

First Announcement (4 March 2020)

University of Eastern Finland – UN Environment Programme Course on Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Seventeenth (17th) Course, 17-27 August 2020, Joensuu, Finland

The University of Eastern Finland (UEF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), are jointly organising a high-profile two-week Course on international environmental law-making and diplomacy. The course will take place from 17 to 27 August 2020 at the University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, Finland. 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). Each Course is based on a specific theme. The Course also provides a forum to foster North-South co-operation and to take stock of recent developments in multilateral negotiations as well as in the implementation of MEAs and diplomatic practices in the international environmental arena.

This is the seventeenth year that the Course will be held and, as in previous years, lectures will be given by experienced diplomats, government officials, international civil servants and members of academia.

The special theme of this year's course will be "The Post-2020 Biodiversity Agenda". 2020 is the year of important global moments for the environment – Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at its 15th Conference of Parties in October 2020 (COP-15 Kunming will be deciding on a new 10-year framework for the conservation of biodiversity to replace the current Aichi targets which are going to expire this year.). Globally, biodiversity is governed by a range of multilateral environmental agreements, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the World Heritage Convention (WHC), the International Plant Protection Convention and the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). While important advances have been made across biodiversity agreements over the years, the current system has not been sufficient to effectively respond to the biodiversity

crisis we are facing. As negotiators are coming together to decide on a new 10-year framework, 2020 will be a crucial year to change these alarming trends and avert further loss of biodiversity. Under that theme and relevant context, a broad range of subjects will be addressed, such as biodiversity framework beyond 2020, key global and regional biodiversity related MEAs, synergies across biodiversity MEAs and nature-based solutions. The course will also address emerging legal responses to perceived gaps in international biodiversity law. In addition, general issues relating to international environmental law-making and diplomacy will be dealt with. The Course employs interactive teaching methods.

The Course is intended for experienced government officials engaged in international environmental negotiations. In addition, other stakeholders, such as representatives of non-governmental organizations and the private sector, may apply to the Course. Researchers and academics in the field of international environmental law are also eligible.

Approximately 30 participants, with an equal distribution from the North and South and taking into account gender balance will be admitted to the Course. Participants that successfully complete the Course will be awarded a Diploma.

The **Draft Programme** will be published on the Course website in June 2020. The application deadline is Friday, **17 April 2020**. Participants are expected to pay their travel and other expenses and a tuition fee of €1000. Candidates from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition can apply for a full or partial fellowship for expenses arising from **travel and accommodation**. Kindly note, however, that participants with a full or partial fellowship are expected to cover minor expenses that arise from e.g. meals not included in the course programme.

Further information

Course website:

<http://www.uef.fi/unep> or <http://unenvironment.org>

Contact address:

mea-course@uef.fi or UNEP-Law-director@un.org