

DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE | Continuing Education Programme

International Water Law and the Law of Transboundary Aquifers

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**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

FACULTÉ DE DROIT



Direction

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Coordination

- **Dr. Mara Tignino**.

Partner

- DiploFoundation.

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Acquire solid competencies of legal and institutional frameworks for transboundary water cooperation: rise to one of the major challenges for sustainable management, protection of fresh water resources, peace and global security

The governance and protection of fresh water is one of the biggest challenges facing the planet over the next decade. With the steady increase of the world's population, urbanization and environmental degradation, the competing demands of States will continue to grow and amplify the risk of disputes. In 2017, the World Economic Forum stated that water crises will be among the highest global risks for the coming fifteen years.

The 6th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of the Agenda 2030 aims to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” and to “implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation”. Instruments and norms of international water law are paramount to the achievement of the SDG 6 which will become crucial in coming years.

Legal knowledge and skills are required by professionals to negotiate and implement legal and institutional frameworks on transboundary water resources. The strengthening of capacities is essential for efficient and effective water cooperation and the sustainable management of water resources and the maintenance of peace and global security.

The e-Learning Course on International Water Law and the Law of Transboundary Aquifers combines legal knowledge and expertise with new technologies, stimulating dynamic interactions between the participants and experts, to equip them with the required knowledge and skills.

This course benefits from the University of Geneva Law Faculty's longstanding expertise in international law and Geneva Water Hub's dedicated Platform for International Water Law.



Objectives

- To gain sound knowledge of international water law.
- To acquire an in-depth understanding of the multifaceted aspects related to the governance of water resources.
- To foster reflection on the linkages between international water law and other areas of international law.
- To foster reflection allowing a more effective use of legal tools to improve access to water and solve water-related disputes.

Skills and competencies

- Interpret and apply the legal instruments, principles and norms of international water law in order to contribute to prevent and settle water disputes.
- Identify and use key instruments and principles of the law of transboundary aquifers.
- Explain the current legal developments in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and contribute to the creation of instruments promoting equitable access and sustainable use of water resources.
- Develop legal skills for the negotiation and implementation of fresh water agreements.
- Promote cooperation and prevent conflicts arising from water use and the sharing of fresh water resources.
- Promote and support public participation in water management issues.



Audience

Professionals from different backgrounds including law, international relations, hydrology, engineering or economics. Government officials (diplomats, technical and scientific specialists working in transboundary water issues), international organizations staff, NGO, civil society representatives, academics and professionals from the private sector.

Pedagogical approach

- A structured and flexible modular e-learning course specially designed for professionals working on a full time basis.
- A focus on theoretical and practical knowledge as well as hands-on experience with case studies.
- Interactive lessons, webinars, thought-provoking videos and an updated audio-visual library.
- Strong collaborative activities such as peer-reviews and discussion groups to facilitate learning.

Tutoring and coordination

Personalized support and feedback is provided for all activities, both online and offline. An online tutor guides participants through their learning experience and facilitates collaborative work and knowledge exchange throughout the course.

Evaluation

All modules comprise online assessment exercises and written assignments. The final exam consists of a case study.



Structure

The course includes 6 thematic modules each one lasting one or two weeks and a 7th module consisting in the resolution of a case study. The completion of the course corresponds to 4 ECTS credits equivalent to 120 learning and training hours.

A one-week module corresponds to 10-12 hours of teaching and learning per week including audiovisual material and reading of legal texts and literature. Depending on the module, the participants will have between 3-4 hours of online activities (i.e. discussion forums, quiz, answers to case-studies etc.) and an average of 6 hours of personal work (i.e. reading of legal texts and literature and preparation of online activities) per week.

A two-week module includes an average of 20 hours of learning and teaching.

The seventh module consists of about 10-12 hours of learning and teaching including the preparation of the final case study.



Module 1 | Sources and Concepts of International Law

1 week | 24-30 September 2018
11 hours | 4 hours online and 7 hours offline

- Explaining the characteristics of international actors in the development of international water law.
- Defining the sources of international water law.
- Comparing diplomatic and judicial methods for settling international water disputes.

Module 2 | The Evolution of International Regulation on Transboundary Water Resources

2 weeks | 1-14 October 2018
19 hours | online and offline

- Analyzing the key aspects and scope of the 1997 Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.
- Describing the activities of the League of Nations, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in the development of international water law.
- Differentiating between the work of the International Law Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).



Module 3 | **The Principles of the Law on Transboundary Water Resources (Part I)**

2 weeks | 15-28 October 2018

21 hours | online and offline

- Examining the content of the principle of equitable and reasonable use, the obligation not to cause significant harm and the principle of cooperation.
- Discussing and providing examples of international judicial decisions dealing with international water law.
- Understanding the role and function of river basin organizations.

Module 4 | **The Principles of the Law on Transboundary Water Resources (Part II)**

2 weeks | 29 October- 11 November 2018

21 hours | online and offline

- Explaining the role of water in international environmental law and human rights law.
- Defining and assessing the human right to water and sanitation.
- Identifying the norms on the protection of water during armed conflicts.



Module 5 | **The Law of Transboundary Aquifers**

2 weeks | 12-25 November 2018
23 hours | online and offline

- Understanding and analyzing the principles applicable to the management and protection of transboundary aquifers.
- Examining and assessing the relationship between the International Law Commission's Draft Articles on Transboundary Aquifers of 2008, the 1997 Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the Model Provisions on Groundwater Resources of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- Identifying the main rules of the existing agreements on transboundary aquifers.

Module 6 | **Water and International Economic Law**

1 week | 26 November-2 December 2018
13 hours | online and offline

- Understanding the linkages between water and international economic law.
- Differentiating between international trade law and international investment law.
- Defining the functions of amicus curiae in arbitrations dealing with water.

Module 7 | **Case Study: Analysis and Legal Resolution**

1 week | 3-9 December 2018
10 hours | online and offline



Application information

Admission requirements

- A recognized University degree (Bachelor, Master, Ph.D. or equivalent).
- Two years of relevant professional experience related to the management and protection of water resources.
- Fluency in English, particularly written and reading abilities.
- Applicants must have a computer and a reliable internet connection for the course duration. They must possess basic computer skills such as navigating the Internet and using Microsoft Word.
- Applicants must submit a CV and a motivation letter explaining why the knowledge of international water law is relevant to their work and how it will be applied to carry out their professional duties.

Selection process

- The selection is made by the Scientific Committee on the basis of candidates' academic qualifications and professional experience.
- A maximum of 35 participants will be selected to participate in the course.

Tuition fees and scholarships

- The entire course costs CHF 900.-
- Full and partial scholarships are available for participants coming from least developed countries and non-OECD countries. Candidates asking for a partial or full scholarship have to explain the reasons for this request in their motivation letter.

Application and registration deadline

Qualified candidates can apply/register for the course by completing an online form available at www.unige.ch/formcont/cours/waterlaw. They can also apply/register by downloading a PDF form available on the same webpage and sending it to info-waterlawonline@unige.ch

The application/registration deadline is 19 September 2018.



Testimonials

“...this course is really helping me see things in a new light (...). I have learnt a lot and I am continuing to learn. I soon have to submit a memo to my director to show him the importance of IWL and the shortcomings of Togo in the domain.”

Richard Barry

Directorate of Water Resources, Togo.
2016 Session.

“I have gained a great deal of knowledge on international law and water law in particular. Having had the background in resource management, political science and international relations, it was a great addition to my knowledge base. The course has exceeded my expectations and I've enjoyed it very much.”

Oxana Wolfson

Policy Consulting Associates, Australia.
2016 Session.

“The training used different participatory approaches such as webinar, assignments and quiz which tested factual knowledge and analytical perspective of the subject matter. The support afforded to me, both technical as well as the answers from the expert, was superb. Therefore, I have no hesitation in recommending the course to any person whatsoever.”

Sarah Vranckx

Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation, Namibia
2016 Session.

“I found the course invaluable. It gave me the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of a wide range of legal topics not only at a national level but also at a global scale. The provided materials and the interactive course design made easy to follow it. The moderator was always supportive and quickly replied to my questions.”

Mohammad Daud Hamidi

MA Student in Integrated Water Resources Management,
German-Kazakh University, Kazakhstan
2017 Session.

“All modules were interactive and included a comprehensive description of different legal instruments of selected types of issues that can occur between riparian stakeholders and those related to human security. The course has also helped me to understand better practical challenges of implementing international water law.”

Martina Kilmes

Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Sweden.
2017 Session.

“I strongly recommend it to everyone ... the quality of the content and the materials are invaluable. As a diplomat, the knowledge acquired during this course will be useful for promoting a better governance of our transboundary and local basins.”

Juan Carlos Pomadera

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peru.
2017 Session.

For more information

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