

# **Environmental and Energy Politics (2410411)**

**Politics and Global Studies International Program  
Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University  
Semester 1, 2023-2024**

## **Lecturers**

Dr. Dipak Gyawali (t.b.c.)  
Dr. Puree Sirasontorn (t.b.c.)  
Kritsada Boonchai (t.b.c.)  
Dr. Carl Middleton

## **Course Coordinator**

Dr. Carl Middleton  
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Office hours (Room 115, Political Science, Building 2): By appointment

## **Course Description**

This course explores the rise of the environment as a policy and a political issue, and in doing identifies key challenges and opportunities for the co-existence of people and the planet. Overall, the course draws on concepts of political ecology, defined by Vandergeest and Roth (2017: 82) as “a field of study that approaches environmental issues through the lens of power relations.” Concepts include the commons, markets and commodification, politics of knowledge and environmental justice. The course begins by critically discussing a range of ethical positions towards the environment, including anthropocentric and ecocentric values. Environmental policy-making and the principles and practice of environmental governance at the local, national and global scale are discussed, identifying the interests, strategies and power relations of key actors involved. In the second half of the course, we focus in particular onto energy and climate change. Given that fossil fuel has been at the heart of economic modernization since the industrial revolution, achieving a just energy transformation is literally a defining challenge for sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## **Class location**

The class will be held in Room 510, Faculty of Political Science Building 3 (Kasem Uttayanin Building).

Class updates will be shared via email.

If you'd like to share your thoughts and comments on the reading in advance of the class, you can do so in the Google Doc here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1acSDgnXZMRGq26LIxxl6JsiSkxRvHBAJx7P8fMtyc74/edit?usp=sharing>

Class materials (readings, presentations) are available in the DropBox folder here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/dgv7nlvuiyylb6by4np89/h?rlkey=ptplagmb9ncqevet6ytw02klk&dl=0>

## **Zoom recording policy**

If a class is held on Zoom and a recording is made, due to the potentially sensitive topics discussed in the class and some students' privacy concerns, all recordings will be permanently deleted at the end of the course. If a student downloads the recording, you are only permitted to view it yourself and must also permanently delete the file. Under no circumstances are you permitted to share or post publicly either images or video of the class recordings. Any student who does so will be reported to the PGS Board for potential further measures which could include failing the course.

### **Format**

The course format will be seminar-based and lecture-based, with several group and individual exercises. All students are expected to prepare beforehand by reading the assigned materials and preparing for discussion.

Guiding questions on each week's reading materials will be uploaded to the DropBox one week in advance of the lesson.

### **Reading**

Most reading is provided in the online reading pack, and is also available via Chulalongkorn University's library resources.

### **Learning objectives**

On completing this course, you will be able to:

- Explain the political character of environment governance in relation to various case studies, such as forests, land, energy and climate change
- Critically discuss the concept of 'sustainable development' and its strengths and shortcomings in practice
- Analyze the unique characteristics of the environment as a policy problem at the local and global level
- Critically assess options for the just transition of energy in Thailand, Southeast Asia and globally

### **Grading**

- *Class participation (10%)*: You are expected to join a minimum of 80 percent of the classes and be prepared to discuss the week's required reading materials **including and especially those of the guest lecturers**. You are expected to actively share your knowledge, experience and opinions in the class discussions.
- *Final paper (40%)*: You will prepare a paper on a topic of interest that is relevant to the course. The paper should be submitted by **5 pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023**. Please see the additional document for guidance and grading matrix.
- *Group work policy analysis (20%)*: You will work in a small group to prepare a policy analysis of a contemporary issue in energy politics. See additional document provided.
- *Individual presentation and short paper submission of an "object of concern" (30%)*: See additional document provided.

### **TurnItIn details**

To submit your final essay, please log in to [www.turnitin.org](http://www.turnitin.org) using your student ID and password. You can then upload your essay here.

- Class: PGS-EEP2023
- Class ID: 39812430
- Enrollment Password: PGS-EEP2023

On submission, your essay will be checked for plagiarism. Any percentage score greater than 15% may not be accepted. Please upload and check your assignment before final submission to **ensure that the TurnItIn score is below 15%**.

AI generated text (for example by ChatGPT) is not permitted within your assignments for this course. While AI is a powerful and useful tool, the purpose of the assignments in this course are to strengthen your individual and independent analytical and writing skills. TurnItIn assesses for AI generated text. **Only an AI generated text score of zero is acceptable for this course.**

### **Course policies**

- Punctual attendance is required at all classes. Students missing more than 20 percent of classes are required to receive an excused absence from the PGS course coordinator.
- For those students that prefer, laptops or other electronic devices are permitted in the class room for note-taking only, but not for Facebook or other work. For guest lecturers, whether laptops are permitted is at the discretion of the individual lecturer.
- Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and could result in a fail grade for the course. Your essay planning exercise and final essay will be submitted to me through “TurnItIn” to ensure that text is original.
- All assignments must be handed in at the designated date. Late assignments will only be accepted if lateness is due to health or other emergencies that must be documented. Please contact me as ahead of time as possible so that we can discuss the situation and reach an agreement.
  - The score of late essays will be reduced by 2% per 24 hours that the paper is late. **Any papers that are more than 7 days late will not be accepted, except under exceptional circumstances.**

Course outline

Session	Date/ time	Session title	Lecturer
1	9 <sup>th</sup> August, 1-4	Environmental Crisis?: Apolitical and Political Ecologies	Dr. Carl Middleton
2	16 <sup>th</sup> August, 1-4	Environmental ethics: Humans-More than Human Relations	Dr. Carl Middleton
3	23 <sup>rd</sup> August, 1-4	Concepts of Sustainable Development	Dr. Carl Middleton
4	30 <sup>th</sup> August, 1-4	Institutions, the commons and commoning	Dr. Carl Middleton
5	6 <sup>th</sup> September, 1-4	Markets and Commodities	Dr. Carl Middleton
6	13 <sup>th</sup> September, 1-4	The environment as a policy problem: Technocracy, democracy and economy	Dr. Carl Middleton
7	20 <sup>th</sup> September, 1-4	Environmental policy instruments: Regulation, market-based instruments, and volunteerism	Dr. Carl Middleton
8	4 <sup>th</sup> October, 1-4	International Environmental Policy and Climate Change	Dr. Carl Middleton
9	11 <sup>th</sup> October, 1-4	Student presentation of “object of concern”	Dr. Carl Middleton
10	18 <sup>th</sup> October, 1-4	Hydropower and the Food- Water-Energy Nexus	Dr. Dipak Gyawali (t.b.c.)
11	25 <sup>th</sup> October, 1-4	Field visit to EGAT Learning Center	Dr. Carl Middleton
12	1 <sup>st</sup> November, 1-4	The Political Economy and Governance of Thailand’s Electricity Sector	Dr. Puree Sirasontorn (t.b.c.)
13	8 <sup>th</sup> November, 1-4	Climate Justice and Thailand’s Social Movements	Kritsada Boonchai (t.b.c.)
14	15 <sup>th</sup> November, 1-4	Environmental justice: Energy policy and politics	Dr. Carl Middleton
15	22 <sup>nd</sup> November, 1-4	Student group presentations	Dr. Carl Middleton

## **Reading materials**

### **Week 1: Environmental Crisis?: Apolitical and Political Ecologies**

Dryzek, J.S. and Pickering, J. (2019) “Chapter 1: Anthropocene: the good, the bad, and the inescapable” (pp 11-29) *The Politics of the Anthropocene*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Robbins, P. (2012) *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction* (2 ed) “Chapter 1: Political versus Apolitical Ecologies” (pp 11-24) Blackwell: Malden, Oxford and Carlton

Vandergeest, P. and Roth, R. 2017. A Southeast Asian political ecology. In Hirsch, P. (Ed), *Handbook of the environment in Southeast Asia*, pp. 82-98. London and New York: Routledge

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### **Week 2: Environmental ethics: Humans-More than Human Relations**

Carter, N. (2018) “Chapter 2: Environmental Philosophy” (pp 13-39) *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy* (2 ed.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Dobson, A. (2007). Environmental citizenship: towards sustainable development. *Sustainable Development*, 15(5), 276-285.

Britto dos Santos, N., & Gould, R. K. (2018). Can relational values be developed and changed? Investigating relational values in the environmental education literature. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 35, 124-131.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2018.10.019>

Tram Luong (2022) Feral atlas: The more-than-human Anthropocene, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/03066150.2022.2092696

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### **Week 3: Concepts of Sustainable Development**

Carter, N. (2018) Chapter 8: Sustainable Development and Ecological Modernization” (pp 211-243) *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy* (2 ed.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Dryzek, J. S. (2013) Chapter 1: Making Sense of the Earth’s Politics: A Discourse Approach (pp 3-23) in *The Politics of the Earth* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Oxford University Press: Oxford

Leach, M. Scoones, I. and Stirling, A. (2010) “Chapter 3: Pathways to Sustainability – Responding to Dynamic Contexts” (pp37-64) *Dynamic Sustainabilities: Technology, Environment and Social Justice* Earthscan-Routledge: Abingdon and New York

Smith, A., and A. Stirling. 2010. The politics of social-ecological resilience and sustainable socio-technical transitions. *Ecology and Society* 15(1): 11. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol15/iss1/art11/>

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#### **Week 4: Institutions, the commons, and commoning**

Robbins, P., Hintz, J., and Moore, S.A. (2010) “Chapter 2: “Institutions and the Commons” (pp 46-52) Environment and Society Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester

Bollier, D. and Helfrich, S. (2019) Free, Fair and Alive: The Insurgent Power of the Commons.

- Part I: The Commons as a Transformative Perspective  
<https://freefairandalive.org/read-it/#part1>
- Part II: The Triad of Commoning <https://freefairandalive.org/read-it/#part2>

Vanderveest and Peluso (1995) “Territorialization and State Power in Thailand” Theory and Society, Vol. 24, No.3. pp. 385-426.

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#### **Week 5: Markets and Commodities**

Robins, P., Hintz, J., and Moore, S.A. “Chapter 3: Markets and Commodities” (pp 29-45) and “Chapter 7: Political Economy” (pp 96-114) in Environment and Society Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester

Beder, S., (2006) “Chapter 7: Measuring Environmental Value” (pp 124-137) Environmental Principles and Policies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction. Earthscan, London.

Peluso, N.L. and Nevins, J. (2008) “Introduction: Commoditization in Southeast Asia” in Nevins, J. and Peluso, N.L. (eds) Taking Southeast Asia to Market: Commodities, Nature and People in the Neoliberal Age Cornell University Press: Ithaca and London

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#### **Week 6: The environment as a policy problem: Technocracy, Democracy, Market**

Carter, N. (2018) “Chapter 7: The Environment as a Policy Problem” (pp 179-210) The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy (3 ed.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

KNOTS (2006) Understanding policy processes: A review of IDS research on the environment Knowledge, Technology and Society Team (KNOT), Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex (read pages 5-15, and then skim the case studies)

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#### **Week 7: Environmental policy instruments: Regulation, market-based instruments, and volunteerism**

Carter, N. (2018) “Chapter 12: Policy instruments and implementation” (pp 331-366) The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy (3 ed.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Beder, S., (2006) “Chapter 9: Prices and Pollution Rights” (pp 156-173) Environmental Principles and Policies: An Interdisciplinary Introduction. Earthscan, London.

Agrawal, A. (2005) “Introduction: The Politics of Nature and the Making of Environmental Subjects” (pp 1-24) in Environmentality: Technologies of Government and the Making of Subjects Duke University Press: Durham and London.

Bridge, G., and Perreault, T. (2009) “Chapter 28: Environmental Governance” (pp 475-497) in Castree, N., Demeritt, D., Liverman, D. & Rhoads, B. (eds) A Companion to Environmental Geography. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester

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**Week 8: International environmental policy and climate change**

Carter, N. (2018) “Chapter 9: Global Environmental Politics” (pp 247-278) and “Chapter 10: Globalization, Trade and the Environment” (pp 279-299) The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy (3 ed.) Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Liverman (2015) “Reading Climate Change and Climate Governance as Political Ecologies” in Perreault, T.; Bridge, G. and McCarthy, J. (Eds) (2015) The Routledge handbook of political ecology. London and New York: Routledge.

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**Week 9: Student presentation of object of concern**

*No readings this week*

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**Week 10: Guest lecture: Hydropower and the Food-Water-Energy Nexus**

*Readings to be provided*

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**Week 11: Field visit: EGAT Learning Center**

*No readings this week*

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**Week 12: Guest lecture: The Political Economy and Governance of Thailand’s Electricity Sector**

*Readings to be provided*

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**Week 13: Guest lecture: Climate Justice and Thailand’s Social Movements**

*Readings to be provided*

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**Week 14: Environmental Justice: Energy Policy and Politics**

Walker, G. (2012) “Chapter 2: Globalizing and framing environmental justice” (pp 16-38) and “Chapter 3: Making claims: justice, evidence and process” (pp 39-76)

Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics Routledge: London and New York

Anguelovski, I. and Martínez Alier, J. 2014. "The 'Environmentalism of the Poor' revisited: Territory and place in disconnected glocal struggles" *Ecological Economics* 102:167-76.

Simpson, A. and M. Smits (2018). "Transitions to Energy and Climate Security in Southeast Asia? Civil Society Encounters with Illiberalism in Thailand and Myanmar." *Society & Natural Resources* 31(5): 580-598

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**Week 15: Group presentations**

*No readings this week*