

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN THEORY AND PRACTICE



SYLLABUS

VU Amsterdam Summer School

17-23 July 2023



Any general questions for the Summer School support team? Contact amsterdamsummerschool@vu.nl.

Course Details

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|------------------------------|--|
| Title | Environmental Justice in Theory and Practice |
| Coordinator(s) | Marije Schaafsma, Ina Lehmann |
| Other lecturers | See below |
| Study credits | 2 |
| Form(s) of tuition | On campus, excursion |
| Approximate contact hours | 23.5 including group work |
| Approximate self-study hours | 26.5 |

Teaching staff (in order of appearance)

Ina Lehmann

Marije Schaafsma

Jasper van Vliet

Michelle Eichinger

Timothy Williams

Natalia Celedón Celis

Montserrat Vazquez Ladron de Guevara

Joshua Nooij

Eszter Szedlacsek

Mathieu Blondeel

Toon Haer

Camille Venier Cambron

Heidi Mendoza

Course description

Across the world, the most vulnerable people are most severely affected by the detrimental consequences of global environmental change. Policies and practices for mitigation of and adaptation to global environmental change impact people in highly uneven ways. These impacts are exacerbated by a lack of voice and agency, as well as a lack of recognition of diverse worldviews and practices among more vulnerable groups. Such injustices hamper achieving SDGs 14 and 15 (life below water and life on land) as well as SDG 1 (zero poverty) and SDG 10 (reduce inequalities). Scholars, environmental activists and policy makers are increasingly sensitive to these patterns, and calls for environmental justice abound. But how to achieve a more just and sustainable future?

Some people support just environmental policies and practices because they are convinced that treating each other justly is inherently the right thing to do – there is a moral imperative. Research also shows that environmental policies that are perceived as “just” can more effective because people are more likely to comply with them. However, it is far less clear what environmental justice really is, and what it demands in practice. Moreover, ideas of justice differ across people and contexts.

This summer course will introduce students to environmental justice from a variety of perspectives. We will engage with philosophical attempts to identify normative standards for what can be considered a just allocation of the benefits and burdens of environmental action. This includes questions such as: Should everybody have equal access to vital ecosystem services? Should rich countries pay for climate change adaptation in poorer countries? If so to what extent? But we will also critically scrutinize the value of philosophical reasoning as an approach to environmental justice. Does philosophy provide us with much needed impartial principles to guide our actions or is it too much of an armchair discipline, removed from what is going on in the ‘real world’? Is listening to stakeholders’ claims and the demands of environmental justice movements and activists a more practically relevant way to make sense of environmental justice? What are their objectives and strategies and how successful are they?

We will also engage with environmental justice aspects of the assessment of impacts of conservation and other environmental policies and interventions. The Intergovernmental Platform of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) has well laid out that people hold diverse values for nature, linked to the way they engage with nature and their worldviews. Then how to best assess such values? What are the advantages of expressing such values in monetary terms, and what are the counterarguments? What is the role of environmental economics and socio-cultural studies in assessing values of nature? How can the process of valuation be organized in a such a way that the resulting outcomes are supported by the people whose values are at stake?

In discussing different approaches, we will link these to concrete case studies and examples of struggles for environmental justice. These will come from different environmental issue areas such as climate change (SDG 13), terrestrial ecosystem conservation (SDG 15), and ocean protection (SDG 14). Environmental justice plays out differently in these settings due to different spatial and temporal scales; whereas in some cases the impacts are felt nearby and immediately (e.g. forest conversion), other issues such as climate change span vast areas and multiple generations. This may lead to different approaches to reduce injustices.

The course will be highly interactive. Lecturers will provide input on key concepts, methods and empirical trends in the field of environmental justice, and guest lectures by practitioners will demonstrate how these concepts are operationalized, feeding into discussions of theory versus practice. Students will be given considerable room to work with these inputs and apply them to cases of environmental injustice or environmental justice movements that they themselves choose to work on. The teachers for this course will come from different backgrounds and departments and have expertise in different environmental issue areas, making this a truly interdisciplinary learning experience. As environmental justice also plays out in urban design, we will include one local guided walk discussing environmental justice issues at city level.

Learning objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- understand different approaches to environmental (in)justice
- apply environmental justice theories and approaches to case studies
- assess and evaluate situations of potential environmental (in)justice
- explore policy options for enhancing environmental justice
- work as a team on questions involving personal (normative) judgement.

Assignments

Small groups of ~3 students will choose a method and concept of environmental justice and apply this to a case study of environmental policies or practice. They can either assess the case from a normative point of view, asking whether or to what extent environmental justice is realized in their chosen case. Or they can take a more analytical approach, asking how issues around environmental justice are debated or contested in their case. Other approaches are also possible in agreement with the course coordinators. Participants are suggested to explore the [EJAtlas](#) or suggest own ideas, in agreement with the course coordinators. The final assignment will be a 15 minutes presentation of the group work on the final day of the course.

Grading

| Criteria | Points |
|--|--------|
| <p><i>Introduction</i></p> <p>The problem that motivates your presentation is clearly identified and the selection of a specific method and concept well justified.</p> | 1 |
| <p><i>Summary of method and concept</i></p> <p>The chosen method and concept are succinctly summarised and there is a clear explanation how they will be applied to the case study.</p> | 1 |
| <p><i>Application to case study</i></p> <p>The analysis clearly applies the method and concept to the chosen case. Relevant and accurate evidence that supports the analysis is presented. The presentation relies on appropriate literature and/or primary sources.</p> | 3 |
| <p><i>Conclusion</i></p> <p>The conclusion summarizes the main results, reflects on their implications for the generalisability of theory/concept, and spells out areas for future research.</p> | 1 |
| <p><i>Presentation – Structure and style</i></p> <p>The presentation is logically and clearly organised. Signposting is effective. Technical terms or unusual words are clarified. The presentation does not last longer than 15 minutes.</p> | 1,5 |
| <p><i>Presentation – Speech and slides</i></p> | 2 |

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|--|-----|
| Articulation is clear throughout, speed of talking is adequate, slides are clear and neat with appropriate amount of text and clear visuals where appropriate. | |
| <i>Referencing</i> The presentation is complemented by a complete and consistent list of references, which meets academic standards. | 0,5 |

Course Schedule (summary)

| Day | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| • Theme | Concepts and methods of environmental justice | Urban environments | Biodiversity and Nature's Contributions to People | Global climate change | Stocktake & outlook |
| Preparation material | Walker (2012) Schaafsma et al. (2023) Adrian Martin explaining Sen's Parable of the flute | Mathiarasan & Hüls (2021) Williams et al. (2022) Questions for a Resilient Future: Julian Agyeman - YouTube | Schmalz et al. (2022) Lilleyman et al. (2022) Dreoni et al. | Lamb et al. (2020) Hallegatte et al. (2020) Explore the Climate Equity Reference Project website and calculator | Adams & Hutton (2007) Rodríguez & Inturias (2018) |
| Morning Programme – key topics | 10.00-12.00h •Dimensions: distribution, participation, recognition •Values of nature | 09.00-12.00h •Spatial injustices •Urban inequalities •Measuring and modelling | 09.00-12.00h •Values of nature •Anthropocentrism and beyond •Ecosystem management | 09.00-12.00h •Global linkages •Historical responsibilities •Capacity to contribute to climate change mitigation | 09.00-12.00h •Group presentations |
| Afternoon programme | 13.00-15.00h •Start group work: choose and explore topic <i>From 15.00h</i> • <i>Summer school social programme</i> | 14.30-16.30h •Guided tour/excursion on urban environmental in/justice in Amsterdam | <i>From 12.00h</i> • <i>Summer school social programme</i> | 13.30-17.00h •Group work: conduct analysis and prepare presentation | 13.00-15.00h •Discussion: transformation towards environmental justice •Course evaluation <i>From 15.00h</i> • <i>Summer school farewell programme</i> |

Reading list

These are the reading materials that will be discussed during the morning lectures, ordered by the day in which they are included in the schedule. We strongly recommend that all participants read these materials before the lecture! All reading materials are provided as pdf files on the course canvas page (although some will be uploaded nearer to the start of the course).

Monday:

- Walker, G. (2012). Environmental justice: concepts, evidence and politics. Abingdon. Ch 3: Making claims: Justice, evidence and process, 40-76. *Focus on the section on justice dimensions*
- Schaafsma, M., et al. 2023. Whose values count? A review of nature valuation studies with a focus on justice. [in press]

Tuesday:

- Mathiarasan, S., & Hüls, A. (2021). Impact of environmental injustice on children's health—interaction between air pollution and socioeconomic status. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(2), 795.
- Williams, T. G., Brown, D. G., Guikema, S. D., Magliocca, N. R., Müller, B., Steger, C. E., & Logan, T. (2022). Integrating Equity Considerations into Agent-Based Modeling: A Conceptual Framework and Practical Guidance. *Focus on sections 1 and 4.*

Wednesday:

- Schmalz, S., Graf, J., Julián-Vejar, D., Sittel, J., & Alister Sanhueza, C. (2022). Challenging the three faces of extractivism: the Mapuche struggle and the forestry industry in Chile. *Globalizations*, 1-19.
- Lilleyman, A., Millar, G., Burn, S., Fatt, K. H. L., Talbot, A., Que-Noy, J., ... & Smith, B. C. (2022). Indigenous knowledge in conservation science and the process of a two-way research collaboration. *Conservation Science and Practice*, 4(8), e12727.
- Dreoni, I., Mentzakis, E., & Schaafsma, M. Favouritism Breeds Self-Interest: An Experimental Study of Procedural and Outcome Fairness. *Available at SSRN 4184152.*
- CBD (2004) Decision adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its seventh meeting VII/28; available at www.cbd.in/decisions. *Focus on the Annex Programme of Work on Protected Areas*

Thursday:

- Okereke, C., & Coventry, P. (2016) Climate justice and the international regime: before, during, and after Paris. *WIREs Clim Change*, 7, 834-851.

- Hallegatte, S., Vogt-Schilb, A., Rozenberg, J., Bangalore, M., & Beaudet, C. (2020). From poverty to disaster and back: A review of the literature. *Economics of Disasters and Climate Change*, 4, 223-247.
- Lamb, W. F., Mattioli, G., Levi, S., Roberts, J. T., Capstick, S., Creutzig, F., ... & Steinberger, J. K. (2020). Discourses of climate delay. *Global Sustainability*, 3, e17.

Friday:

- Adams, W. M., & Hutton, J. (2007). People, parks and poverty: political ecology and biodiversity conservation. *Conservation and society*, 5(2), 147-183.
- Rodríguez, I., Inturias, M. L. 2018. Conflict transformation in indigenous peoples' territories: doing environmental justice with a 'decolonial turn', *Development Studies Research*, 5:1, 90-105.

Additional reading suggestions

Monday:

- Anderson, C.B., Athayde, S., Raymond, C.M., Vatn, A., Arias, P., Gould, R.K., Kenter, J., Muraca, B., Sachdeva, S., Samakov, A., Zent, E., Lenzi, D., Murali, R., Amin, A., and Cantú-Fernández, M. (2022). Chapter 2: Conceptualizing the diverse values of nature and their contributions to people. In: Methodological Assessment Report on the Diverse Values and Valuation of Nature of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. Balvanera, P., Pascual, U., Christie, M., Baptiste, B., and González-Jiménez, D. (eds). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6493134>
Focus on sections 2.2 and 2.4

Tuesday

- Voelkel, J., Hellman, D., Sakuma, R., & Shandas, V. (2018). Assessing vulnerability to urban heat: A study of disproportionate heat exposure and access to refuge by socio-demographic status in Portland, Oregon. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 15(4), 640.
- Bowser, G., & Cid, C. R. (2020). Integrating environmental justice into applied ecology research: Somebody else's problem?. *Ecological Applications*, 30(8), e02250.

Wednesday

- Ens, E. J., Finlayson, M., Preuss, K., Jackson, S., & Holcombe, S. (2012). Australian approaches for managing 'country' using Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge. *Ecological Management & Restoration*, 13(1), 100-107.
- Beltrán-Véliz, J., Gálvez-Nieto, J. L., Tereucán-Angulo, J., Muñoz-Vidal, F., Vera-Gajardo, N., & Müller-Ferrés, P. (2023). Implications of Extractivism and Environmental Pollution in Mapuche Territories of the Araucanía Region. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(9), 5672.
- Torres-Salinas, R., García, G. A., Henríquez, N. C., Zambrano-Bigiarini, M., Costa, T., & Bolin, B. (2016). Forestry development, water scarcity, and the Mapuche protest for environmental justice in Chile. *Ambiente & Sociedade*, 19, 121-144.
- Ford, J. D., Cameron, L., Rubis, J., Maillet, M., Nakashima, D., Willox, A. C., & Pearce, T. (2016). Including indigenous knowledge and experience in IPCC assessment reports. *Nature Climate Change*, 6(4), 349-353.

Thursday

- Holz, C., Kartha, S., Athanasiou, T. 2018. Fairly sharing 1.5: National fair shares of a 1.5 °C-compliant global mitigation effort. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 18, 117-134.

Friday

- Martin, A., Armijos, M.T., Coolsaet, B., Dawson, N., Edwards, G.A.S., Few, R., Gross-Camp, N., Rodriguez, I., Schroeder, H., Tebboth, M.G., L, White, C.S. 2020. Environmental Justice and Transformations to Sustainability, *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 62:6, 19-30.

