

MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Social Sciences
Department of Urban Policy Planning and Local Governments

UPL 540
Environmental Politics and Policy
SYLLABUS

Course Description:

Global environmental challenges pose serious threats to human wellbeing and settlements. The twentieth century has resulted in diversification of environmental problems due to intensification of such global challenges as global warming, climate change and biodiversity loss. On the other hand, since 1960s, significant achievements have been made by the international community to address environmental problems in terms of international agreements and regimes, sectoral policies and regulations, market mechanisms, etc. Owing to increasing concentrations of people and economic activities, cities have gained a central role in environmental governance during the last decades. Along with international organizations and national states, cities are now particularly influential in policymaking to protect the global environment. Therefore, scholars that are interested in urban processes should develop a better understanding of politics and policy of environmental issues.

In view of the above mentioned background, this course explores the foundations and evolution of environmental politics and policy at three fundamental levels of governance: the global, national and sub-national levels. The course intends to provide the students with key aspects of major environmental problems, evolution of the international politics of environmental issues as well as specific organizations, actors and policies of contemporary environmental governance.

Offered Semester:

Spring Semesters

Course Coordinator:

Dr. Osman Balaban
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Course Objectives:

This course aims to provide the students with insights into and an understanding of global environmental problems including climate change and biodiversity loss, and the ways by which international organizations, national and local governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) could address them.

At the end of the course, the students will be able to

- a) explain how and why environmental changes pose problems for human wellbeing and settlements,

- b) discuss how the international community has approached environmental issues, and explain major responses and actions of the international community to address environmental problems,
- c) assess the role played by key international organizations in promotion of global environmental governance,
- d) describe and assess the main arguments and debates concerning the role of NGOs in global environmental politics,
- e) discuss how developed and developing countries have approached environmental issues, and major responses and actions of these countries to address environmental problems,
- f) discuss the links between cities and environmental problems as well as urban policy responses to tackle global environmental problems
- g) conduct and present individual research on evolution and current state of environmental governance in certain countries,
- h) complete a comprehensive research paper.

Weekly Program:

Week 1: Introduction

- Instructor's background
- Course overview

Week 2: Global Environmental Problems

- Clarification of major concepts: natural environment, ecosystems, ecosystem services, human-environment interaction
- Global environmental problems: global warming, climate change, biodiversity loss

Week 3: Global Environmental Politics

- Background that shape global environmental politics
- Key aspects of global environmental politics
- International Organizations and Regimes, and Mega Conferences

Week 4: History of Global Environmental Politics

- Evolution of global policymaking for environmental issues
- Paradigm Shifts and Environmental Politics
- Milestone Events of Global Environmental Politics

Week 5: International Organizations in Environmental Politics

- Major international organizations and their role in environmental politics

Week 6: International Regime on Climate Change

- IPCC
- UNFCCC
- The Kyoto Protocol

Weeks 7-8: States and the Environment I

- Invited Seminar: Guest Speaker

Weeks 8-10: States and the Environment II

- Assigned Seminars: Student Presentations

Week 11: Cities and the Environment

- Links between urban process and environmental change
 - Contribution of cities to environmental problems
 - Impacts of major environmental problems on cities

Week 12: Urban Policymaking for Environmental Problems

- Urban policy responses to address environmental problems
- International case studies

Week 13: City Networks and Collaborations

- Roles of city networks in environmental politics

Course Conduct:

The course will be conducted by means of formal lectures, which will be complemented with assigned seminars and invited seminars. Lectures will be given by the instructor of the course and by guest faculty members, when necessary.

Assigned seminars will include presentations by the students on a given topic relating to key issues of the course. Invited seminars will include presentations by guest speakers providing comprehensive insights into a particular issue.

Reference Material:

- 1) Chasek, P.S., Downie, D.L. and Welsh Brown, J. 2010. *Global Environmental Politics*. Fifth Edition, Westview Press.
- 2) Clapp, J. and Dauvergne, P. 2005. *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. The MIT Press.
- 3) Falkner, R. (Ed). 2013. *The Handbook of Global Climate and Environment Policy*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- 4) Razzaque, J. 2013. *Environmental Governance in Europe and Asia*. New York: Routledge.
- 5) Evans, J.P. 2012. *Environmental Governance*. New York: Routledge.
- 6) Young, O.R. 2013. *On Environmental Governance: Sustainability, Efficiency and Equity*. London: Paradigm Publishers.
- 7) Jasanoff, S. and Martello, M.L. (Eds). 2004. *Earthly Politics: Local and Global in Environmental Governance*. The MIT Press.
- 8) Biermann, F., Siebenhüner, B. and Schreyögg, A. (Eds). 2009. *International Organizations in Global Environmental Governance*. Routledge.
- 9) Seyfang, G. 2003. Environmental mega-conferences—from Stockholm to Johannesburg and beyond. *Global Environmental Change*, 13 (2003), 223–228.
- 10) Schreurs, M.A. 2004. *Environmental Politics in Japan, Germany and the United States*. Cambridge University Press.
- 11) Bulkeley, H. and Newell, P. 2010. *Governing Climate Change*. New York: Routledge.
- 12) Puppim de Oliveira, J. A., Balaban, O., Doll, C., Moreno-Penaranda, R., Gasparatos, A., Iossifova, D., Suwa, A. 2011. *Cities and Biodiversity: Perspectives and Governance Challenges for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at the City Level*. *Biological Conservation*. 144(5), 1302-1313.
- 13) Balaban, O. 2010. İklim Değişikliği ile Mücadelede Kamu Sektörünün Rolü: Türkiye Üzerine Bir İnceleme. *Amme İdaresi Dergisi*, 43(3), 83-108.

- 14) Bouteligier, S. 2013. *Cities, Networks, and Global Environmental Governance: Spaces of Innovation, Places of Leadership*. New York: Routledge.
- 15) Bulkeley, H. 2010. Cities and the Governing of Climate Change. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*. Volume 35, 229-253.
- 16) Lindfield, M. 2010. Cities: A Global Threat and a Missed Opportunity for Climate Change. *Environment and Urbanization Asia*, 1, 2 (2010): 105–129.
- 17) Balaban, O. 2012. Climate Change and Cities: A Review on the Impacts and Policy Responses. *METU Journal of the Faculty of Architecture*, 2012/1 (29:1), 21-44.

Grading:

Course assessment and grading will be based on the following elements:

- a) **Attendance and Class Participation (10%):** Students are expected to come to classes regularly by making the required readings and to participate actively and constructively in class discussions.
- b) **Research Paper and Presentation (50%):** Each student will be responsible for conducting a research on a given topic related to core issues of the course and is expected to present his/her research in an assigned seminar. Students will prepare and submit the papers of the research that they will present in assigned seminars.
- c) **Final Exam (40%):** The final examination in this course will be made by means of an essay type final exam that will be held during the final examination period.