

SYLLABUS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION: GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND POLICY ACTIONS

Professor: Tancrède VOITURIEZ

Session: July 2021

Language of instruction: English

Number of hours of class: 36

Objective of the Course

This course will provide intellectual material for students to understand the rationale for and challenges behind sustainable development and climate action. Students will develop a critical sense of the drivers of actions and the factors of inaction in this field/domain. They will explore the relationships between knowledge and beliefs, science-based policy and contemporary politics. Additionally, students will debate on propositions made by scholars from different academic fields in an attempt to tackle the most pressing environmental and development-related challenges of our time.

Summary

Available evidence of environmental changes in the 21st century has revealed that said changes pose a major threat to our economies and societies. To ring the alarm, some scholars even coined a new term, the “Anthropocene,” to describe the unprecedented influence of human activities on the Earth system.

In 2015, the United Nations solemnly agreed to tackle environmental changes at their roots. They set the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and decided on 17 new and universal Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including climate change. They also made a pledge with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to strengthen the universal response to the threat of global warming by keeping a global temperature rise in this century well below 2°C. The same year, UN member countries took further steps to mobilize public and private resources so as to implement these two corresponding agendas.

From goals to action, questions remain on the amount of change delivered by global commitments. How do rich and poor societies confront and act on SDGs and climate change targets today? What do concepts such as “sustainable development” and “Anthropocene” deliver in terms of policy responses? What responses are they supposed to spark? What is the theory of change for civil societies, CEOs and scientists confronted with inertia, denial or obstruction? Is litigation a way out? While some major economies are stuck in the grip of populist extremism, can environmental and climate change policies frame a new social contract and deliver stability in international relations in the coming years? Students will encounter these kinds of questions throughout the course.

The course will be structured in three parts. In the first part, we will identify various environmental and development-related challenges and map out the policy responses at a global level. In the second part, we will discuss the contemporary politics of global environmental and development changes, and observe that which has been achieved so far. In the last section of the course, we will look at different academic disciplines in order to flesh out science-based options likely to solve the challenges of implementation.

Organization of the Course

- **Theme 1: Sustainable Development Challenges and Global Policy Responses**
- **Theme 2: From Policy to Politics – Mapping Out the Drivers of Action and the Factors of Inertia**
- **Theme 3: Legal and Science-Based Options to Solve Implementation Challenges**

Theme 1: Sustainable Development Challenges and Global Policy Responses

Session 1: Introduction – Two Narratives on “Development”

Suggested reading

- Voituriez T. (2020). Environmental changes. In Dirk Berg-Schlosser, Bertrand Badie,
- Leonardo Morlino (eds.), Handbook of Political Science – A Global Perspective, Part 7, chapter 85, London., SAGE.

Session 2: Leaving No One Behind: Can Poverty Be History?

Suggested readings

- Andy Sumner (2013). Where Do The Poor Live? World Development Vol. 40, No. 5, pp. 865–877.
- Peter Edward and Andy Sumner (2015). Philanthropy, Welfare Capitalism, or Radically Different Global Economic Model: What Would It Take to End Global Poverty within a Generation Based on Historical Growth Patterns? CGDEV

Working Paper 413. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/end-global-poverty-within-generation-historical-growth>

Session 3: Taking Income Inequality Reduction Seriously

Suggested readings

- Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez (2014). Inequality in the long run. *Science*, vol.344, no.6186, 2014, p.838-844.
- Chancel L., Hough A., Voituriez T. (2018) Reducing inequalities within countries: Assessing the potential of the sustainable development goals. *Global Policy*, 9 (1): 5-16.

Session 4: Inserting the Environment in the Development Equation

Suggested readings

- Steffen, W. *et al.* (2011). The Anthropocene: From Global Change to Planetary Stewardship. *Ambio* 40, 739–761.
- Laurans, Y., Rankovic, A. (2019). The ongoing biodiversity loss and how it can be stopped. A reading of the IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. IDDRI Issue Brief 6, May.
<https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/issue-brief/ongoing-biodiversity-loss-and-how-it-can-be-stopped>
- Amiel, F., Laurans, Y., Muller, A. (2019). Agricultural value chains facing the biodiversity challenge: the cocoa-chocolate example. IDDRI Study 5, October.
<https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/study/agricultural-value-chains-facing-biodiversity-challenge-cocoa>

Sessions 5&6: Climate Action as a Litmus Test for Sustainable Development

Suggested readings

- IPCC (2018). Global Warming of 1.5°C. Special report. Summary for Policymakers.
<https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>
- UNEP (2019). Emission gap report. Executive Summary.
<https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2019>

Theme 2: From Policy to Politics – Mapping Out the Drivers of Action and the Factors of Inertia

Session 7: Campaigning for Climate Action

Suggested readings

- Hendey, E. (2015). Does Divestment Work? Harvard IOP. Harvard Kennedy School. <http://www.iop.harvard.edu/does-divestment-work>
- Climate Action Network (2020). In 2020, the power of people must defeat failing politics: Tasneem Essop, CAN Executive Director. <http://climatenetwork.org/node/7649>

Session 8: Leveraging Development Finance

Suggested readings

- Joint Report on Multilateral Development Banks' Climate Finance 2018. <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/650791574955718829/2018-joint-report-on-mdbs-climate-finance.pdf>
- IDFC (2019). Green Finance Mapping Report 2019. Findings in 2018 Data. Executive Summary. <https://climatepolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/IDFC-Green-Finance-Mapping-2019.pdf>
- Voituriez Tancrede, Yao Wang, Larsen Mathias Lund. 2019. Revising the 'host country standard' principle: A step for China to align its overseas investment with the Paris Agreement. Climate Policy, 19 (10): 1205-1210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14693062.2019.1650702>

Session 9: Swapping Fossil Fuel Subsidies for Sustainable Development

- Atansah, P., Khandan, M., Moss, T., Mukherjee, A., and Richmond, J. (2017). "When Do Subsidy Reforms Stick? Lessons from Iran, Nigeria, and India." CGD Policy Paper. Washington, DC: Center for Global Development. <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/when-dosubsidy-reforms-stick-lessons-iran-nigeria-and-india>
- G20 (2019). Indonesia's Effort to Phase Out and Rationalise Its Fossil-Fuel Subsidies. Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and Ministry of Finance, Republic of Indonesia. <https://www.oecd.org/fossil-fuels/publication/Indonesia%20G20%20Self-Report%20IFFS.pdf>

Session 10: What to Expect from Sustainability Private Initiatives?

Suggested readings

- Laurans, Y., Aubert, P.-M., Chaki, A. (2017). Implementation and effectiveness of sustainability initiatives in the palm oil sector: A review. IDDRI Study October 2017. <https://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/study/implementation-and-effectiveness-sustainability-initiatives-palm-oil>
- Vidal, J. (2019). Offsetting carbon emissions: 'It has proved a minefield'. The Guardian Fri 2 Aug 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2019/aug/02/offsetting-carbon-emissions-how-to-travel-options>

Theme 3: Legal and Science-Based Options to Solve Implementation Challenges

Session 11: Getting to Net-Zero Emissions

Suggested reading

- IDB and DDPLAC (2019). Getting to net-zero emissions. Lessons from Latin America and the Caribbean. https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Getting_to_Net-Zero_Emissions_Lessons_from_Latin_America_and_the_Caribbean_en.pdf

Session 12: Harnessing Trade for Sustainable Development

Suggested reading

- Bacchus, J. (2015). Measures to Address Climate Change and the Trade System. Global Rules for Mutually Supportive and Reinforcing Trade and Climate Regimes. Policy Options Paper. E15 Initiative, ICTSD and Climate Strategies. <https://e15initiative.org/publications/global-rules-mutually-supportive-reinforcing-trade-climate-regimes/>

Session 13: Is Climate Litigation the Way Out?

Suggested readings

- Damian Carrington (2018). Can climate litigation save the world? The Guardian, 20 March 2018. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/20/can-climate-litigation-save-the-world>

- UNEP (2017). The Status of Climate Change Litigation – A Global Review. Geneva: United Nations Environment Programme.
<https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/20767>

Session 14&15: Getting to Yes – A Simulation Game

Suggested reading

- Fisher, R., Ury W.L., Patton, B. (2011). Getting to Yes. Penguin Books.

Session 16: Conclusion and Evaluation

Requirements for course validation

Oral participation: 20%

Mid-term paper: 30% providing a critical analysis of one of the suggested readings of the course

Final essay: 50% mapping out the controversies around one particular session's topic

Bibliography

Please refer to the course outline.

Main Professor Biography



Tancrede Voiturez has a PhD in Economics and is a Senior researcher on Global Governance at IDDRI. His research focuses on trade and green innovation relationships, and on the causes of inertia in the implementation of sustainable development policies. Tancrede Voiturez has been involved as a coordinator and/or expert in numerous research projects on globalisation and sustainable development for the European Commission, the European Parliament, the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment, among others. He has been a lecturer at Sciences Po since 2005.