

ISA International Guest Lectures

Trauma of the Sea

Coastal Dosham, Erosion and Cyclical Injury in Kerala, South India

Claudia Lang

Dept of Health Ethics & Society, Maastricht University



12 February, 2026
16:00–17:30

Meeting Room 4, 4th Floor
Georg-Coch-Platz 2
1010 Wien

Photo: © David Bokuchava

Chellanam is among the areas of Kerala that are most severely affected by coastal erosion and flooding. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in Chellanam, I trace lived experiences of coastal erosion. I explore how coastal transformations map onto physiological and psychological states in one of Kerala's most vulnerable communities and address these entangled ecological and psycho-physiological coastal erosions as wounds invoked by the local term, coastal dosham. An Ayurvedic and local imagination of shared trauma, this helps to carve out what it means to think with flows, blockages and imbalances about the multiple interlocking relations of people, minds, bodies and ecologies under conditions of coastal erosion. In doing so, I contribute to the anthropology of coastal erosion and the anthropology of ecological distress.

© Nina von der Wiese



Claudia Lang is an Associate Professor of Anthropology and Health at the University of Leipzig and the University of Maastricht. Her research focuses on the intersection of mental health and social life, situating the lived experience and care of mental distress in wider social relations, particularly in South Asia (India).

ORGANIZER

Institute for Social Anthropology (ISA)

CONTACT

sozialanthropologie@oeaw.ac.at

[OEAW.AC.AT/ISA](https://oeaw.ac.at/isa)

REGISTRATION

No registration required.

Photo: © David Bokuchava