

Degree programme	Type	Course
Interdisciplinary Studies in Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability	OP	1

Contact lecturer

Name : Juan Emilio Nieto Moreno

Email : juanemilio.nieto@uab.cat

Prerequisites

It is recommended that students have a basic knowledge of Law. Even so, each year a small introduction is made on the rules that are applicable, their hierarchy, the competence regime, and the different judicial levels.

Group languages

You can consult this information at the [end](#) of the document.

Objectives

This module is aimed at allowing students to understand and interpret the basic legal regime applicable to the environment and sustainability. Administrative environmental law will be discussed in particular, provided that it constitutes the cornerstone of the legal basis applying to the action of the public administrations concerning the environment, and also has a relevant impact in the world of business. For that purpose, the subject is structured in three large thematic blocks.

In the first block, it is about offering an overview of what is currently understood by Environmental Law, which legal disciplines converge and in what way; Here it is absolutely essential to see the relevance of international environmental law as well as the environmental law of the European Union. It will also be necessary to influence the right of citizens to have an environment suitable for the development of the person and the duty to preserve it and the obligation of the

public powers to ensure the rational use of all natural resources. That is why the role of the Environmental Administration and that of the citizens in the preparation and execution of Environmental Law will have to be discussed.

In the second block, several transversal mechanisms will be studied, which aim to guarantee the participation of citizens in environmental affairs, prevent damage to the environment, favour voluntary environmental rating or management systems, or establish the responsibility of those who cause damage environmental issues, such as access to environmental information, liability for environmental damage, integrated pollution control, environmental impact assessments, eco-labelling and environmental audits.

Finally, the third block will offer an overview of what is the legal regime applicable to environmental subsectors that are usually given independent regulatory treatment, both in terms of the existing distribution of competences and degree of development at state, regional and local, as in the administrative organization adopted, the rules currently in force, their interpretation and the level of application observed: the protection of natural spaces and biodiversity, and protection, management and planning of the landscape; the coast, the coast and the marine environment; continental waters; waste and contaminated soil and atmospheric, acoustic and light pollution. Depending on the time available, they will work more or less thoroughly.

Learning outcomes

- CA30 (Analyse complex socio-environmental problems from a legal perspective, based on critical opinions on the application and effectiveness of environmental regulations.) Analyse complex socio-environmental problems from a legal perspective, based on critical opinions on the application and effectiveness of environmental regulations.
- CA31 (Critically evaluate the ethical and social implications of environmental regulations and policies.) Critically evaluate the ethical and social implications of environmental regulations and policies.
- CA32 (Demonstrate ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties in the field of environmental law.) Demonstrate ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties in the field of environmental law.
- KA30 (Describe the European Union and international legal framework for environmental protection, including the regime applicable to climate change.) Describe the European Union and international legal framework for environmental protection, including the regime applicable to climate change.
- KA31 (Explain the instruments of environmental prevention and control (strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment, liability for environmental damage, permits) and voluntary instruments such as environmental certification and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).) Explain the instruments of environmental prevention and control (strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment, liability for environmental damage, permits) and voluntary instruments such as environmental certification and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).
- KA32 (Distinguish the specific legal protection regimes for different regulated environmental sectors such as water, coastline, atmosphere, waste, contaminated soils and biodiversity.) Distinguish the specific legal protection regimes for different regulated environmental sectors such as water, coastline, atmosphere, waste, contaminated soils and biodiversity.
- SA31 (Interpret current environmental regulations by applying them to specific sustainable management situations and problems.) Interpret current environmental regulations by applying them to specific sustainable management situations and problems.
- SA32 (Evaluate the integration of the environmental component in sectoral public policies from a legal perspective and considering the scope of application of each regulation.) Evaluate the integration of the environmental component in sectoral public policies from a legal perspective and considering the scope of application of each regulation.

Contents

BLOCK 1: GENERAL PART

1. Environmental protection and sustainability objectives as the subject matter of law. Principles. The environmental legal system.
2. The international framework for the legal protection of the environment. The international legal regime applicable to climate change.
3. The significance of European Union Environmental Law. Actors, competences (powers) and principles. The regulatory instruments used and their relationship with domestic law. Exercise of competences. The difference and complementarity with European strategic environmental programmes. The Eighth Environment Action Programme to 2030 and the European Green Deal.
4. Public Administration and environmental protection. Competences and environmental administrative

organisation.

THEMATIC BLOCK 2: Cross-cutting mechanisms

1. Environmental information, citizen and group participation, and access to justice in environmental protection. Citizens' right to participate in the most relevant environmental protection decisions.
2. Liability for environmental damage. Basic features of criminal, civil, administrative and so-called environmental liability applied to this field.
3. Environmental assessment of plans and programmes or strategic environmental assessment. Environmental impact assessment of projects, works, installations and activities.
4. Environmental prevention and control through permits for potentially polluting activities.
5. Traditionally voluntary instruments and their evolution. Incentives for environmental protection. Environmental certification: Ecolabel, green claims/greenwashing, EMAS, ISO standards; Corporate Social Responsibility.

THEMATIC BLOCK 3: Regulated sectors

1. Protection of inland waters.
2. Protection of the coastline and the marine environment.
3. Atmospheric pollution, noise pollution; light pollution and odours: their legal treatment. The regime applicable to climate change.
4. Legal regime of waste and contaminated soils. Circular economy. Hazardous substances.
5. Protection of natural resources. Special protection areas. Protection of biodiversity and the protection, management and planning of landscapes.
6. Integration of the environmental component into the formulation and implementation of sectoral public policies: transport, energy, agriculture...

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Tutorials	5	0.2	CA30, CA31, CA32, KA30, KA31, KA32, SA31, SA32
Lectures	18	0.72	KA30, KA31, KA32
Preparation of presentations and practical work; drafting of papers and/or essays	26	1.04	CA30, SA31, SA32
Study	41	1.64	CA30, CA31, CA32, KA30, KA31, KA32, SA31, SA32
Readings: articles, case law...	11	0.44	CA31, CA32, KA30, KA31, KA32
Seminars/practical sessions/classroom activities	10	0.4	CA30, SA31, SA32

The Environmental Law course is delivered through directed, supervised and autonomous activities.

Directed activities consist of theoretical lectures and seminars/classroom activities.

Seminars and classroom activities usually consist of oral presentations of readings, case law and practical cases, following prior individual work (autonomous activity) and subsequent group deliberations in the classroom (directed activity). The materials are available on the Virtual Campus.

At the beginning of the course, a timetable will be published so that students can consult the schedule of theoretical classes and seminars/classroom activities.

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.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Second mid-term exam	30%	2	0.08	KA30, KA31, KA32
Class presentations and practical sessions; papers, essays	40%	10	0.4	CA30, CA31, CA32, KA30, KA31, KA32, SA31, SA32
First mid-term exam	30%	2	0.08	KA30, KA31, KA32

1. Continuous Assessment

1.1 Assessable activities - Assessment of the theoretical contents of the course is based on two mid-term examinations (each worth 30% of the final mark). The remaining 40% corresponds to the assessment of classroom activities (presentations, practical exercises, etc.) and the papers or essays prepared by students.

At the beginning of the course, the lecturer will make available to students a timetable specifying the specific assessable activities and their weighting, within the limits set by this course guide. It will also indicate whether they are individual or group activities and the scheduled date.

Students will be assessable provided that they have completed a set of activities whose weight amounts to at least two thirds of the total course mark. If this threshold is not reached, the lecturer may consider the student as not assessable.

The dates set for examinations and other assessable activities are compulsory. Only duly justified circumstances that absolutely prevent attendance may allow the activity to be taken on a different date. Driving tests and similar situations are not considered justified reasons.

Mid-term examinations assess knowledge acquired in both lectures and seminars/classroom activities. At the beginning of the course, the lecturer will inform students of the format of the examinations (multiple choice, essay questions, mixed system, etc.).

The marks for classroom activities and written work will also take into account the knowledge and skills applied

(ability to solve practical cases, argumentation, presentation skills, teamwork, among others).

To pass the course, it is necessary to obtain a weighted average mark of 5 points. Students who fail the course (i.e., obtaining an average of less than 5 out of 10) may take the resit examination in accordance with the conditions set out below (1.2).

1.2 Resit

Only students who have sat both mid-term examinations may take the resit examination. There is no minimum mark required to access resit: all students who have sat both mid-term exams and have not passed the course may take the resit.

In this examination, both mid-term exams (theoretical and practical) may be recovered. Coursework and practical work are not recoverable. The content of the resit will cover the contents of both mid-term examinations. The lecturer will specify the format and structure of the resit examination.

The resit examination will take place on the date officially determined by the Master's Coordination.

In the resit grade, marks obtained for practical activities or coursework, as well as those obtained in any of the mid-term examinations, will not be taken into account.

1.3 Copying, plagiarism and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students who copy or attempt to copy in mid-term examinations or written exercises carried out in the classroom will receive a mark of 0 for the course and will not be entitled to sit the resit examination. Likewise, students who copy or attempt to copy in the resit examination will receive a mark of 0.

Students who submit a practical exercise or any other activity in which there is evidence of plagiarism or who cannot justify the arguments presented will receive a mark of 0 for the activity and a warning. In the event of repeated conduct, the student will fail the course and will not be entitled to sit the resit examination.

Restricted use of AI: For this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is permitted exclusively for support tasks (such as bibliographic or information searches, proofreading or translations), or within the context of specific activities in which the lecturer expressly provides for the use of such technologies (such as case simulations). The student must clearly identify which parts have been generated using AI, specify the tools used and include a critical reflection on how these tools have influenced the process and the final result. Lack of transparency will be considered a breach of academic honesty and will entail the same consequences as plagiarism.

2. Single Assessment

2.1 Assessment activities - Assessment of the course is based on three activities: first mid-term exam (30%), second mid-term exam (30%) and practical exam (40%). All these activities will take place on the same day. The date of the assessments will coincide with that set for the second mid-term examination under the continuous assessment system.

The same "not assessable" criterion applies as in continuous assessment.

Students who copy or attempt to copy in the mid-term test, the final examination or the practical test will receive a mark of 0 for the course and will not be entitled to the resit examination. Likewise, students who copy or attempt to copy in the resit examination will receive a mark of 0.

2.2 Resit - Only students who have sat all the activities referred to in paragraph 2.1 may take the resit examination. The same resit system as for continuous assessment will apply.

Review of the final mark follows the same procedure as in continuous assessment.

Bibliography

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WEB RESOURCES

<https://www.miteco.gob.es/es/>

<https://european-union.europa.eu/>

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/index_en

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/chapter/20.html>

<https://ieep.eu/>

<https://www.eea.europa.eu>

<https://www.unep.org/>

<https://hudoc.echr.coe.int>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-intergovernmental-cooperation/environment-and-human-rights>

<https://eeb.org>

Software

This module does not require any specific software.

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this [link](#). To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TEm) Theory (master)	1	English	first semester	afternoon