

POL205S: IR in the Anthropocene
Professor Kate Neville

Winter 2021, Thursday online synchronous 12-2pm (Eastern) & tutorials
[Class will run on “UofT time” – starting time 12:10pm]

NOTE: SYLLABUS IS PROVISIONAL; WILL BE CONFIRMED BY JAN 14

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Office hours: online, tbd

Course Description: Humans have altered the planet so dramatically that some geologists have coined a new epoch: the Anthropocene. Is our study of global politics up to the challenge of human-driven environmental change? In this course, we consider multiple perspectives on IR to make sense of geopolitics on a changing planet.

In this time of unprecedented anthropogenic disruption of our atmosphere and oceans, rapid transformation of land uses, and precipitous declines in biological diversity, the study of international relations is more relevant than ever. Through a thematic focus on global environmental change, the course will introduce students to core concepts in IR, especially in international political economy and international organizations. Considering geopolitics in the context of a changing planet, from oceanic to atmospheric to ecological systems, students will be introduced to—and reflect critically on—a range of IR theories and perspectives.

Plan for the term: We’ll examine and apply various IR approaches and theories to the contemporary moment, placing our current challenges in historical and political perspective. The course has three sections: We start with a core question: I) *What is—and are we really in—the Anthropocene?* In this section, considering the causal relationships between geopolitics and ecological change, we look at how different scholars define the current moment, with attention to the political consequences of a geologic classification. Next, we dig deeper into the question, II) *How do transnational politics shape environmental change (and vice-versa)?* We consider the ways in which relationships among states and across borders shape global environmental change. In this section of the course, we focus on various global challenges—including climate change, biodiversity loss, food, fisheries, and waste—across five earth systems—the atmosphere, lithosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and cryosphere. We examine cross-cutting analytic themes of political economy, international organizations, and security to assess how systems and patterns of knowledge, rule-setting, and accumulation around the world (alternately understood as ideas, institutions, and interests), as well as changing technologies, shape human-environment relationships. Finally, with consideration of how the contemporary global order shapes environmental change, we turn to the question, III) *Where do we go from here?* In this final section of the course, we examine processes of political transformation, with particular attention to the consequences of governance strategies at multiple levels for social and environmental justice.

Course format, assignments, & website: The course is offered online on Blackboard Collaborate. Please monitor the Quercus course site closely! The format involves 12 two-hour classes, almost-weekly tutorial sessions, readings, reading quizzes, and two written assignments.

1. Tutorials (9 tutorials): 20%
2. Reading quizzes (write two of the three quizzes, each worth 10%): 20%
3. Short critical essay (750 words, due week 5): 20%
4. Review/synthesis essay (1500 words, due week 12): 40%

Grade flexibility and notes on assignment weight: We're in challenging times—not just the Anthropocene, but specifically the pandemic. In case of unexpected challenges (student illness, caretaking emergencies, other contingencies), grading policies may be changed as follows:

- deadlines may be moved (as a class or individually; extensions are possible, within UofT limits and rules); and
- grades can be redistributed across assignments; and
- alternate assignments can be arranged to address accommodation needs (even if accommodations are not formally documented).

Readings & other weekly assigned material: The readings and videos/podcasts are central to this course: they offer you multiple perspectives on international relations and the Anthropocene, and they provide both theoretical richness and empirical examples. There are one or two academic readings each week: these are challenging and academically advanced, so demand a lot of your time and attention to read—but they are central to informing how we think about these pressing global relationships! Most weeks, there are also podcasts, interviews, and short film clips to listen to/watch; these should enrich and contextualize the themes of the week—they are also mandatory and will inform your essays, discussions, and quizzes.

In general, and as usual when thinking of a full course load as 5 classes, you should imagine that you'll spend at least 8 hours per week on this course: 2 hours in lecture; 1 hour in tutorials; 2-4 hours on readings and podcasts/videos, and 2-4 hours on assignments. The balance will shift in different weeks (e.g., leading up to an assignment deadline), and the time spent reading/listening to assigned course material and working on assignments will depend on your own academic strengths and skills. For instance, some of you may be fast readers but slow writers; others might need to listen to material several times to solidify your understanding. These are not fixed time commitments, but you should consider that a full course load is like a full-time (40 hr/week) job, and only a handful of those hours are spent in class.

Course outline by week:

PART I: What is—and are we really in—an Anthropocene? What does this mean for IR?

Week 1: Jan 7 – Course Introduction: IR in unsteady times

Week 2: Jan 14 – What defines the Anthropocene? Reorienting international politics

Week 3: Jan 21 – Organizing IR: Security, intl organizations, & political economy

Week 4: Jan 28 – “Blind spots” in political economy: Intersecting inequalities

PART II: How do transnational politics shape environmental change (and vice-versa)?

Week 5: Feb 4 – Challenges to territorial sovereignty: Climate change & borders

Week 6: Feb 11 – Challenges to state-based governance: Corporations & food systems

READING WEEK: Feb 18: no class

Week 7: Feb 25 – Challenges to international organizations: Overfishing & the high seas

Week 8: March 4 – Challenges to limitless growth: Waste & the problem of plastics

Week 9: March 11 – Challenges to the international system: Re-imagining frontiers

Week 10: March 18 – Technology, governance, & the planet

PART III: Where do we go from here?

Week 11: March 25 – Transformative global governance: Experiments & pathways

Week 12: April 2 – In pursuit of global justice: Rethinking IR

Assignment submission & late policies: Please submit assignments electronically through Quercus (or by email, if there are technological glitches with the system) before midnight (Eastern time zone) on the day they are due.

These are especially difficult times: pandemic conditions are exacerbating existing challenges, including financial pressures and school/work commitments, food and housing insecurity, family and caretaking responsibilities, mental and physical health, and more. Deadlines are set to help you plan out your term work, and to help the teaching team manage the grading workload during the term. Rather than seeing these deadlines and late penalties as punitive, I hope you'll see them as providing guidance (and incentives) to meet these timelines.

In general, I anticipate that all assignments will be submitted on time. In general, late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (including weekends). Late quizzes will not be accepted. *However*, some students may find themselves with valid conflicts and challenges, especially in these times. If you can't meet the deadlines, please speak with me and/or your TA in advance, as best you can, about alternate arrangements. Unexpected situations and challenges warrant flexibility and can be accommodated. Please be in touch as early as possible, as this allows the teaching team to plan more clearly.

Assignment details:***1. Tutorials: 20% - held in 9 of the 12 weeks of term (weeks 3-11)***

More details will be provided in class.

2. Quizzes: 20% - two of three, due weeks 4, 8, 12

There will be three quizzes during the term, of which you must write two, to incentivize reading of (and watching/listening to) course material. These are each worth 10%. The quizzes will be based on the assigned readings, podcast, and other weekly material. They must be submitted by the start of class in weeks 4, 8, and/or 12 (depending on which two you submit), and the questions will be posted no later than Friday of the week before they're due (weeks 3, 7, and 11).

3. Short critical essay: 20% - due week 5

This 750-word essay, submitted in week 5, will answer an essay prompt based on course readings from weeks 1-4 that will be posted online in week 4. This is not a research paper, but instead will ask you to critically engage with the readings from Part I of the term.

4. Review/synthesis essay: 40% - due week 12

This ~1500-word paper is a chance for you to really dig into one of the topics or themes of the class, and to practice your independent reading, research, and writing skills. For this paper, you are tasked with writing a *review paper* on a theme/topic connected to our course on IR and the Anthropocene. We will discuss this kind of writing in class, with examples from our course readings. You will work on this through the term, building your skills and analytic capacities over time. Your weekly assigned readings should begin to give you the skills needed to read scholarly articles and books; your short critical essay will provide you practice with engaging

critically with the ideas in readings; and lectures will help you synthesize ideas across readings, case studies, and more. More details will be provided in class.

Policies and Expectations

TL; DR

It's a pandemic so there's more flexibility than usual; come to class and tutorials, do the readings, don't plagiarize; if not the same as on the official class list, please let me know your name and pronouns; write professional emails; classes will be recorded and posted on Quercus; don't make your own recording unless you are a student with accommodations and have my permission; there are university resources and supports—reach out if you need help.

In more detail

In general: We're gathering in this class in a challenging global time: in the intersecting acute and chronic crises of an ongoing pandemic, systemic inequality across economic and racial lines, accelerating climate change and biodiversity loss, and more. This means we'll need to be flexible, patient, and brave—taking on challenging topics in a time of personal and professional/scholarly upheaval. That said, given these challenges, I think this course is more important than ever: we all need the tools to analyze the changing world around us—both to make sense of the unfolding events across the planet and to imagine new ways forward.

So, in this course, you can expect that I will strive to be fair, respectful, prepared, and responsive. In return, I anticipate you will be respectful of your classmates and of me and strive for academic integrity in all forms. I also expect you will engage in our offline activities, be prepared and on time for online classes and your tutorial sessions, and meet deadlines for assignments—all to the best of your abilities, knowing you might be facing tough circumstances outside our virtual classroom. I hope that together we can foster a safe and engaging virtual space for thinking about big questions, and I will be relying on all of you to help create that space.

Unlike an in-person classroom, you'll need to find your own strategies to limit distractions while in class and in tutorials: we'll work together on this, but I hope that while in online sessions, you'll turn off your text/social media/email notifications, avoid scrolling on other websites, and do your best to be present and attentive.

Online learning, recordings, and security: I've borrowed some of this guidance and cautionary note from a colleague, Dr. Ron Diebert (whose work we'll learn from in our course this term), and some from the University of Toronto.

The global pandemic has forced us to radically transform the way we work, teach and learn. Our homes, wherever that is in the world, are now our new classrooms. However, there is something really important we need to discuss: If you are a citizen of another country, and/or accessing your courses at the University of Toronto from a jurisdiction outside of Canada, you remain subject to the laws of the country in which you are residing, or any country of which you have citizenship. You may be assigned readings or asked to discuss topics that are against the law in other nation-state jurisdictions. Your online activities may be monitored or surveilled from within the country where you are studying. There is nothing that the University of Toronto can do about this reality. You may be already familiar with this problem or this may be a new concern. Either way, it's important that you know your local laws.

Students in mainland China: In order to provide access to UofT online resources for students and others residing in mainland China, the university has signed a contract with Alibaba for a network service. Chinese companies are required to operate in accordance with China's cyber security laws and there is an inherent risk of monitoring for individuals in mainland China using any network solution. Unfortunately, there is no simple or secure alternative we can recommend to reduce your risks of connecting from mainland China.

Recordings:

This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download session videos and materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor. For questions about recording and use of videos in which you appear please contact your instructor.

Students may *not* create audio recordings of classes—with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability, who should speak to the instructor prior to beginning to record lectures. Students creating unauthorized audio recording of lectures violate an instructor's intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Course videos may not be reproduced or posted or shared anywhere other than the official course Quercus site and should only be used by students currently registered in the course. Recordings may be saved to students' laptop for personal use. Because recordings will be provided for all lectures, students may not create additional audio or video recordings without written permission from the instructor. Permission for such recordings will not be withheld for students with accommodation needs.

Backups and rough drafts: You are strongly advised to keep rough drafts and backup copies of all assignments and essays you submit for this class. Also, please take a minute at the start of the term to set yourself a backup strategy. Whether it's a backup external hard drive, a web-based cloud service like Dropbox or Google Drive, or some other option, it's important that you have multiple copies of your work in the case of a hard drive failure or computer problem. In general, extensions will not be provided due to technical problems, although in a time of home-based work (where you have differing levels of internet connectivity and stable electricity, access to your own electronic devices, etc.), more flexibility will be available than usual.

Names: If the name on the official course registration list does not, for any reason, match the name by which you would like to be addressed, please let me know. I am not able to change official course lists, but I can call you by your preferred name in our email exchanges and in office hours. Please let me know the pronouns you use (mine are she/her).

Professional titles are a sign of respect in the academic world, but there are varying degrees of formality among scholars. I encourage you to start by calling all your professors by "Prof" or "Dr." [Last Name]; they can indicate if they'd be open to more informal exchanges.

Some students like a more informal exchange, while others feel most comfortable with a formal distinction between their course instructors and their peers and friends. I tend to be open to a less formal environment, but also want to make sure all students feel comfortable. For our online course this semester, I'm happy to be called "Prof./Dr. Neville," or "Prof./Dr. Kate," whichever suits you best. Please sign your emails with the name you'd like me to call you by.

Email and communication: In a virtual course, email is more important than ever! I'll do my best to respond quickly, but please note that I often only check email once a day and may not check on evenings and weekends. I am also in a different time zone for our online course, so our hours of emailing might not be aligned – please be patient and try your best to plan ahead. Please also use the Quercus discussion boards to communicate with each other, as you might be able to help answer your peers' questions. When you reach out by email, please:

- include the course code (POL205) in the email subject heading;
- write from your University of Toronto email account or through the Quercus email function;
- treat emails as a professional form of communication—I anticipate you'll use proper grammar, sentences, and formal greetings and sign-offs; you can expect the same from me.

Writing and Research Support: Research and written communication are core aspects of this course. As second-year students, I anticipate you are still learning how to write analytical research papers and engage in scholarly research; I encourage you to make use of the resources available in these areas, for instance, at the Writing Centres and UofT Libraries—e.g., <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres>. These centres have been operating online and remain available to students in virtual forms.

Exceptions and Assistance: The University has many resources to help students who need assistance, including: Accessibility Services, Students for Barrier-free Access, the Hart House Accessibility Fund, financial assistance, library resources, academic resources, health and counseling services, and peer mentoring systems. The University also is committed to providing allowances for religious observances. If you anticipate needing help with your coursework for academic and/or personal reasons, or you encounter unexpected challenges or crises during the term, please seek the support you need. This may include challenges with physical and mental health, securing food or housing, dealing with loss and grief, parenting or elder care or other care-giving, and more. If you do not know the options, do not hesitate to ask. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, even if you have not yet gone through all the official channels, it is best to let me know right away that you are seeking assistance and may need accommodations (you do not need to disclose the details of your situation to me).

I know that these services are usually overtaxed, and even more so at the present moment. I also recognize it can be difficult to secure support when you are facing acute or chronic crisis conditions. If there are ways we can amend course requirements to help you learn and succeed in this course, I am open to discussions (without requiring specific details of your situation)—please try to contact me in advance to let me know you require or would benefit from accommodations, and we can see what might be possible. (Please note that I'm also managing an unusual teaching situation, and this is a large class; I will do my best—but am still learning!)

A few helpful resources:

- Accessibility Services: <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>
- Health & Wellness: <http://healthandwellness.utoronto.ca/>
- Writing centres: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres>

- Religious accommodations: <http://uoft.me/religiousaccommodation>
- Positive space (LGBTQ+ resources): <http://positivespace.utoronto.ca>

Academic integrity: Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously, seeing these as serious academic offenses.

The seriousness of academic integrity really cannot be stressed enough. When you use ideas, evidence, or direct words from another scholar, you must cite that scholar. This is about giving credit where it is due, and also about helping readers of our work find out how our ideas were developed and where we found evidence to support our claims.

If you use someone else's words, these must be in quotation marks, with the page number indicated. If you use someone else's data, the citation must also include the page number for that information. If you use someone else's ideas, summarized or paraphrased in your own words, you must cite that source. Changing a few words, or substituting synonyms is not the same as paraphrasing: you must substantially change the way in which an idea is expressed. Please consult the library resources and seek help from the librarians and/or writing centres when working on your assignments and papers.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources.

- <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>
- <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources>
- <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>

Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement
- Using someone else's words without using quotation marks
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor (this includes copying sections from an assignment for another course)
- Making up sources or facts
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test
- Falsifying or altering institutional documents, grades, or documents required by UofT

In this course, we may use the online system Turnitin for term papers: *Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.*

Course Schedule

Please note: this is a provisional syllabus and still subject to amendment.

PART I:
WHAT IS—AND ARE WE REALLY IN—THE ANTHROPOCENE?

Week 1. Introduction: International Relations in unsteady times

How do we conceptualize the changes taking place on our planet? What do they mean for global affairs? In this introductory week, we consider how planetary boundaries are challenging our approaches to international relations, and what this means for politics in a time of global change. We consider how mainstream IR research has sidelined environmental research and examine why this needs to change, positioning different understandings of the Anthropocene (as colonialism, capitalism, industrialization, etc.) at the centre of our analysis.

Readings:

- Lovbrand, Eva, Malin Mobjork, and Rickard Soder. 2020. The Anthropocene and the geo-political imagination: Re-writing Earth as political space. *Earth System Governance*, 4: 100051.

Watch/listen:

- Watch short trailer for the film *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* by Jennifer Baichwal, Edward Burtynsky, and Nicholas De Pencier: <https://www.edwardburtynsky.com/projects/the-anthropocene-project> (2:08 min)
- Listen to podcast from the Art Gallery of Ontario on the *Anthropocene Project* with Baichwal, Burtynsky, and De Pencier: <https://soundcloud.com/agotoronto/2018-anthropocene-podcast> (38:40 min)

Optional reading:

- Malhi, Yadvinder. 2017. The concept of the Anthropocene. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 42: 77-104.

Week 2. What defines the Anthropocene? Reorienting international politics

The end of nature? The end of the world? The end of *whose* world? We return to the question of what defines the Anthropocene, and also investigate the meaning of nature, and what different answers might mean for different people and different futures. We consider the ways in which the study of IR allows us to think about an interconnected planet, but also requires us to consider the unequal power relations and local contexts that make up the “global.”

Readings:

- Wapner, Paul. 2014. The changing nature of nature: Environmental politics in the Anthropocene. *Global Environmental Politics*, 14(4): 36-54.
- Mitchell, Audra, and Aadita Chaudhury. 2020. Worlding beyond ‘the’ ‘end’ of ‘the world’: White apocalyptic visions and BIPOC futurisms. *International Relations*, 1-24.

Optional listening:

- “The coming zombie apocalypse” from *CBC’s Ideas* (53:59 min).

Week 3. Organizing IR: Security, intl organizations, and political economy

This week, we turn to different ways of organizing the study of International Relations to address questions of interconnected social and ecological change. We consider in particular the subfields of IR—security, international organizations, and political economy—and relate them to other ways of assessing relationships in the international sphere, including, among others: interests, institutions, and ideas; knowledge, rules, and accumulation; and realism, liberalism, and constructivism. We also consider alternative ways of understanding global relations, with attention to multiple physical and temporal scales and disrupting anthropocentric worldviews.

Readings:

- O’Neill, Kate. 2016. Institutional politics and reform. In *New Earth Politics: Essays from the Anthropocene*, Simon Nicholson and Sikina Jinnah (eds), MIT Press.
- Biermann, Frank, and Eva Lövbrand. 2019. Chapter 1: Encountering the “Anthropocene”: Setting the scene. In *Anthropocene Encounters: New Directions in Green Political Thinking*, Frank Biermann and Eva Lövbrand (eds), Cambridge University Press.

Optional watching/listening:

- Short video by Profs. Joseph Grieco, G. John Ikenberry, and Michael Mastanduno on theories of IR: “Why are there so many theories of International Relations?” – this may be very familiar to some of you, but is a good reminder of some of the mainstream approaches to IR: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKYB24k0anQ>

Week 4. Power, environment, and the contemporary world: Intersecting inequalities

Contemporary power relations in the global system—e.g., which countries are industrialized and have military power—have long and often convoluted histories. These are bound up in physical resources and material production. This week, with readings on the complex interactions of physical and economic systems across borders over time, we investigate how IR perspectives can uncover otherwise-obscure relationships in the international system.

Readings:

- Cowen, Deborah. 2019. Following the infrastructures of empire: Notes on cities, settler colonialism, and method. *Urban Geography*, DOI: 10.1080/02723638.2019.1677990

Listen:

- Diebert, Ron. 2020. Episode 5: Want to help save the planet? Hang onto your old smartphone. From *Reset: Reclaiming the internet for civil society*, the 2020 CBC Massey Lectures, <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/want-to-help-save-the-planet-hang-onto-your-old-smartphone-1.5799102>. (Other Massey Lecture episodes by Dr. Diebert available here: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/reset-reclaiming-the-internet-for-civil-society-1.5795345>).

Optional reading:

- LeBaron, Genevieve, Daniel Mügge, Jacqueline Best, and Colin Hay. 2020. Blind spots in IPE: Marginalized perspectives and neglected trends in contemporary capitalism. *Review of International Political Economy*, DOI: 10.1080/09692290.2020.1830835.

PART II: HOW DO TRANSNATIONAL POLITICS SHAPE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE (AND VICE-VERSA)?

Week 5. Challenges to territorial sovereignty: Climate change and borders

This week, we turn to the climate emergency and its consequences for international security. Through an examination of the consequences of climate change on human migration and displacement—including the question of “climate refugees”—we investigate how international relations are shaped by environmental conditions and responses to changes in ecological systems.

Readings:

- Dalby, Simon. 2020. Chapter 4: Territory, security, mobility (p.55-70) and Chapter 5: Bordering sustainability (p.71-93). In *Anthropocene geopolitics: Globalization, security, sustainability*, University of Ottawa Press.

Listen:

- IOM Migration, Environment and Climate Change podcast, “Do climate change refugees exist?": <https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/podcast-do-climate-refugees-exist> (13:17 min; episode from 2011)

Week 6. Challenges to state-based governance: Corporations and food systems

We investigate food this week, with attention to finance and corporate power in shaping food security and sovereignty. From private authority to international financial institutions, we examine the production of and access to food—and what this means for both people and ecosystems.

Readings:

- Clapp, Jennifer, and William G. Moseley. 2020. This food crisis is different: COVID-19 and the fragility of the neoliberal food security order. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 1-25, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2020.1823838>

Watch and read:

- Short video about food price spikes and global food systems by Evan Fraser (University of Guelph) in *The Guardian*: <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/food-blog/10-things-need-to-know-global-food-system> (12:21 min), and a short written summary of the key points.

Optional reading:

- Clapp, Jennifer, and Caitlin Scott. 2018. Introduction: The global environmental politics of food. *Global Environmental Politics*, 18(2): 1-11.

READING WEEK – NO CLASS

Week 7. Challenges to international organizations: Overfishing and the high seas

We turn this week from food systems in general to fisheries in particular, with consideration of governance in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. We consider conventional and

“sustainable” fisheries, and we assess varying private and intergovernmental approaches to addressing unsustainable extraction, species losses in oceans, and overfishing.

Readings:

- Campling, Liam, and Elizabeth Havice. 2018. The global environmental politics and political economy of seafood systems. *Global Environmental Politics*, 18(2): 72-92.

Watch and read:

- Short video of Rashid Sumaila (UBC) on high seas and fisheries management: <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/qa-to-save-fish-ban-high-seas-fishing-ubc-professor-suggests> (1:34 min), and a transcript of a brief interview with Dr. Sumaila

Optional reading:

- Green, Jessica, and Bryce Rudyk. 2020. Closing the high seas: A club approach. *Marine Policy*, 115: 103855.

Week 8. Challenges to limitless growth: Waste and the problem of plastics

The accumulation of wealth by some in the global economy has long been predicated on externalizing the environmental and social costs of increasing production and consumption. However, planetary systems are reaching their limits of absorbing these costs, and marginalized communities are pushing back against exploitation. Through a look at waste—including in relation to plastics and climate change—we examine the economic systems that underpin contemporary international relations, as well as alternative models for governance and exchange. We consider data visualization tools and multimedia approaches for identifying and assessing these interconnected dynamics.

Readings:

- Worm, Boris, Heike K. Lotze, Isabelle Jubinville, Chris Wilcox, and Jenna Jambeck. 2017. Plastic as a persistent marine pollutant. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 42: 1-26.

Listen:

- Episode 4 of the *Plastisphere Podcast*, “Plastic vs. the climate,” <https://anjakrieger.com/plastisphere/>

Optional reading:

- O’Neill, Kate, Erika Weinthal, and Patrick Hunnicutt. 2017. Seeing complexity: Visualization tools in global environmental politics and governance. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 7: 490-506.

Week 9. Challenges to the international system: Re-imagining frontiers

This week, we consider the role that “frontiers” have played in international affairs, especially in resource extraction processes. With attention to regions that defy national claims (e.g., Antarctica, the deep seabed), we continue with last week’s consideration of how expansionary ideas are at odds with a bounded planet, and further interrogate the intersecting challenges of extraction, climate change, biodiversity loss, and sovereignty claims.

Readings:

- Leane, Elizabeth, and Jeffrey McGee. 2020. Chapter 1: Anthropocene Antarctica: Approaches, issues and debates (pp. 1-14). In *Anthropocene Antarctica: Perspectives from the humanities, law and social sciences*, Elizabeth Leane and Jeffrey McGee (eds), Routledge.

Listen:

- Sustainable Asia podcast, “Mining the deep: Is it worth sacrificing the ocean floor?”: <https://chinadialogueocean.net/11492-deep-seabed-ocean-floor-podcast/> (25:13 min; transcript available on the webpage)

Optional reading and listening:

- Zalik, Anna. 2018. Mining the seabed, enclosing the Area: Ocean grabbing, proprietary knowledge, and the geopolitics of the extractive frontier beyond national jurisdiction. *International Social Science Journal*, 68(229-230): 343-359.
- Sweaty Penguin podcast, “Rare earth minerals”: <https://thesweatypenguin.com/podcast/6-rare-earth-minerals/> (50:20 min) – helpful background on, and terrestrial development of, rare earth elements and minerals.

Week 10. Technology, governance, and the planet

This week, we consider how new technological developments—from gene editing to GIS tracking to automated marketing—are reshaping systems of production, consumption, trade, and extraction around the world. These have the potential to identify and address environmental damage in creative, globally interconnected ways, but can also reinforce and accelerate existing patterns of social and ecological harm.

Readings:

- Dauvergne, Peter. 2020. Is artificial intelligence greening global supply chains? Exposing the political economy of environmental costs. *Review of International Political Economy*, DOI: 10.1080/09692290.2020.1814381.

Watch:

- Short video on science, technology, and climate change by Sheila Jasanoff (Harvard U): <https://climatechange.environment.harvard.edu/sheila-jasanoff> (5:24 min)

Optional reading:

- Nicholson, Simon, and Jesse L. Reynolds. 2020. Taking technology seriously: Introduction to the special issue on new technologies and global environmental politics. *Global Environmental Politics*, 20(3): 1-8.

PART III: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Week 11. Transformative global governance: Experiments, pathways, and accountability

Following our assessment of the challenges facing international actors and systems, this week we turn to strategies for rearranging global governance systems and institutions at multiple levels. We consider how processes of experimentation and strategies to hold governing actors to account might help transform social and environmental outcomes—though, as always, we address some of the challenges and barriers to these transformations.

Readings:

- Bernstein, Steven, and Matthew Hoffmann. 2018. Chapter 14: Decarbonisation: The politics of transformation (pp. 248-265). In *Governing Climate Change: Polycentricity in Action?*, Andrew Jordan, Dave Huitema, Harro van Asselt, and Johanna Forster (eds), Cambridge University Press.

Read and watch – two examples of experimental urban governance:

- *Love letters to trees*: The city of Melbourne started a service for residents to email municipal staff about particular trees in the city, mainly for maintenance purposes. They started getting love letters and silly notes to the trees in the city: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-12/people-are-emailing-trees/10468964?nw=0> (photographs and text)
- *Urban tinkering in Kisumu*: This is a short video about an “urban tinkering” project ICLEI-Africa is working on in Kisumu, Kenya. <https://cbc.iclei.org/applying-urban-tinkering-principles-in-kisumu-a-walking-workshop-along-auji-river/> (video: 2:35min; note, the security concerns in urban regions include violence against girls—these are not depicted, but are mentioned)

Optional reading:

- Kramarz, Teresa, and Susan Park. 2016. Accountability in global environmental governance: A meaningful tool for action? *Global Environmental Politics*, 16(2): 1-21.

Week 12. In pursuit of global justice: Rethinking IR

In our last week, we turn back to the big questions of justice, creativity, and imagination in global politics, with attention to those who are most marginalized in the current international system. We consider perspectives on justice and new ecological relationships that might inform new ways forward in the world, and we also investigate the role of art, literature, and metaphor in helping us think through global challenges and change.

Readings:

- Kashwan, Prakash, Frank Biermann, Aarti Gupta, and Chuks Okereke. 2020. Planetary justice: Prioritizing the poor in earth system governance. *Earth System Governance*, 41: 293-319.
- Johnson, Elizabeth, Harlan Morehouse, Simon Dalby, Jessi Lehman, Sara Nelson, Rory Rowan, Stephanie Wakefield, and Kathryn Yusoff. 2014. After the Anthropocene: Politics and geographic inquiry for a new epoch. *Progress in Human Geography*, 38(3): 439-456.

Watch:

- Rising Tides: The Crossroads Project (film: 1hr 11min): <https://www.novaslc.org/crossroads> (“The Crossroads Project fuses original music with art, imagery, and science to create live performance experiences that address global sustainability and provide a path toward meaningful response.”)

Optional reading:

- Gan, Elaine, Nils Bubandt, Anna L. Tsing, and Heather A. Swanson. 2017. Haunted landscapes of the Anthropocene. In *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet*, Anna Tsing, Heather Swanson, Elaine Gan, and Nils Bubandt (eds), University of Minnesota Press.