

Dustin Breitling

Thesis Advisor: Martin Riegl, PhD.

## Small Island Developing States and Statehood

Abstract: The spate of warnings that have been issued concerning Climate Change and its damaging impact upon the livelihood of populations has garnered increasing acknowledgement and critical concern. In a century where the potential for states to be submerged, concerns are being raised about how states, especially Small Island Developing States, are susceptible to losing Statehood. Small Island Developing States are already being ravaged by higher sea levels and dramatic loss of livelihood through inundation and potential submergence of their territory by the end of the century. Already these concerns are catalyzing Small Island Developing States to seek out alternative arrangements for their populations and importantly to preserve their legal personality. These arrangements tie in decisive concerns that connect how States are understood within in the international community as possessing a permanent territory, effective governance, permanent population and the capacity to be recognized by others. The angle offered and explored here becomes what happens once a permanent territory is undermined by seawaters and populations are relocated to Host States. If these issues are bound to occur then can historical precedents assisting in projecting what Small Island Developing States could resort to legally and resource-wise to maintain their standing and recognition amongst the International Community.