

ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS

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This specialization offers students the opportunity to study the causes and solutions to environmental problems from a multidisciplinary social sciences perspective. This involves contributions from ecological economics, political ecology, sociology, and human geography. Students will learn about concepts, theories, and methods, write essays, participate in debates, and learn to apply socio-environmental research techniques. This specialization is of interest to students with backgrounds in economics, social sciences, and political science who are pursuing careers in environmental research, public administration, and both non-profit and for-profit sectors.

In addition to the three compulsory courses on Interdisciplinary Concepts on Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability (*"Theory and Practice of Interdisciplinarity"* – 3 ECTS, *"Interdisciplinary Project"* – 9 ECTS, and *"Scientific Communication and Dissemination"* – 3 ECTS) and the Master's Thesis (10 ECTS), this specialization includes two additional compulsory courses: *"Foundations of Ecological Economics"* (9 ECTS) and *"Political Ecology"* (6 ECTS).

"Foundations of Ecological Economic" provides a broad introduction to environmental and climate economics, institutional economics, social metabolism (flows of materials and energy), integrated assessments, and ecological macroeconomics. Students will also participate in an economic experiment and in a debate on environment versus growth.

"Political Ecology" examines how political and economic power shapes social and environmental change. The emphasis is on analyzing ecological conflicts and injustices, as well as the ways grassroots actors organize to oppose powerful corporations and states. The module covers an introduction to the basic principles of political ecology thinking and its applications to conservation, the study of rural commons, and urban issues.

Students must complete the remaining credits in the program through a combination of four optional courses (each worth 5 ECTS). Some courses thematically connected to the specialization include: *"Qualitative Methods for Social Science Research"*, *"Corporate Social Responsibility"*, *"Sustainable Transport and Mobility Policies"*, *"Environmental Law: Essential Foundations for Professionals"*, *"Tools for Analyzing Social Metabolism"*, *"Water Management, or Internships in Institutions"*. The [full list of electives can be consulted on the website](#).

Regarding the Master's Thesis, an example of project topics can be consulted [here](#). The thesis may be carried out with professors and researchers from the UAB and ICTA, as well as with external organizations.