

Global Environmental Governance

Spring 2025

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Meeting time: T 9-12pm, 3.212
Office hours: 3.227, T 1-3pm and by appt

This course will introduce students to major aspects of global environmental governance. We will begin with introduction of essential concepts related to collective action and public goods. In the first part of the course, we will address the nature of global environmental problems, collective action theory, the leading international organizations dealing with environmental problems, the significant pieces of global rules governing the environment, the role of the United States, science, non-state actors, and private governance. In the second half of the course, we will look in detail at a few issues, including air quality and ozone depletion, climate change, oceans management and fishing, rainforest conservation, species protection, and the future of global environmental governance.

The goals are to (1) familiarize you with the key debates and issues past, present, and future in global environmental governance, (2) provide you with a set of analytical tools to understand the scope for progress in this arena, (3) develop your sense of the landscape of organizations and information in this space, and (4) spur your creative engagement with global environmental issues in your subsequent professional career.

Grading and Assignments

Grading will be based on an actor profile/problem diagnosis (10%), two response papers (20%), a midterm exam (30%), a final strategy project (30%), and class participation (10%).

For the actor profile/problem diagnosis exercise, I will select several documents related to the current state of play for the entire class to read (as well as some optional podcasts/videos). You and possibly one other student will be asked to do a short presentation of 5 to 10 minutes in the class followed by between 10 and 20 minutes of Q&A and discussion in class (20 minutes in total for individual presenters, 30 minutes for two presenters). For topics before the mid-term, you will relate the news articles/documents to the readings from class that day to talk about The Role of Actors/Limitations in global environmental governance. For topics after the mid-term, you will carry out a Problem Diagnosis, discuss issues related to that topic and collective action, what has been tried to date and deficiencies/limitations in the approach to date. That presentation will be accompanied by a 2 page double-spaced summary of those same themes (Actor Topics: Role/Limitations; Problem Topics: Problem Diagnosis, What Has Been Tried). If two of you are presenting, each of you has to submit an individual assignment.

For the response papers, you will write a two-page double-spaced summary of the readings for two different days (that should be different from the actor profile/problem diagnosis day) and these should be from BEFORE THE MIDTERM. For that assignment, your responses should be double-spaced. You should address all of the authors you read for that week. What is their argument? Do you agree with their assessment? Why or why not? This assignment will force

you to be pithy. The best papers will provide a synthesis of some of the key points made in the readings, your own critical evaluation of and reactions to the readings, and comments on the conceptual implications of the readings. Do NOT sequentially summarize each of the readings. Response papers are due the beginning of the class for the topic on that given day.

The in class mid-term exam will be applied where you get some news articles to read about a topic and be asked a series of questions to diagnose the challenges of collective action, limitations on the approaches to date and what should be done going forward.

For your end of the semester strategy project, you will design a campaign to focus on progress in an area of your choosing. You will develop a multi-faceted strategy for advancing progress in that space focusing on (a) state-based approaches, (b) international organizations, and (c) non-state actors/private governance. These can be alternative approaches or part of an overarching coherent strategy. The project will have two parts a 1-2 page single-spaced strategy memo and a more detailed background paper of roughly 10-12 pages double-spaced expanding on the memo. More detailed instructions will be provided but your strategy paper will cover (1) the nature of the problem (2) which actors are important (3) deficiencies in approaches to date and (4) what should be done going forward.

For the class participation, I'm going to go old school and pass around an attendance sheet each class and will also reflect on quality/quantity of participation during each session.

All of your work should be original. Please no plagiarism; don't pass off some author's work as your own. If you do and I find out, bad news! I will enforce the strongest punishments in the LBJ School's plagiarism policy that I can. Please refer to the official policy for further details.

** Late assignments will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade for every day late. Thus, an A- would become a B+, a B+ a B, etc.*

My grading scale

93 and up is an A

90-93 A-

87-90 B+

83-87 B

80-83 B-

Readings: I'd like you to get a copy of Hannah Ritchie, *Not the End of the World: How We Can Be the First Generation to Build a Sustainable Planet*. Vintage. 2024. Paperback is \$13.68.

https://www.amazon.com/Not-End-World-author/dp/152993124X/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&sr=

All readings will be available on Canvas, unless otherwise noted on the syllabus as a URL or through UT LIBRARY. I also encourage you to read current events related to the coursework.

Course Digest

Class 1 (1/14): Global Environmental Governance
Class 2 (1/21): Collective Action
Class 3 (1/28): The Role of States
Class 4 (2/4): Treaties and International Agreements
Class 5 (2/11): International Environmental Organizations
Class 6 (2/18): Non-State Actors
Class 7 (2/25): Air Pollution/Ozone

Class 8 (3/4): Mid-term (covers classes 1-6)

Class 9 (3/11): Climate

No Class (3/18): Spring Break

Class 10 (3/25): Clean Energy Transition
Class 11 (4/1): Forests
Class 12 (4/8): Fisheries & Oceans
Class 13 (4/15): Wildlife Conservation
Class 14 (4/22): Future of Global Environmental Governance

(5/1) Strategy Papers Due

COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1 (1/14): Global Environmental Governance

Ritchie, Hannah. Intro and Chapter 1. 1-36.

Mitchell, Ronald. 2010. *International Politics and the Environment* (Los Angeles: Sage). Chapters 2. 21-47.

Andresen, Steinar, Elin Lerum Boasson, and Geir Hønneland, 2012. "Chapter 1, Introduction: Governing the International Environment." *International Environmental Agreements: An Introduction*. Routledge, 3-20.

Barrett, Scott. 2003. *Environment and statecraft: the strategy of environmental treaty-making* (Oxford: Oxford University Press). Chapter 2, 19-48.

Study Questions

- What are international environmental problems?

- What is global environmental governance?
- What are some of the key moments in global environmental governance history?
- What does Mitchell mean by problem structure and what role does it play?
- What are the issues associated with resolving environmental issues that have an upstream/downstream component?
- What about capacity problems?
- What is the history of the fur seal? What lessons learned does Barrett draw?
- What are the various approaches to global environmental governance?
- What are the five questions that Andresen and Speth propose to evaluate environmental governance efforts?

Class 2 (1/21): Collective Action

Axelrod, Regina and Stacy VanDeveer. 2019. "Governing the Global Environment." *The Global Environment: Institutions, Law, and Policy*, 5th edition. Axelrod et al, 1-32.

Oye, Kenneth A. 1985. "Explaining Cooperation under Anarchy: Hypotheses and Strategies." *World Politics* 38(1), 1-24.

Sandler, Todd. 2004. *Global collective action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Chapters 2 and 3, 17-44 and 45-74.

Hardin, Garrett. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons."
http://www.garretthardinsociety.org/articles/art_tragedy_of_the_commons.html

Barrett, Scott. 2007. *Why Cooperate? The Incentive to Supply Global Public Goods*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 1-21, 74-102.

Mitchell, Ronald. 1994. "Regime Design Matters: Intentional Oil Pollution and Treaty Compliance" *International Organization* 48:3: 425-458.

Study Questions

- According to Oye, what are the barriers to collective action? How do you overcome those barriers?
- What are the two properties of public goods and how does that affect collective action?
- What is the tragedy of the commons?
- What are externalities?
- What is the technology of aggregation? How does that affect the prospects for collective action?
- Why does Oye say, when you see hoofed animals, think horse not zebra?
- How can states overcome these collective action problems?
- As an issue area, what game forms do international environmental problems take? Are the prospects for cooperation and collective action good?
- What is difference between the domestic and international arena?
- What made for successful policy in the oil pollution regime?

Class 3 (1/28): The Role of States

Urpelainen, Johannes. 2022. *Global environmental politics: the transformative role of emerging economies*. Columbia University Press. 1-86.

DeSombre, Elizabeth R. 2019. The United States and Global Environmental Politics: Domestic Sources of U.S. Unilateralism. In *The global environment: institutions, law, and policy*, edited by Regina S. Axelrod, Stacy D. VanDeveer, and David Leonard Downie, Washington, DC: CQ Press. 5th: 163-190.

Busby, Joshua. 2015. "A Green Giant? Inconsistency and American Environmental Diplomacy," chapter in an edited volume *The United States, China, and World Order*, edited by John Ikenberry, Zhu Feng, and Wang Jisi, Palgrave. 245-274.

Henderson, Mark. 2021. It All Hinges on China: Environmental Governance in the Twenty-First Century. *Global Environmental Politics* 21 (4): 148–153.

Study Questions

- What is the role of states in global environmental governance?
- How does the sovereign state system shape the potential for progress?
- How have changes in the distribution of power changed global environmental governance?
- Where do states' environmental preferences come from?
- What are different ways states can address international environmental challenges?
- What has the US's record been in global environmental governance? How has it changed over time?
- Under what conditions does the United States play a leadership role in global environmental policy?
- What is the crux of Henderson's review article on China?

Class 4 (2/4): Treaties and International Agreements

Chasek, Pamela S. and Lynn M. Wagner. 2012. *The Roads from Rio: Lessons We Learned from Twenty Years of Multilateral Environmental Negotiations*, 1-37.

Susskind, Lawrence E. and Saleem H. Ali. 2015. *Environmental Diplomacy*, 9-44.

Victor, David G. and Lesley A. Coben, 2005. "A Herd Mentality in the Design of International Environmental Agreements?" *Global Environmental Politics*, 5, 24-57.

Mitchell, Ronald B. et al. 2020. "What We Know (and Could Know) About International Environmental Agreements" *Global Environmental Politics*. 103-118.

Brandi, Clara, Dominique Blümer, and Jean-Frédéric Morin. 2019. When Do International Treaties Matter for Domestic Environmental Legislation? *Global Environmental Politics* 19 (4): 14–44.

Study Questions

- What are the stages of treaty negotiation to implementation? What is the difference between signing an agreement and ratifying it? What does it mean for a treaty to enter into force?
- Why is there a preference for hard law in international environmental agreements?
- Are there any potential advantages of pledges (or soft law approaches) to international agreements?
- What do Victor and Coben mean by the herd mentality in the design of international environmental agreements? Why do negotiators prefer quantity targets over prices? Why might price targets be preferred?
- What do we know about patterns in international environmental agreements?
- How well is the system of international environmental agreements working?
- When do international treaties matter for domestic environmental legislation?

Class 5 (2/11): International Environmental Organizations

DeSombre, Elizabeth. 2006. *Global Environmental Institutions*. London: Routledge. 1-41.

Busby, Joshua. 2017. "International Organization and Environmental Governance" in Renée Marlin-Bennett, ed, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, 1-29. **TO BE REPLACED WITH 2025 UPDATE.**

Siebenhüner, Edited by Frank Biermann and Bernd. 2009. *Managers of Global Change: The Influence of International Environmental Bureaucracies*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 1-11.

Bauer, Steffen, Per-Olof Busch And Bernd Siebenhüner. 2009. "Treaty secretariats in global environmental governance" in: Frank Biermann / Bernd Siebenhüner / Anna Schreyögg (eds.), *International organizations in global environmental governance*, London: Routledge, 174-191.

Esty, Dan. 2006. "Global Environmental Governance," in Colin Bradford and Johannes Linn, eds., *Global Governance Reform* (Washington, DC: Brookings Press). 108-114.

Najam, Adil. 2003. "The Case Against a New International Environmental Organization," *Global Governance* 9: 367-381.

Ivanova, Maria. 2021. "At 50, the UN Environment Programme must lead again." *Nature* 590: 365.

Ivanova, Maria. 2021. *The untold story of the world's leading environmental institution: UNEP at fifty*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2021, 1-24.

Study Questions

- What is the distinction between institutions, organizations, and bureaucracies/secretariats?
- What functions need to be performed by global environmental organizations?
- What is the Achilles heel of many international organizations?

- What did Seibenhuner say about variation in secretariat agency? What is Bauer's assessment?
- What is the role of UNEP? What are its accomplishments? What are its weaknesses?
- What is Esty's argument for a reformed UNEP? What is Najam's argument?
- What is Ivanova's take on UNEP?
- What did I write about the reputation of the World Bank and WTO?

Class 6 (2/18): Epistemic Communities, Non-State Actors, and Private Governance

Epistemic Communities

Haas, Peter M. 1989. Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control. *International Organization* 3 (2): 377-403.

Nonstate Actors

O'Neill, Kate. 2019. "Architects, Agitators, and Entrepreneurs." In *The global environment: institutions, law, and policy*, edited by Regina S. Axelrod, Stacy D. VanDeveer. 5th. Washington, DC: CQ Press. 35-67.

Keck, Margaret and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders*. 1-38.

Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, Mette, and Teale N. Phelps Bondaroff. 2014. "From Advocacy to Confrontation: Direct Enforcement by Environmental NGOs." *International Studies Quarterly* 58 (2): 348-361.

Private Governance

Green, Jessica, 2014. *Rethinking Private Authority*. Princeton U. Press. 1-25.

Study Questions

- What is included in the category of non-state actors?
- What is the relationship between science and global environmental policy?
- What are epistemic communities?
- What are NGOs? What are their sources of influence? What are their limits?
- What are transnational advocacy networks? Who can be part of it?
- What are the four mechanisms TANs use to influence political outcomes?
- What are the various stages of the policy process over which they have influence? Which stages do they have most influence?
- What is framing? What kinds of frames work? How does that affect environmental advocacy?
- What is direct enforcement? Under what conditions does it potentially work?
- What is private authority?
- What is the distinction between delegated and entrepreneurial authority?

Class 7 (2/25): Air Pollution/Ozone

McNeill, J. R. 2001. *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World* (New York: Norton), 50-83.

Ritchie, Hannah. Chapter 2. 37-66.

Wettestad, Jorgen. 2012. "Reducing long-range transport of air pollutants in Europe." *International Environmental Agreements: An Introduction*. Steinar Andresen, Elin Lerum Boasson, and Geir Hønneland eds. Routledge, 23-37.

Levy, Marc A. 1993. "European Acid Rain: The Power of Tote-Board Diplomacy." In *Institutions for the earth: sources of effective international environmental protection*, edited by Peter M. Haas, Robert O. Keohane, and Marc A. Levy, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 75-132.

Downie, David Leonard. 2019. "International Environmental Regimes and the Success of Global Ozone Policy" In *The global environment: institutions, law, and policy*, edited by Regina S. Axelrod, Stacy D. VanDeveer. 5th. Washington, DC: CQ Press. 101-32.

Kelsey, Nina. 2021. International Ozone Negotiations and the Green Spiral. *Global Environmental Politics* (2021) 21 (4): 64-87.

Study Questions

- What does McNeill say about the history of air pollution? What's different about the contemporary era?
- What is Ritchie's take on the state of air pollution?

Acid Rain

- Let's talk about acid rain and air pollution efforts in Europe historically with the Long-Range Transboundary agreement. What was the problem? What pollutants has it regulated?
- How did high politics help this issue get attention and get on the agenda? How was it structured? How did it change over time? What were some of the critical divisions? Between who? Over what? How resolved? Why did it work or not? What does Levy say? What does Wettestad say?

Ozone

- What was the problem? What pollutants were regulated? How did this issue burble up and get dealt with? How was this problem different from air pollution?
- How was it structured? How did it change over time? What were some of the critical divisions? Between who? Over what? How resolved? What was the role of the United States? What was the role of UNEP? How has the regime dealt with non-participation and non-compliance?
- According to Kelsey, why has it worked?

Class 9 (3/11): Climate

Ritchie, Hannah. Chapter 3. 66-114.

Sandler, Todd. 2004. *Global collective action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 212-234.

Keohane, Robert, and David G. Victor. 2011. "The Regime Complex for Climate Change." *Perspectives on Politics* 9 (1): 7–23.

Busby, Joshua. 2016. "After Paris: Good Enough Climate Governance," *Current History*, 3-9.

Busby, Joshua. 2019. "As the Stakes Rise, Climate Action Loses Momentum." *Current History*. 2019. 36-38.

Busby, Joshua and Johannes Urpelainen. 2020. "Following the Leaders? How to Restore Progress in Global Climate Governance." *Global Environmental Politics*. 99-121.

Busby, Joshua. 2025. "International Climate Cooperation in an Era of Geopolitical Turmoil." *Great Decisions*. 53-64.

Study Questions

- What is Ritchie's take on the state of global climate change?
- What does Todd Sandler say are the primary differences between collective action on climate and ozone?
- What was the Kyoto approach? What are targets and timetables? What is common but differentiated responsibility? What were the flexibility mechanisms? What were Annex I and non-Annex I countries?
- What is the regime complex for climate change?
- Why do Keohane and Victor suggest a single integrated organization has not been possible for climate change?
- What is their argument for smaller clubs? What functions could the UNFCCC retain?
- How are developing countries like China trying to shape climate governance (Jinnah)?
- What is my argument about the virtues of the Paris agreement? What are its weaknesses?
- What's the current state of the Paris Agreement?

No Class (3/18): Spring Break

Class 10 (3/25): Clean Energy Transition

Allan, Bentley, Joanna I. Lewis, and Thomas Oatley. 2021. "Green Industrial Policy and the Global Transformation of Climate Politics." *Global Environmental Politics* 21 (4): 1–19.

Green, Jessica. Forthcoming. Extract from *Existential Politics: Why global climate institutions are failing and how to fix them*. 7-20. 21-34. 90-103. 104-111.

Kupzok, Nils and Jonas Nahm, 2024. "The Decarbonization Bargain: How the Decarbonizable Sector Shapes Climate Politics." *Perspectives on Politics*. 1-24.

Study Questions

- What is Green et al.'s argument about asset re-evaluation and why previous understandings of global environmental politics have misunderstood the problem?
- What's happening with green industrial policy according to Allan et al.?

- How is decarbonization shaping climate politics according to Kupzok and Nahm?

Class 11 (4/1): Forests

Ritchie, Hannah. Chapter 5. 115-143.

Gulbrandsen, Lars H. 2012. "International forest politics: intergovernmental failure, non-governmental success?" *International Environmental Agreements: An Introduction*. Steinar Andresen, Elin Lerum Boasson, and Geir Hønneland. Routledge, 151-170.

Keck, Margaret E., and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International Politics." *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Cornell: Cornell University Press) Chapter 4, 121-164.

Morita, Kanako and Ken'ichi Matsumoto. 2023. "Challenges and lessons learned for REDD+ finance and its governance." *Carbon Balance and Management*. 1-14.

Study Questions

- What mix of goods do forests produce?
- What is Ritchie's take on the state of global forests?
- Per Gulbrandsen, what is the history of intergovernmental approaches to forest conservation? Why have they failed?
- Per Keck and Sikkink, how have international campaigners tried to address deforestation? Why were they somewhat more successful building a movement to address deforestation in Brazil compared to Malaysia?
- What is REDD+? Why has the forest conservation movement hitched its wagon to climate change? How is it working?

Class 12 (4/8): Fisheries

Ritchie, Hannah. Chapter 8. 255-287.

Stokke, Olam. 2012. "International fisheries politics: from sustainability to precaution." *International Environmental Agreements: An Introduction*. Steinar Andresen, Elin Lerum Boasson, and Geir Hønneland. Routledge, 97-116.

Campling, Liam and Elizabeth Havice. 2018. "The Global Environmental Politics and Political Economy of Seafood Systems." *Global Environmental Politics*. May 2018, 72-92.

Barkin, J. Samuel. 2022. "Institutional Structure, National Power, and Knowledge in the International Governance of Fisheries." *Global Environmental Politics* 22 (4): 197–202.

Young Song, Annie, Michael Fabinyi & Kate Barclay. 2023. "China's approach to global fisheries: power in the governance of anti-illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing." *Environmental Politics*. 407-426.

Study Questions

- What kind of problem is fisheries management on the oceans?
- What is Ritchie's take on the state of global fisheries?
- How effective are regional fisheries management institutions? What are the mechanisms by which fisheries can be managed?
- What is De Stokke's view on the Exclusive Economic Zones?
- How is seafood regulated?
- What is Barkin's review say about how fisheries are governed?
- What do Young Song et al. say about China's approach to global fisheries?
- How should fisheries/oceans be regulated going forward?

Class 13 (4/15): Wildlife Conservation

Ritchie, Hannah. Chapter 6. 193-220.

Kolbert, Elizabeth. 2014. *The Sixth Extinction*. 1-22.

Felbab-Brown, Vanda. 2017. *The Extinction Market*. Hurst Publishers 1-30, 241-278.

CITES. What is CITES

<https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/what.php>

CITES. How CITES works.

<https://www.cites.org/eng/disc/how.php>

Gehring, Thomas and Eva Ruffing. 2008. "When Arguments Prevail Over Power: The CITES Procedure for the Listing of Endangered Species," *Global Environmental Politics*. 8(2), 123-148.

Duffy, Rosaleen. 2022. Crime, Security, and Illegal Wildlife Trade: Political Ecologies of International Conservation. *Global Environmental Politics* 22 (2): 23–44.

Study Questions

- What is the sixth mass extinction?
- What is Ritchie's take on the state of global species conservation?
- What is CITES? According to Gehring and Ruffing, how does it work? Why do they argue that reason-based deliberation is key to its operations?
- How do sanctions work through CITES? Has it been effective?
- What should be done to conserve wildlife? What do you make of Felbab-Brown's recommendations?
- What is Duffy's argument about securitization of wildlife conservation?

Class 14 (4/22): Future of Global Environmental Governance

Ritchie, Hannah. Conclusion. 288-300.

Pattberg, P. & Widerberg, O. 2015. "Theorising Global Environmental Governance: Key Findings and Future Questions." *Millennium*, 43(2), 684-705.

Wapner, Paul. 2014. "The Changing Nature of Nature: Environmental Politics in the Anthropocene," *Global Environmental Politics*. 36-54.

Urpelainen, Johannes. 2022. *Global environmental politics: the transformative role of emerging economies*. Columbia University Press. 254-271.

Study Questions

- What is the Anthropocene?
- What does Wapner say about the significance of the Anthropocene for nature and humanity?
- According to Pattberg and Widerberg, how has global environmental governance changed?
- What is Urpelainen's sketch of how global environmental governance changed?
- What does Urpelainen say about what approaches will work now?
- What should be done? Are you optimistic?

(5/1) Strategy Papers Due