

Module No. P 1	Module name Global environmental changes
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Additional teaching staff Prof. Dr. Mayer, Prof. Dr. Storch, Prof. Dr. Hildebrand, Prof. Dr. Spiecker, Prof. Dr. H. Renneberg	
Syllabus <p>Students will be introduced to some of the globally most important environmental problems such as water and air pollution, acid rain and forest decline, the loss of forests and biodiversity, global warming and others. At the same time, this module is designed to familiarise students with the research process in the environmental and social sciences. Based on selected reading from the book “The sceptical environmentalist” and the responses from other scientists to the arguments by the author of that book, Bjørn Lomborg, students will be challenged by the difficulty to assess the magnitude of environmental problems. Against this background, research ethics, the quality and reliability of scientific information, and the role of science in the public discourse will be discussed.</p> <p>Following the introduction of particular environmental problems by experts, students will work in groups to examine independently the extent of these problems in more depth and analyse the, sometimes contrasting, claims and arguments made by different scientists. These analyses will be presented to the whole group and an expert panel towards the end of the module.</p>	
Learning goals and qualifications <p>In this module students are expected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to gain an understanding of the most pressing environmental issues facing the globe • to develop an understanding of important models and assumptions used to predict future environmental conditions • to develop the capacity to assess scientific information critically • to appreciate the social dimensions and context of information • to reflect about the role of science in society, in particular in policy development • to learn about research ethics <p>Development of the following qualifications is supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literature research skills, reading of scientific documents • teamwork • presentation and report writing 	

<p>Teaching and learning methods</p> <p>Lectures, tutorials, discussion groups, independent research</p>
<p>Prerequisites</p> <p>none</p>
<p>Requirements for registration</p> <p>none</p>
<p>Distribution of work load</p> <p><i>Contact hours</i> 40 h (Lectures, tutorials, presentations)</p> <p><i>Independent learning</i> 85 h (group work, preparation, reading etc.)</p>
<p>Proposed assessment</p> <p>Group presentation and final report</p>
<p>Link to some learning resources:</p> <p>http://www.csicop.org/scienceandmedia/environmentalist/ http://www.grist.org/advice/books/2001/12/12/of/ http://www.ucsus.org/global_environment/archive/page.cfm?pageID=533 http://www.wri.org/</p>
<p>Preliminary Reading</p> <p>B. Lomborg (2001) The sceptical environmentalist – Measuring the real state of the world. Cambridge Univ. Press.</p>
<p>Comments</p>

