
SustainEUorPlanet – Jean Monnet Chair Project

presents

SustainEUorPlanet Seminars in Bologna

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AULA H Belmeloro, via Beniamino Andreatta 8

***“The Rise of Sustainable Investment
Facilitation: The WTO IFD Agreement and
the EU–Angola and the EU–Ecuador
SIFAs”***

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Introductory Remarks and Discussant
Prof. Elisa Baroncini
SustainEUorPlanet Jean Monnet Chair

Abstract: Historically, international investment agreements (IIAs) have been structured around substantive investor protection standards and investor-State dispute settlement (ISDS) mechanisms. More recent initiatives, however, highlight a different governance logic that prioritises transparency, administrative efficiency, regulatory cooperation, and broader sustainable development objectives. In short: a regulatory framework centered on "investment facilitation". Within this evolving landscape, the analysis focuses on three contemporary instruments: the WTO Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD Agreement) and the Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreements concluded by the European Union with Angola and Ecuador (SIFAs). Despite operating at different levels of governance - multilateral in the case of the WTO and bilateral in the EU agreements - these frameworks share a distinctive design. They omit commitments on market access, exclude traditional substantive protections such as fair and equitable treatment (FET) and full protection and security (FPS), and do not provide for ISDS. Instead, they promote a procedural architecture in which States remain the central actors in the regulation and facilitation of investment.

Dr. Niccolò Lanzoni: Niccolò Lanzoni is post-doctoral research fellow and adjunct professor in International Law at the Department of Law and at the Department of Cultural Heritage of the University of Bologna. He holds a PhD in International Law from the University of Bologna and has been admitted to the Italian Bar. He has obtained the "National Scientific Qualification" (Abilitazione Scientifica Nazionale) for the position of associate professor in International Law in Italian universities. Previously, he held the position of post-doctoral research fellow (*assegnista di ricerca*) and adjunct professor at the same university. A visiting research fellow at the Heidelberg Institute for Latin America and former guest lecturer at the Eastern Mediterranean University, he served as research assistant for the Italian Defence College in the M/V 'Norstar' case (Panama v Italy). In 2023 he published the monograph *L'acquiescenza nel diritto internazionale* with Editoriale Scientifica. In 2025 he won the Rosalyn Higgins Prize for the article: "The International Judicial Function and How We Think About It: Non Liqueur Revisited".

Prof. Elisa Baroncini: Full Professor of International Law, Elisa Baroncini is Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague (since October 2025). She has been elected (December 2023) Member of the Executive Council of the Society of International Economic Law (SIEL) and, in 2019, she founded DIEcon, the Interest Group on International Economic Law of the Italian Society of International Law (SIDI), which she currently coordinates after having been Co-Chair of the Interest Group on International Economic Law of the European Society of International Law for ten years (2013-2022). Member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Advanced Studies (ISA) of the *Alma Mater Studiorum* – Università di Bologna, in June 2022 Elisa Baroncini was appointed by the European Commission "TSD Expert" to settle disputes within the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapters (TSD Chapters) of the new EU Trade Agreements, and, in May 2025, accepted by the International Law Association to be member of the ILA Committee on the Contributions of International Law to the Global Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2030 Agenda. In May 2023, she was appointed by the Italian Government as an Independent Non-executive Director on the Board of Administration of Eni S.p.a., the Italian energy company. Elisa holds a cum laude Law Degree and a PhD in EU Law from the University of Bologna. After many years of EU Law and International Law teaching, she currently teaches International Trade and Investment Law (Re-Globe), International Law on Sustainable Development, and International Energy Law in Bologna and Ravenna, has been Visiting Professor at the China-EU School of Law, speaker in many international conferences, Visiting Researcher at the European University Institute. Elisa, currently Jean Monnet Chair of the Project SustainEUorPlanet (2025-2028), coordinates and participates in international, EU, and national research projects: *inter alia* Coordinator of the Jean Monnet Module Re-Globe (2022-2025), the Seed Funding Una Europa Project ImprovEUorGlobe (2023), the Seed Funding Una Europa Project WHC@50 (2022), the Projects "L'Organizzazione mondiale del commercio quale protagonista dello sviluppo sostenibile nel rilancio del sistema multilaterale" (2024-2025) and "Il sistema multilaterale degli scambi come piattaforma per affrontare le sfide globali: gli Accordi e le Iniziative plurilaterali dell'OMC quali strumenti di governance del nuovo ordine economico mondiale" (2025-2026), both financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She published extensively on EU External Relations Law, EU Trade Policy, and International Economic Law, mainly in English and Italian. Her main fields of research include: the crisis of the WTO Appellate Body and the WTO reform process; the relation between free trade and non-trade values; transparency in International Economic Law; the role of the European Parliament and the European Commission in the conclusion of international trade and investment agreements; the bilateral dispute settlement mechanisms of the new EU Trade Agreements; UNESCO and International Economic Law; EU trade policy and the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda; International and EU Energy Law.

SustainEUorPlanet: The Project proposes an interdisciplinary and critical analysis of the EU's international policies and legal frameworks directed to economic and social fairness, respect for the environment, access to clean energy and essential goods, while looking for security to overcome geopolitical tensions and asymmetries. SustainEUorPlanet has a twofold purpose. On one side, it offers a set of activities envisaging the promotion of a ruling and academic class of excellence, involving EU, national and international civil servants, politicians, NGOs, local businesses and public administration. On the other side, SustainEUorPlanet shows the leading role of the EU as a global actor in constantly promoting a sustainable agenda for trade, environment, energy and climate policies, highlighting the importance of economic operators' accountability and the relevance that EU citizens can have in shaping and enforcing EU's external tools through participation and transparency. Likewise, the Project focuses on political security policies in world economy. More information available on the [Project's website](#) and on [LinkedIn](#).

