

The mock treaty negotiation felt like a Gargantuan task at first! I, alongside my groupmates, acted as the delegation of the EU. I think we were lucky because there are many sources on the EU's position on these issues, but at the beginning, it seemed difficult to draft treaty articles, and doing so in line with existing legal framework and the red lines of the delegation we represented. In the case of the EU, specific considerations, such as the internal consistency and applicability, come to the fore.

It is one thing to understand an international environmental treaty and different positions and approaches to an environmental matter in theory, but another to actually implement them. Taking part of this mock negotiation certainly made the application aspect much more tangible and showed me -and I believe I can say that on behalf of all my classmates- how much we learned throughout this master's programme. Another takeaway from this experience for me is learning how diplomacy works, as it is not just pushing forward a position and demonstrating legal reasoning but also balancing competing priorities. It was very interesting to see how just formulating an obligation differently could make it much more acceptable to different delegations with completely different priorities than mine.

A challenging aspect was certainly having to consider the feasibility and the red lines of my delegation. Many proposals from different delegations sounded compelling from an environmental and justice perspective, however, I had to assess whether they would actually be agreed to in a real negotiation context. It was difficult at times to separate personal opinions and the official position of the delegation.

It was also very interesting seeing how different delegations approached the same issues from fundamentally different perspectives, such as development priorities, capabilities and historical responsibility. This showed us how environmental protection is not purely a technical or legal issue, but a political one. I believe we all gained important skills that are very important in professional life, such as being able to analyse different positions quickly, a constructive approach, the importance of compromises without losing one's position completely, structured argumentation and negotiation strategy.

I think the success of these kind of activities ultimately depends on how seriously all participants take it, and in our case I was blown away by my all classmates' work! From the delegations to the co-chairing group, everybody assumed their roles and worked fiercely to achieve their goals. For me, this is what made this entire experience so successful and fun at the same time!

Dilara

Feedback from the mock negotiation

Personally, I really enjoyed working with our colleagues as the chairing group for this mock negotiation process because it was an insightful academic experience. One of my key takeaways from this practice that I learnt was the importance of effective communication and coordination with your team or group members in order to equitably distribute our tasks and duties to deliver and reach our focal objectives in this negotiation. Honestly, I truly appreciated the opportunity to be a co-chair in this mock negotiation because we faced the challenge of guiding and driving this negotiation process to a successful and consolidated agreement with the crucial collaboration, engagement and proactive participation of my classmates.

This was a challenging and special academic experience because we were able to work together as a team in order to timely complete our responsibilities as the chairing group to prepare the scenario for this negotiation proceeding and keep the momentum, motivation and synergy going until the final conference to conclude the consolidated version of the Protocol. All this was done while considering in parallel, our current academic workload with the master's thesis and other assignments. Sincerely, coming to Stockholm to study within this master's programme in Environmental Law was one of the best decisions of my life because I had the opportunity to expand my professional horizons and learn new knowledge, alongside meeting and interacting with amazing colleagues, friends and professors from different parts of the world in a cosmopolitan academic atmosphere to establish long-lasting friendships and relationships. This was indeed the most terrific and rewarding experience of this programme!

José