparency, confidentiality and the participation of the Party concerned. Particular attention will be given to national implementation reporting under Article 26 of the Barcelona Convention, which provides an essential evidentiary basis for assessing legal, administrative and practical implementation measures, their effectiveness, and difficulties encountered by Parties. Recent compliance-related issues concerning ecosystem protection, coastal-zone management, protected areas, biodiversity, monitoring and effectiveness of implementation will be used to illustrate the Committee's practical relevance. The central argument is that the Compliance Committee strengthens the Barcelona Convention system by combining legal assessment, institutional dialogue, technical clarification and practical assistance, while preserving its facilitative character and respect for the specific situation of each Contracting Party.

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW CONFERENCE - SESSIONS

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

Rhidian Thomas, LLD (Hon)
Institute of International Shipping and Trade Law
Swansea University, Wales, the United Kingdom

Rhidian Thomas is the Professor Emeritus of Maritime Law and Founder Director of the Institute of International Shipping and Trade Law at Swansea University, Wales, UK. He previously held academic positions at universities in the UK, and visiting positions at universities in Europe, Scandinavia, Far East and North America. He held the Francqui Chair at the University of Leuven in 2010/2011 and is the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate of Law from the University of Gothenburg. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of International Maritime Law*, and a member of the editorial boards of *Shipping & Trade Law* and *International Comparative Maritime Law*. He is also a titulary member of the Comité Maritime International and its International Standing Committee on Marine Insurance Law, the British Maritime Law Association, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, and an Honorary Member of the Croatian Maritime Law Association. His principal teaching and research interests are in the fields of maritime and shipping law, marine insurance law, international trade law and commercial dispute resolution. He has written, edited and contributed to many books and published widely in academic and professional journals. He is a frequent speaker at conferences and seminars, and also acts as an expert witness and consultant.

Maritime Liens and Mortgages – The Centenary of the Quest for a Unifying International Convention

The keynote speech will analyse the concept of a maritime lien and deal with the relationship between maritime liens and mortgages and similar charges, as well as between maritime claims and non-maritime claims. The priority maritime liens enjoy over other categories of claims and also as between each other will also be explored. The distinction in the common law between maritime liens and statutory rights in rem is also developed. Claims which are characterised as maritime liens are governed by national law and this has led to a significant diversity of approach. Since the 1920s there has been an attempt to achieve international harmony through uniform international conventions which has not been successful. The various international initiatives are closely examined and reasons for their lack of success speculated on. There is currently no international initiative under consideration. The question will also be posed whether the concept of a maritime lien should survive in the modern maritime law. It could be argued that a maritime lien gives the lienor an unacceptable right against maritime personal property. It enables a claimant to arrest maritime property as security for a claim notwithstanding that the property owner bears no liability for the claim. As such the owner's right to property is undermined in a way that is manifestly unjust. The procedure, so it may be concluded, is contrary to contemporary notions of justice. It cannot be said that there is a lively contemporary debate to this effect but there is every justification to have such a debate.

Časlav Pejović, PhD
Kyushu University – Faculty of Law
Fukuoka, Japan

Časlav Pejović is the Professor Emeritus at the Faculty of Law, Kyushu University. He graduated in law at the University of Montenegro (B.A.), has LL.M. degrees from the University of Belgrade and Kyoto University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Zagreb. His research interests include maritime law, comparative law, transnational commercial law, foreign investment law, Japanese law, and corporate law. He is a member of several international academic and professional associations, such as the International Academy of Comparative Law (IACL), the International Academy of Commercial and Consumers Law (IACCL), the Japanese Association of Maritime Law, and an Honorary Member of the Croatian Maritime Law Association. He was co-editor (with Gerald McAlinn) of *Law and Development in Asia* (Routledge, 2012) and author of several books, including *Transport Documents: International Law and Practice* (Informa Law, Routledge, 2020), I*nternational Maritime Law: Comparative Law in the Context* (Informa Law, Routledge, 2025), and *Common Law: Introduction to the Law of Obligations* (with Borislav Ivošević, in Montenegrin, UDG, Podgorica, 2026). His papers are published in world-leading journals, and some are translated into other languages. He is the arbitrator of the Tokyo Maritime Arbitration Commission (TOMAC) and the Thai Arbitration Institute (TAI). He also served as an arbitrator at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Arbitration.

Chinese Maritime Code 2025 – Contracts on Carriage of Goods by Sea

The People's Republic of China's new Maritime Code, adopted in 2025 and effective from 1 May 2026, represents the first comprehensive revision of the 1992 Code and reflects major developments in international shipping, global trade, digital technologies, environmental protection, and judicial practice. Given China's central position in global maritime commerce, the new legislation is expected to have significant implications for international maritime law and practice. This presentation examines the reforms relating to the carriage of goods by sea, one of the most extensively revised parts of the Code. A key innovation is the replacement of the former dual system, under which domestic and international carriage were governed by separate legal regimes, with a unified framework applicable to both. At the same time, the Code preserves certain distinctions that reflect the practical differences between domestic and international carriage, particularly with regard to seaworthiness, liability for delay, and exemptions from carrier liability. The presentation also considers new rules governing the delivery of goods, unclaimed cargo, and the suspension of carriage. Particular attention is devoted to the recognition of electronic transport records. Responding to the rapid digitalization of maritime transport, the new Code establishes a comprehensive legal framework governing the issuance, transfer, legal effect, and conversion of electronic transport documents. The presentation further analyses the Code's new conflict-of-law provisions, which require the application of Chinese maritime law to certain international carriage contracts involving Chinese ports. These provisions have the potential to reshape the legal framework governing international carriage of goods by sea and challenge the long-standing predominance of English law in this field, in carriages involving Chinese ports.

Norman A. Martínez Gutierrez, PhD
IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI)
Valletta, Malta

Norman Martínez Gutierrez is the Director of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI). He read law at the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) and has been lecturing in international law and maritime law more than 25 years. He holds a Master of Laws (LLM) Degree and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree from IMLI. He has been a member of the IMLI Faculty since 1999 and, in 2019, he was conferred the Title of Full Professor of International Maritime Law. Professor Martínez has acted as an international maritime law consultant since the year 2000 and has drafted legislation for governments in several areas of maritime law. He is the author of the book *Limitation of Liability in International Maritime Conventions: The Relationship between Global Limitation Conventions and Particular Liability Regimes*, Routledge, London / New York, 2011, has co-authored/edited several books in the field of international maritime law, and has published numerous articles in different languages in prestigious law journals around the world. In 2011, the Government of Honduras presented him with a Diploma of Recognition for steadfast contributions to the international maritime community and in particular to the promotion of the good name of the Republic of Honduras. He is a Titulary Member of the Comité Maritime International and an honorary member of the Croatian, Colombian ad Slovenian Maritime Law Associations.

Fifty Years of the LLMC 1976 and Thirty Years of the 1996 Protocol

2026 marks the 50th anniversary of the Convention on Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims, 1976 (LLMC Convention) and the 30th anniversary of the 1996 Protocol thereto. Given the great importance of the concept of limitation of liability for maritime claims in today's shipping world, this presentation aims to provide a very brief overview of the historical development of limitation of liability for maritime claims in over 100 years of international regulation. It will briefly mention the essential features of the Convention and the importance of its implementation under national legislation. The presentation will discuss IMO's efforts to achieve a unified interpretation of the test to break the right to limit liability and will highlight the relationship between the 1976 LLMC Convention and the 1996 LLMC Protocol, as well as the possible conflict of limitation of liability regimes. The presentation will then address the difference between the global limitation conventions and the particular liability regimes, following which it will centre the discussion on the possible reservations, and options available under the convention, as well as international cooperation solutions to promote capacity development in States Parties.

1. MARITIME AND TRANSPORT LAW – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Jasenko Marin, PhD
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law
Zagreb, Croatia

Jasenko Marin is a Full Professor with tenure at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Department for Maritime Law and General Transport Law. He teaches several graduate and postgraduate (doctoral) courses in the fields of maritime law, transport law and (marine) insurance law. He is an author or co-author of four scientific books and more than 180 scientific and professional papers devoted to various topics of maritime law, transport law and insurance law, marine insurance law included. Professor Marin is a Titulary Member of the Comité Maritime International – CMI. He is a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Institute for European Traffic Law based in Luxembourg. He was a member of the COST MarSafeNet Association – network of experts on maritime safety and security (2012-2016). Professor Marin is a long-time member of Croatian Maritime Law Association and Croatian Transport Law Association. Furthermore, he was a co-founder and the first president of the Croatian Insurance Law Association. In the period from 2014 to 2018 he was an insurance ombudsman appointed by the Croatian Insurance Bureau. He is a member of the Croatian Academy of Legal Sciences as well as of the Scientific Council for Government Administration, Judicature and the Rule of Law established by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Professor Marin is a long-time arbitrator of the Centre for International Arbitration based in Shanghai. He also serves as an arbitrator at the Permanent Arbitration Court of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of the Expert Commission of the Croatian Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure for the drafting of the 2004 Croatian Maritime Code and its 2007, 2008, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2019 amendments. He is a member of the editorial board of the scientific journals Comparative Maritime Law, Croatian Insurance Journal and Insurance Trends. He has actively participated in numerous international scientific conferences devoted to maritime law, insurance law and transport law.

Liability of Multimodal Transport Operators – The Interplay between Contractual Terms and Mandatory Law

In multimodal transport, goods are carried from origin to destination under a single contract using two or more modes of transport, such as maritime, inland waterway, air, road, or rail. As the predominant form of transport in international trade, multimodal transport plays a vital economic role. However, its rapid economic and technological development has not been matched by a corresponding level of globally harmonised legal framework, particularly regarding the liability of multimodal transport operators for damage to goods during carriage. This issue is of major importance for numerous stakeholders in international trade, including carriers, freight forwarders, cargo owners, and both liability and cargo insurers. While unimodal transport is governed by international conventions regulating carrier liability, no such convention in force currently exists for multimodal transport. Furthermore, national legal systems approach this issue differently, resulting in a lack of global uniformity and legal predictability. Consequently, parties to multimodal transport contracts must regulate liability issues through contractual clauses, ensuring their consistency with the mandatory provisions of the applicable law. In this context, the presentation shall examine the provisions of unimodal conventions currently in force, specifically dealing with their applicability to certain stages of multimodal transport. Furthermore, the analysis aims to determine the level of contractual freedom available to the parties to a multimodal transport contract. By examining the

content of commonly used contractual clauses and their applicability in light of mandatory provisions of unimodal international conventions and selected national laws, this presentation allows for a clearer understanding of the actual scope and effect of these clauses. Ultimately, this analysis contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the legal framework governing multimodal transport operator liability for damage to goods.

Zoran Tasić, LLB
Global Offshore Engineering - Legal Department
Split, Croatia

After graduating at the Law Faculty in Split, Zoran Tasić has started his career at Shipbuilding Industry Split where he was involved in export shipbuilding contracts and shipbuilding finance for eight years. In late 1980s, he has joined Shipping Department of Stephenson Harwood, a City of London firm of solicitors where he worked on shipping finance and shipbuilding disputes for 15 years. In 2002, Zoran joined Ince & Co, another City of London firm of solicitors where he worked on shipping related matters for two years. While in London, he was attending courses in Legal Aspects of International Financing, Law of International Trade and Conflict of Laws at Queen Mary University. Upon return to Croatia, he joined Raiffeisenbank Austria d.d. in Zagreb as a Deputy Head of Legal. In 2006, Zoran has formed Banking & Finance team at Zagreb branch of Anglo-Austrian law firm CMS Reich-Rohrwig Hainz, where he spent ten years being involved in many projects in Croatia financed by international banks. Since 2014 until 2022, he was acting as a Consultant to the Management Board of Shipbuilding Industry Split, Croatia. Then he joined Legal department of Global Offshore Engineering in Split, where he was involved for six years in drafting and negotiating various types of offshore contracts. Zoran is a listed Arbitrator in domestic and international disputes held at the Croatian Chamber of Commerce. He has spoken at many conferences and written articles on the international finance and shipping and shipbuilding matters.

How Onerous "Pay to Be Paid" Clause is in Marine Insurance? The Case of MS Amlin Marine NV v King Trader Limited & Others (Court of Appeal, 2025)

This presentation examines a number of issues arising from an authoritative decision of the Court of Appeal in the matter of *MS Amlin Marine NV v King Trader Limited & Ors* [2025] EWCA Civ 1387 of 5 November 2025. Following the grounding of the *Solomon Trader* in February 2019, a Hong Kong arbitral tribunal made an award in March 2023 against her Charterer in the amount of $47 million. The Charterer was wound up in April 2024 and was consequently unable to honour the award. The Charterer's liability insurer (MS Amlin Marine NV) sought a declaration from the Commercial Court in London that (i) the "pay to be paid" (or "pay first") rule was properly incorporated in their Policy and enforceable against the Charterer, (ii) no indemnity was payable by the insurer in respect of any liability that the Charterer had not discharged, and (iii) the "pay first" rule survived the transfer of the Charterer's rights to the Owner and its insurer under the Third Parties (Rights against Insurers) Act 2010. In July 2024, the Commercial Court (Mr Justice Foxton) granted the declarations sought in respect of all the issues. In October 2025, the vessel's owner and its insurer appealed on the grounds that the "pay to be paid" clause was inconsistent with the principal insurance clause contained in the vessel's certificate of insurance and Class 1 insurances. Further, they argued that the clause was not adequately brought to the Charterer's attention and was onerous, unusual, unfair and commercially unreasonable, and in breach of and contrary to the so-called "red hand doctrine". The Court of Appeal

dismissed the appeal, confirming the declarations granted by the Commercial Court, This case confirms that “pay to be paid” clauses continue to be standard in marine insurance policies and that courts will continue to enforce them whenever they are included in the parties’ commercial contracts.

Iva Tuhtan Grgić, PhD
University of Rijeka - Faculty of Law
Rijeka, Croatia

Iva Tuhtan Grgić is an Associate Professor at the University of Rijeka's Faculty of Law, where she teaches Maritime and Transportation Law, Marine Environmental Protection Law, and Administrative Maritime Law. She earned her PhD in Civil Law and Civil Law Procedure from the University of Zagreb's Faculty of Law. She carried out several research stays at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Law in Hamburg, Germany, at the European University Institute in Florence and at the Sapienza University of Rome. Her research findings have been presented at numerous national and international conferences and round tables, and her scholarly work includes a number of publications in the fields of civil and maritime law. She has also served as a member of the expert committee for drafting the Law on Maritime Domain and Seaports and provides ad hoc legal advice to the business sector. As a member of research teams, she has worked on several projects dealing with legal aspects of the transformation of social property, maritime concessions and nautical tourism. She is the Principal Investigator of the CroConnect research project (2025–2029), funded through the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility – NextGenerationEU, focusing on legal aspects of sustainable and inclusive transport transformation. Her professional engagement also includes serving as Vice-President of the Croatian Maritime Law Association and membership in the Croatian Comparative Law Association and the Croatian Transport Law Association.

Zuzanna Pepłowska-Dąbrowska, PhD
Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń
Law and Administration Faculty
Toruń, Poland

Zuzanna Pepłowska-Dąbrowska is an Assistant Professor at the Commercial, Maritime and Civil Procedure Law Department of the Law and Administration Faculty at the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland. Between 2015 and 2019, she served on the Polish Codification Commission for Maritime Law. She is a Board Member of the Polish Maritime Law Association, a member of the Maritime Law Commission’s board of the Polish Academy of Sciences and an arbitrator in maritime disputes. She is an author of many publications in the field of maritime law in Polish and English, including *Codification of Maritime Law* (Informa Law from Routledge 2020); *Maritime Safety - A Comparative Approach* (Informa Law from Routledge 2021) and *Regulating Unmanned Vessels – Emerging Solutions* (Informa Law from Routledge 2026) (all as a co-editor and contributor). She has researched at multiple maritime law centres, including Swansea, Southampton, Oslo, Cadiz, Castellón de la Plana, and New Orleans (the latter as a Fulbright grantee). She was a member of the Polish Delegation to the Legal Committee sessions in London and one of the directors of the maritime and transport law conference, which is held annually at the Inter-University Centre in Dubrovnik.

Is it a Sea Carriage or a Holiday?
on the CJEU Case MH v Costa Crociere SpA

The cruise industry seems to be booming after the collapse during the coronavirus pandemic. At the same time, the law applicable to cruises is highly fragmented. In the EU Member States, there are various legal acts regulating separate issues. Such a *status quo* provides scope for possible overlap of the legal regimes. Specific tensions arise in the field of civil liability for personal injury to passengers. On one hand, there is the uniform liability regime, the 2002 Athens Convention, incorporated into EU law through Regulation (EC) No 392/2009, which specifically addresses carrier's liability for death of and personal injury of passengers and baggage loss or damage. On the other hand, there is the Directive (EU) 2015/2302 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on package travel and linked travel arrangements, which aims to provide protective measures for travellers who participate in package travel. The latter notion also includes cruises. The presentation focuses on this clash of the two legal regimes. The conflict is not hypothetical and has been considered by the Court of Justice of the EU in case C-629/24, MH v Costa Crociere SpA. The CJEU examined whether a passenger could rely on the (old) Package Travel Directive 90/314/EEC or whether the field of passenger personal injury was occupied by the mandatory exclusive code – the Athens Convention and Regulation (EC) No 392/2009. The authors will examine the CJEU reasoning and share their opinion of the judgment, and discuss legal questions that remain unresolved, as well as its potential implications for the interpretation of Article 14(4) of Directive (EU) 2015/2302.

2. CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN SHIPPING INDUSTRY

Daniele Casciano, PhD
University of Udine, Italy

Daniele Casciano is an Associate Professor of Navigation and Transport Law at the University of Udine, where he teaches Transport Law and Logistics, Transport and International Trade Law. He has obtained the Italian National Scientific Qualification as Full Professor in the same field. He is also a practising lawyer, member of the Trieste Bar Association and partner at LawFed – Studio Legale Antonini. He graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Bologna in 2002, subsequently earning an LL.M. in Maritime Law from the University of Southampton (2003) and a Ph.D. in Law and Economics of Production Systems, Transport and Logistics from the University of Udine (2010). He is member of the editorial boards of the journals *Diritto dei Trasporti* and *Comparative Maritime Law*, and of the scientific committee of the *Rivista italiana di diritto del turismo*. He is a member of the Italian Maritime Law Association (AIDIM) and serves on its Steering Committee. He is the author of two monographs – on P&I insurance and shipment sales – and numerous articles and case notes on maritime, transport and international trade law.

Filippo Lorenzon, PhD
University Gabriele D'Annunzio
Pescara, Italy

Filippo Lorenzon is a Professor of Transport Law at Università Gabriele D'Annunzio (Italy), former Chair of Maritime and Commercial Law at Dalian Maritime University (PRC) and a former Director of the Institute of Maritime Law of the University of Southampton. Filippo has considerable experience in shipping practice with leading maritime and commercial law firms in Genoa and Venice and is now a Consultant with Campbell Johnston Clark in London. He has published numerous books and articles on carriage of goods by sea and international trade. In 2020 he published the sixth edition of *C.I.F. and F.O.B. Contracts* in the prestigious British Shipping Laws Series (Sweet & Maxwell) and has since worked and researched on the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic as well as the legal link of robotics and A.I. on commodity trading.

Crude Oil and Products Trading at a Difficult Time: Is the Law of Commodities Plying Through Dire Straights?

The intricacies and peculiarities of the international trading of oil and oil product have come to the fore in recent months due to a series of important geo-political events. Those unfamiliar with this small but important slice of the commodity market may regard its legal framework as a high stake glorified wet version of the classic dry bulk model beautifully summarised in the latest vintage of the Incoterms. The reality is however very different. Oil is traded through multiple channels: public tenders, both open and restricted, term, spot are just the most common. The classic workings of CIF/FOB contracts is often manipulated, amended and tinkered with in order to get a deal through. The few big players compete with a relatively large number of small and very small traders, refineries and distributors making it often complex to understand who has the upper end of a bargain in any specific case. And then comes high volatility. Against this background, the law underpinning these transactions gets often tested far and beyond what is normally expected even for high value transactions. This presentation focuses on some of the most recent developments in the law of international trade in oil and oil products to evaluate and assess its reaction to difficult market conditions, its suitability to provide a stable supply of fossil fuels and potential need for reform.

Vlatka Butorac Malnar, PhD
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Vlatka Butorac Malnar is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka, where she teaches Competition law and European private law to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. She is the Vice-President of the Croatian Competition Law and Policy Association, a non-governmental advisor for the ICN, a member of the editorial board of *Yearbook of Antitrust and Regulatory Studies* and a member of the International advisory board of *Legal Yearbook IPP-PF*. She holds the LL.M and S.J.D. degrees from the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. Over the years, she researched in a number of academic institutions (Cornell Law School, NY, USA; Max-Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, Hamburg, Germany, European University Institute, Florence, Italy). Her work in the area of competition has been published by some of the most renowned international publishers. She is engaged in educational and advisory activities for legal practitioners.

Marijana Liszt, LL.M.
Law firm Liszt & Partners
Zagreb, Croatia

Marijana Liszt has been a practising attorney since 2002. After graduating from the Faculty of Law in Zagreb and obtaining a master's degree in EU Law at the University Carlos III of Madrid, she completed the master's course in EU Law at the Zagreb Law School, focusing on State Aid Law. In 2005 she was appointed by the government of the Republic of Croatia as head of the working group on Chapter 8 – Competition and served in that position from 2005 until the closing of the EU Accession negotiations in 2011. She is currently pursuing a PhD at the Faculty of Law of the University of Rijeka, working on a thesis in the topic of services of general economic interest. She is also a co-author of a university course book on *Competition and State Aid Law* and an author of numerous expert articles relating to competition, state aid or sports law published in Croatia and in the EU, as well as a guest lecturer at the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb and University of Rijeka. Marijana Liszt is the founder and driving force of the boutique law firm Liszt & Partners from Zagreb renowned for its specialisation in State Aid and Competition Law. She has vast experience as a state aid expert and consultant in the region and has been providing specialised consulting services throughout Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Ukraine, Macedonia, Kosovo, Moldova, etc.

Legal Implications of Public Interest Relating to Mainland Cabotage

The authors examine the normative and conceptual relationship between services of general economic interest (SGEI), public service obligations (PSO) and public service contracts (PSC) in maritime cabotage under Council Regulation 3577/92 and Article 106(2) TFEU, with a specific focus on whether, and under what conditions, mainland–mainland routes can qualify as SGEI or be subjected to PSO/PSC. While both Croatian law and Regulation 3577/92 adopt a broad notion of maritime cabotage encompassing mainland and island routes, Article 4(1) of the Regulation, as interpreted by the Commission's Communication on the Interpretation of Council Regulation No 3577/92, confines PSO and PSC to routes to, from and between islands, save for a narrow exception where mainland links are geographically isolated in a manner comparable to islands. At the same time, SGEI is a broader Treaty-based concept: public service compensation (PSC in the State aid sense) is permissible only where a genuine SGEI has been entrusted and the Altmark criteria or the SGEI State aid

framework are respected. This raises two interrelated questions: first, whether an SGEI in maritime transport may exist outside the formal PSO/PSC regime of Regulation 3577/92, particularly for mainland–mainland services; and second, whether a PSO that is not grounded in an SGEI in the sense of Article 106(2) is conceptually and legally coherent in EU law. Using the Croatian system of coastal liner services, including the "light" public service obligation, as a case study, the presentation explores the legal and practical boundaries of national discretion to define SGEI in a liberalised and sector-specific EU framework, and critically assesses whether attempts to construct local SGEI, PSO or PSC for mainland–mainland cabotage are compatible with the liberalisation logic and case law (Analir, SNCM) surrounding Regulation 3577/92.

Ceren Cerit Dindar, PhD
Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University (AYBU), Law Faculty
Ankara, Türkiye

Ceren Cerit Dindar graduated with LLB from Ankara University in 2009. Following her graduation and legal internship period, she was called to Ankara Bar in 2010. She obtained her LLM degree in International Commercial and Maritime Law at Swansea University, United Kingdom in 2013. She was later awarded the degree of PhD in Maritime Law by the same university in June 2019. Her PhD research mainly focuses on legal issues concerning delivery and redelivery of the vessel in time charters. She held the position of research assistant at the Institute of International Shipping and Trade Law (IISTL), Swansea University during her PhD period. Full scholarship was provided by Turkish Ministry of Education for her LLM and PhD studies. Dr. Dindar is currently working as an assistant professor at Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University (AYBU), Law Faculty. She is the head of the Maritime Law Department since 2022. She is also the coordinator of LLM programme in Maritime Law which has been offered at AYBU, Law Faculty since September 2021. She teaches "Carriage of Goods by Sea" and "The Law of Charterparties" modules under the LLM programme. As of 2023, she also serves as a dedicated senior researcher at Ankara University National Center for the Sea and Maritime Law (DEHUKAM). Additionally, she has been serving as the editor of DEHUKAMDER since June 2025. She successfully conducted the project titled *"Legal Problems Relating to the Autonomous Vessels in Turkey and Potential Solutions",* which was funded by The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey under the *"1001-Supporting Scientific and Technological Research Projects Program"* and its project outputs have been successfully shared. Her primary research interests focus on the law of charterparties, autonomous vessels and the implications of the decarbonisation process on maritime commerce.

From "Sail Fast, Then Wait" to the "Blue Visby Solution" – Decarbonising Charterparty Practices

As a response to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 14 (Life below Water), the International Maritime Organization has implemented an ambitious legal framework aimed at achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping by or around 2050. Following these global regulatory framework, a comprehensive decarbonisation movement has commenced in the maritime industry. While long term decarbonisation in the industry can be managed through alternative fuels, immediate operational efficiency measures are essential for short term emission reductions. In this regard, leaving behind the widespread operational inefficiency known as "Sail Fast, Then Wait" can be seen as a significant opportunity. Under traditional voyage charterparties, vessels frequently proceed to the port at full

speed and end up waiting at anchor for days due to port congestion. As a result, “Sail Fast, Then Wait” practice causes environmental harm through unnecessary fuel consumption, so that increased carbon emissions. To reduce these adverse environmental impacts of the practice, “Just in Time Arrival” protocols are introduced to encourage a “Sail Slow and Save” approach. However, they found little application in practice due to conflicting financial motivations between shipowners and charterers, alongside the risk of contractual breach. Accordingly, this presentation aims to evaluate both the contractual hurdles embedded in traditional voyage charterparties and the practical limitations of current “Just in Time Arrival” efforts, while indicating the “Blue Visby Solution” as a new, multi-stakeholder framework for operational decarbonisation. By combining ocean software algorithms, a standardized contractual mechanism and an equitable financial benefit sharing model, this initiative enables vessels proceeding to the same port to optimize speeds collectively without violating despatch obligations or sacrificing commercial priority. Ultimately, this study suggests how integrating the “Blue Visby Solution” into contemporary voyage charterparty practices could reconcile traditional maritime law principles with modern decarbonisation imperatives and support the maritime sector’s ongoing transition toward net-zero emissions.

3. NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN MARITIME TRANSPORT

Manuel Alba Fernández, PhD
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Madid, Spain

Manuel Alba Fernandez (LD 1995, MBA Diploma 1996, PhD 2003) is an Associate Professor of Commercial Law at Carlos III University of Madrid, where he has been teaching since 1999. He has also taught in graduate and undergraduate programs in other Universities in Spain and in other countries. His research activities and publications have focused on maritime law, company law and international trade and business law. Other than in Spain, he has published in Argentina, Colombia, France, The Netherlands, United States of America, Germany and Italy. He has acted as a Spanish Delegate at the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, with which Prof. Alba has also cooperated as an expert for technical assistance activities. He has served as an Attached Officer for the General Commission for the Codification of Law of the Spanish Ministry of Justice. He is currently a member of the Executive Committee of the Spanish MLA and a Titulary Member of the Comité Maritime International.

Something Old, Something New: Some Thoughts about the Integration of Emerging Technologies in Maritime Law

Maritime law has been linked to technology almost since its inception: technology related to ships, communications, navigational aids and infrastructure, particularly port infrastructure. From the perspective of public law, regulations aim to ensure the safety of people and property at sea, protect the marine environment, preserve international shipping, and, more recently, prevent climate change and reduce emissions. In its interaction with private maritime law, technology has also played a decisive role in contract law and in the compensation for non-contractual damages. The technological transformation of recent years is also having an impact on transportation, logistics, and navigation. While the second half of the 20th century brought advances in long-distance communications and ship geolocation, the last decade heralds more drastic changes and a greater need for legal adaptation. Legal and economic literature highlights three phenomena whose disruptive effect is amplified by their combined use: increased connectivity and real-time visibility of the logistics chain; artificial intelligence, currently the most prominent; and the automation of processes—both documentary and physical—through the Internet of Things and smart infrastructures. These factors enable constant communication between vessels, operators, and infrastructure, and open up opportunities to optimize maritime traffic, the use of maritime spaces, environmental impact, and port operations. However, this growing reliance on information and data reveals new vulnerabilities and risks, which are particularly sensitive in a sector where the safety and protection of people, property, and the marine environment are paramount. This presentation will address these new realities to assess their impact on maritime administrative regulations and to identify some of the changes they may bring about in contractual practice and rules.

Raphael Esu, PhD
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Dr Raphael Esu is a Senior Lecturer in Law and Programme Leader for the accelerated LLB at the University of Hertfordshire Law School. He also serves as Head of Legal at Propel GmbH, a Berlin-based technology company with operations across Germany, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Kenya. He completed his doctorate in Shipping and Commercial Law at the City Law School, City St George's, University of London. His research concerns commercial and maritime law and the commercial law consequences of emerging technology. It addresses contractual responsibility, risk allocation, and evidential questions across voyage charterparties, international sales and carriage of goods, digital assets, and distributed-ledger records in trade and customs. His work examines how established doctrines of contract, evidence, and regulation accommodate systems that are automated, distributed, or cryptographically secured, and how commercial parties and regulators should allocate the resulting risks. His monograph on managing legal risk in voyage charterparties for autonomous ships is published by Routledge. His recent articles examine speed and consumption warranties under standard charterparty forms, data communication responsibilities aboard modern vessels, data protection and distributed ledgers, and cryptocurrency regulation in African markets. Dr Esu is a qualified Barrister and Solicitor, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Digital Twins and Rethinking Good Weather in Speed and Consumption Warranties

This presentation asks whether the good weather paradigm in speed and consumption warranties operates as a fixed feature of English performance warranty or as a contractually contingent convention that parties may displace by drafting. Digital twin technology, by modelling vessel performance across all encountered conditions, forces that question. The argument advanced is that digital twins could leave good weather analysis intact as a matter of doctrine, while relocating uncertainty from observation to interpretation. Under the orthodox approach settled in The Didymi and reflected in NYPE drafting, capability is inferred from sampled periods of minimal environmental interference, and adverse conditions are excluded rather than corrected. A model-based all weather methodology replaces inference with comparison against a calibrated baseline. The locus of dispute could therefore move from the classification of sea states to the calibration of resistance coefficients, the reliability of hind cast data and the treatment of partial currents. Parties may choose that shift, with significant evidential consequences. Unless the charterparty agreement expressly addresses the baseline, the treatment of environmental variables and the evidential status of modelled expectations, the interpretative instincts evident in The Divinegate and The Ocean Virgo may reassert the orthodox logic. The limit therefore lies in drafting.

Mihael Mišo Mudrić, PhD
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Law
Zagreb, Croatia

Mihael Mišo Mudrić (PhD) is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb. He earned his PhD at the University of Hamburg (2013) as a scholar of the Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law. His extensive expertise encompasses energy law, AI regulation, data protection, transport, insurance, and security law. As a certified Lead Auditor for the ISO/IEC 42001:2023 AI Management System, Prof. Mudrić actively shapes national legislation. He serves on working groups for the EU AI Act implementation and the Croatian Penal Code amendments. As a TAIEX expert, he advises state bodies on EU Acquis harmonization. Additionally, he is an arbitrator at the Croatian Chamber of Economy and represents Croatia at the IMO on autonomous vessels. With over 140 publications and 210 presentations, he regularly lectures at national diplomatic, judicial, and public administration academies. He has contributed to over 30 projects, leading regulatory affairs for the H2020 IMPETUS project and directing the TransProm project (University of Zagreb). An award-winning academic, he is Vice-President of the Croatian Maritime Law Association, founder of the Croatian Insurance Law Association, and one of the founders of the Dubrovnik Maritime Law Summer School. He has held visiting lectureships globally, including Tokyo, Rotterdam, and Malmö.

Title: ISO 42001:2023 – AI Risk Management System in Shipping

The maritime industry is currently undergoing a profound digital transformation, heavily driven by the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI). From autonomous navigation and predictive maintenance to dynamic route optimization and supply chain logistics, AI offers unprecedented efficiency and environmental gains. However, this rapid technological shift introduces novel vulnerabilities, including severe cybersecurity threats, algorithmic bias, operational safety hazards, and complex liability issues. This presentation explores the critical role of the newly established ISO/IEC 42001:2023 standard in mitigating these sector-specific challenges. As the world's foundational AI management system standard, ISO 42001 provides a robust, certifiable framework designed to ensure the safe, ethical, and transparent deployment of AI technologies. Focusing specifically on the shipping ecosystem, the discussion will dissect how maritime organizations can systematically establish, implement, and maintain an AI risk management system in direct alignment with ISO 42001:2023. Key areas of focus include conducting comprehensive AI impact assessments, establishing clear governance structures, and integrating new AI risk protocols with existing maritime safety regulations, such as the ISM Code. Furthermore, the presentation addresses the intersection of international maritime law and algorithmic accountability, highlighting how proactive compliance shields shipowners, operators, and port authorities from emerging legal and regulatory exposures. Ultimately, attendees will be provided with actionable insights on leveraging ISO 42001:2023 not merely as a regulatory compliance checklist, but as a strategic necessity to foster stakeholder trust, ensure operational resilience, and safely navigate the future of AI-augmented shipping.

Luci Carey, LLM
University of Aberdeen
The United Kingdom

Luci Carey is a Lecturer in Commercial Law at the University of Aberdeen. Before joining Aberdeen, she was a Teaching Fellow in Commercial Law at the University of Edinburgh, where she is completing a PhD examining the legal and liability implications of introducing autonomous vessels. Her research interests lie principally in commercial law, shipping and maritime law, and the impact of emerging technologies in these fields. She spent five years as a Research Associate at the Centre for Maritime Law, National University of Singapore, where she remains an Academic Fellow. Before entering academia, she served as Research Associate to the President of the Court of Appeal at the Supreme Court of Western Australia. She is a co-author of the latest edition *of Commercial Law in Scotland*, and her work has appeared in journals including *Lloyd's Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly, the Journal of International Maritime Law, the Edinburgh Law Review, and Lloyd's Shipping and Trade Law*.

Carriage of Passengers by Sea and MASS – The Legal Challenges for Crewless Passenger Vessels

Much attention has been paid to the development of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) in recent years with the IMO publishing its non-mandatory, goal-based MASS Code. Unsurprisingly, the MASS Code is focused on safety and security concerns as balanced against perceived benefits of autonomous technology. The existing operational remotely operated vessels (ROVs) are used for surveying activities. Such operations are generally of minimal risk to human life as the ROVs are usually less than 24 metres in length. There are also ongoing trials of autonomous cargo carrying vessels involved in short-sea shipping in areas of low maritime traffic. However, there is developing technology which is enabling the introduction of autonomous passenger ferries. In the United Kingdom, the international carriage of passengers by sea is governed by the Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their luggage by Sea. The Athens Convention is extended to all sea carriage within the UK by the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea (Domestic Carriage) Order 1987. This presentation questions whether the current legal regime governing the carriage of passengers by sea is appropriate where navigational decisions are made by an autonomous self-learning system and asks if parallels can be drawn with autonomous road transportation.

4. NEW FORMS OF TRANSPORT DOCUMENTS

Liang Zhao, PhD
Southampton Law School,
University of Southampton
The United Kingdom

Liang Zhao is an Associate Professor in Law at Southampton Law School, University of Southampton, UK. He also serves as the Director of Private and Commercial Law Centre at University of Southampton Law School. Dr. Liang Zhao obtained LLB from Dalian Maritime University, China, his LLM from University of Southampton, and his PhD from The University of Hong Kong. Dr. Zhao is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (FCIArb), supporting member of the London Maritime Arbitrators Association (LMAA) and arbitrator of the China Maritime Arbitration Commission (CMAC). Dr. Zhao's research interests encompass maritime law, insurance law, commercial contract law and conflict of laws. He has published extensively in leading academic journals, including *Lloyd's Maritime and Commercial Law Quarterly, Journal of Business Law, Journal of Private International Law* etc. Dr Zhao is the co-author of *Maritime Law and Practice in China* (Informa law from Routledge, 2017). He also co-authored the chapter on *"Ship Finance"* in *Maritime Law and Practice in Hong Kong* (Sweet and Maxwell Hong Kong, 3rd edition, 2026).

Electronic Bill of Lading – Chinese and Comparative Law Perspective

Electronic bills of lading need recognition of their effect by law in order to perform the same functions as paper bills of lading. The Chinese Maritime Code 2025 (CMC) includes a newly added section on electronic transport records that applies to the electronic bills of lading, granting them the same effect of the paper bills of lading. This new section of the CMC was drafted with reference to the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records 2017 (MLETR) and the UK Electronic Trade Documents Act 2023 (ETDA). This presentation compares the relevant provisions on electronic bills of lading in the CMC 2025, the MLETR and the ETDA. It identifies the differences between these instruments and examine the future work towards the harmonisation of law governing the recognition of the legal effect of the electronic bills of lading.

Patrick Vlačič, PhD
University of Ljubljana
Faculty of Maritime Studies and Transport
Portorož, Slovenia

Patrick Vlačič was born in 1970 in Slovenj Gradec in Slovenia. He completed his legal studies at the Faculty of Law of University of Ljubljana, master's degree at Faculty of Law of the University of Split (Croatia) and PhD again at Faculty of Law in Ljubljana in 2005. He worked at the Supreme Court as a judicial trainee and passed bar exam in 1998. From then to present he has been a professor at the Faculty for Maritime Studies and Transport of University of Ljubljana. He was also director of small international airport, Aerodrom Portorož d.o.o. and the Minister of Transport in 9th Government of Republic of Slovenia between 2008 and 2012. At the moment he is an Associate Professor, and he lectures maritime law, commercial law, civil law, transport law and insurance law. He is also practising law, especially in area of transport and insurance. He is author or co-author of seven books and many articles. He is also a musician and plays bass guitar in bands since year 14. He speaks Slovenian, English, Italian, Croatian and Serbian.

Latest Developments Related to the Electronic Bill of Lading

The transition from paper bills of lading to electronic bills of lading (eBLs) represents one of the most significant developments in the digitalisation of international trade. While global adoption remains gradual, recent legal, technical and institutional developments indicate steady progress towards broader use of electronic transferable records in maritime trade. This contribution examines several developments that are particularly relevant to the current evolution of the eBL. First, an increasing number of jurisdictions are adopting legislation based on, or compatible with, the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (MLETR). Although legal fragmentation remains an important challenge, these developments are gradually strengthening the legal basis for the cross-border use of eBLs. Second, interoperability between different eBL systems is emerging as a central issue. As legal recognition becomes more widespread, the ability to transfer electronic trade records across different platforms, technological environments and participants is increasingly important for achieving broader adoption. In this context, the technical standards developed by the Digital Container Shipping Association (DCSA) constitute an important element in establishing a common framework for interoperable electronic bills of lading. Finally, the contribution considers the evolving role of the International Group of P&I Clubs, including its two different levels approach to the approval of eBL systems. The IG P&I approval remains the informal licence for the eBL platforms. Taken together, these developments suggest that global eBL adoption remains gradual but is steadily moving from experimentation towards an increasingly interconnected and standardised digital trade environment.

5. GREEN SHIPPING, MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

Božena Bulum, PhD
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Božena Bulum is a Scientific Adviser with Tenure at the Adriatic Institute of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. She is a visiting lecturer at the Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Maritime and Transport Law Department of the Zagreb Law Faculty, and the Maritime Department of the University of Zadar, where she holds the academic title of Assistant Professor. Actively contributes to expert committees of the Croatian Ministry of the Sea, Transport, and Infrastructure in drafting maritime legislation and provides legal advisory services to the business sector. Dr. Bulum is part of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Expert Group at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. She has been invited to speak at many international and domestic conferences and has also served as a member of organizing committees for various academic seminars and conferences. She leads the scientific project *"Market Competition in the Maritime Sector – Croatian and European Union Legal Framework"*, supported by the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts Foundation. She is a supervisory board member of the Croatian Maritime Law Association and a founding member of the Croatian Competition Law and Policy Association. Her academic contributions include the publication of an academic monograph entitled *"Maritime Transport and Port Services and European Union Competition Law"*, several book chapters, and over 50 scientific and professional papers.

Marija Pijaca, PhD
University of Zadar - Maritime Department
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Marija Pijaca is an Associate Professor at the Maritime Department University of Zadar, Croatia, where she teaches several undergraduate and graduate courses in the field of maritime law. She is also actively involved in the University's special education and training programme for seafarers leading to the highest maritime certifications. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she holds several institutional roles at the University of Zadar. She graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, and subsequently enrolled in the postgraduate scientific programme Maritime Law and the Law of the Sea at the Faculty of Law, University of Split. During her postgraduate studies, she developed a particular interest in maritime property law. She obtained her master's degree with the thesis "*Contracts on Towing Operations at Sea"* and later earned her PhD from the Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka, defending the dissertation on Bareboat Charter. Prof. Pijaca has participated in numerous national and international scientific research and professional projects. She is the author of the scientific monograph "*Bareboat Charter"* as well as numerous scientific and professional publications. She regularly presents her research at international scientific conferences. She is currently a member of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Expert Group at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE).

Gorana Jelić Mrčelić, PhD
University of Split, Faculty of Maritime Studies,
Split, Croatia

Prof. Gorana Jelić Mrčelić was born on 24 February 1973 in Split, Croatia. In 1996, she graduated from the Maritime Faculty Dubrovnik – Study in Split, obtaining a BSc in Maritime Transport, Department of Sea-Fishing Technology, and an Engineer in Maritime Transport, Department of Nautical Studies. In 2024, she earned a PhD in Biotechnology from the University of Zagreb, Croatia. She is a full professor of biotechnology at the University of Split, Faculty of Maritime Studies, where she teaches and conducts research in sustainability, the blue economy, marine fisheries, marine environmental protection, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, and Marine Spatial Planning, with a particular focus on aquaculture. She has also been a guest professor at the University of Split Department of Marine Studies, University of Dubrovnik, Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries Split, University of Rijeka Faculty of Maritime Studies, University of Zagreb Faculty of Agriculture, and Dr Franjo Tuđman Defence and Security University. Prof. Jelić Mrčelić has published over 100 articles in journals and conference proceedings and has participated in over 15 international and national competitive projects. She currently leads one international and one institutional scientific project. She is an Advanced Open Water Diver (SSI).

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Aquaculture and Contemporary European Union Decarbonisation Strategies

Croatia has pioneered commercial Atlantic bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) aquaculture since 1996, initiated by domestic fishermen utilizing purse-seining and farming techniques acquired in Australia. Currently, Croatia and Spain, alongside Malta, Greece, and Italy, constitute the leading producers in Mediterranean bluefin tuna farming/fattening. The capture and subsequent farming of Atlantic bluefin tuna hold profound economic significance for the Republic of Croatia, with the wild-capture component for farming purposes representing a key segment of the national fisheries sector. The Mediterranean capture-based aquaculture model for Atlantic bluefin tuna entails the wild capture of individuals utilizing purse seines, subsequent biomass enhancement through a diet of small pelagic fish within floating net cages, and final export to the high-value Japanese sushi and sashimi market. Above mentioned activities are regulated through three-tier frameworks: regional, European, and national. Matters regarding the management of Atlantic bluefin tuna species at the regional level fall under the jurisdiction of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). The fisheries and aquaculture of Atlantic bluefin tuna in Croatia are subject to the EU Common Fisheries Policy. The European Union has enacted regulatory instruments governing the comprehensive management of Atlantic bluefin tuna within the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. Recently, at the EU level, a series of studies have been conducted aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. As Croatia holds a significant share of the European Union's Atlantic bluefin tuna quotas and serves as a major exporter of farmed tuna, it actively participates in these initiatives. Proposed measures for mitigating the carbon footprint of fishing vessels and aquaculture facilities applicable to tuna fisheries and farming are analysed, along with their possible regulatory implications.

Axel Luttenberger, PhD
University of Rijeka, Faculty of Maritime Studies
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Axel Luttenberger is a Titular Full Professor with Tenure at the Faculty of Maritime Studies of the University of Rijeka. He got his Bachelor's Law degree at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Law, and became Master of Law and Doctor of Legal Sciences at the University of Split, Faculty of Law. After passing bar examination he had long lasting practice in marine insurance business as legal attorney and legal advisor. He had experience in local government and government public service having been the City Mayor of Opatija and Member of Croatian Parliament. He has published four books and over hundred academic papers. His main activities are teaching maritime, commercial and environmental law at various university and vocational programmes. He is a member of a number of organisations, including Croatian Maritime Law Association. He is involved in projects for maritime industry, government entities and non-governmental environmental associations.

Marine Conservation under the Nature Restoration Law

Biodiversity loss and the degradation of marine ecosystems continue at an alarming rate, harming people, the economy, nature and the climate. Consequently, the restoration of marine ecosystems within a strong legal framework is crucial for safeguarding biodiversity, enhancing climate resilience and securing the well-being of coastal communities. At a pivotal moment when many ecosystems are nearing critical tipping points, the new Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869 is enacted and binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all European Union Member States. It aims to integrate the goals of actively restoring nature into a comprehensive, effective strategy, particularly with regard to climate protection and land use. The roadmap of nature restoration for restoring sea habitats in poor condition is by 2030 to restore at least 20% of degraded marine habitats by 2030 as well as to restore at least 60% of degraded marine habitats by 2040 and to restore at least 90% of degraded marine habitats by 2050. Under this legal framework, Member States are required to submit their finalized National Restoration Plans by September 1, 2026. Moreover, the law dictates that up until 2030, Member States must prioritize restoration measures within existing Natura 2000 sites. The Nature Restoration Law represents a critical evolution in marine environmental governance, shifting the legal focus from merely defending the status quo of our oceans to actively rebuilding them with a necessary reconciliation between economic resource extraction and long-term marine climate resilience.

Pia Rebelo, PhD
The City Law School
City University of London
The United Kingdom

Dr. Pia Rebelo is an Energy & Decarbonisation Specialist at Stephenson Harwood LLP and a Senior Lecturer in Private Law at the City Law School, whose work focuses on the legal and regulatory frameworks underpinning the transition to net-zero emissions. Her research lies at the intersection of contract law, sustainability, and maritime decarbonisation, with a particular focus on how contractual mechanisms can facilitate emissions reductions and support the implementation of climate policy. She teaches maritime law, cross-border commercial law, and contract law, and has published extensively on green shipping contracts, climate clauses, green and sustainable finance, supply chain finance, polar shipping, climate litigation, and maritime decarbonisation.

Decarbonisation Updates in Shipping: Where are we now?

This presentation provides an update on key policy and market developments shaping emissions reductions in maritime transport, focusing on the IMO Net Zero Framework, the EU's FuelEU Maritime Regulation, the expansion of emissions trading systems (ETS) to shipping, and the growing role of voluntary decarbonisation instruments. It outlines how the IMO's mid-century net-zero ambition is being translated into lifecycle-based fuel standards and economic measures, while FuelEU Maritime drives near-term uptake of low- and zero-emission fuels. The presentation also examines the operational and financial implications of carbon pricing under maritime ETS regimes and explores emerging voluntary approaches, such as book-and-claim systems, that enable companies to support and account for the use of sustainable marine fuels across complex supply chains. Together, these developments highlight areas of alignment, divergence, and strategic challenge for shipowners, operators, cargo owners, and fuel suppliers navigating the transition to a net-zero shipping sector.

Petra Perišić, PhD
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Rijeka, Croatia

Petra Perišić is an Associate Professor of International Law at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Law. She teaches Public International Law, the Law of the Sea, and the Law of International Organizations, including courses offered in English to international students. Her research focuses on contemporary challenges in public international law, particularly the regulation of the use of force, state responsibility, and the Responsibility to Protect doctrine. Her recent work examines the role of international law in addressing climate change, including international advisory opinions on climate-related obligations, as well as the protection of cultural heritage from the impacts of climate change. She has also published on the law of the sea and the legal implications of emerging military technologies, including autonomous weapon systems. She has published extensively in Croatian and international academic journals and regularly presents her research at international conferences. Petra Perišić is currently a member of the research project *"Protecting the Rights of Vulnerable Persons in Challenging Times: Legal Standards and Current Realities"*, funded through the European Union's NextGenerationEU initiative. She has also participated in other research projects and has pursued advanced academic training at the Hague Academy of International Law, the European University Institute in Florence, and the Europa-Institut of Saarland University.

Climate Change, Marine Environmental Vulnerability and the Law of the Sea – Interpreting State Obligations in the ITLOS Advisory Opinion

In May 2024, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) issued its Advisory Opinion on Climate Change and International Law. The request, submitted by the Commission of Small Island States (COSIS), asked the Tribunal to clarify the obligations of States Parties under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) with respect to the prevention, reduction and control of marine pollution resulting from climate change, as well as the protection and preservation of the marine environment from its adverse impacts. Applying the principle of systemic integration, the Tribunal interpreted UNCLOS in light of the relevant rules of international law, including those governing climate change. Most notably, it concluded that anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions constitute pollution of the marine environment within the meaning of UNCLOS, thereby confirming the applicability of key Convention provisions, in particular Articles 192 and 194. The

Tribunal further emphasized that States must exercise stringent due diligence, informed by the precautionary approach, apply the best available science, and cooperate at the global and regional levels. The presentation examines the Tribunal's interpretation of States' obligations under UNCLOS, with particular emphasis on the concept of stringent due diligence. It explores the implications of this standard for the interpretation and development of States' obligations to protect and preserve the marine environment in the context of climate change.

TRANSPORT LAW DE LEGE FERENDA 2026

Ante Vojković, LLM
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Rijeka, Croatia

Ante Vojković is an Attorney at Law at Stanić & Partners LLC, Rijeka. He graduated in Law in 2019 from the Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka, where he was awarded three Dean's Awards for academic excellence. In 2021, he passed the bar exam with special praise (*cum laude*). In 2024, he obtained the Degree of Master of Laws (LL.M.) in International Maritime Law with distinction from IMLI, Malta. At IMLI, he was awarded the prestigious CMI Prize for Best Overall Performance, as well as the Government of Malta Prize for the Best Maritime Legislation Drafting Project, for his work entitled *"A Law to Incorporate the 1996 Protocol to the 1972 Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter into the Laws of Croatia and to Provide for the Effective Implementation Thereof."* In 2026, he was awarded the IMLI–Lloyd's Register Foundation Research Degree Fellowship. As part of his doctoral studies at IMLI, Malta, he conducts research on liability and compensation regimes for incidents involving alternative fuels. Alongside his legal practice and academic endeavours, Ante Vojković writes monthly maritime law columns for *Burza Nautike*, a specialised maritime journal. He is also the author of the original scientific paper *"A Legal Analysis of Pollution Damage Claims in the Case of Pollution by Oil and Bunker Oil: Understanding the International Regulatory Framework and the Specifics of the Croatian Legal System,"* prepared at IMLI, Malta, as his LL.M. dissertation. He is an active member of the Croatian Maritime Law Association.

A Liability and Compensation Regulatory Framework in the Event of a Pollution Incident by Alternative Fuels

The transition to alternative marine fuels has become a cornerstone of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) decarbonisation agenda following the adoption of the 2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships. While this transition is essential for achieving net-zero emissions, it also exposes a significant gap in the existing international liability and compensation framework. Current conventions governing pollution damage, including the 1992 Civil Liability and Fund Conventions, the 2001 Bunkers Convention and the 2010 HNS Convention, were not designed to address incidents arising from the use of alternative fuels as marine fuels. This presentation examines the suitability of the existing international liability and compensation regimes for addressing incidents involving alternative fuels and identifies the legal challenges arising from their increasing use in maritime transport. Particular attention will be given to the common legal principles underpinning the current regimes, the specific characteristics of alternative fuels that will require modified or entirely new legal solutions, and the question of whether the existing framework can be adapted or whether a new international instrument should be developed. Finally, the presentation will highlight the latest developments within the IMO, the Comité Maritime International (CMI), and the maritime industry concerning liability and compensation for alternative fuel incidents. It will discuss emerging legal issues and industry trends, together with potential approaches for addressing the evolving challenges associated with the maritime energy transition.

Maša Štampić, LLM
Ministry of Maritime Affairs
Podgorica, Montenegro

Maša Štampić holds a Master Degree in International Maritime Legislation from the IMO International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI), Malta, and a postgraduate specialisation in Maritime Management from the University of Montenegro. She has built her career across both public administration and the private maritime sector. While in Malta, she worked at *MC Consult & Associates*, a legal consultancy specialising in shipping, logistics, and maritime law. She then served as an Executive in Business Development and Shipyard Operations at a yacht company Melita Marine Group from Malta, operating across four countries. Upon returning to Montenegro, she resumed her role at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. She has completed extensive training in international maritime law, with a strong interest in seafarers' rights and sustainable maritime development, and has participated in numerous seminars and courses on the law of the sea, maritime dispute resolution, and sustainable development in the maritime domain. In addition to her native language, she speaks fluent English and Italian, enabling her to work effectively in international and multilingual environments. She is one of the founders and President of WISTA Montenegro. She is also a member of the Montenegrin Maritime Law Association. Ms. Maša Štampić has a strong interest in the intersection between international regulation and local maritime policy, particularly in the challenges faced by small maritime states like Montenegro. Her focus includes legal matters related to seafarers' certification, working and living conditions, international compliance and gender equality. Her current work centres on improving the professional and legal support framework for Montenegrin seafarers within a globalised shipping industry, with the emphasis on more support for women.

Nour Elias Nohra, LLM
IMO International Maritime Law Institute
Valletta, Malta

Nour Nohra is a dedicated lawyer, currently serving as the ITF Seafarers Research Associate in Seafarers' Rights at the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI) in Malta. She is also a member of the Beirut Bar Association, where she practices law. Ms. Nohra graduated with Honours from the Lebanese University, completing her Bachelor's degree in Law at the Filière Francophone de Droit. She continued her academic journey at the same university, earning a First Master's degree in General Law. In 2023, she pursued further specialization and earned an LL.M. in International Maritime Law from IMLI, a renowned institution for maritime law education. Fluent in three languages (Arabic, French, and English) Ms Nour Nohra also speaks professionally in these languages and is actively learning Maltese to further expand her linguistic skills. Throughout her career, she gained practical legal experience through various internships. She began with a paralegal internship at Bablex, where she worked on legal translation tasks. She later interned at Baroudi Law Firm in Beirut, gaining valuable experience in general legal practice, including legal research, case preparation, and client support. In addition to her legal work, Ms. Nohra is a professional violin player.

Maritime Labour Convention after 20 Years: From Policy to Practice - Closing the Gap between Legal Protection and Effective Implementation

Twenty years after the adoption of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), the Convention has become widely recognised as the "fourth pillar" of the international maritime regulatory framework and the principal instrument protecting seafarers' rights worldwide. Through

its comprehensive standards and subsequent amendments, it has significantly strengthened minimum requirements relating to working and living conditions, repatriation, medical care, and financial security and complaint mechanisms. Despite these achievements, practical implementation continues to reveal important shortcomings. This presentation argues that the principal challenge is no longer the absence of legal rights, but the fragmentation of responsibilities among the numerous actors involved in protecting seafarers. Flag States, port States, labour-supplying States, shipowners, insurers and other stakeholders frequently share jurisdiction over the same case, yet effective coordination and communication between them remain limited. As a result, seafarers may experience delays in obtaining assistance, compensation, repatriation or other forms of protection, particularly in complex situations involving abandonment, occupational injuries or operations in conflict-affected areas. Combining doctrinal legal analysis with practical experience gained through handling real cases involving seafarers' rights, this presentation examines the gap between the legal framework established by the MLC, 2006 and its implementation in practice. It identifies recurring obstacles encountered by competent authorities and analyses how fragmented institutional responsibilities affect the timely protection of seafarers. The presentation concludes that the future development of the MLC should focus not only on introducing new substantive rights, but also on strengthening mechanisms for international cooperation, communication and coordinated case management among responsible authorities. Only through effective implementation can the Convention fully achieve its objective of providing meaningful and accessible protection to seafarers worldwide.

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Aleksa Martinović is a Montenegrin lawyer whose practice combines general legal work with a strong focus on maritime law. He currently works at a VRD law firm in Podgorica, Montenegro, providing legal support across various areas of practice, including corporate, civil, and maritime matters. His interest in maritime law was shaped by earlier experience at a law firm in Montenegro, where he worked on maritime disputes, shipping contracts, and marine accidents, while supporting compliance with international maritime regulations. Aleksa holds an LL.M. in Maritime Law and Shipping Business from Frederick University in Limassol, Cyprus, where he defended his thesis titled '*Seaworthiness of Autonomous Vessels: Carrier Duties under the Hague-Visby and Rotterdam Rules'*. He is also completing LL.M. studies in International Law at the University of Montenegro, having earlier graduated in law from Union University Law School in Belgrade. Building on this academic foundation, he is currently applying for doctoral studies. Aleksa frequently appears as a guest speaker at international maritime law conferences, sharing his expertise and staying engaged with current developments in the field. Fluent in English and conversant in German and Italian, he brings strong research and communication skills together with an international outlook shaped by his studies and professional experience across Montenegro, Serbia, and Cyprus.

Marine Pollution from Ships under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea: A Review with Reference to Montenegrin Legislation

Vessel-source marine pollution operational discharges of oil, noxious liquid substances, sewage, garbage, and air emissions, plus accidental spills remains one of the most persistent threats to ocean health. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), particularly Part XII on

"Protection and Preservation of the Marine Environment," provides the principal international legal framework for addressing this problem. UNCLOS obliges States to adopt laws preventing, reducing, and controlling vessel-source pollution, allocating enforcement among flag, port, and coastal States. Flag States bear primary responsibility for ensuring their vessels comply with international standards, notably those set by the International Maritime Organization, including MARPOL. Coastal and port States hold supplementary jurisdiction within territorial seas and exclusive economic zones. This presentation examines the UNCLOS regime on vessel-source pollution and evaluates its transposition into Montenegro's domestic law, a coastal State on the Adriatic and Mediterranean Sea. Montenegro's framework the Law on Protection of the Sea from Pollution from Ships, the Law on Maritime Safety, and related legislation, alongside accession to MARPOL and other IMO instruments is assessed against UNCLOS Part XII obligations and regional instruments such as the Barcelona Convention. The analysis identifies alignment as well as gaps in implementation, monitoring capacity, and enforcement, particularly amid Montenegro's EU accession process and harmonization with EU maritime environmental directives. Recommendations are offered for strengthening the national legal and institutional framework to ensure more effective prevention and control of ship-generated pollution in Montenegrin waters.

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Azra Kulenović is a PhD candidate in the PhD Programme *"The Sea and Maritime Law"* at Ankara University. She studied law at the Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, and obtained a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree from the Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka. Her master's thesis, '*Employment Relationships of Seafarers with Special Reference to Jadrolinija*,' was inspired by the practical experience she gained during her student internship at Jadrolinija, Croatia's national shipping company. Following the completion of her legal studies, she worked in several law firms in Rijeka, gaining practical legal experience. She also served as a lecturer in Commercial Law at the School of Fashion, Design and Commerce in Rijeka. Her doctoral research is conducted within the academic environment of the DEHUKAM Research Center, where she participates in lectures, seminars, and academic activities as part of the PhD Programme at Ankara University. She has also participated in the DEHUKAM Capacity Building Program and the Summer Maritime Academy organized by Kadir Has University. Azra actively participates in national and international academic conferences in the fields of maritime law, the law of the sea, maritime security, and ocean governance. Her recent academic activities include participation in the MARSEC COE Conference in Istanbul, the International Conference *Panama Canal – 25 Years of Panamanian Management*, and the Conference on Blue Economy for Sustainable Ocean Governance, held in Ankara in 2026.

Critical Underwater Infrastructure in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction: Legal Challenges under UNCLOS and the BBNJ Agreement

Critical underwater infrastructure (CUI), particularly submarine cables and pipelines, constitutes an essential component of global transport, communication and energy systems. By enabling digital connectivity, navigation and energy supply chains, it supports international trade and the resilience of contemporary maritime transport. However, increasing dependence on such infrastructure has heightened its vulnerability to accidental damage, environmental pressures, hybrid threats and deliberate interference in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Despite growing attention to

submarine infrastructure and the adoption of the BBNJ Agreement, limited research has examined how its interaction with UNCLOS contributes to the legal protection of critical underwater infrastructure in ABNJ. This presentation addresses this gap by analysing whether existing international legal instruments provide a coherent framework for safeguarding submarine cables and pipelines beyond national jurisdiction. Employing a doctrinal legal methodology, the presentation examines the relationship between the freedom to lay and maintain submarine cables and pipelines, environmental obligations, environmental impact assessments, area-based management tools, and principles of international cooperation and due diligence. It argues that the main legal challenge lies not in the absence of regulation, but in the fragmented interaction between maritime freedoms, biodiversity conservation and infrastructure protection. From a *de lege ferenda* perspective, the presentation argues that future developments should focus on strengthening coherence between existing legal regimes rather than creating a new framework. Coordinated implementation of UNCLOS and the BBNJ Agreement can enhance legal certainty, integrated ocean governance and the resilience of global maritime connectivity.

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Gordan Stanković studied law at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Law. He obtained LL.M. degrees from the Law Faculties of Split, Croatia and Southampton, UK, and a Ph.D. degree from the University of Split, Faculty of Law. He was a Fulbright visiting scholar at the Tulane Law School in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. Dr. Stanković is a partner and head of the Shipping and Admiralty Department at Vukić & Partners, one of the leading commercial and shipping law firms in Croatia. He has extensive experience in various fields of shipping law, but his greatest expertise lies in the fields of shipbuilding, ship finance, ports/terminals/maritime demesne, and enforcement of maritime claims. On two occasions (2000 and 2006-2007), he acted as legal consultant to the Government of Croatia on restructuring of the Croatian shipbuilding industry. As an Associate Professor, he has taught Maritime Law at the Faculty of Maritime Studies in Rijeka, as well as the Law of Shipping Finance at the Faculty of Law in Rijeka, and the Maritime Procedural Law at the Faculty of Law in Split. Dr. Stanković is the author of a series of monographs and papers on various shipping law topics, including the chapter on Croatia in *Kluwer's International Encyclopaedia of Laws - Transport Law*. He has given presentations on a large number of international and domestic maritime law conferences. He has been involved in the drafting of the Croatian Maritime Code as a member of the working group on registration of ships, liens and mortgages, as well as the working group on judicial sales of ships and ship arrest. Dr. Stanković is the President of the Croatian Maritime Law Association and a Titulary Member of the CMI. He is also listed as arbitrator at the Permanent Arbitral Court of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce.

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Igor Vio has been teaching courses in Maritime Law, Law of the Sea, Maritime Labour Law, Environmental Law and Transport Insurance as an Associate Professor at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Maritime Studies. As a visiting lecturer, he has participated in courses at the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta, the IMO International Maritime Academy in Trieste, and the International Ocean Institute at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada. His legal education includes an LLB degree at the University of Rijeka, Faculty of Law, an LLM in Ocean and Coastal Law at the University of Miami, School of Law, an LLM in the Maritime Law and Law of the Sea and a PhD degree in Maritime Law from the University of Split, Faculty of Law. As a UN fellow, he spent one year in the United States and worked at the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs in New York City. Igor Vio has published papers covering various fields of the international law of the sea and maritime law. He was the editor of the volume *"Maritime Code of the Republic of Croatia and Recent Developments in the Area of Maritime and Transportation Law"* and a co-editor and contributor of the book *"Regulating Unmanned Vessels – Emerging Solutions"* (Informa Law from Routledge 2026). He was also a member of the working group for drafting amendments of the Maritime Code. As an invited speaker, he participated with presentations at various national and international conferences. He is the Secretary General of the Croatian Maritime Law Association and a Titulary Member of the CMI.

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