

**Study Profiles on the Master Programmes in International  
Environmental Studies (M-IES) and Global Development  
Studies (M-GDS)**

<b>ECG</b> Environmental and Climate Governance	<b>GFS</b> Global Food Systems
<b>DEEP</b> Degrowth, Ecological Economics and Political Ecology	<b>DASJ</b> Development and Social Justice

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## Study Profiles for the Master Programmes in International Environmental Studies (M-IES) and Global Development Studies (M-GDS)

*By Programme Leaders, October 2024 updates (first published August 2024)*

The M-IES and M-GDS programmes have developed study profiles based on the two programmes' distinctive and shared interdisciplinary strengths. The study profiles complement the obligatory courses in each of the study programmes.

The main aim is to provide guidance to students in choosing elective course to make a coherent study plan. This will prepare students better for writing a master thesis on a topic within the study profile. One study profile is distinct for each programme, and two are shared between them:

- **Environmental and Climate Governance – ECG (M-IES)**
- **Degrowth, Ecological Economics and Political Ecology (DEEP) (M-IES and M-GDS)**
- **Global Food Systems – GGS (M-IES and M-GDS)**
- **Development and Social Justice (DASJ) (M-GDS)**

A study profile describes the thematic area and learning goals and recommends a study plan that includes: (1) One to three *study profile course(s)*, (2) a set of *profile relevant electives* including internship options, and (3) a *master thesis* on a topic within the thematic area.

In line with students' advice, the study profiles give students freedom to choose between different, feasible combinations of elective courses. The list of electives is not exhaustive. Students are free to choose other electives offered at the department and university.

For simplicity, the description of the study profiles do not include the courses that are obligatory for both programmes: EDS312 Research Methods and the M30/M60 master thesis courses; nor the courses that are mandatory for one programme: for M-IES, EDS303 Introduction to International Environmental Studies and EDS306 Green Transformations in Theory and Practice; and for M-GDS, EDS201 Introduction to Global Development Studies and EDS305 Development Theory and Politics.

The study profiles were shared with the students who enrolled in August 2024 and published in October 2024 to inform potential applicants for the 2025 admission. The Joint Programme Committee for IES and GDS has decided to review and update the study profile descriptions annually, normally in connection with the spring semester course revisions.

We hope the study profiles will be helpful and invite your comments and suggestions.

**Study Profile: Environmental and Climate Governance**

This study profile emphasizes national, regional, and international policies designed to address global environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, land use conflicts, and energy system transitions. Study profile courses will provide in-depth knowledge about policy responses developed by society to address environmental challenges, including international environmental agreements, national environmental policies, and transnational governance. The main actors of global environmental governance (states, international organizations, transnational governance actors, private companies, non-governmental organizations) and their roles in policymaking processes are identified and discussed.

Climate change is a defining socio-environmental challenge in the 21st century. The window of opportunity to enable climate resilient development that supports social equity and justice, well-being, reduced poverty, ecosystem health, low warming levels and reduced risk is narrowing. Policy actions this decade determine our prospects for ensuring sustainable development in the long term. The study profile therefore pays particular focus to the characteristics, challenges, and opportunities associated with climate change. Students are introduced to a range of topics related to the causes of and socio-political responses to anthropogenic climate change.

**Learning outcomes**

- In-depth understanding of key concepts, frameworks, and tools for understanding climate change and sustainability problems, and creating solutions
- Ability to engage in management and policy formulation for sustainable development
- Capacity to analyse complex environmental problems and governance issues in an interdisciplinary way

**Study profile courses**

- EDS355 Climate Change and Society (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS348 Global Environmental Governance (10 ECTS, spring)

**Profile relevant electives**

- EDS351 Ecological Economics and Degrowth (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS225 Linking Ecological and Social Resilience (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS379 Global Political Economy (10 ECTS, autumn)
- APL380 Environmental Governance for Planning (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS330 Political Ecology (10 ECTS, spring)
- EDS349 Energy and Society (5 ECTS, January)

## M-IES cont.

### Study Profile: Environmental and Climate Governance

**Organizations relevant for internship (EDS313)** include: Civil society and social movement actors; government agencies and ministries; Zero, Norwegian Environment Agency. [\[1\]](#)

After completing this study profile, students will be able to discuss and have a grounded understanding of the relationship between science, policy, and practice within environmental governance, with emphasis on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and possible transformative pathways to sustainability. This will enable them to work for a wide range of international, national civil society, government and academic organizations in climate environmental and climate governance.

[\[1\]](#) Students have the responsibility for securing internship offers and there is no guarantee of offers from any of the organizations listed.

## M-IES and M-GDS

### Study Profile: Degrowth, Ecological Economics and Political Ecology (DEEP)

There is an emerging consensus regarding the need for radical changes in models of production, distribution, and consumption, and that interdisciplinary ecological, economic, and political insights are needed to explore and guide such transitions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services International (IPBES) are calling for transformative changes in political, economic and financial systems, alerting that gradual change approaches will not achieve global sustainability targets. At the same time, diverse cultural practices and critical thinking point towards alternative models of human-nature relations and development, including degrowth or postgrowth alternatives.

This study profile examines the deeper sociopolitical and economic roots of environmental problems, addresses societal-ecological change, critical junctures and emerging alternatives through the approaches of Ecological Economics, Political Ecology and Degrowth. Topics explored include planetary boundaries, extractive industries, environmental justice and decolonized models of conservation, sustainable resource use, and governance of commons. It will also discuss controversies over framings, valuation and commodification of nature, debates on the feasibility of decoupling growth from environmental impacts, and key policy proposals for prosperity without growth.

#### Learning outcomes

- Ability to integrate economic and ecological understanding in examining how human needs can be met within planetary boundaries
- Awareness of ethical principles, values and environmental and ecological justice norms that are needed for sustainable and just co-existence between humans and non-humans
- Ability to analyse and understand the role of power in shaping society–environment relations and processes and how gendered, classed, and raced power relations and political processes hinder or facilitate sustainable and just co-existence
- Knowledge about a wide range of development strategies including work time reduction, changing consumption patterns, downscaling of production in overdeveloped regions, wealth and income caps, and redistribution of resources such as land, water, energy, and biodiversity

#### Study Profile Courses

- EDS330 Political Ecology (10 ECTS, spring)
- EDS350 Ecological Economics and Degrowth (10 ECTS, autumn)

## M-IES and M-GDS cont.

### Study Profile: Degrowth, Ecological Economics and Political Ecology (DEEP)

#### **Profile relevant electives**

- EDS355 Climate Change and Society (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS379 Global Political Economy (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS349 Energy and Society (5 ECTS, January)
- EDS348 Global Environmental Governance (10 ECTS, spring)

**Organizations relevant for internship (EDS313)** include: Civil society and social movement actors; government planning agencies; International Society for Ecological Economics; consumption reduction initiatives; Greenpeace, Oxfam, Future in Our Hands ... [\[1\]](#)

Students who complete this study profile will have gained critical and interdisciplinary political, economic, and ecological knowledge, understanding and skills. This will enable them to work for a broad range of civil society, government and academic institutions working on the creation of paths towards more just and sustainable futures.

[\[1\]](#) Students have the responsibility for securing internship offers and there is no guarantee of offers from any of the organizations listed.

## M-GDS and M-IES

### Study Profile: Global Food Systems

Transforming global food systems for food security, equity, and healthy diets for all in a climate and nature friendly way, is a major challenge facing the world and affecting all continents and societies. The Study Profile on Global Food Systems cuts across both Global Development Studies and International Environmental Studies as well as across social and natural sciences. With food systems we mean production, food chains, consumption and all actors involved in food related processes as well as the broader socio-economic and natural environments where these food related processes take place. The United Nations are calling for food system transformation focusing on changing food systems to become more sustainable including more climate friendly and resilient, more equitable and inclusive, and more effective in contributing towards good nutrition and health. Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger, appears far from reachable by 2030, as violent conflicts, climate change and economic downturns are impacting negatively on the food security situation in the world. Creative efforts to address these problems and shifting the global trend towards food justice and sustainability is one of the major challenges for the coming decades.

#### Learning outcomes

- Knowledge and understanding of the meanings of food systems, and the various concepts, approaches and theories used in food system studies and the critique of these, including the capacity to assess issues in relation to review of relevant cases.
- The ability to analyze food systems in cross-disciplinary ways including technological, environmental, nutritional, economic, societal, political, and demographic factors.
- Specialized insight into particular themes within food systems, for example violent conflicts, poverty, inequality, justice, rights, power, gender, food production, agroecology, technological innovations, seed systems, biodiversity, climate change, nature, consumer behavior, nutrition, healthy diets, and sustainable change.

#### Study Profile Courses

- EDS285 Global Food Systems (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS352 Agro-Ecology and Development (10 ECTS, spring)
- EDS379 Global Political Economy (10 ECTS, autumn)

#### Profile relevant electives

- EDS245 Human Rights and Development (10 ECTS, spring)
- EDS355 Climate Change and Society (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS370 Gender and Development (5 ECTS, August)
- ECN352 Poverty and Inequality (10 ECTS, spring)
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## M-GDS and M-IES cont.

### Study Profile: Global Food Systems

**Organizations relevant for internship (EDS313)** include, for example: Civil society and social movement actors; development agencies, ministries, FAO and other UN bodies. [\[1\]](#)

After completing the GFS Study Profile, students will have strengthened their understanding, skills and competence on a wide variety of local and global dimensions of food systems with high relevance for future work in development, research, advocacy, and policy-making for civil society organizations, international bodies, government institutions, actors in food production, research and education institutions, among others.

[\[1\]](#) Students have the responsibility for securing internship offers and there is no guarantee of offers from any of the organizations listed.



**Study Profile: Development and Social Justice (DASJ)**

Social justice is key to human development and wellbeing and our collective capacities to deal with conflicts and socioecological crises. The Study Profile on Development and Social Justice will introduce students to diverse perspectives on justice as they inform struggles and development processes for gender, class and racial equality. Courses will explore the histories, contemporary discourses, policies, and practices in global development and social justice, including such topics as poverty and inequality, human rights, democracy and participation, displacement and migration, and work. The Study Profile is interdisciplinary and to other study profiles on food justice, degrowth and climate- and ecological justice. Exploring the roles of social movements, states, private enterprise and international organisations will require understanding power relations and the responsibilities and accountability of power holders. Students will discuss of capitalist and other ideologies and political economy models for socioecological transformations towards justice.

**Learning outcomes**

- In-depth knowledge about issues, theories and methods in the field of development and social justice
- Improved ability to document and understand politics, policies and practices that affect social justice outcomes
- Conduct and communicate independent research on a topic within development and social justice
- Enhanced ability to evaluate, critique and propose alternative approaches to social justice issues and to apply new insights in practice.

**Study Profile Courses**

- EDS245 Human Rights and Development (10 ECTS, spring)
- ECN352 Poverty and Inequality (10 ECTS, spring)

**Profile relevant electives**

- EDS341 Decolonial Theory (5 ECTS, January)
- EDS285 Global Food Systems (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS350 Ecological Economics and Degrowth (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS330 Political Ecology (10 ECTS, spring)
- EDS378 State-Building and Conflict: Afghanistan (10 ECTS, odd years, spring: 2025)
- EDS379 Global Political Economy (10 ECTS, autumn)
- EDS391 Post-Conflict Police and Security Reform (10 ECTS, even years, spring: 2026)

## M-GDS cont.

### Study Profile: Development and Social Justice (DASJ)

**Organizations relevant for internship** (EDS313), for example: Civil society and social movement actors; Amnesty International, Save the Children, Refugee Council of Norway, Helsinki Committee, Greenpeace Norway, UN bodies<sup>[1]</sup>

After completing the DASJ Study Profile, students will have strengthened their understanding, skills and competence on a wide variety of social justice issues in global development, with high relevance for future work for civil society organizations, international bodies, government institutions, research and education, among others.

<sup>[1]</sup> Students have the responsibility for securing internship offers and there is no guarantee of offers from any of the organizations listed.

## Overview of IES and GDS Study Profiles 2024

Environmental and Climate Governance (ECG)  
 Degrowth, Ecological Economics and Political Ecology (DEEP)  
 Global Food Systems (GFS)  
 Development and Social Justice (DASJ)

CODES			
Frequency (info incomplete)		Status of course	
An	Annually	O	Obligatory for the programme
Ev	Even years	SP	Study Profile Course
Od	Odd years	E	Elective

IES	IES-GDS	IES-GDS	GDS
ECG	DEEP	GFS	DASJ

First Semester			ECTS				
EDS303 Introduction to IES (Aug)	An	5	O	O	O		
EDS201 Introduction to GDS (Aug)	An	5		O	O	O	
EDS305 Development Theory and Politics (GDS)	An	10		O	O	O	O
EDS306 Green Transformations (IES)	An	10	O	O	O		
EDS312 Research Methods	An	5	O	O	O	O	
EDS260 Global Environmental Change	An	10			E		
EDS285 Global Food Systems	An	10			SP	E	
EDS355 Climate Change and Society	An	10	SP	E	E	E	
EDS379 Global Political Economy	An	10	E	E	SP	E	

Second Semester							
EDS341 Decolonial Theory (Jan)	Od	5		E			E
EDS349 Energy and Society (Jan)	Ev	5	E	E			E
BUS360 Taxes, Justice, Sustainability I (Jan)		5				E	E
MINA321 Sustainability & Expert Disagreement (Jan)		5	E				
EDS312 Research Methods	An	10	O	O	O	O	
EDS245 Human Rights and Development		10		E	E	SP	
EDS330 Political Ecology		10	E	SP	E	E	
EDS348 Global Environmental Governance		10	SP	E	E		
EDS352 Agro-Ecology and Development		10			SP		

EDS378 State-building and Conflict	Od	10					E
EDS380 International Organizations			E				E
AOS236 Sustainability Leadership			E			E	
EDS391 Post-conflict Police and Security	Ev	10					E
ECN352 Poverty and Inequality		10				E	SP
ECOL200 General Ecology (MINA)		10	E	E			
EDS275 Natural Resource and Env. Economics		10	E				

Third Semester			ECTS			
EDS370 Gender and Development (Aug)		5	E	E	E	E
EDS260 Global Environmental Change	An	10	E	E		
EDS306 Green Transformations	An	10			E	E
EDS313 Internship (10–30 ECTS)			E	E	E	E
EDS350 Ecological Economics and Degrowth	An	10	E	SP	E	E
EDS355 Climate Change and Society	An	10	E	E	E	E
EDS 379 Global Political Economy			E	E	E	E
ECN372 Climate Economics?			E			
ECOL310 Global Change Ecology?			E	E		
Master Thesis 60 Credit (Semester 1)		30	E	E	E	E

Fourth Semester						
Master Thesis 30 Credit		30	O	O	O	O
Master Thesis 60 Credit (Semester 2)		30	O	O	O	O
Other courses (if free credits)						