A Student’s Guide to the «Environmental and Climate Economics» courses and Specialization in the Master of Climate Sciences

This guide is for students who are enrolled in the MSc Climate Science program at the University of Bern, and who are interested in Environmental and Climate Economics. In fact, the Department of Economics offers a considerable variety of both theoretical and empirical courses in the field of Environmental and Climate Economics.

In the following, we give some guidance on how to include economic education in the MSc Climate Science program depending on your personal educational background.

1. Students without Economics major or minor in the Bachelor’s Degree

For students without a Bachelor’s degree in Economics, we offer the course “Environmental Economics for Non-Economists”. This course will be held every fall semester starting from 2018. The course does not require an economic background and teaches the fundamental concepts and methodologies, both theoretical and empirical, of (environmental) economics. In case of doubt, discuss the eligibility with the course lecturer. After successful completion, you are up to speed to take the courses “Environmental Economics: Introduction” and “Contingent Valuation”. While the former rests on microeconomic theory, the latter employs empirical methods.

If you wish to go even further, we recommend that you consult either Prof. Eric Strobl (eric.strobl@vwi.unibe.ch) or Prof. Ralph Winkler (rwinkler@vwi.unibe.ch). We are happy to advise you on how to tailor your curriculum.
2. **Students with Economics minor in their Bachelor’s Degree**

In case you did a minor in Economics during your Bachelor’s degree, the choice of courses depends on whether you want to write your Master’s thesis in the field of Climate Economics. If so, please consult Section 3 of this guide. If not, we recommend taking the courses “Environmental Economics: Introduction” and / or “Contingent Valuation” if you have not done so already in your Bachelor’s Degree (or comparable courses if you did your Bachelor’s degree at a different university).

How to proceed from there strongly depends on your own interests and in which field you will write your Master’s thesis. You may want to consult either Prof. Eric Strobl (eric.strobl@vwi.unibe.ch) or Prof. Ralph Winkler (rwinkler@vwi.unibe.ch), as we are happy to advise you on your personally tailored curriculum.

3. **Students with Economics major in their Bachelor’s Degree**

In case you passed your Bachelor’s degree with a Major in Economics and you want to specialize in Environmental and Climate Economics in your Master’s of Climate Sciences, we strongly recommend taking the courses “Microeconomics II” and “Econometrics II” as early as possible. These courses lay the conceptual and methodological foundations in Microeconomics and Econometrics on the Master’s level. The courses are very helpful to succeed in Master courses in Environmental and Climate Economics, and they are indispensable for writing a Master’s thesis at the Department of Economics. If you have not taken “Environmental Economics: Introduction” and / or “Contingent Valuation” (or comparable courses if you did your Bachelor’s degree at a different university) we also recommend to take those courses, as they lay a sound foundation in theoretical and empirical concepts of Environmental Economics.

How to proceed from there strongly depends on your own interests and the topic of your Master’s thesis. Depending on whether you want to write an empirical or theoretical thesis, we advise you to consult either Eric Strobl (empirical) or Ralph Winkler (theoretical). We are happy to advise you on your personal curriculum.

4. **Students considering a PhD in Environmental / Climate Economics**

In case you specialize in Economics, write your Master’s thesis in Economics and you can see yourself writing a PhD thesis in Climate and Environmental Economics (and graduate with a PhD in Economics) after successful completion of your Master in Climate Sciences, everything said in Section 3 also applies to you. However, we would strongly recommend that you take the course “Macroeconomics II” in addition and as a part of the 10 ECTS ‘elective courses upon approval’. This course is offered at the Department of Economics every fall semester. While this course is not an official course (i.e. listed in Annex 1 of the studies program) for the Master’s in Climate Science, the regulations allow to credit up to 10 ECTS from other programs (10 ECTS upon approval by the Studies Director). If you take the Economics specialization in
the Master's in Climate Science, this approval is generically granted for the course “Macroeconomics II”. The reason why we advise to take this additional course is that you fulfill the necessary criteria, with respect to your educational background, for admission to the PhD program in Economics if you have at least 60 ECTS in Economics on the Master's level and have successfully taken “Microeconomics II”, “Macroeconomics II” and “Econometrics II”.

If you have any questions about pursuing a PhD in Economics after your Master's in Climate Science, please feel free to consult either Eric Strobl or Ralph Winkler.Sciences.

On behalf of the Graduate School of Climate Sciences

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