

# Energy Transitions and Marine Environments: Conflicts, Cooperation, and International Regulation

Science for Society Roundtable addressing the following issues:

- Maritime Governance in uncertain times: *security and cooperation amidst tensions*
- Sharing maritime spaces: *legal, spatial, and ecological perspectives*
- Cooperation and energy infrastructure-building at sea: *learning from best practices*

Full program below.

Organized under the Geo-legal Working Group of the European Research Platform on Energy and Climate Law

## Context

As the UN Nice Conference on the Oceans takes center stage in 2025, it is an opportune moment to reflect on the role of maritime spaces in the energy transition, which has increasingly attracted the attention of policymakers, legal professionals and social scientists. The Geo-legal Working Group of the European Research Platform on Energy and Climate law has identified this timely issue as the focus of its work in 2025.

The symposium will gather contributions from law, social and environmental sciences to address governance challenges related to energy development in marine environments, focusing on the North of Europe (North Sea, Irish Sea, Baltic Sea). These areas are strategic for oil and gas production in Norwegian waters and UK waters and are rapidly becoming key sites for offshore wind under the North Seas Energy Cooperation 'NSEC'. The aim is to explore how legal frameworks can adapt to the specific challenges of these spaces.

## Main challenges

The discussions will examine zoning systems, space-sharing practices, and marine spatial planning – including marine protected areas - as tools requiring reorganization of legal and spatial frameworks. These developments raise tensions between national and international law, particularly in cross-border infrastructure. The symposium will map existing frameworks and explore how to better integrate them across scales to support sustainability and mitigate tensions.

The symposium will also focus on new bilateral cooperations in cross-border investments, questioning the roles of actors, power imbalances and risk sharing. Key themes will include energy justice, governance of common pool resources, and the rights of future generations. It will also interrogate legal definitions of ownership and appropriation and whether maritime spaces can be treated as common goods in support of sustainability goals.

The presentation of these topics will consider whether these challenges reflect a shift in maritime governance or reproduce existing tensions, raising the question of new "blue legalities" (Braverman & Johnson, 2020). Finally, the symposium will highlight the need for methodologies that capture adaptive interdisciplinary approaches to the energy transition.

## Agenda

### **2.30 p.m (Paris Time) – Welcome speech**

- Pascal Marty, Director of the Maison Française d'Oxford
- Louis de Fontenelle, Associate Professor in Public Law, University of Pau and Pays de l'Adour, Director of the European Research Platform on Energy and Climate Law

### **2.35 pm to 3.30 pm – 1<sup>st</sup> Panel : Governing marine spaces in the context of the energy transitions : challenges and cooperation**

*Chair : Pierre Bocquillon, Associate Professor in Politics, University of Est Anglia*

- Geneviève Pons, Europe Jacques Delors, Director General and Vice President ; Chair of the Citizen Engagement Group of the European Union Mission "Restore our Ocean and Waters" (Starfish)
- Glen Wright, Researcher, REN 21
- Tobias Baussmann, Deputy Head of the Office for Hydraulic and Marine Renewable Energies, Directorate General for Energy and Climate

### **3.30 pm – 3.45 pm – Break**

### **3.45 pm to 4.45 pm – 2<sup>nd</sup> Panel : Energy infrastructure development in complex environments : spatial enquiries**

*Chair : Emmanuelle Santoire, Research Fellow LATTS CNRS, University Gustave Eiffel, ENPC, IPP*

- Hugo Cordier, PhD Student LATTS , ENPC : "Bridging Worlds : Offshore Wind Planning in France"
- Pierre Warlop, Country Director, Natural Power
- Brice Trouillet, Full Professor, Director of UMR 6554 CNRS LETG, Institut de Géographie et d'Aménagement Régional, University of Nantes (IGARUN) : "Maritime spatial planning – perspectives and challenges about "spatial" and geographic information" (La planification de l'espace maritime à propos de quelques enjeux autour du "spatial" et de l'information géographique).

### **4.45 pm – 5 pm – Conclusion**