

China's Law of the Sea

The New Rules of Maritime Order

Isaac B. Kardon

An in-depth examination of the law and geopolitics of China's maritime disputes and their implications for the rules of the international law of the sea

China's Law of the Sea is the first comprehensive study of the law and geopolitics of China's maritime disputes. It provides a rigorous empirical account of whether and how China is changing "the rules" of international order—specifically, the international law of the sea.

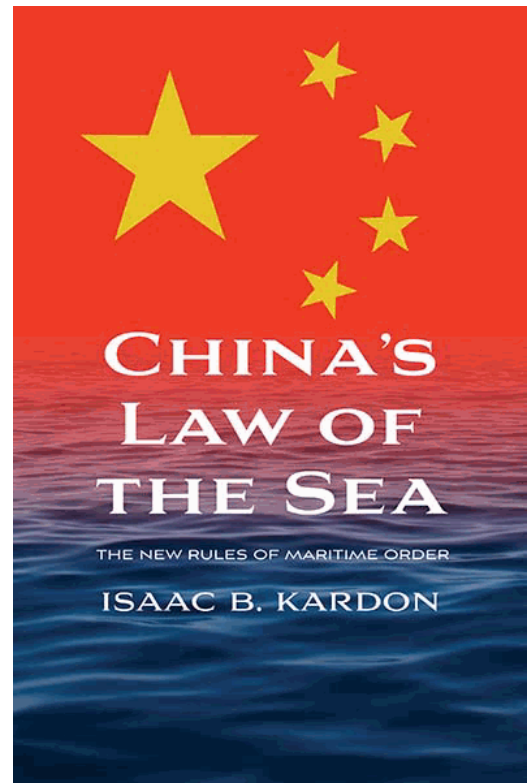
Conflicts over specific rules lie at the heart of the disputes, which are about much more than sovereignty over islands and rocks in the South and East China Seas. Instead, the main contests concern the strategic maritime space associated with those islands. To consolidate control over this vital maritime space, China's leaders have begun to implement "China's law of the sea": building domestic legal institutions, bureaucratic organizations, and a naval and maritime law enforcement apparatus to establish China's preferred maritime rules on the water and in the diplomatic arena.

Isaac B. Kardon examines China's laws and policies to defend, exploit, study, administer, surveil, and patrol disputed waters. He also considers other claimants' reactions to these Chinese practices, because other states must acquiesce for China's preferences to become international rules. China's maritime disputes offer unique insights into the nature and scope of China's challenge to international order.

Isaac B. Kardon is senior fellow for China studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He was formerly assistant professor at the U.S. Naval War College's China Maritime Studies Institute. He is also a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations and an associate in research at Harvard's Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies.

Praise for *China's Law of the Sea*:

"China's rise as a maritime power is a defining element of its ascent. In this carefully researched and insightful book, Kardon documents China's distinctive approach to the law of the sea that combines legal interpretations, bureaucratic mobilization, and maritime forces on the water. *China's Law of the Sea* is a terrific contribution to the literature that illuminates China's challenge to the international maritime order in East Asia and beyond."—M. Taylor Fravel, director of the Security Studies Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology



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