

## **IR x67: Political Economy of Climate Change**

London School of Economics  
Winter 2025

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Office hours: Mondays, 3:10–5:10 pm, CBG 9.03

Lectures: Mondays, 2–3 pm, PAN G.01

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Why has climate change proven to be such a challenging issue for global governance? How will climate disruptions and decarbonization transform the global economy and politics? Which groups will win or lose from these transitions, and how are they shaping climate governance today? This course addresses these questions in a research-focused survey of the political economy of climate change. We explore cutting-edge scholarship on climate politics and critically analyze various theoretical concepts and models, assess the (dis)advantages of varied empirical approaches, and draw links to core debates in international political economy. Students gain familiarity with the frontier of climate politics scholarship, learn how to constructively critique academic work, and develop skills in designing and executing rigorous political economy research.

The course emphasizes close reads of political science and economics scholarship, with special attention paid to theory development, empirical methods, and causal inference. Prior training in quantitative analysis is neither assumed nor necessary, but students should be ready to explore these methods in class. The course material is meant to challenge, not intimidate. The familiarity students gain with research approaches during the term is valuable for many private sector, non-profit, policy, and academic careers.

Weekly lectures offer a broad overview of various topics. In discussion sections, we do deep dives into assigned readings and discuss their implications for climate politics. Students should attend their section having critically read the assigned work, ready to assess the readings' arguments, empirical designs, and interconnections. Is an author's reasoning logically sound? What happens if we adjust some theoretical assumptions? Do the empirics support the theory? What research ideas are sparked by a reading?

### Assessment

MSc students are primarily assessed on the basis of a proposal for an original piece of climate politics research, due in the Spring Term (max 3,000 words; 75% of the final mark). The proposal should consist of a research question, theory and hypotheses, and an empirical strategy for evaluating those hypotheses. I strongly encourage students to start thinking about this early, and to meet with me throughout the term to discuss ideas for the proposal. The formative assignment is a one-page outline of planned research proposals, due 7 March 2025. Towards the end of the course, students will give short presentations of their proposal in section (5%). The remainder of MSc students' final mark is based on the quality of their participation (15%) and leadership of the discussion of 1–2 assigned readings in section (5%).

BSc students are primarily assessed on the basis of an essay about course material, due in the Spring Term (max 2,500 words; 80% of the final mark). The prompt for the essay will be circulated early in the Winter Term. I strongly encourage students to meet with me in office hours to discuss ideas for the essay. The formative assignment is a one-page outline of the essay, due 7 March 2025. The remainder of BSc students' final mark is based on the quality of their participation (15%) and leadership of the discussion of 1–2 assigned readings in section (5%).

Discussion leaders for a given section should come prepared to give 3–5 minutes of comments about a reading, which should include a brief summary of the reading and, more importantly, a critical assessment of its strengths, weaknesses, and connections to other work or broader course themes. For tips on how to do this well, see Blattman, “The discussant’s art” (<https://chrisblattman.com/blog/2010/02/22/the-discussants-art/>), and Humphreys, “How to critique” (<https://macartan.github.io/teaching/how-to-critique>).

### Academic Integrity

All work submitted for this course must be your own and will be checked with Turnitin. If you are concerned about being able to complete an assignment well or on time, please speak with me as soon as possible. Plagiarism can come back to haunt you many years later. Material in written work drawn from elsewhere must be properly quoted where appropriated and cited using a common style for the social sciences.

### Generative AI

This course permits use of generative AI (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) for all assignments. It does *not* permit copying and pasting text from AI services, even if that text is quoted and cited.

You should see AI as a tool for enhancing your learning. You may not use it as a substitute for doing your own work. You can use AI to help interpret readings, for example, but you must still do the readings yourself. You can use AI to review your writing, but the work you submit must be written by you and you alone; copying or paraphrasing AI output will be treated as plagiarism and penalized accordingly.

Put simply, *you should not use AI to avoid doing work for this course*. This is in your short- and long-term interest. In the short term, AI interpretations of academic work, proposals of research ideas, composition of essays, etc. are not of high quality (and are often easy to detect). Even if you happen to avoid detection, marks for AI-generated content will be worse than what you could earn by doing your own work. Over the long term, you are putting yourself at a serious professional disadvantage if you forgo learning opportunities in favor of typing things into a chatbot.

For written assignments in this course, you are required to include a short description of how you used AI to support your work. Details on this will be supplied in lecture.

Asterisk \* denotes optional reading for BSc students. Reading list subject to change.

## **20 January      Environment and Development**

1. EGAP Methods Guides ([methods.egap.org/guides.html](https://methods.egap.org/guides.html)). Read at least:
  - a. “10 Things to Know About Reading a Regression Table” (<https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-reading-a-regression-table/>).
  - b. “10 Things to Know About Causal Inference” (<https://egap.org/resource/10-things-to-know-about-causal-inference/>).
  - c. “10 Strategies for Figuring Out if X Caused Y” (<https://egap.org/resource/10-strategies-for-figuring-out-if-x-caused-y/>).
2. \*Sokoloff and Engerman 2000, “History Lessons: Institutions, Factor Endowments, and Paths of Development in the New World,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.
3. Sachs 2001, “Tropical Underdevelopment,” NBER Working Paper.
4. Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2002, “Reversal of Fortune: Geography and Institutions in the Making of the World Income Distribution,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

## **27 January      Carbon Economies**

1. Ramsay 2011, “Revisiting the Resource Curse: Natural Disasters, the Price of Oil, and Democracy,” *International Organization*.
2. Ross 2008, “Oil, Islam, and Women,” *American Political Science Review*.
3. \*Groh and Rothschild 2012, “Oil, Islam, Women, and Geography: A Comment on Ross (2008),” *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*.
4. Sances and You 2022, “Voters and Donors: The Unequal Political Consequences of Fracking,” *Journal of Politics*.

## **3 February      Evolution of Climate Governance**

1. Sprinz and Vaahutoranta 1994, “The Interest-Based Explanation of International Environmental Policy,” *International Organization*.
2. Falkner 2016, “The Paris Agreement and the New Logic of International Climate Politics,” *International Affairs*.
3. Tingley and Tomz 2022, “The Effects of Naming and Shaming on Public Support for Compliance with International Agreements: An Experimental Analysis of the Paris Agreement,” *International Organization*.
4. \*Allan and Nahm 2024, “Strategies of Green Industrial Policy: How States Position Firms in Global Supply Chains,” *American Political Science Review*.

## **10 February      Collective Action**

1. Barrett 2003, *Environment and Statecraft: The Strategy of Environmental Treaty-Making*, Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 3.
2. \*Nordhaus 2015, “Climate Clubs: Overcoming Free-Riding in International Climate Policy,” *American Economic Review*. Sections I, III–V, VII, VIII.
3. Aklin and Mildenberger 2020, “Prisoners of the Wrong Dilemma: Why Distributive Conflict, Not Collective Action, Characterizes the Politics of Climate Change,” *Global Environmental Politics*.

4. Kennard and Schnakenberg 2023, “Comment: Global Climate Policy and Collective Action,” *Global Environmental Politics*.
5. Aklin and Mildenberger 2023, “Reply: The Persistent Absence of Empirical Evidence for Free-Riding in Global Climate Politics,” *Global Environmental Politics*.

### **17 February      Firms and Industry**

1. Colgan, Green, and Hale 2021, “Asset Revaluation and the Existential Politics of Climate Change,” *International Organization*.
2. \*Kennard 2020, “The Enemy of My Enemy: When Firms Support Climate Change Regulation,” *International Organization*.
3. Cory, Lerner, and Osgood 2021, “Supply Chain Linkages and the Extended Carbon Coalition,” *American Journal of Political Science*.
4. Singh, Thrall, and Zucker 2025, “Greener Pastures? A Labor Market Theory of Climate Governance,” manuscript.

### **3 March              Elections**

1. \*List and Sturm 2006, “How Elections Matter: Theory and Evidence from Environmental Policy,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
2. Sanford 2023, “Democratization, Elections, and Public Goods: The Evidence from Deforestation,” *American Journal of Political Science*.
3. Colantone et al. 2024, “The Political Consequences of Green Policies: Evidence from Italy,” *American Political Science Review*.
4. Pereira et al. 2024, “Encouraging Politicians to Act on Climate: A Field Experiment with Local Officials in Six Countries,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

\*\*Formative assignment due 7 March by Moodle (1 page single spaced).

### **10 March           Workers and Consumers**

1. Gaikwad, Genovese, and Tingley 2022, “Creating Climate Coalitions: Mass Preferences for Compensating Vulnerability in the World’s Two Largest Democracies,” *American Political Science Review*.
2. Bolet, Green, and González-Eguino 2024, “How to Get Coal Country to Vote for Climate Policy: The Effect of a ‘Just Transition Agreement’ on Spanish Election Results,” *American Political Science Review*.
3. Bush and Clayton 2023, “Facing Change: Gender and Climate Change Attitudes Worldwide,” *American Political Science Review*.
4. \*Clark, Khoban, and Zucker 2024, “Breadwinner Backlash: The Gendered Effects of Industrial Decline,” manuscript.
5. \*Brulé 2023, “Climate Shocks and Gendered Political Transformation: How Crises Alter Women’s Political Representation,” *Politics & Gender*.

### **17 March           Bureaucrats**

1. Ding 2020, “Performative Governance,” *World Politics*.

2. Dipoppa and Gulzar 2024, “Bureaucrat Incentives Reduce Crop Burning and Child Mortality in South Asia,” *Nature*.
3. \*Buntaine et al. 2024, “Does the Squeaky Wheel Get More Grease? The Direct and Indirect Effects of Citizen Participation on Environmental Governance in China,” *American Economic Review*.
4. Clark and Zucker 2024, “Climate Cascades: IOs and the Prioritization of Climate Action,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

## **24 March      Finance and Litigation**

1. Glennerster and Jayachandran 2023, “Think Globally, Act Globally: Opportunities to Mitigate Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Low- and Middle-Income Countries,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*.
2. Bermeo 2018, *Targeted Development*, Oxford University Press. Chapter 6.
3. \*Graham and Serdaru 2020, “Power, Control, and the Logic of Substitution in Institutional Design: The Case of International Climate Finance,” *International Organization*.
4. Voeten 2024, “Do Domestic Climate Rulings Make Climate Commitments More Credible? Evidence from Stock Market Returns,” *Journal of Politics*.

## **31 March      Climate Shocks**

1. Healy and Malhotra 2009, “Myopic Voters and Natural Disaster Policy,” *American Political Science Review*.
2. \*Arias and Blair 2024, “In the Eye of the Storm: Hurricanes and Climate Migration Attitudes,” *American Political Science Review*.
3. Hilbig and Riaz 2024, “Natural Disasters and Green Party Support,” *Journal of Politics*.
4. Gazmararian and Milner 2024, “Political Cleavages and Changing Exposure to Global Warming,” *Comparative Political Studies*.

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## **Further reading:**

- Allan 2017, “Producing the Climate,” *International Organization*.
- Arias and Blair 2022, “Changing Tides,” *Journal of Politics*.
- Battaglini and Harstad 2020, “The Political Economy of Weak Treaties,” *Journal of Political Economy*.
- Batten, Sowerbutts, and Tanaka 2016, “Let’s Talk About the Weather,” Bank of England Working Paper 603.
- Bättig and Bernauer 2009, “National Institutions and Global Public Goods,” *International Organization*.
- Bayer 2023, “Foreignness as an Asset,” *Journal of Politics*.
- Bechtel, Genovese, and Scheve 2019, “Interests, Norms, and Support for the Provision of Global Public Goods,” *British Journal of Political Science*.
- Bechtel and Scheve 2013, “Mass Support for Global Climate Agreements Depends on Institutional Design,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

- Beiser-McGrath and Bernauer 2019, “Commitment Failures Are Unlikely to Undermine Public Support for the Paris Agreement,” *Nature Climate Change*.
- Bhavnani and Lacina 2015, “The Effects of Weather-Induced Migration on Sons of the Soil Riots in India,” *World Politics*.
- Breetz, Mildener, and Stokes 2018, “The Political Logics of Clean Energy Transitions,” *Business & Politics*.
- Brooks and Kurtz 2016, “Oil and Democracy,” *International Organization*.
- Brooks and Kurtz 2022, “Oil ‘Rents’ and Political Development,” *Comparative Political Studies*.
- Buntaine and Prather 2018, “Preferences for Domestic Action Over International Transfers in Global Climate Policy,” *Journal of Experimental Political Science*.
- Carattini et al. 2022, “Mandatory Disclosure Is Key to Address Climate Risks,” *Science*.
- Carleton and Hsiang 2016, “Social and Economic Impacts of Climate,” *Science*.
- Carleton et al. 2022, “Valuing the Global Mortality Consequences of Climate Change Accounting for Adaptation Costs and Benefits,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.
- Chenet, RyanCollins, and van Lerven 2021, “Finance, Climate Change, and Radical Uncertainty,” *Ecological Economics*.
- Colgan and Hinthorn 2023, “International Energy Politics in an Age of Climate Change,” *Annual Review of Political Science*.
- Colgan, Keohane, and Van de Graaf, “Punctuated Equilibrium in the Energy Regime Complex,” *Review of International Organizations*.
- Cooper, Kim, and Urpelainen 2018, “The Broad Impact of a Narrow Conflict,” *Journal of Politics*.
- Cremaschi and Stanig 2024, “Voting and Climate Change: How an Extreme Weather Event Increased Support for a Radical-Right Incumbent in Italy,” *Journal of Politics*.
- de Sherbinin 2020, “Are ‘Climate Migrants’ Real?,” Perry World House.
- Dell, Jones, and Olken 2012, “Temperature Shocks and Economic Growth,” *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*.
- Dellmuth and Gustafsson 2021, “Global Adaptation Governance,” *Climate Policy*.
- Deyris 2023, “Too Green to Be True?,” *New Political Economy*.
- Dolšák and Prakash 2022, “Three Faces of Climate Justice,” *Annual Review of Political Science*.
- Douenne and Fabre 2022, “Yellow Vests, Pessimistic Beliefs, and Carbon Tax Aversion,” *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*.
- Falkner 2021, *Environmentalism and Global International Society*, Cambridge University Press.
- Finnegan 2022, “Institutions, Climate Change, and the Foundations of Long-Term Policymaking,” *Comparative Political Studies*.
- Gazmararian and Tingley 2023, *Uncertain Futures*, Cambridge University Press.
- Goldstein et al. 2019, “The Private Sector’s Climate Change Risk and Adaptation Blind Spots,” *Nature Climate Change*.
- Green 2014, *Rethinking Private Authority*, Princeton University Press.
- Green 2021, “Does Carbon Pricing Reduce Emissions?,” *Environmental Research Letters*.
- Green et al. 2021, “Transition, Hedge, or Resist?,” *Review of International Political Economy*.
- Greenstone and Jack 2015, “Envirodevonomics,” *Journal of Economic Literature*.

Haas 1992, "Banning Chlorofluorocarbons," *International Organization*.

Hadden 2015, *Networks in Contention*, Cambridge University Press.

Hai and Perlman 2022, "Extreme Weather Events and the Politicization of Climate Change Attribution," *Science Advances*.

Harding et al. 2024, "Buying a Blind Eye," *American Political Science Review*.

Harstad 2016, "The Dynamics of Climate Agreements," *Journal of the European Economic Association*.

Hazlett and Mildenberger 2020, "Wildfire Exposure Increases Pro-Environment Voting within Democratic but Not Republican Areas," *American Political Science Review*.

Hochstetler and Viola 2012, "Brazil and the Politics of Climate Change," *Environmental Politics*.

Hovi, Sprinz, and Underdal 2009, "Implementing Long-Term Climate Policy," *Global Environmental Politics*.

Hsiang and Sobel 2016, "Potentially Extreme Population Displacement and Concentration in the Tropics Under Non-Extreme Warming," *Scientific Reports*.

Kala, Balboni, and Bhogale, "Climate Adaptation," VoxDevLit.

Keohane and Victor 2011, "The Regime Complex for Climate Change," *Perspectives on Politics*.

Keohane and Victor 2013, "The Transnational Politics of Energy," *Daedalus*.

Mach et al. 2019, "Climate as a Risk Factor for Armed Conflict," *Nature*.

Mahdavi, Martinez-Alvarez, and Ross 2022, "Why Do Governments Tax or Subsidize Fossil Fuels?," *Journal of Politics*.

Mares, Scheve, and Toenshoff 2025, "Compensation, Beliefs in State Effectiveness, and Support for the Energy Transition," *Comparative Political Studies*.

McAllister and Schnakenberg 2022, "Designing the Optimal International Climate Agreement with Variability in Commitments," *International Organization*.

McLean 2018, *Saudi America*, Columbia Global Reports.

Meckling and Nahm 2022, "Strategic State Capacity," *Comparative Political Studies*.

Meckling et al. 2015, "Winning Coalitions for Climate Policy," *Science*.

Mildenberger 2020, *Carbon Captured*, MIT Press.

Mitchell 2009, "Carbon Democracy," *Economy and Society*.

Morin and Jinnah 2018, "The Untapped Potential of Preferential Trade Agreements for Climate Governance," *Global Environmental Politics*.

Nahm 2019, "The Energy Politics of China," in the *Oxford Handbook of Energy Politics*, Oxford University Press.

Pahontu 2024, "The Democrat Disaster: Hurricane Exposure, Risk Aversion and Insurance Demand," *Journal of Politics*.

Prakash and Potoski 2006, "Racing to the Bottom?," *American Journal of Political Science*.

Quorning 2023, "The 'Climate Shift' in Central Banks," *Review of International Political Economy*.

Ricke et al. 2018, "Country-Level Social Cost of Carbon," *Nature Climate Change*.

Rodrik, Subramanian, and Trebbi 2004, "Institutions Rule," *Journal of Economic Growth*.

Ross 2012, *The Oil Curse*, Princeton University Press.

- Ross 2015, “What Have We Learned about the Natural Resource Curse?,” *Annual Review of Political Science*.
- Sabel and Victor 2022, *Fixing the Climate*, Princeton University Press.
- Sachs 2003, “Institutions Don’t Rule,” NBER Working Paper 9490.
- Schmalensee and Stavins 2017, “Lessons Learned from Three Decades of Experience with Cap and Trade,” *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*.
- Sivaram 2018, *Taming the Sun*, MIT Press.
- Stern 2021, “15 years on from the Stern Review,” lecture.
- Stokes 2016, “Electoral Backlash against Climate Policy: A Natural Experiment on Retrospective Voting and Local Resistance to Public Policy,” *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Stokes 2020, *Short Circuiting Policy*, Oxford University Press.
- Tingley and Tomz 2014, “Conditional Cooperation and Climate Change,” *Comparative Political Studies*.
- Tooze 2019, “Why Central Banks Need to Step Up on Global Warming,” *Foreign Policy*.
- Victor 2011, *Global Warming Gridlock*, Cambridge University Press.
- Voeten 2025, “The Energy Transition and Support for the Radical Right: Evidence from the Netherlands,” *Comparative Political Studies*.
- Xu 2024, “‘Bureaucratic Packing’ in the Brazilian Amazon: How Political Competition Drives Deforestation,” *Journal of Politics*.
- Yergin 2009, *The Prize*, Free Press.
- Zucker 2022, “Group Ties amid Industrial Change,” *World Politics*.
- Zucker 2025, “Identity, Industry, and Perceptions of Climate Futures,” *Journal of Politics*.