

# Course Descriptions Master 2020-2021

Course Title Sustainability, Law and the Environment  
Course Code SSP2052  
ECTS Credits 5,0  
Assessment Whole/Half Grades

Period	Start	End	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
4	1-2-2021	26-3-2021					

Level no level  
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Language of instruction English

Goals  
\* to understand the main characteristics and trends of international environmental law;  
\* to explain main dilemma's like how to reconcile sustainable development with legal decision-making and how to strengthen compliance;  
\* to discuss potential ways forward like a shift from uniform global approaches to polycentrism.

Description  
PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHOD(S) USED IN THIS COURSE IS WITH RESERVATION. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED HERE IS BASED ON THE COURSE SETUP PRIOR TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS. AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE CRISIS, COURSE COORDINATORS MAY BE FORCED TO CHANGE THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT METHODS USED. THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEACHING/ASSESSMENT METHOD(S) WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE COURSE SYLLABUS. Given the existence of global environmental problems, it is of utmost importance to have adequate international law approaches in order to steer the behavior of governments and private actors towards more sustainable behavior. At the same time, the international community has acknowledged that environmental law should not have a single environmental focus and that law should be developed on the basis of a balance between economic, social and environmental concerns. It is however not easy to reconcile the often single-focused legal approaches, based on competences for regulatory action, with such a broad balancing of different interests.

In order to examine current trends, main dilemma's and possible ways forward regarding the role of law for a sustainable environmental protection this course uses three perspectives: 1) the government perspective with a discussion of international environmental rulemaking and unilateral regulatory approaches; 2) the business perspective with attention to liability and voluntary approaches like Corporate Social Responsibility; 3) The victim perspective including the position of environmental non-governmental organizations, discussing inter alia procedural rights like access to information.

The problem of climate change serves as the core case for the course. Particular attention will go to regulatory instruments, ranging from traditional command and control to market-based regulatory approaches like 'carbon trading'. After the course, it will be easier for students to understand the thinking of lawyers and, moreover, have a basic idea of the role that law can play - including its shortcomings - in the pursuit of sustainability.

Literature  
Prerequisites  
Keywords  
Teaching methods  
Assessment methods  
Evaluation in previous academic year

For the complete evaluation of this course please click <http://iwio-sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/rapporten.asp?referrer=codeUM>

This course belongs to the following programme / specialisation

Master Sustainability Science, Policy and Society      Compulsory Course(s)