COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environmental Legislation and Policy at the International Level

2026-2027

1. Programme-related data

1.1 Higher education institution	**BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY**
1.2 Faculty	**FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING**
1.3 Department	Environmental Analysis and Engineering
1.4 Field	Environmental Engineering
1.5 Level of study	MA
1.6 Degree programme / Qualification	Sustainable Development and Environmental Management/ Environmental Engineering
1.7. Form of education	Învăţământ cu frecvenţă (Full-time education)

2. Course-related data

2.1 Course title	**Environmental Legislation and Policy at the International Level**			Discipline code	**NME4012**
2.2 Course coordinator	Assoc. Prof., PhD Ruxandra Malina Petrescu-Mag				
2.3 Seminar coordinator	Assoc. Prof., PhD Ruxandra Malina Petrescu-Mag				
2.4. Year of study	1	2.5 Semester	2	2.6. Type of assessment	Exam (E)
2.7. Course status	Compulsory		2.8. Course type	Discipline-specific course (DS)	

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activities)

3.1. Number of hours per week	**4**	of which: 3.2. course	**2**	3.3. seminar/ laboratory/ project	2
3.4. Total of hours in the curriculum	56	of which: 3.5. course	28	3.6. seminar/ laboratory	28
Time allocation for individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)					**hours**
Learning from textbooks, course materials, bibliography, and notes (IS)					35
Additional research in the library, on subject-specific electronic platforms, and on-site					25
Preparing seminars/ laboratories/ projects, assignments, reports, portfolios, and essays (greater than or equal to the total number of hours specified in the course calendar for evaluation tasks)					22
Tutoring (professional guidance)					4
Other activities [i.e.: two-way communication with the course coordinator/tutor]					4
3.7. Total hours of individual study (IS) and self-taught activities (ST)				**90**	
3.8. Examination				**4**	
3.9. Total hours per semester				**150**	
3.10. Number of credits				**6**	

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

4.1. curriculum-related	No requirements
4.2. skills-related	No requirements

5. Conditions (if necessary)

5.1. course-related	Classroom with a video projector
5.2. seminar/laboratory-related	No requirements

6.1 Competencies resulting from the completion of the degree programme ***(as referred to in the curriculum)***[1]

Professional competencies	
Competency code	**Competency**
PC2	Develop environmental policy: Develop an organisational policy on sustainable development and compliance with environmental legislation in line with policy mechanisms used in the field of environmental protection.
PC5	Interact professionally in research and professional environments: Show consideration to others as well as collegiality. Listen, give and receive feedback and respond perceptively to others, also involving staff supervision and leadership in a professional setting.
PC8	Implement environmental protection measures: Enforce environmental criteria to prevent environmental damage. Strive for the efficient use of resources in order to prevent waste and reduce costs. Motivate colleagues to take relevant steps to operate in an environmentally friendly manner.
PC12	Perform scientific research: Gain, correct or improve knowledge about phenomena by using scientific methods and techniques, based on empirical or measurable observations.
Transversal competencies	
Competency code	**Competency**
TC1	Think analytically: Produce thoughts using logic and reasoning in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
TC2	Work in teams: Work confidently within a group with each doing their part in the service of the whole.

6.2. Learning outcomes relevant to the degree programme (as referred to in the curriculum)[2]

Learning outcomes targeted by the subject		
Competency code	**Knowledge and comprehension**	**Specific academic skills**
PC2, PC12, TC1	1. The student/graduate identifies and describes the international environmental legislative and policy framework, the assessment and analysis procedures used in ecological management, as well as the principles of ecosystem services assessment.	1. The student/graduate applies environmental legislation and policies in concrete situations. The student/graduate uses assessment and analysis procedures for ecological management. The student/graduate evaluates ecosystem services and integrates them into environmental decisions.

[1] The professional and/or transversal skills targeted by the subject for which the course description is prepared will be copied from the curriculum of the degree programme. For each competency, the complete entry, including the competency code, will be copied with the exact wording that appears in the curriculum, without any changes. If no competency is copied from either of the two categories, the row corresponding to that category is deleted from the table.

[2] The learning outcomes relevant for the degree programme and targeted by the subject for which the course description is prepared will be listed. The entries, copied without any changes from the Curriculum by subject type (Core Subject/Specialisation Subject/Complementary Subject), are listed under the corresponding competency.

PC5, PC 12, TC1, TC2	The student/graduate describes the stages of the scientific research process and of carrying out an applied research project in the field of environmental engineering.	The student/graduate actively participates in research and professional practice processes, documenting activities and results. The student/graduate applies integrated theoretical and practical knowledge in solving complex environmental problems. The student/graduate formulates research questions, applies appropriate methodologies and draws well-founded conclusions.

7. Subject-specific learning outcomes (referred to by each subject coordinator across the range of competencies and learning outcomes at the level of the degree programme)

Knowledge and comprehension
1. The student knows and understands the fundamental concepts of environmental policy, environmental legislation, and their historical development.
2. The student understands EU and international environmental principles, including the prevention, precaution, and polluter-pays principles.
3. The student knows and understands the main directives and regulations concerning air quality, water protection, waste management, biodiversity, chemicals, and industrial emissions.
4. The student knows and understands how environmental policies are formulated, how they interact with legislation, and the institutional mechanisms for implementing environmental laws within the EU.
5. The student understands the legal basis for environmental liability and the functioning of compliance mechanisms such as the infringement procedure.
6. The student knows and understands cross-cutting environmental challenges such as climate change adaptation, industrial hazards, and waste management in the context of the EU and globally.
7. The student knows and understands the roles of key stakeholders, institutional actors, and governance structures involved in shaping and enforcing environmental law.
Specific academic skills
1. The student is able to apply policy analysis tools (including the eightfold path) to evaluate environmental policies and their impacts.
2. The student is able to conduct stakeholder analyses and assess the influence of various actors on environmental decision-making.
3. The student is able to critically interpret case law, directives, and regulatory documents to understand their practical application in real-world contexts.
4. The student is able to analyze policy-making stages, decision-making models, and ideological influences relevant to environmental governance.
5.The student is able to evaluate environmental policies in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and equity.
6. The student is able to use legal and academic resources, including case law, directives, and scholarly literature, to support informed arguments and analyses.
7. The student is able to clearly present findings using policy analysis frameworks, stakeholder matrices, and structured argumentation, and to contribute actively to academic debates.

8. Contents

8.1 Course	Teaching and learning methods	Remarks[3]
Part I. Environmental policy **Courses (C) 1-2. Intro to policy-making. The study of public policy: A conceptual framework** What is "policy"? What is "politics"? What is the environmental policy? Environmental Policy: A Short History Why do we need an environmental policy? The EAPs The policy typologies The (environmental) policy golden rules *Q&A section* **C3 What should you think about when you want to examine the content and impact of a policy?** Ideologies and their role in creating new policies Environmentalism The rational or problem-solving model- a brief overview *Q&A section* Pop assignment **C4 The decision-making process** Decision-making process Types of decisions Decision-Making Models Power (Steven Lukes' Three Faces of Power, French & Raven's Types and Bases of Power) The stakeholders- definition, categories, stakeholder analysis The policy cycle framework *Q&A section* **C5. Policy analysis – in detail. The eightfold path** (after Bardach, 2019) (part I) Overview of (ex-ante) policy analysis steps Step 1. Define the problem Step 2. Assemble some evidence Step. 3 Construct the alternatives *Q&A section* **C6. Policy analysis – in detail.** **The eightfold path** (part II) Step four: Select the criteria Step five: Project the outcomes Step six: Confront the trade-offs Step seven: Decide! (e.g., Apply the "Twenty-Dollar-Bill Test") Step eight: Tell your story (e.g., apply the "Grandma Bessie Test"; gauge the audience; consider the medium to be used to tell the story) *Q&A section* ***PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION*** **C7-8. From environmental policy to legislation** Legal basis of environmental policy	Exposure: description, explanation, conversation.	Students are encouraged to take their participation to the next level by not only answering questions but also asking them, and by not just making comments but responding specifically to the topics raised during courses and seminars.

[3] For example, organisational aspects, recommendations for students, specific aspects relating to the course/seminar, such as inviting experts in the field, etc.

EU environmental principles: The prevention and precautionary principle, PPP, The integration principle Environmental liability Institutional framework for the right of legislative initiative, the right of legislation, the right of interpretation of the EU law and coercion The infringement procedure *Q&A section* **C9. The EU Environmental Legislation: Air and Noise** The Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Directive 2024/2882/EC The National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive 2016/2284/EU Environmental Noise Directive (END) 2002/49/EC Infringement and preliminary ruling cases on air quality *Q&A section* **C10. The EU Environmental legislation: Water, nature and biodiversity Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC** Water Framework Directive (2000/60) Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC Birds Directive 2009/147/EC Nature Restoration Law - Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 Soil Monitoring Law - Biodiversity conservation EU case law Water-related EU case law *Q&A section* **C11. The EU Environmental legislation: Waste** The Waste Framework Directive (waste definition, exclusions from the scope of WFD, waste hierarchy, economic instruments, and other measures to provide incentives for the application of the waste hierarchy, by-product concept, end-of-waste status) The Landfill Directive; The Packaging Directive; The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Waste-related international obligations Waste-related EU case law *Q&A section* **C12. The EU Environmental legislation: Chemicals, industrial emissions, and major accident hazards** C*HEMICALS*: REACH Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, The CLP Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008, The Chemicals Act (Control of Major Accident Hazards involving Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2015 (the "COMAH Regulations ») *INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS AND MAJOR ACCIDENT HAZARDS:* Directive 2010/75/EU on Industrial Emissions (IED); Directive 2015/2193/EU on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from Medium Combustion Plants (MCP Directive); Regulation (EU) 2017/852- Mercury regulation EU Case law- SEVESO *Q&A section* **C13. Cross-cutting environmental issues: climate change** The EU adaptation strategy in April 2013 (revised in 2018)		

The 2020 climate & energy package The 2030 climate & energy package EU case law - Renewable Energy Directive *Q&A section* **C14. The Environmental Implementation Review. Course Review** Presentation of the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) Do we need EIR? The Environmental Implementation Review Package Biodiversity – an example of how an environmental EU policy sector is reflected in the EIR The case of Romania (EIR challenges, opportunities, deficiencies) Course Review **NOTE:** The course structure is based on the ERA Academy of European Law course - "Introduction to European Environmental Law" (taught by Prof. Ludwig Krämer, Monika Krivickaite).		

Bibliography

1. Biermann, F., Hickmann, T., Sénit, C. A., Beisheim, M., Bernstein, S., Chasek, P., ... & Wicke, B. (2022). Scientific evidence on the political impact of the Sustainable Development Goals. Nature Sustainability, 5(9), 795-800.
2. Hardin, G. (1968). The tragedy of the commons. *Science,* 162(3859), 1243-1248.
3. Kroll, C., Warchold, A., & Pradhan, P. (2019). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Are we successful in turning trade-offs into synergies?. Palgrave Communications, 5(1).
4. Li, X., Yu, Z., Salman, A., Ali, Q., Hafeez, M., & Aslam, M. S. (2021). The role of financial development indicators in sustainable development-environmental degradation nexus. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, 28(25), 33707-33718.
5. Ma, F., Wang, H., Tzachor, A., Hidalgo, C. A., Schandl, H., Zhang, Y., ... & Fu, B. (2025). The disparities and development trajectories of nations in achieving the sustainable development goals. *Nature Communications*, *16*(1), 1107.
6. Petrescu-Mag, R.M., Petrescu, D.C., Oroian, I.G.; Safirescu, O.C., Bican-Brișan, N. (2016). Environmental Equity through Negotiation: A Case Study on Urban Landfills and the Roma Community. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health*, 13, 591.
7. Ríos, A. M., Raimo, N., Benito, B., Vitolla, F., & Guillamón, M. D. (2026). Governing for the goals: how governance quality shapes the achievement of the sustainable development goals. Sustainable Development, 34, 422-436.
8. UN, n.d. The 17 goals https://sdgs.un.org/goals
9. Video material: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYA1y405JW0 (Tragedy of the commons)

8.2 Seminar / laboratory	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Remarks**
The goal of the seminars is to foster active student participation in discussions. This does not imply that every student must engage in the same manner or with the same frequency. Rather, the objective is to cultivate an inclusive environment in which all students feel empowered to contribute and learn. Additionally, the seminar group will have the opportunity to explore issues and ideas in depth from diverse perspectives related to environmental policy and legislation. Activities include critical discussions, debates on the stages of environmental policymaking, and case-study analyses. Students will also be assigned to co-lead class discussions based on the assigned readings. Examples of pop assignments and debates:	Conversation, debate, case studies. *Recommended strategies for students:* Become more active in discussions and contribute more thoughtful, effective comments to help raise the overall quality of the conversation.	Please note: Reading the course materials is necessary but not sufficient to ensure meaningful participation in discussions. Students who do not engage with the course support materials and other required readings cannot contribute effectively to discussions.

Identify an area or problem where a public policy was established. What model(s) were used in its creation? Justify your answer. Among the existing models for developing public policies, which one best serves public interests and societal demands? Why? Provide arguments. *Debate:* Using the following criteria, public interest, effectiveness, fairness, and consistency, evaluate the proposed (imaginary) constitutional amendment: Current text: Article 136 (3) of the Romanian Constitution states that "The mineral resources of public interest, the air, the waters with energy potential that can be used for national interests, the beaches, the territorial sea, the natural resources of the economic zone and the continental shelf, as well as other possessions established by organic law, shall be public property exclusively." (Constitution of Romania, 2003) Proposed (imaginary) constitutional amendment: "The mineral resources of public interest, the air, the waters with energy potential that can be used both for national and EU interests, the beaches, the territorial sea, the natural resources of the economic zone, and the continental shelf, as well as other possessions established by organic law, shall be public and private property."		

Bibliography for the seminars:

1. Hall, D. M., & Steiner, R. (2020). Policy content analysis: Qualitative method for analyzing sub-national insect pollinator legislation. MethodsX, 7, 100787.
2. Hancock, J. (2019). Environmental human rights: Power, ethics and law. Routledge**.**
3. Leipold, S. (2021). Transforming ecological modernization 'from within' or perpetuating it? The circular economy as EU environmental policy narrative. Environmental Politics, 1-23.
4. McEldowney, J., & McEldowney, S. (2020). Contemporary issues in environmental law and policy. Edward Elgar. https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/download/708fa5a07c96bdd3686561d7be2e9f8addc9532d6f7a1a001c8c0f7b7681b1cc/103161/Sustainable%20Chemical%20Regulation%20in%20a%20Global%20Environment%20final%201.pdf
5. Peeters, M., & Eliantonio, M. (Eds.). (2020). Research handbook on EU environmental law. Edward Elgar Publishing.
6. Petrescu-Mag, R. M., Petrescu, D. C., Oroian, I. G., Safirescu, O. C., Bican-Brişan, N. (2016). Environmental equity through negotiation: A case study on urban landfills and the Roma community. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 13(6), 591.
7. Petrescu-Mag, R. M., Petrescu, D. C., Safirescu, O. C., Hetvary, M., Oroian, I. G., Vâju, D. (2016). Developing public policy options for access to drinking water in peripheral, disaster and polluted rural areas: A case study on environment-friendly and conventional technologies. Water, 8(3), 80.

9. Evaluation

Type of activity	9.1 Evaluation criteria[4]	9.2 Evaluation methods[5]	9.3 Share in the grade (%)
9.4 Course	Knowledge of the milestones in environmental policymaking: e.g., concepts, legal basis, greening commitments of the EU policies; Knowledge of the main regulations in environmental protection.	Exam	50%
9.5 Seminar/lab activities	Elaboration and presentation of a research essay (research project)	The following elements will be considered: respecting the deadline, attractiveness of the presentation, the content, and references.	30%
	Active participation in seminars	To assess the project, the following elements will be considered: adherence to the deadline; paper presentation; paper appearance; paper content; and references.	20%
9.6 Minimum performance standards: Attendance at lectures is not mandatory, but it is recommended. The course coordinator may implement methods to monitor attendance. Students must meet the minimum participation requirements for all academic activities. The passing grade is 5 (five). Appeals regarding final results, submitted within 24 hours of the communication of the grades, are resolved by a committee appointed by the faculty management within 48 hours of the submission of the appeal.			

10. SDG labels (Sustainable Development Goals)[6]

✓ Sustainable Development Generic Label								
1 FĂRĂ SĂRĂCIE	2 FOAMETE „ZERO"	3 SĂNĂTATE ȘI BUNĂSTARE	4 EDUCAȚIE DE CALITATE	5 EGALITATE DE GEN	6 APĂ CURATĂ ȘI SANITAȚIE	7 ENERGIE CURATĂ ȘI LA PREȚURI ACCESIBILE	8 MUNCĂ DECENTĂ ȘI CREȘTERE ECONOMICĂ	9 INDUSTRIE, INOVAȚIE ȘI INFRASTRUCTURĂ
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
10 INEGALITĂȚI REDUSE	11 ORAȘE ȘI COMUNITĂȚI DURABILE	12 CONSUM ȘI PRODUCȚIE RESPONSABILE	13 ACȚIUNE CLIMATICĂ	14 VIAȚA ACVATICĂ	15 VIAȚA TERESTRĂ	16 PACE, JUSTIȚIE ȘI INSTITUȚII EFICIENTE	17 PARTENERIATE PENTRU REALIZAREA OBIECTIVELOR	No label applies
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

[4] The evaluation criteria must directly reflect the learning outcomes targeted at the level of the degree programme respectively at the level of the subject. More specifically, the learning outcomes set out in the expected learning outcomes are assessed.

[5] Both final evaluation methods and ongoing evaluation strategies should be established.

[6] Select a single label which, according to the *Implementation of SDG labels in the academic process*, best matches the subject. If the subject addresses sustainable development in a generic manner (i.e. by presenting/introducing the general framework of sustainable development, etc.), then the Sustainable Development generic label may be applied. If none of the labels describe the subject, select the last option: *"No label applies."*

Date of entry:
April 6, 2026

Signature of course coordinator

Ruxandra M. Petrescu-Mag

.....

Signature of seminar coordinator

Ruxandra M. Petrescu-Mag

.....

Date of approval in the department:

.....

Signature of the head of department

.....