



FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN FEDERAL MARITIME AND HYDROGRAPHIC AGENCY LECTURES AT IMLI

Professor Peter Ehlers (Former President of the German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency) recently visited IMLI and delivered a lecture on “Marine environment protection – The example of the Baltic Sea”.

During his lecture Professor Ehlers discussed the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (the Helsinki Convention) which was adopted in 1974 and revised in 1992, marking an important milestone in international ecopolitics. Professor Ehlers explained that the Convention formulates regulations obliging Contracting Parties to implement and apply appropriate national protection measures and sets up the legal basis for an intergovernmental co-operation through the International Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (Helsinki Commission or HELCOM). As an important innovation the Convention no longer sees the protection of the marine environment only as a matter of reduction of inputs, but includes also nature conservation and biodiversity. Professor Ehlers stated that the greatest obstacle is that the protection of the marine environment requires huge investments, but public financial resources are limited. Professor Ehlers concluded his lecture by saying that despite these existing problems the Helsinki Convention has proved to be a successful instrument to advance marine environment protection. The co-operation within HELCOM has initiated a promising development. However, this co-operation has not yet achieved its final aim, but is a continuous and challenging task which has to be further intensified.



Professor Peter Ehlers (Former President of the German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency) lecturing to the Class of 2010/2011

Professor Ehlers has long been involved in maritime law affairs. During his notable career he has held various positions in the German maritime administration including, President of the German Bundesamt für Seeschifffahrt und Hydrographie (Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency). He has actively participated in international activities at International Maritime Organization, International Hydrographic Organization and Helsinki Commission. A Professor of Law of the Sea at Hamburg University he is a board member of numerous marine scientific and technical institutions and author and editor of numerous publications on maritime, environmental, administrative and legal matters.

After retirement in 2008 he has held leading functions in several maritime institutions, including Governing Board of the World Maritime University, Malmö, Board of Trustees of the International Foundation for the Law of the Sea, Hamburg, Institute for Law of the Sea and Maritime Law of Hamburg University, Baltic Sea Institute for Maritime, Environmental and Infrastructure Law, Rostock University and Directing Committee of the International Max-Planck Research School for Maritime Affairs, Hamburg.

When asked about the latter Professor Ehlers explained that:

“The International Max Planck Research School for Maritime Affairs at the University of Hamburg has set up a unique interdisciplinary Ph.D. program covering the legal, economic, ecological and geophysical aspects of the use, protection and management of the oceans. It is divided into five research clusters: "Maritime Trade and Transport", "Coastal Zone Management", "Management of the Marine Environment", "Ocean and Climate" and "Management of the Deep Sea Bed". The research of the natural scientists is directed towards the causal link between certain uses of marine resources and their effects, while the assessment of these effects and the discussion of normative consequences are essentially carried out by economists and lawyers.

The School provides extensive research capacities as well as its own teaching curriculum. In addition, the researchers can use the facilities of other institutions of the Law of the Sea, such as the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), with whom a cooperation has been established. Directors are professors and lecturers from the cooperating institutions. They act as supervisors for dissertations and elect applicants for the School's Ph.D. grants. Scholars and Associates are students with outstanding academic credentials who write their Ph.D. thesis at the School. Scholars receive a full scholarship, whereas Associates are expected to find other sources of funding.”

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