

CONFERENCE

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ACTIVE

ERSAP 2026 : Ecocriticism and Representations of the Sea in the Arts in Portugal

LOCATION	SUBJECT / TOPIC	EVENT DATES	LAST UPDATED
Portugal	General	November 5-6, 2026	7th July, 2026

DESCRIPTION

Ecocriticism and Representations of the Sea in the Arts in Portugal
5 and 6 November 2026

Call for Papers

The sea and marine life are often considered as pillars of cultural heritage, identity, and collective memories in Portugal (Lourenço 2001; Lourenço 2014). From the historical milestones of the sixteenth century transoceanic navigation (Cortese 1978) to literary production (Avelar 2024), the ocean has shaped the national imagination of Portugal (Tomás 2013). As Antonio Barreto writes: "Heritage is a human creation and the results from history and culture. But there are natural realities that are transformed, through history, culture, and technology into heritage. Such is the case of the sea for the Portuguese" (2019: 15). As a form of heritage, this connection extends to gastronomy and, in a particularly profound way, to the musical sphere (Simões 2013: 45–62; Sardo 2013: 44–64).

From fado, with its narratives of longing and loss, to the songs that gave rhythm to the fishermen's daily work, the Portuguese musical repertoire has functioned as a living archive of human interaction with the environment. However, there is nothing natural or essentialist about this Portuguese relationship with the sea, for it is an imaginary that has been constructed and continuously negotiated across historical periods, which also bears the imprint of colonialism (João 2015: 119–147; El-Shawan Castelo-Branco et al 2003: 73–142). More dramatically, the transformations driven by climate change and unsustainable industrial fishing in the twenty-first century threaten not only biodiversity (Ramos-Pereira 2004: 26–43), but also the cultural practices linked to it – a topic that still requires greater attention in scholarly research.

In any case, beyond its material and economic dimensions, the sea in Portugal remains a space of imagination and transformation. As evoked in the songs of José Afonso, the sea is not just a site of identity and homecoming, but also a place of alterity and utopia. By singing of the sea, we evoke the possibility of a new era, in which culture and nature meet once again in a shared project of humanity – a vision that also

KEY DEADLINES

Submission	31st Jul, 2026
Notification	15th Sep, 2026
Conference	5th Nov, 2026

OFFICIAL LINKS

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CALL FOR PAPER URL

<https://callforpaper.org/cfp/call-for-papers-ersap-2026>

resonates with the notion of the Blue Humanities (Mentz 2023; Oppermann 2019: 443–461). This call seeks to explore the intersection between what we have inherited and what we must protect. Therefore, we invite researchers, artists, and cultural practitioners to reflect on how these environmental changes reshape the meaning of the arts and their role as vehicles of identity and resistance.

Papers are welcome on the following topics, amongst others:

- The sea as a cultural construct in Portuguese music and the arts;
- Music, critique, and resistance to climate crises in Portugal;
- Intersections between literature, music, and environmental heritage;
- Representations of the sea and music in literature and written culture;
- Music, sound, identity, and the politics of ocean memory;
- Collective memory, local identities, and soundscapes;
- The sea in film, the media, and popular culture;
- Folklore, folk groups, and the preservation of intangible cultural heritage;
- Coloniality and decoloniality of contemporary maritime identity;
- Transcultural and postcolonial perspectives on the maritime imaginary;
- Blue Humanities and music as an environmental archive;
- Resistance, utopia, and sound activism in the face of climate change;
- Tourism and heritage preservation of coastal musical cultures;
- Technology, marine sciences, and music;
- Ocean ethics, music, and maritime imaginaries;
- Phenomenology, aesthetics, listening, and maritime experience.

Submission Guidelines

Proposals should be sent to the email: cecc.fch@ucp.pt, and include paper title,

A 300-word abstract in Portuguese or in English should be submitted for a 20-minute presentation, including a provisional title, a brief biographical note (max. 150 words) and contact details.

Contributions may be in Portuguese or English.

- Abstract submission deadline: July 31, 2026
- Notification of acceptance: September 15, 2026
- After acceptance of abstracts, participants must register for the conference.

Registration Fees and Deadlines

The registration fee includes coffee breaks and conference materials.

- Early bird registration (September 16–30): €75 (student) | €100 (non-student)
- Regular registration (October 1–20): €100 (student) | €150 (non-student)

Keynote Speakers

Diana Gonçalves, Catholic University of Portugal

Susana Sardo, University of Aveiro

Organizers

Alyse Kaweng Fan e Thales Reis Alecrim

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Ana Matoso, CECC

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Sofia Vieira Lopes, INET-md

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