

Category

SH Social Sciences and Humanities

Session Number

SH-1

Session Title

Environmental Protection, Resource Rights and Evolving Geopolitics in Antarctica

Session Description

Global pressure over the Antarctic environment and its natural resources will increase over the coming decades due to three factors: climate change, the global dwindling of natural resources, and the fact that Article IV of the Antarctic Treaty leaves the question of sovereignty in Antarctica unresolved. Thus, the global community and the ATS regime specifically have an interest in developing tools to ensure continued protection of the natural environment as well as the regime itself. It is critical to develop projections regarding soft and hard manifestations of territorial pressures and international power plays on the ATS, and how these are likely to build over the next decades. We are also at a unique point in history to influence the ethical dimensions of the decisions that may govern claims on, and uses of, the Antarctic: What is a fair division of natural resources? Does any nation or group of nations have a privileged claim? Is stronger environmental protection desirable and how should it feature in future decisions?

In this session we invite contributions that are placed within the theoretical framework of international law and international management regimes, as well as normative viewpoints on territorial claims, claims over natural resources and environmental protection. Historical or comparative analyses on these issues, and discussions based on the Arctic experience are also welcome.

Keywords: Antarctica, environmental protection, international law, Antarctic Treaty System, resource rights, geopolitics, sovereignty, territorial claims, regimes, Arctic

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