

Education plan with regulations for the

**Joint Nordic Master Programme in Environmental Law**  
**Nordiskt masterprogram i miljö rätt**  
**120 University Points, 120 ECTS Credits**

*Determined on 21 May 2018, by the Board of the Faculty of Law, Uppsala University. The education plan enters into force in the autumn semester of 2019.*

In General

The Nordic Master Programme in Environmental Law (NOMPEL) is an advanced full-time study programme of 120 ECTS credits, with a nominal study length of two years. The Programme is planned for 25 students of any nationality. The operation of the NOMPEL programme is based on a cooperation between the Faculty of Law at Uppsala University (Coordinating Institution), the Law School at the University of Eastern Finland and the Faculty of Law at UiT The Arctic University of Norway. The three universities have entered into a Cooperation Agreement to which this Education Plan is an appendix.

Students are admitted to the NOMPEL programme at Uppsala University. All three universities provide courses for the NOMPEL programme. Teaching and examinations are held in English.

The students are also registered at the University of Eastern Finland and UiT The Arctic University of Norway in order to gain study rights as a degree student and to gain access to student services. Students from non-EU and non-EEA countries must achieve residence permits in Sweden, Norway and Finland in order to start and fulfil NOMPEL. Those students are also required to pay specific admission and tuition fees determined by each NOMPEL country.

NOMPEL includes three main phases, in accordance with a progression in learning outcomes. The first phase entails a broad introduction to the topic, indicating the role of law and the functions of particular environmental legal instruments in environmental policies. The student will also learn how international and EU environmental law interact with national law. In the second phase, students specialise in two environmental legal areas: (i) the law on effective management of natural resources, including the protection of biodiversity and (ii) climate change and energy law. During the third phase, the student shall produce a thesis in either of the two legal specialisation fields, covering the Nordic perspective.

NOMPEL will internationalise higher education in the Nordic region, inter alia, by including in the education important links between national, EU and international law; by comparing legal approaches used in different states; by providing students from different countries the opportunity to work together and cooperate; by engaging lecturers from different countries and through student mobility. NOMPEL is based on excellence and high quality through the engaging of professors and other lecturers who hold a PhD exam, and through positions at three

law institutions with long experience in environmental law research and education. The courses are research oriented and based on problem solving. NOMPEL also includes cooperation with the industry and the labour markets, in particular, by engaging practitioners as lecturers.

### Objectives of the Programme

The objective of the master programme is to provide advanced knowledge in environmental law methodology and insight in how crucial environmental issues are managed legally internationally, within EU and in the Nordic states. The programme should attract and prepare students for future PhD studies, and thereby, promote sustainability in academic environmental law research at Nordic and other universities. The programme should also meet the increasing demand for environmental law expertise in non-academic work, particularly in the sustainable energy sector.

### Acceptance Requirements

The Cooperation Agreement stipulates the admittance procedure.

### *Academic Requirements*

A Bachelor of Law or another equivalent university degree, corresponding to at least three years of full-time study (180 ECTS credits). The degree must be relevant to the programme and include at least 90 ECTS credits in legal science.

Since this is a joint Master's programme, your Bachelor's degree needs to be approved by all participating universities according to the rules in each NOMPEL country.

### *Language Requirements*

IELTS 6.5 (min. 5.5 in writing)/TOEFL pBT 580 (min. 4.5 in writing)/ TOEFL iBT: 90 (min. 20 in writing). The participating universities exempt certain students from making tests in English if the knowledge is proved otherwise in accordance with the rules in each NOMPEL country.

### Selection

Students are selected based on

- a total appraisal of quantity and quality of previous university studies; and
- a letter of motivation (1 page), including information about previous education, work and other experience.

### Content of the Master Programme

#### *A. Programme with Three Phases*

NOMPEL includes three main phases in accordance with a progression in learning outcomes.

#### *First Phase*

The first phase entails a broad introductory course, basically a discussion on the *Role of Law in Environmental Policies* (Uppsala). The student will learn the functions and potentials of different environmental legal instruments and principles, as well as how legislation and legal principles can counteract implementation of environmental objectives and green growth. The student will also learn how international and EU environmental law interact with national law and the basic structures and challenges in environmental law, in all Nordic states. In addition, the students will be introduced, early on, to the coming NOMPEL courses in the second phase and to the challenges connected with the authoring of a master thesis, during the third phase.

### *Second Phase*

Building upon a general understanding of environmental law (i.e. the influence of international and EU law and the basic legal similarities and differences between the Nordic states), the second phase (end of the first and the entire second and third semesters) provides the student with a specialisation in two environmental legal areas. Both are of fundamental importance from an international, EU and Nordic perspective. One of the legal areas is the law on *Effective Management of Natural Resources, Including the Protection of Biodiversity*. In a first introductory course in Uppsala, the objective is to analyse the relation between the management of natural resources (forest, water, wind etc.) and the interest of conserving biodiversity, as stipulated in international law, EU law and the law of the Nordic states. In Joensuu, the students continue with the natural resource theme and take courses on international law and forests, international water law as well as on environmental impact assessment and World Trade Organization (WTO) law, in the context of natural resources. The course held in Tromsø, on international law and sustainable use of living marine natural resources, includes studies on the protection of biodiversity in marine harvesting, in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction, and offers case studies on national implementation.

The second specialisation area is climate change and energy law. The first course in this specialisation takes place in Joensuu and provides students with a basic understanding of the climate change challenge and key legal mechanisms and policies related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. In Joensuu, students will also take a course on international trade regimes under the WTO, which introduces the key WTO rules relating to climate change. Aspects of trade in renewable energy technologies and the relationship between the WTO and emissions trading systems are also included. In Tromsø, the students continue with a course that provides them with advanced knowledge of the interdependence between climate and energy, including the implications of climate change law for the energy sector, renewable energy, emissions trading and carbon capture and storage. The course will also offer case studies from the Arctic.

During the second phase, NOMPEL has made use of the specific competencies of the respective law institutions. Still, in order to include the Nordic perspective, materials and lecturers from other Nordic states will also be involved in the courses, in order for the students to understand how environmental objectives, established in international and EU law, are implemented in different Nordic states. We have already contacted Danish and Icelandic environmental law professors and they are willing to give input into the courses.

### *Third Phase*

With specific competencies in biodiversity law and climate and energy law, the student shall produce a thesis in either of the two legal fields; but with a specific thesis topic demanding their own empirical research and analysis, covering, inter alia, the Nordic perspective. The student is continuously supported by a supervisor from any of the three universities. Seminars, during the course, advise the student in legal methodology, structuring and writing skills (as a follow-up to the introductory course). Students receive feedback on draft papers, presented in seminars, in the middle of the semester. The final thesis is subject to opposition, during seminars, at the end of the course and is evaluated and graded by a professor other than the student's supervisor. The final seminars also include a summing up of the entire Master's Programme.

### *B. The Programme in Four Semesters*

NOMPEL is in brief structured as follows:

- First semester: *Introduction - The Role of Law in Environmental Policies* (15 ECTS) and *Law on Management of Natural Resources and Protection of Biodiversity* (15 ECTS), Faculty of Law, Uppsala University. Students stay in Uppsala during the entire semester.
- Second semester: *Climate Change Law and Policy* (5 ECTS), *WTO: Environment, Clean Energy and Natural Resources, Trade and Resources* (5 ECTS), *International Environmental Law II* (5 ECTS), *International Law and Forests* (5 ECTS), *Environmental and Social Impact Assessment* (5 ECTS) and *International Water Law* (5 ECTS). Students stay in Joensuu during the entire semester.
- Third semester: *Energy and Climate Change Law* (15 ECTS) and *Protection of the Marine Environment with Focus on Marine Living Resources Law* (15 ECTS). Students stay in Tromsø during the entire semester.
- Fourth semester: *Master thesis in Environmental Law* (30 ECTS). Seminars at the start, middle and end of the semester. Supervisors are engaged from Tromsø, Joensuu and Uppsala. No obligation for students to stay in Uppsala, Tromsø or Joensuu. Participation in the seminars is mandatory; but most of them may be attended on video links.

### Learning Outcomes

The objective of NOMPEL is to educate and examine master students with competencies in three complementary domains, as stipulated in the Swedish Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100), annex 2:

(i) *Knowledge and Understanding*: Candidates who can:

- Identify and comprehend complex environmental legal issues concerning, inter alia, the role of law in connection with (a) implementation of climate policies and in particular the transformation to sustainable energy systems and (b) effective management of natural resources including halting the loss of biodiversity;
- Raise fundamental questions about the concepts of sustainable development, natural resources management, biodiversity conservation, climate change and sustainable energy systems;
- Identify and understand international, EU and Nordic environmental and energy specificities and interests and the interaction with national policies and interests in the Nordic countries;
- Identify and understand the economic and policy concerns in solving the legal problems and issues arising in this field;

(ii) *Intellectual Competences/Competence and Skills*: Candidates who have the:

- Ability to reflect on various environment law topics and to ask critical questions from a legal perspective;
- Ability to synthesize concisely the complexity of intricate energy and environmental regulation topics and to create an overview of these topics;
- Ability to work independently and to carry out an integrated and comprehensive legal analysis of national and transnational environmental and energy law issues;
- Ability to seek out and select relevant legislative documents and cases;
- Ability to comprehend national and transnational environmental and energy law problems and to set up a solution;
- Ability to successfully undertake written assignments, deliver oral presentations and conduct small-scale research in an area of sustainable environmental and energy law that will be of value in developing policy and professional practice, and applying regulatory frameworks and implementing instruments related to climate change,

sustainable energy systems, effective management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity.

(iii) *Practical Competencies/Competence and Skills*: Candidates who can:

- Communicate and draw up legal solutions both orally and in writing.
- Correctly and comprehensively advise and guide clients within the issues of environmental law, in particular, in relation to climate change, sustainable energy, resource management and biodiversity;
- Contribute to the design and development policies and regulations with the aim of managing climate change, sustainable energy systems, effective resource management and conservation of biodiversity;
- Develop the competencies required to professionally advise businesses, organizations and public authorities on the adoption, implementation, supervision, development and control of sustainable energy and environmental regulation mechanisms;
- Manage and develop the area of national and transnational environmental and energy regulation, including the identification of new solutions to support the transition to a sustainable, low carbon and resource efficient economy;
- Independently initiate and implement collaborations that embrace different legal disciplines; and
- Take part in the new developments and transitions taking place in the Nordic countries, Europe and globally, in accordance with internationally agreed upon aims on climate change, sustainable energy systems, effective resource management and conservation of biodiversity.

(iv) *Judgement and Approach*: Candidates who can:

- Demonstrate the ability to make assessments in environmental law with regard to disciplinary, social and ethical aspects and to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work;
- Demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used; and
- Demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

### Teaching and Examination

Problem solving and active student participation are the essential components in the NOMPEL education. Seminars include, inter alia, analyses of court cases and constructed hypothetical cases, discussions related to student presentations of legal solutions in Nordic states and made-up court cases with students actively role playing.

In each taught semester, the teaching staff, across the consortium, encourages critical thinking and independent study. Students are offered a wide range of teaching and learning activities as appropriate to the aims of the individual courses. These include (a) lectures followed by plenary discussion - sessions supported by written texts and PowerPoint presentations; (b) seminars organised as participative lectures or with student presentations; and (c) workshops and smaller seminar groups exploring the themes of the preceding presentations or addressing pre-given tasks, texts and questions. The writing of individual assignments represents an integrated part of the learning approach. Students are encouraged to use study groups as a resource for learning and debate. The use of learning approaches varies within individual modules and university traditions, but all participants are encouraged to develop a common course identity, through the creation of reading/interest groups, to consolidate shared interests and to pursue a more in-depth study of an issue.

Continuity and progression are assured by means of the design of the curriculum. The first phase lays the fundamentals and provides the basis for understanding approaches, perspectives and tools in national and transnational environmental and energy regulation. The second phase allows for specialisation in the context of (i) natural resources management and biodiversity law and (ii) climate change and energy law. The third phase allows students to unify and extend their understanding of the subject as developed in the taught part of the Programme, by pursuing an independent research project in one of the two legal areas in the second phase.

The NOMPEL partners will use their established contacts with industry, businesses, decision makers, authorities, interest groups, NGOs, etc., in order to integrate them into the Programme, especially during the second phase. The plan is to involve practitioners as teachers and arrange study visits to business entities, public institutions etc. Where possible, practitioners will be involved as advisers during the master thesis (third phase).

The institution responsible for each course determines the grading of that course.

The student must have completed 75 ECTS of the programme courses in order to be accepted to the fourth semester.

#### Degree

The Programme leads to a joint degree (120 credits), named:

- Master of Legal Science (Uppsala University)
- Master of International and Comparative Law (University of Eastern Finland)
- Master of Laws (UiT The Arctic University of Norway)

The Programme degree requires the completion of all Programme courses.

#### Evaluation

The Programme will be externally evaluated in 2024 and after that, at least once each sixth year, in accordance with the consortium Agreement and the Coordinating Institution's national legal requirements. Two educational experts from universities other than the Parties will perform the evaluation. The Programme Steering Committee is responsible for initiating an external evaluation.