



First Announcement (2024)

## University of Eastern Finland – United Nations Environment Programme Course on Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) Course on MEAs, 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 27 May - 6 June 2024, Helsinki, Finland

The University of Eastern Finland (UEF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) are jointly organising a cutting-edge course on international environmental law-making and diplomacy. The course is organised in collaboration with the Government of Finland.

The course seeks to transfer experience in the field of international environmental law to current and future negotiators of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). It also provides a forum to foster North-South co-operation and to take stock of recent developments in MEAs as well as diplomatic practices in the international environmental arena.

In 2024, we will celebrate a significant milestone - the 20th Anniversary of the UEF-UNEP Course. This year's course will focus on assessing the remarkable evolution and the pivotal role of MEAs. MEA regimes have undergone significant evolution since the course was launched in 2004 with the adoption of new treaties and treaty amendments, such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, and the High Seas Treaty (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction). Also important is the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Further, negotiations are currently ongoing on a plastics treaty.

In recent decades, MEAs have also become increasingly complex, shifting from niche agreements into interconnected mechanisms that shape international environmental law. In a world grappling with numerous sustainability challenges, comprehending the complex, interlinked and dynamic nature of MEAs, along with their constraints and opportunities is paramount.

Furthermore, we will commemorate two decades of capacity building for MEA negotiators. This program has been instrumental in empowering diplomats and government officials to navigate the intricacies of international environmental negotiations. The 2024 event presents a unique opportunity to evaluate the course's evolution, acknowledge the networks it has cultivated,

and highlight the impactful debates and research conducted by participants.

As in past editions, the second part of the 2024 course will cover both the substantive and procedural aspects of international environmental negotiations. It will utilize a diverse array of teaching methods, including expert lectures, interactive sessions, comprehensive training in negotiation skills and management, and an engaging two-day negotiation simulation.

The course is intended for **experienced government officials engaged in international environmental negotiations. Government officials are therefore invited to apply for consideration before the deadline.**

In addition, applications from other stakeholders, such as representatives from academia, non-governmental organizations and the private sector will also be considered.

We are committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity. Therefore, approximately 30 participants will be selected, ensuring an equal representation from the North and South, and maintaining a gender-balanced cohort. Upon successful completion of the course, participants will be conferred with a Diploma.

The course prioritizes accessibility, ensuring that valuable knowledge is available to all interested individuals.

The **Draft Programme** will be published on the Course website in due course. The application deadline is Friday, **23 February 2024**.

### Further information

Course website:

<https://sites.uef.fi/cceel/uef-unesp/>  
<http://unenvironment.org>

or

Contact address:

[mea-course@uef.fi](mailto:mea-course@uef.fi) or [UNEP-Law-director@un.org](mailto:UNEP-Law-director@un.org)