

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

Code: 102814  
ECTS Credits: 6

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
2501915 Environmental Sciences	OT	4	0

## Contact

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## Teaching groups languages

You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject. Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2023.

## Prerequisites

No prerequisites are required.

## 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, 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 to 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 of broader approaches to global governance more generally.

BLOCK I: Cooperation, institutions and a bit of history

1. International environmental problems, collective action problems and cooperation
2. Change and continuity in the history of international environmental politics

3. Regimes, not organizations, and why that matters
4. The cycle of international environmental negotiations

#### BLOCK II: Actors, power, interests and preferences

5. States in international environmental politics: power, preferences and interests
6. Environmental NGOs: voice, access, and direct action
7. Companies and private authorities: the transnational governance sphere
8. International environmental politics and the UN system

#### BLOCK III: Negotiations, cooperation and conflict

9. Climate: the many changes of climate politics
10. Ozone: the model of environmental negotiations
11. Whales: a tale of three transnational actors
12. Biodiversity: North and South
13. Palm oil: private authorities
14. Acid rain: the role of knowledge and science
15. The debate on environmental security

## 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			
Master classes	30	1.2	2, 4, 11, 7, 9
Problem solving classes	19.5	0.78	3, 4, 14
Type: Supervised			
Case studies	6	0.24	3, 4, 12, 11, 7, 8, 1, 15, 13, 14
Debates, discussions and quizzes	4	0.16	3, 2, 4, 6, 5, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 8, 1, 15, 13, 14
Type: Autonomous			

Student-led preparation of group exercise	40.5	1.62	3, 8, 1, 15, 13
Student-led study	50	2	3, 2, 4, 11, 7, 9, 10, 8, 15

## Assessment

The evaluation of this course consists of the following:

1. A partial exam covering the first part of the course programme mid-way through the course: 35% of the final grade.
2. A partial exam covering the second part of the course programme at the end of the course (on the last day of class): 35% of the final grade.
3. A group exercise: 20% of the final grade.
4. Continuous assessment: participation in class and activities programmed by the teaching staff, such as debates, text commentaries, etc.: 10% of the final grade.

Important considerations:

In order to pass the course, it is necessary to obtain a minimum grade of 5 in each of the partial exams and the weighted average final grade of the course also needs to result in a minimum grade of 5. If failing to overcome the threshold, students will be able to take part in a retake exam if they have participated in assessment activities equivalent to 60% of the final grade.

Single assessment:

Students who have so requested in due time and form, may participate in a single assessment activity consisting of an exam (70% of the grade) and a practical activity (30% of the grade). This single assessment activity will take place on the last day of class at the end of the term. To pass the single assessment activity, it is necessary to obtain a minimum grade of 5. In case of failing to overcome the threshold, it is possible to retake the assessment activity.

## Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Final exam (open book)	35%	0	0	2, 4, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 14
Group exercise	20%	0	0	3, 2, 4, 6, 5, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 8, 1, 15, 13
Mid-term exam (open book)	35%	0	0	2, 4, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 14
Participation in class	10%	0	0	3, 2, 4, 6, 5, 12, 11, 7, 9, 10, 8, 1, 15, 13, 14

## Bibliography

- Gareth Porter, Janet Welsh Brown and Pamela S. Chasek (2017), *Global Environmental Politics*, Westview Press.
- Michele M. Betsill, Kathryn Hochstetler, and Dimitris Stevis (eds.) (2014), *Advances in International Environmental Politics*, Palgrave.

## Software

None in particular.