

MARIPOLDATA Ocean Seminar Series

# Identifying and Describing Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs):

## A Key Tool for the Protection of Ocean Biodiversity in Dispute

Wednesday, September 14, 5:00 – 6:30pm (CEST)

Venue: Online

The distribution of legal authority to protect biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) between the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Law of the Sea Convention (LOSC) has been a contentious issue. In practice, main responsibility has been allocated to LOSC, under which a new implementing agreement on conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) is currently being negotiated and now close to being completed. CBD was allocated responsibility for providing scientific information and advice on marine biodiversity, which has resulted in the identification and description of 321 Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) worldwide, within and beyond national jurisdiction. These could provide important scientific backing for a coming BBNJ instrument under LOSC, especially as regards the designation of marine protected areas and the conduct of environmental impact assessments in ABNJ. However, the process of modifying EBSAs and identifying new ones has recently been challenged by the CBD Conference of the Parties, harking back to previous disputes over the legal mandate and thereby threatening the entire mechanism that has been established. In the context of international environmental law and law of the sea, Senior Researcher Christian Prip will discuss the distribution of competence between the two instruments and the potential importance of EBSAs for the expected BBNJ instrument, using the Central Arctic Ocean EBSA as an example.



Christian Prip is a Senior Researcher at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute Norway with a law background. His core area of research is international environmental law and governance with a specific emphasis on biodiversity, oceans and the Arctic. Before entering academia, Prip has 20 years of experience as a lead negotiator in international environmental negotiations for his native country Denmark. From 2005 to 2007 he was Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Technical, Technological and Scientific Advice (SBSTTA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The monthly [MARIPOLDATA Ocean Seminar Series](https://www.maripoldata.eu) offer a virtual space to get information and engage in exchanges on ocean governance issues, through presentations by international experts from academia, governments, international organisations and civil society. It is organised by the MARIPOLDATA project.

**To register:** via email to [maripoldata.erc@univie.ac.at](mailto:maripoldata.erc@univie.ac.at), indicating your name and institution

**More information:** <https://www.maripoldata.eu>

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