

**Environmental Institutions and Policies in the  
International Context**

Code: 102814  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2501915 Environmental Sciences	OT	4	0

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

**Contact**

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**Use of Languages**

Principal working language: english (eng)  
Some groups entirely in English: Yes  
Some groups entirely in Catalan: No  
Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

**External teachers**

Ana Karla Perea

**Prerequisites**

None.

**Objectives and Contextualisation**

This class will expose students to the key actors, interests and institutions that take part in international environmental politics. This implies paying attention to the following issues:

- 1) the general features of the international system (which includes a crash course on International Relations as a discipline);
- 2) the key actors and political forces of the international arena, inasmuch as they are relevant for environmental matters;
- 3) the interactions between such actors, the evolution of the system and the ways in which actors react to that evolution;
- 4) the rules, regimes and norms established to facilitate cooperation on environmental matters, particularly as regards international negotiations;
- 5) the international institutions (both formal and informal) that have been created in order to uphold such norms and rules; and
- 6) some of the key factors and problems associated with the ways in which the environment can be at the root of violent conflicts.

## Competences

- Adequately convey information verbally, written and graphic, including the use of new communication and information technologies.
- Analyze and use information critically.
- Demonstrate adequate knowledge and use the tools and concepts of the most relevant social science environment.
- Demonstrate concern for quality and praxis.
- Demonstrate initiative and adapt to new situations and problems.
- Information from texts written in foreign languages.
- Teaming developing personal values regarding social skills and teamwork.
- Work autonomously

## Learning Outcomes

1. Adequately convey information verbally, written and graphic, including the use of new communication and information technologies.
2. Analyze and critically assess the functioning of the various state political institutions.
3. Analyze and use information critically.
4. Analyze problems arising from the implementation of public policies and conflict situations recognizing the complexity of social phenomena and policy decisions that affect democracy, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.
5. Demonstrate concern for quality and praxis.
6. Demonstrate initiative and adapt to new situations and problems.
7. Describe the main elements of the political process: socialization, attitudes and political ideologies.
8. Information from texts written in foreign languages.
9. Make a diagnosis of the problems of conflict and cooperation to the countries, regions and areas of the international system as it takes.
10. Make a diagnosis of the problems of security and development to countries, regions and areas of the international system as it takes.
11. Political actors describe and critically evaluate the political behavior in different socio-political and historical contexts.
12. Show whether these policies cause conflicts or respond to a consensus.
13. Teaming developing personal values regarding social skills and teamwork.
14. Use this demonstration to be interpreted as embodying a political decision.
15. Work autonomously

## Content

At the end of the course students will be familiar with the basic analytical tools and empirics of international environmental politics. More to the point, first, students will develop a critical understanding of key areas of international environmental politics, in terms of the outcomes of negotiations, the objectives of actors, their motives, the resources they are able to mobilize, alliances, and the interests at play. In addition, the course also helps students develop the capacity to understand, discuss and use some of the most relevant analytical and conceptual approaches to the study of international environmental politics, which are often specific variations on broader approaches to global governance more generally.

### Block 1

Block 1 revises the agenda, actors and consequences of the 4 big UN conferences on the environment, namely the UN Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio, 1992), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, 2012), under the understanding that they are (particularly the first two of them) good illustrations of different phases in international environmental politics.

### Block 2

Block 2 explores the causes, consequences and design of international regimes on the environment. When do regimes emerge to manage environmental problems, which functions do they perform and which consequences can they have? When can they be expected to have an impact or, alternatively, to remain as dead letter agreements? What do different IR schools of thought think about this? This block also addresses the debate on the need to build a World Environmental Organization. Which countries have been for and against an IGO on the environment? What would be the reasons for and against the creation of a World Environment Organization? What are the key features of the different proposals on a WEO? How would each of them contribute to enhance global environmental governance?

### Block 3

Block 3 is a who is who of international environmental politics. We pay attention at different actors, their resources, their roles and their influence in international environmental politics. More to the point, we look at:

- States. Power, powers and emerging powers.
- Non-governmental organizations. Voice and access.
- Companies and private authorities
- Subnational/local governments, transgovernmental networks
- the European Union

### Block 4

Block 4 pays attention at specific negotiations in international environmental politics. Some of the negotiations we can pay attention to are the following ones:

- Climate change
- Ozone
- Acid Rain
- Biodiversity
- International trade in GMOs
- Dessertification
- Whales
- Antarctic Treaty System

## Methodology

See the table.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Lectures	30	1.2	2, 4, 11, 7, 9

Small group practical work at class	10	0.4	3, 4, 14
Small group seminars	10	0.4	3, 6, 5, 12, 9, 8, 1, 15, 13, 14
Type: Supervised			
Office hours in small groups (final paper)	4	0.16	3, 4, 7, 15, 13, 14
Type: Autonomous			
Student-led preparation of final paper	40	1.6	
Student-led study	50	2	3, 2, 4, 11, 7, 9, 10, 8, 15

## Assessment

The final paper will look at negotiations taking place at the yearly Conference of the Parties. We will following negotiations in quite some detail at class.

If one of the exams, or both, gets less than 5, the student will be able to take a re-sit exam if he or she has taken part in assessment activities equivalent to 60% of the final grade.

## Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final exam (open book)	40%	3	0.12	2, 4, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 14
Final paper on climate negotiations (groups, max 3 people)	40%	0	0	3, 6, 5, 8, 1, 15, 13
Mid-term exam (open book)	20%	3	0.12	2, 4, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 14

## Bibliography

-Gareth Porter, Janet Welsh Brown and Pamela S. Chasek (2017), Global Environmental Politics, Westview Press.

-Betsill, Michele M., Hochstetler, Kathryn, and Stevis, Dimitris (eds) (2014), Advances in International Environmental Politics, Palgrave.

## Software

None