

## ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Fall 2025 (3 credits)

SYD 6520 (Sec. CO15)/ LAS 6938 (Sec. CTG1) / ANG 6930 (Sec. CT69)

Friday 9:35 - 12:35

Grinter Hall 376

**Professor Christine Overdevest**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:30**

**& By Appointment**

**Professor Catherine Tucker**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00-12 noon**

**& By Appointment**

***Note:** This syllabus is subject to further change or revision, as needed, to best realize the educational goals of the course. Modifications will be announced in class or on course materials with fair prior notice.*

This course on Environmental Governance takes a multi-disciplinary approach to examining how formal and informal institutions, policies, rules, and practices shape environmental outcomes. It concerns contemporary challenges in designing rules and institutions for regulating human-environment relations. It raises questions about *who* makes environmental decisions; *how* they are made, and *how* political and economic power shapes environmental governance. It is concerned with normative questions such as how best to organize social actors and systems to promote sustainable or ecological outcomes.

Environmental governance researchers investigate particular arrangements and address broader theoretical questions concerning the fitness to purpose/effectiveness, fairness, equity, legitimacy, and accountability of different approaches. We evaluate leading environmental policy strategies, including traditional state regulation, market-based incentives, participatory and community-based systems, and regulation created by private actors—as well as cutting edge theoretical perspectives on de-growth, performativity, and building “diverse economies.” Increasingly, the interactions between different forms of regulation figure prominently in debates on governance. Empirical examples of governance arrangements from different parts of the world and different domains (climate change, forestry, fisheries, agriculture, among others) highlight challenges and opportunities.

### **Objectives:**

Students will:

- Describe and evaluate critical trends in environmental governance
- Analyze and interpret the social and political forces associated with the emergence, institutionalization, and operation of competing approaches to environmental governance
- Compare and evaluate different theories and academic debates about environmental governance
- Contrast and appraise competing assumptions underlying different approaches to environmental governance.

- Explain the social and political outcomes and effectiveness of different approaches to environmental governance
- Demonstrate the capacity to pose and defend research questions related to environmental governance

### **Required and Recommended Readings and Materials:**

All required and recommended readings and supplementary resources will be posted on Canvas.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### ***Grading***

1. Weekly Assignment (e.g., Memos , Discussion Questions, Peer Commentaries)	30%
2. Session Leadership	20%
3. Seminar Paper Rough Draft for Peer Reviews due on Nov. 10 (ungraded)	0%
4. Student Presentation of Seminar Paper	10%
5. Peer Reviews	10%
6. Seminar Paper. Due Monday, December 8 at 5 pm	30%

Late submissions will be deducted 10% of the total possible points each day. Accommodations may be made for illnesses or emergencies with documentation (see Course Policies below).

#### **Grading Policy:**

#### **The course will be graded as follows:**

A	100%	to	94%
A-	<93.99%	to	90%
B+	<89.99%	to	87%
B	<86.99%	to	83%
B-	<82.99%	to	80%
C+	<79.99%	to	77%
C	<76.99%	to	73%
C-	<72.99%	to	70%
D+	<69.99%	to	67%
D	<66.99%	to	63%
D-	<62.99%	to	60%
F	<59.99%	to	0%

#### **Weekly Assignments**

Each week we will have a written assignment (e.g., a memo, discussion questions) that engages with the readings and topics. These assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the *Tuesday* before class and should be submitted to Canvas. Where memos are assigned, they are meant to help you reflect on the basic arguments of each reading and define key concepts in enough detail so that you can use them as study guides for prelims or for material to support your seminar paper. Memos should be about 2 pages in length (please do not exceed 3 double-spaced pages). Read your classmates' contributions before class, provide a peer commentary on two of your peers' memos, and come prepared for discussion.

Session Leadership will provide individual students the opportunity to practice pedagogical skills by giving a commentary on the topic of the day, posing questions, and leading discussion or a creative activity. Each student will lead a session at least once during the semester (during that week, you will not be assigned a memo or other activity). Students will be evaluated for their session leadership, based on the quality of work, active participation, thoughtfulness, and insightful contributions, and submission of their leadership plan & materials prior to the class.

### Seminar Paper

#### Team Projects (Strongly Encouraged)

For this course's final presentation/seminar paper, students are strongly encouraged to work in teams of two. Working collaboratively promotes deeper engagement, develops communication skills, and allows us to accommodate all presentations within the limited class time.

If we have an odd number of students, a small number of solo projects may be permitted, but these must be approved in advance by the instructor. Solo projects will be held to the same standards of depth and quality as team projects.

Instructions: Choose a topic relevant to environmental governance and your research interests. Propose your topic by email to Drs. Overdevest and Tucker no later than **Oct 20 at 11:59 pm**. If you are uncertain, please meet with one of the instructors to consult.

There are several approaches to a good seminar paper for this class:

1. Write an empirical paper. You may choose to do web and document research on a specific state or non-state governance initiative (such as fair trade, a forest certification scheme, or a new kind of performance, such as a sharing network), analyzing it alone or in comparison with another initiative. The paper should explore a specific form or challenge of environmental governance. You may analyze its emergence, effectiveness, relationship to public authority, or other issues raised in class. 15-20 pages.
2. Write a case study analysis that develops a detailed assessment of a specific environmental governance challenge and possible options for policy or practice, including an analysis of extant policy processes and outcomes. 15-20 pages.
  - a. If you write an empirical paper, consider submitting a shorter but publishable policy review or analysis for *Society and Natural Resources*: (5,000-word limit).
3. You may also apply concepts and readings in the course to your research interests, exploring how they influence the development of your research thesis. 15-20 pages.

4. Finally, you may write a theoretical synthesis and critique of different approaches to governance. 15-20 pages.

NOTE: Groups of two or three students may propose collaborating on a paper for publication.

- a. Consider submitting your class papers to journal. *Society and Natural Resources* publishes Policy Review/Analyses articles and Practice-Based Knowledge (5000-word limit):

“Policy Reviews examine current or proposed policies associated with natural resource management. These articles can raise policy questions, propose alternate action, or critique current or proposed policy.”

Practice-based knowledge articles focus on “the emergence of hybrid governance institutions across state, market, and civil society, understanding the complexity of dynamic socio-ecological systems, recognizing the challenges of multiple knowledge systems and context-specific practices, embracing the power of informal institutions and civic science, and engaging debates on the growing prevalence of market-oriented conservation. The goal is to provide a dedicated space within the published, peer-reviewed literature for scholars, government officials, nonprofit managers, and engaged citizens to share experiences informed by practical action. Relevant and timely practice-based insights may improve understanding and management of social and ecological processes and systems, while also offering the potential to contribute to theory.”

*Grading Criteria for Papers* (adapted from the syllabi of Professor Aili Mari Tripp):

1. Well-defined statement of your thesis. A thesis supplies a specific subject and a clear direction for your paper. A thesis must: a) contain an arguable point; b) control the entire argument; c) provide a structure for your argument.
2. Serious Engagement of Alternative Arguments. As appropriate, do you seriously consider arguments other than those you make? Do you address evidence that does not support your position? Draw from sources not read in class?
3. Clarity of Presentation. Are your ideas clearly expressed? Is your paper focused, or does it wander? Can a reader easily identify your main points? Are the ideas presented elaborated sufficiently? Are there signposts to guide the reader? Are terms defined?
4. Organization. Is the paper organized effectively? Is the sequence of points made logical and clear? Does each paragraph have a central idea that a reader can easily identify?
5. Grammar, Spelling, Citations, Format. Is the copy clean and relatively free from grammatical errors? Have you cited ideas and facts drawn from published sources?

### **Peer Review of Paper Drafts**

Each student will review two of their peers' paper drafts, and share their written reviews with the author to recommend improvements in the final draft. Peer reviews are to be shared with the authors on the day that they present their paper Nov. 14 or 21.

**Seminar Papers due Monday, December 8 at 11:59 pm.** (Submit to Canvas, double spaced)

### Paper Presentations

On November 21, students will present their seminar papers. Drafts of their papers must be circulated no later than 11:59 pm on Friday, November 14 for all papers. Students will have 10 minutes to present. Discussion will follow. Peer reviewers and students who are not presenting on a given day should prepare brief constructive comments on ~3 of their classmates' paper drafts to offer during the discussions. Everyone is welcome to provide constructive feedback on other's papers.

### Intellectual Stance

The class process aims to support graduate students' growth as independent scholars. As such, the class encourages diverse perspectives, alternative interpretations, and respectful contestation. It intends to create a welcoming context to freely explore uncertainties and puzzles. Part of the intellectual process is to seek clarification (and pose questions) when something seems confounding or unclear. The focus on the class will be on discussion and exchange of ideas, grounded in theoretically rigorous approaches, courageous and skilled examination of concepts, and evidence-based discussion.

### ***Class Schedule***

*Note: Adjustments may be made to the schedule and content if advantageous for learning*

### ***Preamble: Introduction to Environmental Governance***

#### ***Week One – Aug. 22 Class and Participant Introduction—***

*Broadly introduce philosophical contexts and instructors' intellectual foundations.*

#### *Background Reading:*

Dryzek, Chapter 1. "Making Sense of Earth's Politics: A Discourse Approach."  
Selections. In *Politics of the Earth*, Oxford University Press.

*Dryzek's book evaluates the actors and storylines underlying three ideal type approaches to environmental governance: administrative rationalism (state-based approaches), economic rationalism (market-based approaches), and democratic pragmatist (participatory approaches).*

Bennett, N. J. and T. Satterfield. 2018. Environmental Governance: A practical framework to guide design, evaluation and analysis. *Conservation Letters* 2018:11.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/conl.12600>.

**Week Two – Aug 29: Degrowth and Designs for a New Society-Environment Relation**

Session Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

Kallis, G., Paulson, S., D’Alisa, G. & Demaria, F. 2020. The Case for Degrowth. Polity Press, Cambridge, UK & Medford, MA. Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-64. (Chapters available separately in Canvas)

Paulson, S. and Otto, J. 2017. Finding Common Ground: Exploring synergies between degrowth and environmental Justice in Chiapas, Mexico. *Journal of Political Ecology* 24:425-666.

Bartlett, A. Arithmetic, Population and Energy. Video. (74 minutes)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sI1C9Dyfi\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sI1C9Dyfi_8)

*In this lecture, Professor Emeritus Albert Bartlett presents a clear argument against growth. Marshalling logic, mathematics, concrete examples and illustrations, he lays out the fatal flaws in assumptions that economic growth is necessary for societal well-being. He further indicates the unsustainability of current rates of natural resource extraction and consumption. His reasoning provides foundational rationales that support of degrowth as integral for sustainability, even though he does not use the terminology of degrowth.*

Optional Readings & Webcasts:

D’Alisa, G., G. Kallis, and F. Demaria. 2015. Epilogue: Austerity to Dépense. In *Degrowth: A vocabulary for a new era*. D’Alisa, Kallis, and Demaria, eds. Pp. 215-220. New York: Routledge.

Escobar, A. 2015. Degrowth, postdevelopment, and transitions: a preliminary conversation. *Sustainability Science* 10: 451-462.

Paulson, S. 2017. Degrowth: culture, power and change. *Journal of Political Ecology* 24: 425-448.

*This webcast with LSE colleague Jason Hinkel provides a nice general intro to degrowth: [Everything you wanted to know about degrowth, and didn’t know who to ask](#). Brave New Europe.*

**Memo:** Write a memo commenting on the critical contributions and controversies encompassed by the arguments presented in favor of degrowth. Considering the many controversial and potentially uncomfortable changes that would be required by degrowth, close your memo by posing at least one question or conundrum that you would like to discuss in class. *Post your memo and question(s) to Canvas/Discussions by 11:59 pm on Tuesday, Aug. 26. Read your classmates’ memos and comment on at least two. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

**Week Three – Sept. 5: Performativity Theory and the Diverse Economies Research Programme**

Session Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2008. "Diverse Economies: Performative Practices for 'Other Worlds'." *Progress in Human Geography* pp. 1–20.

Law, J. and Urry, J. 2004. "Enacting the Social." *Economy and Society* 33 (3), pp.390-410.

Gibson-Graham, J.K. 2014. Rethinking the Economy with Thick Description and Weak Theory. *Current Anthropology* 55(9): S147-S153

Skim at least one of the following empirical pieces:

Lambert, D. 2025. "It's all about sharing": Can circular initiatives be autonomous food spaces?" *Journal of Political Ecology* 32: xx – xx

Raj, G. and G. Feola 2025. Becoming Community Economy: How Community-Supported Agriculture Diversifies Farm Labour. *Local Environment*. 1–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2024.2447762>

Holmes, H. 2018. New Spaces, Ordinary Practices: Circulating and Sharing within Diverse Economies of Provisioning. *Geoforum* 88:138-147

Klagge B. & T. Meister (2018) Energy cooperatives in Germany – an example of successful alternative economies? *Local Environment* 23(7):697-716, DOI: [10.1080/13549839.2018.1436045](https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2018.1436045)

Marshman, J. & Knezevic, I., (2021) "What's in a name? Challenging the commodification of pollination through the diverse economies of 'Bee Cities'", *Journal of Political Ecology* 28(1), p.124-145. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2458/jpe.2307>

McCourt, M. and G. Perkins 2018. Valuing the Diverse Economies and Climate Possibilities of a Winter Festival in Western Maine, USA. *IdeAs* [Online], 12 | Automne / Hiver 2018. Online since 05 November 2018, connection on 20 April 2019.  
<http://journals.openedition.org/ideas/3439> ; DOI : 10.4000/ideas.3439

Turnhout, E., S. van Bommel, N. Aarts. 2010. How Participation Creates Citizens: Participatory Governance as Performative Practice. *Ecology and Society* 15(4) 26.

Optional Further Reading:

Gibson-Graham, J.K. and K. Dombroski. 2020. *The Handbook of Diverse Economies*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar. 576 pages.

Krueger, R. C. Schulz, and D. C. Gibbs. 2018. Institutionalizing Alternative Economic Spaces? An Interpretivist Perspective on Diverse Economies. *Progress in Human Geography* 42(4): 569-589

Cameron, J. & Wright, S., 2014, 'Researching Diverse Food Initiatives: From Backyard and Community Gardens to International Markets', Editorial for Special Issue, *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*, 19(1), 1-9.

**Memo:** Write a memo where you engage the “diverse economies” research programme and the performativity perspective, including your critical analysis of their key analytical strengths and weaknesses. What do you find most useful in these perspectives? What questions do you have? What concerns? *Read your classmates' memos and comment on at least two of them. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

#### ***Week Four – Sept 12: Performance and Public Measures: A Governance Mechanism?***

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

Espeland W. and M. Sauder. 2007. “Rankings and Reactivity: How Public Measures Recreate Social Worlds.” *American Journal of Sociology* 113(1): 1–40

*Espeland and Sauder develop a theoretical view of a particular performative practice -- the power of public measures – to enact new social worlds.*

Overdevest, C. 2010. “Comparing Forest Certification Schemes: The Case of Ratcheting Standards in the Forest Sector.” Special Issue on Law and Legitimacy in Transnational Governance. *Socio-Economic Review* 8(1):47-76.

*Similarly, this article seeks to demonstrate the importance of public measures in recreating social worlds.*

Fung, A. and D. O'Rourke. 2000. “Reinventing Environmental Regulation From the Grassroots Up: Explaining and Expanding the Success of the Toxics Release Inventory.” *Environmental Management* 25(2):115-127.

*Unlike economic accounts of measures and measurements, which focus on information's effect on reputation and self-interest, F&O argue that the effectiveness of performance information is dependent on how it is used to mobilize a variety of societal actors in a particular field to put social pressure on targeted actors.*

#### ***Optional Further Reading:***

**Vormedal, I., & Ruud, A. (2022).** "Carbon disclosure as performative governance: How companies perform carbon transparency." *Environmental Politics*, 31(3), 399-



420. [DOI: 10.1080/09644016.2021.1957973]

*This article analyzes how the Carbon Disclosure Project creates new carbon accounting practices, influencing firms' internal operations and legitimacy performances.*

Bowen, F, S. Tang, and P. Panagiotopoulos. 2019. A Classification of Information-based Environmental Regulation: Voluntariness, Compliance and Beyond. *Science of The Total Environment*. 712. 135571. 10.1016/j.scitotenv.2019.135571.

Johnston-Edwards, S. and T.R. Walker 2020. An Overview of Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory Program as a Pollution Control Policy Tool. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 63:6, 1097-1113, DOI: 10.1080/09640568.2019.1634525

O'Rourke D. and A. Ringer 2015. The Impact of Sustainability Information on Consumer Decision Making. *Journal of Industrial Ecology* 20(4) 882-892.

Overdeest C. and B. Mayer. 2008. Harnessing the Power of Information through Community Monitoring: Insights from Social Science. *Texas Law Review*. (86)7:1493-1526.

**Memo:** Write a memo where you identify and critically evaluate the idea that public measures are powerful, and, then raise 2-3 questions for discussion. Your questions might highlight challenges, point to complexity, and focus on controversy or probe utility, extension, and fruitfulness. *Read your classmates' memos and comment on at least two of them. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

***Week Five –Sept. 19 Post WWII Approaches to Environmental Governance: Administrative Rationalism and Economic Rationalism***

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Administrative Rationalism*

Short, J. 2012. "The Paranoid Style in Regulatory Reform." *Georgetown Law Review*. Pp.1-65 (focus on p. 1-7, p 22- 63)

*It is important in the study of environmental governance to understand critiques of different approaches to governance. Short overviews the major criticisms of state regulation emerging from the post-war economic literature, including characterizations of the "costly state," the "captured state," the "cognitively impaired state," and the "coercive state." Short argues that one of these views legitimized the growth of private self-regulation in the 1980s and 1990s.*

*Economic Rationalism*

Diesendorf M, Davies G, Wiedmann T, Spangenberg JH, Hail S. Sustainability scientists' critique of neoclassical economics. *Global Sustainability*. 2024;7:e33. doi:10.1017/sus.2024.36

Or

Ruiz Serrano, A., Musumeci, A., Li, J.J. *et al.* Rationality and the exploitation of natural resources: a psychobiological conceptual model for sustainability. *Environ Dev Sustain* **27**, 13167–13189 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-024-04470-3>

Or

Brohe, A., N. Eyre, and N. Howarth. 2009. Chapter 2. "Emissions Trading: A New Tool for Environmental Management." In *Carbon Markets: An International Business Guide*. London: Earthscan.

Optional Further Reading:

Mintz, J. 2005. "Has Industry Captured the EPA?: Appraising Marver Bernstein's Captive Agency Theory After Fifty Years," 17 *Fordham Environmental Law Review*. Pp.1-37.

REGBLOG (University of Penn Law School) did a series on regulatory capture. Check out various articles here: <http://www.regblog.org/2016/06/13/rooting-out-regulatory-capture/>

**Memo, option 1:** Taking the Short article into account, describe which, if any, of the four critiques you agree with and which you would argue against. Include a framing for each critique that indicates the underlying logic of the critiques and your choices. Suggest two or more questions for discussion. *Review your classmates' comments, indicate which questions (other than your own) that you would most like to discuss in class. You should identify a minimum of two questions posed by two different classmates. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

**Memo, option 2:** Write a summary and critique of market-based emissions trading schemes as an environmental governance mechanism, as discussed by Brohe et al. What questions do you have? Suggest two or more questions for discussion. *Review your classmates' questions. Then for your peer commentaries, indicate which questions (other than your own) that you would most like to discuss in class. You should identify a minimum of two questions posed by two different classmates.*

***Week Six – Sept. 26: Civil-Society Approaches: Commons, Common Property and Community-based Natural Resources Governance***

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

*This week introduces commons theory, and circumstances in which common-pool resources may be most effectively governed as common property and community-based institutions. In addition, it will explore the complications of understanding “community” and how various factors within and across levels of governance can pose challenges for community-based natural resource management. It will engage with Ostrom’s eight principles associated with long-enduring common-pool resource regimes, as well as the types of rules – and their diversity – discovered to exist in such regimes. Case studies provide examples of communities’ experiences managing and governing common-pool resources in contexts of markets and globalization.*

Required Readings:

Brief Overview of Ostrom’s Design Principles (1990/2005) and Cox, et al. (2010) Modifications (Compiled by C. Tucker)

Ostrom, E. 2005. Part III. Working with Rules: Ch.8 – “Using Rules as Tools to Cope with the Commons; Ch.9 – “Robust Resource Governance in Polycentric Institutions.” In *Understanding Institutional Diversity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

*With this text, Ostrom advances an empirically substantive critique of one-size-fits-all policy approaches, and musters evidence on the advantages and limitations of local governance of commons. The discussion refines assessments of the design principles and types of rules associated with long-enduring common-pool resource regimes, as first introduced in her seminal book, Governing the Commons.*

Choose one of these two theoretical readings (read both if time allows):

Agrawal, A., and C. Gibson. 1999. “Enchantment and Disenchantment: The Role of Community in Natural Resource Conservation.” *World Development* 27:629-49.

*This reading is considered by many commons scholars to be among the most synthetic and thorough discussions of the advantages and pitfalls of using “community” as the unit of analysis for studying natural resource management.*

McKean, M. 2001. “Common Property: What Is It, What Is It Good for, and What Makes It Work?” In *People and Forests: Communities, Institutions, Governance*. C. Gibson, M. McKean and E. Ostrom, eds. Pp. 27-55. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

*McKean’s chapter provides a clear explanation for the differences between common-pool goods and property rights, and why common property (especially when applied to common-pool resources) can be economically and environmentally efficient and sustainable in certain contexts. One key point is that a “good” presents inherent qualities, while property is a human creation imposed upon goods. Common property is accurately explained as joint private ownership.*

Case Study Readings (Choose any two):

*These articles offer a range of empirical findings on community-based resource*

*management and governance.*

Heber-Dunning, K. 2015. "Ecosystem services and community-based coral reef management institutions in post blast-fishing Indonesia." *Ecosystem Services* 16:319-332.

Lockyer, J. 2017. "Community, commons, and degrowth at Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage." *Journal of Political Ecology* 24: 519-542.

Garcia Lopez, G., Velica, I. & D'Alisa, G. 2017. Performing Counter-Hegemonic Common(s) Senses: Rearticulating Democracy, Community and Forests in Puerto Rico. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2017.1321026>

van der Zon, M., de Jong, J., Jacobs, M., Arts, B., de Jong, W., & Boot, R. 2025. Socio-Economic and Ecological Factors Influencing Rulemaking for Community-Based Forest Management: A Study on Aguaje (*Mauritia Flexuosa*) in the Peatlands of the Pastaza Marañon Foreland Basin, Peru. *International Journal of the Commons*, 19(1), pp. 83–99. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijc.1392>

Optional Further Reading:

Cox, Michael, Gwen Arnold, and Sergio Villamayor Tomás. 2010. "A Review of Design Principles for Community-based Natural Resource Management." *Ecology and Society* 15(4):38.

*Cox et al. analyze the findings of numerous case studies that have assessed Ostrom's design principles for long-enduring communal management of common-pool resources, and suggests some modifications while showing ample evidence supporting the principles.*

Netting, Robert McC. 1976. "What Alpine Peasants Have in Common: Observations on Communal Tenure in a Swiss Village." *Human Ecology* 4(2):135-46.

*Netting's Alpine Peasants article is considered a classic that provides valuable insight to ecological factors that shape local choices for communal or private land ownership. His work was among the inspirations for Ostrom's work on long-enduring common-pool resource regimes, and continues to be cited as a key reference.*

Yoder, L., C. H. Wagner, K. Sullivan-Wiley, and G. Smith. 2022. The Promise of Collective Action for Large-Scale Commons Dilemmas: Reflections on Common-Pool-Resource Theory. *International Journal of the Commons*, 16 (1):47-63. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ijc.1163>

**Memo:** Critically evaluate the contributions of this theoretical focus on community-based environmental governance and commons dilemmas. What does it offer to discussions of environmental governance that complements or transcends other approaches? Consider what the case studies indicate about the benefits and challenges confronting governance

of the commons, and community-based resource management, in the modern global system. Ask at least one question for clarification or general class discussion. *Read your classmates' memos and comment on at least two of them. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

### **Week Seven –Oct 3: Social-Ecological Systems Approaches and Institutional Analysis**

Session Leadership: \_\_\_\_\_

*Social-Ecological Systems (SES) approaches have become an integral part of conceptualizing systemic social-environmental processes and implications for environmental governance. Current research is using these approaches to understand governance challenges and effective adaptation in contexts of rapid local-to-global social-ecological change processes.*

Ostrom, E. 2009. A General Framework for Analyzing Sustainability of Social-Ecological Systems. *Science* 325: 419-422. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.1172133>

*This article formally introduced the SES Framework. It emerged over a decade of collaborative work, discussion, preliminary testing and contestation among Ostrom's colleagues, students, and other researchers. Ostrom intended this framework as a dynamic, synthetic and flexible approach for analyzing and addressing the great diversity of environmental governance conundrums. It explicitly built on and extended the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework (see Optional Further Readings below). She also hoped it would demonstrate the futility of any panacea for solving social-ecological problems. Ironically, the SES Framework's adherents and critics have found it difficult to use dynamically, and some have interpreted it as a static tool rather than an evolving framework. Nevertheless, the SES Framework is among the most influential of the SES approaches, and has been adopted by a number of researchers as a tool for systematically assessing the strengths, weaknesses, and functionality /sustainability of SES, especially at local and regional scales.*

Colloff, M.J., B. Martín-López, S. Lavorel, B. Locatelli, R. Gorddard, P.Y. Longaretti, G. Walters, L. van Kerkhoff, C. Wyborn, A. Coreau, R.M. Wise, M. Dunlop, P. Degeorges, H. Grantham, I.C. Overton, R.D. Williams, M.D. Doherty, T. Capon, T. Sanderson, and H.T. Murphy. 2017. "An integrative research framework for enabling transformative adaptation." *Environmental Science and Policy* 68:87-96. doi: 10.1016/j.envsci.2016.11.007.

*This promising framework, proposed by the Transformative Adaptation Research Alliance, entails a Values, Rules, Knowledge (VRK) perspective. This article introduces the perspective and a dynamic transformative model for envisioning pathways toward sustainability. It has been adapted for use in case studies supporting co-production of knowledge in climate change adaptation, which will*

*be discussed*

*Choose one of these case studies to read:*

Torres Guevara, Luz Elba, Achim Schlüter, and Maria Claudia Lopez. 2016. Collective action in a tropical estuarine lagoon: adapting Ostrom's SES framework to Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta, Colombia. *International Journal of the Commons* 10 (1):334-362.

Leslie, H., X. Basurto, M. Nendovic, K. Cavanaugh, J. J. Cota-Nieto, B. Erisman, E. Finkbeiner, G. Hinojosa-Arango, M. Moreno-Sriniketh, S. Reddy, A. Sánchez-Rodríguez, K. Siegel, J. J. Ulibarria-Valenzuela, A. Hudson Weaver, O. Aburto-Oropeza. 2015. Operationalizing the social-ecological systems framework to assess sustainability. *PNAS* 112(19):5979-5984.

Nagendra, Harini, and Elinor Ostrom. 2014 "Applying the Social-Ecological System Framework to the Diagnosis of Urban Lake Commons in Bangalore, India." *Ecology and Society* 2014: 19.

*Optional Further Reading:*

McGinnis, M. 2011. An Introduction to IAD Framework and the Language of the Ostrom Workshop: A Simple Guide to a Complex Framework. *Policy Studies Journal* 39(1):169-183.

*McGinnis provides definitions of concepts that are foundational for the IAD Framework and institutional analysis, as well as a brief overview of the IAD Framework. These are integral to Ostrom's 2005 chapters assigned for this week. McGinnis reveals the care that the Ostrom Workshop has given to constructing a common language. Many of the terms have a range of meanings in scholarly and public use. The Ostrom Workshop endeavored to bring consistency and clarity to important foundational terms through precise definitions, which are often narrower than often found in general use.*

Colding, Johan, and Stephan Barthel. 2019. Exploring the social-ecological systems discourse 20 years later. *Ecology and Society* 24 (1).

McGinnis, M. and E. Ostrom. 2014. Social-Ecological System Framework: Initial changes and challenges. *Ecology and Society* 19. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-06387-190230>

Ostrom, E. 2011. Background on the Institutional Analysis and Development Framework. *Policy Studies Journal* 39:7-27.

**Memo:** Write a memo evaluating the contributions and challenges of social-ecological systems frameworks represented by these readings. Given that institutional approaches

are integral to these frameworks, consider how these complement, contrast with, and potentially inform theories on the vanguard, such as degrowth and performativity. Please use quotes from the readings to support your perspective. Include at least one question for discussion (underline your discussion question). Consult the McGinnis 2011 to check the correct definitions for central concepts. *Read your classmates' memos, comment on at least two of them, and come to class prepared for discussion.*

***Week Eight – Oct 10: Exploring Complexities, Contradictions, and Potentials of Multilevel, Multiscale and Multi-Partner Governance of Natural Resources***

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*This class will explore the theoretical bases for, and efforts of, decentralization and multiscale, multi-partner approaches to resolve environmental problems by restructuring existing policies and social-political arrangements to facilitate or incentivize improved (more sustainable) management.*

Lockwood, M., J. Davidson, A. Curtis, E. Stratford & R. Griffith. 2010. Governance Principles for Natural Resource Management. *Society & Natural Resources* 23 (10): 986-1001. URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08941920802178214>

Lawless, S., Song, A. M., Cohen, P. J. & Morrison, T. H. 2020. Rights, equity and justice: A diagnostic for social meta-norm diffusion in environmental governance. *Earth System Governance*, 6, 100052.

Sattler, C.; B. Schröter; A. Meyer; G. Giersch; C. Meyer; and B. Matzdorf. 2016. Multilevel governance in community-based environmental management: a case study comparison from Latin America. *Ecology and Society* **21**.

*Optional Further Reading:*

Dell'Angelo, J., P. McCord, E. Baldwin, M. Cox, D. Gower, K. Caylor, and T. Evans. 2014. "Multilevel Governance of Irrigation Systems and Adaptation to Climate Change in Kenya." in *The Global Water System in the Anthropocene: Challenges for Science and Governance*, A. Bhaduri, J. Bogardi, J. Leentvaar, and S. Marx, eds. Pp. 323-41. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Gómez-Baggethun, E.; E. Kelemen; B. Martín-López; I. Palomo; and C. Montes. 2013. Scale Misfit in Ecosystem Service Governance as a Source of Environmental Conflict. *Society and Natural Resources* 26:1202-1216.

Gruby, R. and X. Basurto. 2013. Multi-Level Governance for Large Marine Commons: Politics and Polycentricity in Palau's Protected Area Network. *Environmental Science and Policy* 33:260-272.

Larson, A. M., D. Barry, and G. R. Dahal. 2010. "New Rights for Forest-Based

Communities? Understanding Processes of Forest Tenure Reform." *International Forestry Review* 12(1):78-96.

Wright, G. D., K. Andersson, C. Gibson, and T. Evans. 2015. "What incentivizes local forest conservation efforts? Evidence from Bolivia." *International Journal of the Commons* 9(1):322-46.

**Memo:** In light of the readings, write two paragraphs that lay out (1) what you see as the greatest challenge(s) for achieving equitable, cross-scale and sustainable environmental governance. And (2) explore the question: Does transdisciplinary science and co-production of knowledge offer a notable departure or advance over any other approaches discussed in class? Why or why not? Include one or more key quotes from the readings to support your points. Then pose one question for discussion. *Review your classmates' memos before class and leave a peer commentary on at least two. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

**Oct. 17 Homecoming Weekend: No Class**  
***Seminar Paper Proposal Due Oct 20 at 11:59 pm***

***Week Nine—Oct 24: Transdisciplinary Science and Co-Production of Knowledge for Sustainable Environmental Governance***  
***Session Leadership:*** \_\_\_\_\_

Reid, R. S., D. Nkedianye, M. Y. Said, D. Kaelo, M. Neselle, O. Makui, L. Onetu, S. Kiruswa, N. Ole Kamuar, P. Kristjanson, J. Ogutu, S. B. BurnSilver, M. J. Goldman, R. B. Boone, K. A. Galvin, N. M. Dickson, and W. C. Clark. 2016. "Evolution of models to support community and policy action with science: Balancing pastoral livelihoods and wildlife conservation in savannas of East Africa." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113(17):4579-84.

*Reid et al. report on a long-term project working that developed a continuous engagement model with pastoral communities to create hybrid local-scientific knowledge relevant for conservation planning and policy. The project aimed to transcend power inequities that typically exist between researchers, community members, and policy makers.*

Colloff, M.J., R. Gorddard, N. Abel, B. Locatelli, C. Wyborn, J.R.A. Butler, S. Lavorel, L. van Kerkhoff, S. Meharg, C. Múnera-Roldán, E. Bruley, G. Fedele, R.M. Wise, and M. Dunlop. 2021. "Adapting transformation and transforming adaptation to climate change using a pathways approach." *Environmental Science & Policy* 124:163-174. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2021.06.014>.

*Colloff et al. examine case studies that applied an Intentional Transformative Adaptation approach to co-produce knowledge and create effective pathways*



*toward sustainability. They found that ITA led to some constructive outcomes, yet also faced difficulties to overcome power imbalances, enable cooperation, and achieve transformation.*

Steger, C., Klein, J. A., Reid, R. S., Lavorel, S., Tucker, C. M., Hopping, K. A., Marchant, R., Teel, T., Cuni-Sanchez, A., Dorji, T., Greenwood, G., Huber, R., Kassam, K.-A., Kreuer, D., Nolin, A., Russell, A., Sharp, J. L., Šmid Hribar, M., Thorn, J. P. R., Grant, G., Mahdi, M., Moreno, M. & Waiswa, D. 2021. Science with society: Evidence-based guidance for best practices in environmental transdisciplinary work. *Global Environmental Change*, 68, 102240.

*Steger et al. offer a rigorous analysis of a global survey of researchers involved in transdisciplinary research projects to identify practices that appear most effective. They also consider the challenges and shortcomings of transdisciplinary research to achieve co-production of knowledge and shared goals. The article highlights the current state of transdisciplinary research and provides insights for its applicability and limitations to inform and improve environmental governance.*

*Optional Further Reading:*

Alcorn, J.B., A. Zarzycki, and L.M. De La Cruz. 2010. Poverty, governance and conservation in the Gran Chaco of South America. *Biodiversity* **11:39-44**.

Bray, D., E. Duran, and O.A. Molina-Gonzalez. 2012. Beyond harvests in the commons: multi-scale governance and turbulence in indigenous/community conserved areas in Oaxaca, Mexico. *International Journal of the Commons* **6:151-178**.

Smedstad, J.A. and H. Gosnell. 2013. Do Adaptive Comanagement Processes Lead to Adaptive Comanagement Outcomes? A Multicase Study of Long-term Outcomes Associated with the National Riparian Service Team's Place-based Riparian Assistance. *Ecology and Society* **18**.

**Memo:** In light of the readings, write two paragraphs that lay out (1) what you see as the greatest challenge(s) for achieving equitable, cross-scale and sustainable environmental governance. And (2) explore the question: Does transdisciplinary science and co-production of knowledge offer a notable departure or advance over any other approaches discussed in class? Why or why not? Include one or more key quotes from the readings to support your points. Then pose one question for discussion. *Review your classmates' memos before class and leave a peer commentary on at least two. Come to class prepared for discussion.*

**Assignment:** Instead of a memo, develop three questions for discussion that draw on or are inspired by the required readings and one of the supplemental readings. Include a brief framing for each question that indicates the underlying key issues, controversies, or puzzles raised by the readings. One or more of your questions should require comparisons and/or critical assessments built on prior readings and theoretical

approaches.

***Week Ten – Oct. 31: Civil-Society Approaches: Regulation through Multi-stakeholder Standard Setting and Environmental Certifications Movements***

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

Meidinger, E. 2003. “Forest Certification as a Global Civil Society Regulatory Institution.” In: *Social and Political Dimensions of Forest Certification*. Pp. 265-289. Forstbuch: Nordrhein-Westfalen, Germany.

*Early background reading on one of the first civil society regulatory institutions: the Forest Stewardship Council. Meidinger develops the notion that these are more than “market-based” regulatory devices as is evidenced in their deliberative standard setting forums, power balancing among interest groups. It is an early, optimistic view of the capacities of the then emerging civil society standards movement.*

Critiques:

Graeme A., S. Renckens, and B. Cashore. 2015 “Transnational Private Governance between the Logics of Empowerment and Control” *Regulation and Governance*. 9(2): 108-124

Levy, D., J. Reinecke and S. Manning. 2016. “The Political Dynamics of Sustainable Coffee: Contested Value Regimes and the Transformation of Sustainability.” *Journal of Management Studies*. 53:3 (364-401)

Recent Assessment of Impacts:

Skim: Komives, K., A. Arton, E. Baker, E. Kennedy, C. Longo, A. Pfaff, C. Romero, and D. Newsom. 2018. Conservation impacts of voluntary sustainability standards: How has our understanding changed since the 2012 publication of 'Toward sustainability: The roles and limitations of certification'? Washington DC: Meridian Institute.

*Optional Further Reading:*

*More on the concept of “ratcheting up”:*

Jespersen, K., Grabs, J., & Gallemore, C. 2024. Ratcheting up private standards by exploiting coopetition: The curious case of RSPO’s adoption of zero-deforestation criteria. *Ecological Economics*. 233: 108229

*More on Assessments of Impacts:*

Steering Committee of the State-of-Knowledge Assessment of Standards and Certification. 2012. *Toward sustainability: The roles and limitations of certification*.

Washington, DC: RESOLVE, Inc. Read the Executive Summary pp. ES1-ES18.  
*Consensus review of the state of play by the actors themselves. The Steering Committee is a group of certified firms, standard setting organizations and academics.*

*On Public-Private Interactions:*

Cashore, B., Knudsen, J. S., Moon, J., & van der Ven, H. 2021. Private Authority and Public Policy Interactions in Global Context: Governance Spheres for Problem Solving. *Regulation & Governance*, 15(4), 1166-1182. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rego.12395>

Renckens, S. 2020. Disaggregating public-private governance interactions: European Union interventions in transnational private sustainability governance, *Regulation & Governance*, 10.1111/rego.12332, 15, 4, (1230-1247).

*Focus on the “Global South”:*

Schouten, G., & Bitzer, V. 2015. "The emergence of Southern standards in agricultural value chains: A new trend in sustainability governance?" *Ecological Economics*, 120, 175–184.

Gonzalez Tovar, J., A. Larson, G. Barnes, and C. Tucker. 2020. Can multi-stakeholder forums empower indigenous and local communities and promote forest conservation? A comparative analysis of territorial planning in two Brazilian states with contrasting contexts. *Conservation Science and Practice*. URL: <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.326>

Van der Ven, H. Y. Sun, and B. Cashore, 2021. Sustainable commodity governance and the global south, *Ecological Economics*, 10.1016/j.ecolecon.2021.107062, 186, (107062).

**Memo:** The readings this week juxtapose various views of the promise and challenges of NGO-led certification movements operate as governance devices. After considering the arguments and evidence presented here, bolstered by any supplemental reading you may do, please present your view of certification as a governance device. Be sure to incorporate and discuss the **theories and concepts** encountered in the readings in your analysis. What questions do you have? *Read your classmates’ memos and come to class prepared for discussion.*

**Week Eleven – Nov 7: The Green Transition and State-Based Industrial Policy**

*Session Leadership:* \_\_\_\_\_

*This week explores how governments are using industrial policy tools to drive decarbonization, regional revitalization, and green innovation. We will examine new state-led approaches in the U.S. and beyond, focusing on place-based, mission-oriented, and sectoral strategies that seek to rebalance market failures and build equitable green economies.*

Rodrik, D., Juhász, R., & Lane, N. (2023, August 4). *Economists reconsider industrial policy*. Project Syndicate.

Allan, Bentley, Joanna I. Lewis, and Thomas Oatley. 2021. "Green Industrial Policy and the Global Transformation of Climate Politics." *Global Environmental Politics*, 21(4): 1-19.

Muro, M., Maxim, R., Parilla, J., & de Souza Briggs, X. (2022, December 15). *Breaking down an \$80 billion surge in place-based industrial policy*. Brookings Metro. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/breaking-down-an-80-billion-surge-in-place-based-industrial-policy/>

#### *Optional Further Reading*

McCann, P. (2023), "How Have Place-Based Policies Evolved to Date and What Are They For Now?", Background paper for the OECD-EC High-Level Expert Workshop Series on "Place-Based Policies for the Future", Workshop 1, 14 April 2023, [https://www.oecd.org/cfe/regionaldevelopment/place-based\\_policies-for-the-future.htm](https://www.oecd.org/cfe/regionaldevelopment/place-based_policies-for-the-future.htm)

Rodrik D. 2004. Industrial Policy for the Twenty-first Century. Last accessed. June 1, 2024. <https://drodrik.scholar.harvard.edu/files/dani-rodrik/files/industrial-policy-twenty-first-century.pdf>

Rodrik, D., and Sabel, C. F. (2019). "Building a Good Jobs Economy." Harvard Kennedy School Faculty Research Working Paper No. RWP20-001 (2019). Available at: [https://scholarship.law.columbia.edu/faculty\\_scholarship/2608](https://scholarship.law.columbia.edu/faculty_scholarship/2608)

**Assignment:** Develop three questions for discussion that draw on or are inspired by the required readings and one of the supplemental readings. Include a brief framing for each question that indicates the underlying key issues, controversies, or puzzles raised by the readings. Feel free to pose questions that require comparisons and/or critical assessments with earlier readings and theoretical approaches. *Review your classmates' questions and framing. Then for your peer commentaries, indicate which questions (other than your own) that you would most like to discuss in class. You should identify a minimum of two questions posed by two different classmates.*

***Week Twelve – Nov. 14: Student Presentations***

***Week Thirteen - Nov 21: Student Presentations and Course Improvement Discussion***

***Week Fourteen – Thanksgiving Holiday***

***Week Fifteen - Dec 5: Reading Day - No Class***

<b>Seminar Paper Due Monday, December 8 by 11:59 pm</b>
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## **Course Policies:**

### **Policy on Plagiarism / Cheating:**

Plagiarism in written assignments (i.e. the copying of material without citation of the source) is unacceptable. It will lead to a zero on the assignment or paper if it is of a minor degree (less than a paragraph), and to a failing grade in the course in cases of extensive copying without citation. If you have doubts about when and how to cite sources, Dr Tucker or Dr. Overdevest will be glad to answer your questions.

### **Emergencies:**

If you have a medical or family emergency that prevents you from completing an assignment or exam on time, or results in extended absence, bring it to the attention of professor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made with proper documentation.

### **Class Attendance Policy:**

- Success in this class depends on regular attendance throughout the semester. If you miss a class for any reason, you need to email the instructors promptly to provide an explanation of why you are or will be absent. It is always acceptable to have absences for religious observances and professional development commitments (e.g., conference presentations). You must advise the instructors in advance of scheduled and foreseeable absences.
- **If you are feeling ill – DO NOT COME TO CLASS.** Reasonable accommodations will be made with prompt notification. A doctor's note is advisable.
- **If you are unable to complete assignments on time for any reason, notify your instructors immediately.** Documentation is advisable (e.g., doctor's note) to get an extension to submit a late assignment.
- You are responsible for all material and information shared in class. It is a good idea to find classmates with whom you can exchange notes.
- If you miss a class and want to discuss missed material, make an appointment with one of the instructors to go over what you missed and any questions you may have.

## **University Policies and Resources:**

**This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see this link: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>**

**The link and the policies are also posted on the class Canvas website.**

### **Honor Code**

*UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

*In addition, students may not publish (including sharing with other students) any recording of a class lecture without the written consent of the lecturer. (See In-Class Recording below)*

*The Honor Code ([sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/](http://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/)) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.*