

**Natural Resource Policies**  
Department of Human Ecology, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences,

**Course Information**

**Number Section: 11:374:314:01**  
**Meeting Time: TBD**  
**Location: TBD**  
**Website: Canvas**

**Instructor**

**Victoria C. Ramenzoni**  
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**Office Hours: TBD**



*N.B.: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*



**Course Description: Natural Resource Policies in Forests, Marine, and Coastal Ecosystems**

During this course, we will explore major theoretical and methodological approaches to the formulation, evaluation, and implementation of natural resource use policies. We will deep our toes into classic, contemporary, and cutting-edge research articles from different disciplines such as Anthropology, Sociology, Human Geography, Economics, Fishery and Forest Sciences, and Natural Resource Management. The main goal will be to examine the role of policy and the processes/motivations behind the formulation of regulatory instruments in the context of forest, coasts, and marine landscapes. We will also examine the status of key issues in the management of natural resources we rely on, challenges to their sustainable use, and potential pathways into the future.

The class will be framed around three principles:

- 1) Policies respond to particular historical/epistemological contexts. Throughout our past, few biomes, if any, have been spared from the direct effects of human action (and I challenge you to find one example). In these interactions, diverse forms of societal appropriation and systematization of natural resources have emerged. Therefore, we need to visualize how those relationships between people and their environments unfold to better understand policy making.
- 2) Forest, marine, and coastal ecosystems are complex socioecological systems that can show emerging behaviors. Through feedback mechanisms and processes of interaction at different scales and among different components, new unpredictable conditions may arise. In short, we are approaching a moving target. By defining a point of contact (being that theoretically or empirically based), we focus our vision. This process, while not devoid of significant trouble for policy-makers (as we shall see later), allows knowledge to be transformative.
- 3) Policy means different things to different people, and policies can be implemented in many different ways. This diversity challenges the idea that policies form a coherent system. That is, a particular society may control resource use and access across a wide set of institutions and mechanisms. Some of these are more transparent than others (laws, acts vs. cultural prohibitions and practices). In this class we will explore the underlying principles that unify all these representations.

On this new adventure, I strongly encourage the critical consideration of conceptual definitions such as policy, environment, ecology, culture, society, and landscape. Critical in this instance means that we will not take any assumptions or explanations for granted. In class, we will reconstruct the historical and epistemological context in which definitions and argumentations are used and how they have been applied to develop resource use policies.

### **Objectives: *What's in for me?***

If all goes well, at the end of this course you would have gained a new theoretical and analytical toolbox that will help you understand how different societies and cultures formulate policies to regulate access and use of forest, coastal, and ocean environments. Hopefully, you may be able to transpose some of these insights and skills into your own work.

- New skills and abilities in identifying key principles behind regulatory instruments and institutions that control access to resources by human societies, and the resulting patterns of environmental modification and/or trajectories of degradation associated with them.
- New skills and abilities in identifying the many societal and cultural configurations that result from interacting with/in natural resources such as traditional customary systems (adat, sasi), informal rules, and individual based norms (taboos, prescriptions).
- New skills in identifying past, current, and emerging threats to forests, coasts, and marine landscapes.

### **Major Objectives:**

- Goal 1.2, 1.6, and 1.7. Goals 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9. Goals 3.1 and 3.2.  
<https://humanecology.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Learning-Goals-EPIB.pdf>

### **Thematic**

- Review and evaluate major theoretical and applied frameworks for understanding resource regulation in the context of human-environmental interactions.
- Consider human responses, and cultural and behavioral variation in policy making across different ecologies and spatial and temporal scales.
- Explore and discuss theoretical tools and methodological techniques for studying policy impacts (from qualitative studies, to reconstructions and statistical models).
- Discuss the application of theoretical frameworks into different resource management tools and policies.

### **Instructional**

- To expose students to different approaches in the field of socioecological systems, human ecology, and natural resource management policies, including historical and contemporary works, with a keen eye on sociological and anthropological contributions and perspectives.
- To train students to be more effective readers and engage in discussions, to be able to identify major theses and limitations in other perspectives, to identify benefits and ways to move forward in addressing obstacles.
- To train students to be more effective in written and oral presentation, argumentation and facilitation techniques.
- To train students in the development of a thematic literature review and annotated bibliography.

### **Assignments**

- 1) **DISCUSSION LEADER:** You will be responsible for leading discussion in one session (see topics below) next to a partner. This requires the formulation of a reading guide with questions for the class you are assigned to lead or co-lead. The guide has to be elaborated with your partner and submitted **3 days ahead of the appointed session (Tuesday before if Thursday, Friday if Monday)**.

- 2) Documentary Piece: Analyze the documentary “Sacred Cod” through the concepts discussed in class. (**Short essay 1500 words**).
- 3) EXAMS: You will be responsible for **two short essays** (1500 words) addressing questions posed by the instructor. Essays should include a critical consideration of the readings and issues explored in the class.
- 4) FINAL: You will be responsible for developing a short and to the point research paper (2500 words, without citations), on a topic of your choosing. The term paper offers students (1) the opportunity to explore a topic of their choosing in greater depth, and (2) an exercise in scientific critical writing. Topics should pertain to the themes discussed in the class. **The paper is something you should be working on throughout the quarter.** The assignment will have several parts and due dates. More specifics of the assignment will be provided in a separate handout. In the meantime, the paper has to include an extension/intervention component which can take the shape of direct recommendations for action on a particular issue. **To complete the full assignment: You will be required to submit a short statement describing the research problem you will address, its relevance, and your plan for generating the recommendations (300 words), an annotated bibliography (no less than 10 additional peer-reviewed sources), a first draft for revisions (optional), and a final draft at the end of the course.**

On writing conventions and citation style:

All written materials for this class will be typed and consistently formatted. For issues of style beyond general document formatting refer to the current APA/MLA norms. Use American word spellings. If you need any help on managing citations and software, please do not hesitate to reach out. I advise the use of Zotero or any other reference manager for your project.

Grades

To get an A, you are required to have at least 94 points. To get a B, you should score somewhere between 85 and 83, and a C anywhere between 73 and 75. A D is any score between 63 and 65. You will fail if you score below 60.

A+, A	94–100%, 94–100%, 90–93%
B+, B	86–89%, 83–85%, 80–82%
C+, C	76–79%, 73–75%, 70–72%
D+, D	66–69%, 63–65%, 60–62%

Item	Points	Due Date
Participation by leading/assisting discussion.	10 points	By choice
Research problem statement	5 points	2/9
Take Home Exams	20 points each	3/6 and 4/17
Annotated Bibliography	10 points	3/30
Documentary Discussion	10 points	2/27
Final Paper	25 points	5/4
	<b>100 points</b>	

**Extra points will be awarded for participation and during extra-credit assignments (10 points). So, you can still make an A even when you don't get perfect scores on the class**

**Expectations and Requirements:**

- Punctual attendance.

- Active participation in class.
- On-time submissions (you will lose points for not submitting on time...)
- DO THE READINGS and Do your own work!
- Compliance with Rutgers policies for ethical conduct. Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

### **Participation:**

Because the design of this class is highly participatory, you will be graded on your level of participation. This includes the designated discussion days as well as all of the other class periods. Yet, the instructor recognizes that talking in public may be easier for some while difficult for others. We will work together to determine a common rubric for evaluating participation and how to improve class engagement. All of this said, you are strongly encouraged to take part in discussions, state your informed opinion (based on arguments from the class materials and evidence-based articles or case studies), and challenge any assumptions that you may find compelling or wrong.

**Late Assignments/Make-ups:** Can I take an exam late or submit an assignment late? Not unless you have a really good reason—trouble with the law, unforeseen illness or death, savage attack by wild geese, etc. Whether a make-up assignment will be permitted, and its format, are at the discretion of the instructor. If at all possible, please contact the instructor before the due date, or alternatively, within the following 24 hours.

**Attendance:** Class attendance is very important, both for individual benefits and for the collective social benefits that come from class discussion. As an added incentive to participate, you will accrue points for each class you attend. Doctors' notes, obituaries, and attendance to academic conferences are the only justifiable excuses for missing class. If weather, vehicle maintenance issues, heartache, sickness, etc. cause you to miss class, the instructor will be sympathetic, but you will not earn attendance points.

### **“Netiquette” Policies**

- Identify yourself **in all email or Canvas message correspondence. Begin messages with a greeting and close with your name.**
- Avoid sarcasm. **It can be misinterpreted and cause hurt feelings.**
- Keep the dialog collegial and professional. **Some discussion topics may be controversial.**
- Do not flame - **These are outbursts of extreme emotion or opinion. Think twice before you submit a response. You cannot edit or delete your posts once they have been submitted.**
- Do not use offensive language or profanity.
- Use clear subject lines for your posts.
- Do not use all caps. **It is the online equivalent of YELLING!**
- Avoid using abbreviations or acronyms - **like UNESCO - unless the entire class knows them.**
- Use emoticons **to clarify your emotions. They add context to your words that cannot be seen otherwise. :)**
- Be forgiving. **Anyone can make a mistake.**

### **Resources for remediation**

Students can find academic support at the Rutgers Learning Centers.

<https://rlc.rutgers.edu>

### **Accommodations for special needs**

Learning disabilities: Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment. Rutgers has many resources that we can rely upon, but this requires some planning. So meeting with the instructor is the best way we can make the most out of available resources. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at the Office of Disability Services.

<https://ods.rutgers.edu>

**About inclusion and diversity:**

**This class is a safe space. Please talk to the instructor if anything happens that threatens that. This includes: microaggressions, open aggressions, things that bothered you... etc. And remember to SPEAK UP!**

<https://diversity.rutgers.edu/speakup>

<https://studentaffairs.rutgers.edu/resources/bias-prevention-reporting#tab=panel-2>

<https://diversity.rutgers.edu>

**We acknowledge that the land on which we stand is the ancestral territory of the Lenape People.** We pay respect to Indigenous people throughout the Lenape diaspora—past, present, and future—and honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised.

### **Course Readings**

NOT MANDATORY BUT ADVISED: Textbooks (Can be purchased online on your vendor of preference. Get the ebook version and save a tree in the process.) We will read several chapters from this book:

***Cubbage, F., O’Laughlin, J., & Peterson, M. N. (2017). Natural Resource Policy. Waveland Press, Inc.***

### Readings AND Assignments by Date

Week	Topic	Reading Assignment
1/19	Introduction and Syllabus.	No reading assignment; get started on next week's work.
1/23	Discussion. Watch on your own: Who Controls the Land 1. <a href="https://www.kanopy.com/en/rutgers/watch/video/4575167">https://www.kanopy.com/en/rutgers/watch/video/4575167</a> 2. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCpjr3qkeq4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCpjr3qkeq4</a>	Watch at home. Write short piece with key questions and ideas. VIDEOS
1/26	3. Scoping the field. Introduction to major issues and basic definitions.	Cubbage et al. 2017. CH 1.
1/30	4. Scoping the field. Introduction to major issues and basic definitions.	Cubbage et al. 2017. CH 2.
2/2	5. Regulating forests, coastal, and marine landscapes: definitions of property, law, and customary systems. 6. How to scope a research problem.	Cole and Ostrom 2012.
2/6	7. Understanding Natural Resource Use: The Tragedy of the Commons. 8.	Demsetz 1967. Hardin 1968.
2/9	9. Responses to The Tragedy of The Commons 10. THE LORAX <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V06ZOQuo0k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V06ZOQuo0k</a> <b>PROBLEM STATEMENT DUE.</b>	Feeny et al. 1990. VIDEO
2/13	11. Socio-Ecological Systems Framework and Analytical frameworks to property.	Ostrom 2009.
2/16	12. Evidence for other systems of property. Case studies. Adat and sasi. 13. Discussion of individual projects. Consultations.	Zerner 1994.
2/20	14. Common forests and pastures	Chakravarty-Kaul 1998.
2/23	15. Where policy fails: The story of the Cod. Discussion and short documentary. 16. How to write an argumentative comment. In text citations and plain language.	McGuire 1997.
2/27	17. History of policy. The case of MSY. <b>COMMENTS ON DOCUMENTARY DUE.</b>	Carmel 2009.
3/2	18. Political Ecology and Community/Local Representations. Discourses of overuse, Access, and Precautionary Management. 19. How to do an annotated bibliography?	Finkbeiner et al. 2017.
3/6	20. Uncertainty and policy. <b>TAKE HOME EXAM 1 DUE.</b>	Goodwyn 1990.
3/9	21. Policy and flexibility.	Graham 1994.
3/13	22. Complex Systems Part 1: Resilience in Forest and Coastal Systems.	Berkes 2007. Liu et al. 2007.

Week	Topic	Reading Assignment
3/16	23. Complex Systems Part 2: Resilience in Forest and Coastal Systems. Wicked problems.	Jentoft et al 2009.
Springbreak		
3/27	24. Socio-Ecological Systems in transition. Emerging Practices, Adaptation and Transformation Approaches to Climate Change.	McCay et al. 2011.
3/30	25. Emerging Practices, Adaptation and Transformation Approaches to Climate Change. <b>ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE.</b>	Quimby 2015.
4/3	26. Governance and Markets: Ecosystem Services and Human Wellbeing. Exploring valuation of natural resources and compensatory mechanisms to advance policy design.	Cubbage et al. 2017. CH 4. Sections.
4/6	27. Governance and Markets: Ecosystem Services and Human Wellbeing. Exploring valuation of natural resources and compensatory mechanisms to advance policy design.	Cubbage et al. 2017. CH 11. Sections.
4/10	28. Methods and techniques for co-participatory policy making. Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Citizen Science, and Stakeholder Engagement. 29. How to do an effective ppt oral presentation	To be selected
4/13	30. Methods and techniques for co-participatory policy making. Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Citizen Science, and Stakeholder Engagement.	To be selected.
4/17	31. Pluralistic definitions of sustainability and moving forward. <b>TAKE HOME EXAM 2 DUE.</b>	Plaganyi et al. 2013.
4/20	32. Interactive governance.	Kooiman 2008.
4/24	33. Oral Presentations I. Post 3 slides with voice over.	
4/27	34. Oral Presentations II. Post 3 slides with voice over.	
5/1	35. FINAL DAY OF CLASS. Open discussion of policy issues. 36. <b>FINAL PAPER DUE.</b>	





### Mandatory Articles

- Berkes, F. 2007. Understanding uncertainty and reducing vulnerability: lessons from resilience thinking. *Natural Hazards*. Vol. 41: 283-295.
- Berkes, F., M. Kislalioglu Berkes, and H. Fast. 2007. "Collaborative Integrated Management in Canada's North: The Role of Local and Traditional Knowledge and Community-Based Monitoring." *Coastal Management* 35 (1):143–62.
- Chakravarty-Kaul, M. 1998. Transhumance and Customary Pastoral Rights in Himachal Pradesh: Claiming the High Pastures for Gaddis. *Mountain Research and Development*, 5-17.
- Cole, D. H., and E. Ostrom. 2012. "The Variety of Property Systems and Rights in Natural Resources", in *Property in Land and Other Resources*, Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. Chapter 2.
- Demsetz, H. 1967. "Toward a Theory of Property Rights." *The American Economic Review* 57 (2): 347–59.
- Feeny, D., F. Berkes, B. J. McCay, and J. M. Acheson. 1990. "The Tragedy of the Commons: Twenty-Two Years Later." *Human Ecology* 18 (1):1–19.
- Finkbeiner, E. M, N. J. Bennett, T. H. Frawley, J. G. Mason, D. K. Briscoe, C. M. Brooks, C. A. Ng, et al. 2017. "Reconstructing Overfishing: Moving beyond Malthus for Effective and Equitable Solutions." *Fish and Fisheries* 18 (6):1180–91.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12245>.
- Finley, C. 2009. "The Social Construction of Fishing, 1949." *Ecology and Society* 14 (1).  
<https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-02704-140106>.
- Graham, T. 1994. "Flexibility and the Codification of Traditional Fisheries Management Systems." *SPC Traditional Marine Resource Management and Knowledge Information Bulletin* 3: 2–6.
- Hardin, G. 1968. "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* 162 (3859):1243–48.  
<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.162.3859.1243>.
- Jentoft, S. and Chuenpagdee, R. (2009) Fisheries and coastal governance as a wicked problem. *Marine Policy* 33, 553–560.
- Kooiman, J., Bavinck, M., Chuenpagdee, R., Mahon, R. and Pullin, R. (2008) Interactive governance and governability: an introduction. *The Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies* 7, 1–11.
- Liu, J., T. Dietz, S. R. Carpenter, M. Alberti, C. Folke, E. Moran, A. N. Pell, et al. 2007. "Complexity of Coupled Human and Natural Systems." *Science* 317 (5844):1513–16.  
<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1144004>.
- McCay, Bonnie J., Wendy Weisman, and Carolyn Creed. 2011. "Coping with Environmental Change: Systemic Responses and the Roles of Property and Community in Three Fisheries." In *World Fisheries*, edited by Rosemary E. Ommer, R. Ian Perry, Kevern Cochrane, and Philippe Cury, 381–400. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444392241.ch23>.
- McGoodwin, J. R. 1990. *Crisis in the World's Fisheries: People, Problems, and Policies*. Stanford University Press. [Chapters to be defined.]
- McGuire, T. R. 1997. "The Last Northern Cod." *Journal of Political Ecology* 4 (1):41–54.
- Ostrom, E. 2009. A general framework for analyzing sustainability of social-ecological systems. *Science*, 325(5939), 419-422.
- Plaganyi, E. E., I. van Putten, T. Hutton, R. A. Deng, D. Dennis, S. Pascoe, T. Skewes, and R. A. Campbell. 2013. "Integrating Indigenous Livelihood and Lifestyle Objectives in Managing a Natural Resource." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 110 (9):3639–44.  
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1217822110>.
- Quimby, Barbara. 2015. "Emerging Customs: Small-Scale Fishing Practices in Aceh, Indonesia." *Applied Geography* 59 (May): 125–30.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2014.11.026>.

- Wilson, J. A., J. M. Acheson, M. Metcalfe, and P. Kleban. 1994. "Chaos, Complexity and Community Management of Fisheries." *Marine Policy* 18 (4): 291–305.  
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0308-597X\(94\)90044-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0308-597X(94)90044-2).
- Zerner, C. 1994. "Through a Green Lens: The Construction of Customary Environmental Law and Community in Indonesia's Maluku Islands." *Law & Society Review* 5: 1079. <https://doi.org/10.cf22b2>.