



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

8,478: International Environmental Law

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Oral examination and technical discussions, Digital, Group work individual grade (100%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,478,1.00 International Environmental Law](#) -- English -- [Proelss Alexander](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

International environmental law is a sub-system of public international law, which is why students participating in the course should have basic knowledge of public international law, in particular its subjects and sources (even though a brief introduction will be given at the beginning of the course). Participants are expected to participate actively in class discussions.

Learning objectives

- Students will acquire knowledge about a special field of public international law that has, in particular in light of global warming and biodiversity loss, considerably gained in practical relevance and importance. The course aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the international legal framework governing environmental protection and sustainable development.
- Students will become familiar with the specifics of international environmental law, including international climate change law and international biodiversity conservation law, and its interrelationship with environmental governance.
- Students will gain insight into the challenges of international environmental governance and attempts to address them legally.

Course content

The course introduces students to international environmental law in its entirety. In a first part, cross-cutting issues will be addressed (concept, history and sources of international environmental law; principles of international environmental law; environmental protection through procedures; environmental protection and human rights), by means of which references to general international law will be established at the same time. In a second part, selected regimes for the protection and sustainable use of individual environmental media and challenges will be analyzed (climate change; conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; if time permits: protection of the marine environment; protection of inland waters). Occasional references to European Union law are also integrated.

More precise details will be made available in an outline in advance of the beginning of the course.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

As far as the content is concerned, the course is structured as follows:

Unit 1: Development and sources of international environmental law

Unit 2: General principles of international environmental law



Unit 3: Environmental protection through procedures

Unit 4: Environmental protection and human rights; international environmental liability

Unit 5: International Climate Change Law

Unit 6: Protection of species and conservation of biodiversity

Unit 7: Marine environmental protection

Course literature

Course materials will be made available on studynet in advance. The course is designed to be as interactive as possible, requiring pre- and post-work. Popular English-language works in the field of environmental law include, in particular:

- U. Beyerlin/T. Marauhn, *International Environmental Law*, 2011, Hart Publishing
- A. Boyle/C. Redgwell, *Birnie, Boyle and Redgwell's International Law and the Environment*, 4th ed. 2021, OUP
- D. Bodansky/J. Brunnée/E. Hey (Hrsg.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Environmental Law*, 2008, OUP
- P.-M. Dupuy/ J.E. Viñuales, *International Environmental Law*, 2nd ed. 2018, CUP
- T. Koivurova, *Introduction to International Environmental Law*, 2013, Routledge
- L. Rajamani & J. Peel (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Environmental Law*, 2nd ed. 2021, OUP
- P. Sands/J. Peel, *Principles of International Environmental Law*, 4th ed. 2018, CUP
- E.J. Techera/J. Lindley/K.N. Scott/A. Telesethsky (eds.), *Routledge Handbook on International Environmental Law*, 2nd ed. 2020, Routledge

Additional course information

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Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/1)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Oral examination and technical discussions
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Group work individual grade
Weighting	100%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

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Examination-aid rule

Closed Book for Examinations in Law



The use of aids is limited to the list below:

- any programmable electronic devices that are capable of communication such as electronic dictionaries, notebooks, tablets, smartphones, headsets, additional screens, etc. are not admissible unless they are expressly required for the examination or have been admitted under supplementary aids by the faculty members in charge of the examination;
- any texts of edicts issued by the Confederation in the four national languages and in the English translation of the Swiss Federal Chancellery, as well as the official edicts issued by the Canton of St.Gallen are also admissible. For reasons of simplicity, those edicts from this admissible category which are required for the examination are listed under the heading "Supplementary aids";
- additional aids and private collections of law are only admissible if they are expressly listed under supplementary aids. The list is exhaustive. Any private collections that are not listed are expressly prohibited and will be confiscated without compensation – regardless of whether they are law editions that are commented, uncommented or annotated;
- unless defined otherwise under supplementary aids, any documents may be combined in any number and language;
- pocket calculator models of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series as well as dictionaries without any handwritten notes are allowed.

The following preparation of legal texts is permitted:

- references to other legal articles, including all designations and numbers as they occur in the legal texts that are permitted (e.g. Arts 62 ff. CO / Art. 164(1)(a) FC / Art. 25(2)(a)(8) VAT Act / Art. 158 FC i.c.w. Art. 4 ParlA / Art. 29(II) FC, etc.). They must be written in a national language and/or in English;
- highlighting with any type of highlighter or marker pen in different colours (e.g. underlining or circling something, special characters such as arrows, asterisks, etc). The systematic highlighting of individual letters is prohibited, as are any other notes and comments;
- tabs: self-adhesive tabs in the margin of individual legal texts are permitted but they must only bear marginalia, titles and articles (e.g. Art. 141 FC: Optional referendum or 5. Title: Federal Authorities or Art. 5 FC) of the corresponding page.

Print-outs and copies of admissible legal texts (i.e. all official editions or permitted private collections, including tables of contents and indices) must be identical with the original and must be able to be unequivocally assigned to a source.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

Supplementary aids

Texts of the relevant sources (Rio Declaration, UNFCCC, Paris Agreement)

The examination will be conducted as a digital oral examination off-campus with the following admissible media:

- **Private notebook** (compulsory) - no tablets!
- **Mains adapter** (compulsory)
- **Webcam and microphone** (compulsory)
- **HSGcard** for identification control (compulsory)
- Compliant headphones* (optional)
- External computer mouse (optional)
- External computer keyboard (optional)

All equipment must be in working order and internet connection must be guaranteed.



* Approved headphones are: OverEar headphones (wireless & wired) or InEar headphones (wired only).

We expressly point out that the examination cannot be taken with tablets/iPads.

The examination will be taken either via MS TEAMS or Zoom. You will receive the relevant information and necessary links from the person responsible for the examination. Examinations may be recorded with the consent of the student.

Additional electronic devices, interactions with other programmes/software/browsers or access to other files as well as communication with other persons are expressly not permitted and will be punished as attempted cheating in case of suspicion. The same applies to unauthorised absence from the recording area of the webcam.

Examination content

The oral exam will be conducted in English and will cover the subjects discussed in class. This includes, in particular, the following topics:

- 1) Sources, subjects and Actors of international environmental law
- 2) General principles of international environmental law
- 3) Responsibility and liability
- 4) International climate change law

Examination relevant literature

All course materials. Further literature references that are relevant for the examinations will be provided during the course.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).

