

ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS AND STRUCTURES AS A MEANS OF  
SAFEGUARDING STATE SOVEIGNTY AGAINST SEA LEVEL RISE. A LAW  
OF THE SEA PERSPECTIVE.

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**Abstract**

According to reliable scientific data, Sea Level Rise due to Climate Change, is a fact. Amongst various social, economic and legal implications, the issue of State Sovereignty is one of the least taken into account. Certain methods, including the use of Artificial Islands and Structures (A.I.S.), for tackling the problem of gradual sinking of lands, especially in Small Island and Low Lying states, are proposed or already deployed (e.g. the “sovereignty marker”, Yamamoto and Esteban, 2010). The use and status of A.I.S. has been dealt with only scarcely by the UNCLOS. On the other hand, environmental and safety issues have been much more thoroughly elaborated on national and regional level, but only for exploration and exploitation platforms.

The use of A.I.S., as a means of conserving Territorial Sovereignty over vanishing areas, is an upcoming aspect, which is yet to be taken under consideration by both scientific community and policy makers. Artificial Islands as human habitats, Land Reclamation Projects, Sovereignty Markers for submersing islands, are some of the most noteworthy ideas. The lack of an integrated and coherent framework on their legal status acts as a setback for their adoption as an effective means against the problems that Sea Level Rise poses on Territorial Sovereignty.

The scope of this presentation is to highlight the possible uses of A.I.S. vs. Sea Level Rise, to underline the lack of international legal framework concerning their deployment and use and to present several legal options and actions that should be undertaken in order to promote the use of A.I.S.