Stockholm University

27 November 2025

METHODS, THEORIES AND PRACTICES IN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

COURSE OUTLINE – SPRING TERM 2026

Welcome to *Methods, Theories and Practices in Environmental Law* at the Department of Law, Stockholm University.

1 Purpose and Content of the Course

The course *Methods, Theories and Practices in Environmental Law* is the third course of the Master Programme in Environmental Law. While amounting to 15 ECTS credits, it runs in parallel with the course *Master Thesis in Environmental Law* (also 15 ECTS credits; see separate outline) throughout the spring term. Hence, the knowledge, skills etc. developed during this course will help preparing the students for the writing of the Master thesis.

While *Methods, Theories and Practices in Environmental Law* is intended to provide more in-depth academic outcomes on environmental law methods, theories and research in transboundary contexts, it also aims at giving the students more knowledge about the practices of environmental law in transboundary contexts. Thus, experienced practitioners will also teach in the course.

Methods, Theories and Practices in Environmental Law builds on the courses *Transboundary Environmental Law* (TEL) and *Cross-cutting Issues in Environmental Law* (CCI), and requires even more of independent work, with more active search for literature and relevant legal materials by the students themselves.

Just like TEL and CCI, this course aims at encouraging critical legal reasoning among the students, i.e. at reviewing, assessing and questioning structures, principles, institutions and concepts.

The expected learning outcomes of the course are set out in the syllabus, adopted by the Department of Law.

Department of Law

Stockholm University
Stockholms universitet
Juridiska institutionen
106 91 Stockholm

Visiting address:
Universitetsvägen 10 C
www.juridicum.su.se

Phone: 08-162245
Telefax: 08-6124109
E-mail: jonas.ebbesson@juridicum.su.se

Stockholm University

2 Overview

This course consists of a series of lectures of a seminar style, where students are expected to actively participate; the writing and presentation of three memos; and a mock negotiation of an international treaty. The memos and the mock negotiation are parts of the examination, and are either graded with Pass (G)/Fail (U) or with credit points, as set out below. In this course, there is *no* final written examination.

The entire course – i.e. all teaching and all discussions – is in English.

3 Teaching

Lectures: While labelled lectures, they will regularly have a *seminar* style. For most lectures, *reading assignments* with questions and literature will be posted in advance on the course website, at the platform *Athena*. To pass the course, active participation in at least 80 percent of the lectures (indicated "80 PERCENT") is required. Active participation means that students are expected to have prepared for the lectures by reading the relevant literature, trying to answer the questions and being ready to engage in discussions about them.

In addition to discussions on the specific topics, the lectures will provide occasions for explaining and expanding on other elements of the course, e.g. the mock negotiation, and for the writing of the Master thesis.

While most lectures will be given at the campus, some lecture with teachers/practitioners abroad will be given online.

Mock negotiation: For this part of the course, the students will be divided into groups representing different categories/alliances of states and a Secretariat group. Based on specific instructions with group profiles, the groups will prepare position papers and responses to position papers of other groups. They will also negotiate orally on the basis of their different positions. The Secretariat group will be tasked with managing the negotiations and aiming at the achievement of a treaty.

Writing and presenting memos: As a part of the course and the examination, each student will write *three memos* of 1,400 – 1,600 words, with references. The memos are intended to feed in to the writing of the Master thesis.

Stockholm University

- *Memo 1*: Methods for examining what the law is in transboundary environmental contexts
- *Memo 2*: Methods for examining the effectiveness of environmental law in transboundary contexts
- *Memo 3*: Theories on environmental law in transboundary contexts

Each student will present each memo for the other students. The presentations should take no more than 5 minutes each.

Each memo will be graded 0-10 credits points. While the memo is the main part in the assessment, the presentation may also be taken into account in the grading. In all, this part of the course amounts to up to 30 credit points of the examination.

4 Literature

There will be no book or compendium for this course. The literature will consist of articles, reports, case-law and other documents, as set out in the reading assignments for the lectures. Students will also be expected to search for relevant literature in the writing as well as in the mock negotiation.

5 Social Events

It is possible to organise some form of social events on site during the course. This may include course dinner, a movie – documentary or other – on legal matters relating to the environment, or something else, initiated by the students.

6 Examination

The course is examined through the following parts:

1. **The three memos, including oral presentations**, are mandatory and will each be graded 0-10 credits points. Accordingly, in all, the three memos can amount to *30 credit points*. *Note* that if a memo is not submitted on time, it will be graded half the number of credit points which should have been given if submitted on time.

Stockholm University

Assessment criteria for the written and oral assignments:
- Subject and problem formulation
- Factual knowledge and insight into the subject
- Presentation
- Material and method
- Analysis and argumentation including independence of thought
- Conclusions, sources and formalities
- Language
- Oral presentation and discussion at the seminar

2. **The mock negotiation** is mandatory and will be *graded Pass (G) or Fail (U)*. Assessment criteria for the examinations of the mock negotiation:
   - Insight into the current scenario and assigned role
   - Ability to formulate problems
   - Ability to independently and systematically argue, based on given conditions.
   - Ability to adapt argumentation to changing circumstances
   - Ability to reflect on ongoing discussions

In order to pass the course, all these parts must be completed. The maximum total score is 30 points.

In addition to these examining elements, active participation at 80 per cent or more of the lectures (indicated “80 PERCENT”) is required. If a student fails to meet the baseline requirement, s/he will have to write a short memo for each lecture where s/he failed to participate. Active participation means preparing the assignments, reading the literature, trying to answer the questions and being ready to engage in discussions about them.

7 Registration

No specific registration is required for this course. Being part of the Master programme in environmental law, all students approved to the programme are approved to this course.

Stockholm University

8 Grade Criteria

The following are the grade criteria (according to the 7-point ECTS grading scale) for all forms of examination:

A
An excellently structured reasoning with a clear focus on the central aspects and with a high relevance in light of the questions posed; extensive reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems, including critical reflection.

B
A very well-structured reasoning with a clear focus on the central aspects and with a high relevance in the light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems, including critical reflection.

C
A well-structured reasoning with a focus on the central aspects and with relevance in the light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make independent and balanced assessment of the problems.

D
A structured and relevant reasoning, which covers some of the central aspects in light of the questions posed; reference to legal sources and the correct use of relevant facts; signs of an ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of the problems.

E
A transparent reasoning which observes some aspects that are central to the questions posed; some reference to legal sources and relevant facts; signs of an ability to make an independent assessment of the problems.

Stockholm University

Fx
A reasoning which observes aspects that are central to the questions posed but insufficient reference to legal sources and the relevant facts and/or no signs of an ability to make an independent assessment of the problems.

F
A reproduction of disjointed facts with insufficient reasoning.

9 Special Pedagogical Support

Stockholm University provides special pedagogical support to students with documented long-term disabilities. For example, a student may be eligible for alternative forms of examination, such as extended time limits for examinations. If a student intends to apply for alternative forms of examination, s/he should inform the course administrator via email well in advance of the examination and specify what kind of alternative examination is requested. Should the application be submitted later than 3 (three) weeks prior to the examination, there is no guarantee that the alternative form of examination can be granted.

For further information, students should ask the course administrator at the beginning of the course.

10 Course Evaluation

All students are encouraged to fill in an electronic course evaluation at the end of the course. The course evaluation is an important feed-back from the students, and a means to assess the students' appreciation of the course. It is used for developing the course, teaching methods and for determining the quality of the course.
The electronic form will be available via *Athena* in the last weeks of the course

11 Reception hours

Course director:

Prof. Jonas Ebbesson	Room: C951	On appointment and
Email: jonas.ebbesson@juridicum.su.se		in relation to teaching

Stockholm University

Course administrator:

Nägin Chater-Sahab	Room C860	On appointment
Email: EL@juridicum.su.se		Tuesdays and Thursdays 13-15

Teachers/tutors:

Associate Prof. Anna Christiernsson	Room: C982	On appointment and
Email: anna.christiernsson@juridicum.su.se		in relation to teaching