

# Introduction to Environment and Climate Law for Pacific Lawyers and Judges



**InforMEA**  
UNITED NATIONS INFORMATION PORTAL ON  
MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS



## Course Syllabus

### Learning Objectives

This course focuses on the environmental challenges affecting the Pacific region, and the legal frameworks in place to safeguard the environment.

At the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Describe environmental challenges affecting Pacific islands;
2. Recognize the international, regional, and national legal frameworks and principles of environmental law and climate law;
3. Outline the role of the courts;
4. Understand the most common legal tools of environmental law and its enforcement.

### Content & Duration

This online course is comprised of 10 lessons, which provide links for reference and further reading. The lessons are organized in interactive modules that combine course theory with exercises and interactions that will facilitate the learning process. The core content is complemented with additional materials, such as videos, publications, and external websites.

It will take you approximately 5 hours to complete the course, excluding additional materials. This is a self-paced course that allows you to manage your time as you wish. You can navigate the lessons at your convenience and retake them whenever you wish.

### Completion Certificate

Take the quiz at the end of the course to assess your learning progress. You are required to answer at least 80% of the assessment questions correctly in order to obtain a course certificate.

Before obtaining the certificate you also need to submit the course survey (your feedback). This survey helps us to improve the course, develop new courses and assess if you are achieving your learning objectives.

# Course Outline & Content

**Lesson 1: Contemporary Environmental Challenges Affecting Pacific Islands**  
SIDS in the Pacific, climate change, pollution and waste management, health of the oceans, illegal trade in wildlife and timber products, overfishing and IUU fishing, extractive industries

**Lesson 2: International environmental law, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)**

Introduction, Sources of International Environmental law, Introduction to MEAs

**Lesson 3: International Environmental Law Principles and Concepts**

Overview of IEL Principles, such as Precautionary Principle, Polluter Pays, Intra-Generational Equity, and others.

**Lesson 4: Environmental Rights**

Linkages between human rights and the environment, the growing legal recognition of environmental rights, substantive and procedural.

**Lesson 5: Climate Change Litigation**

Introduction to international climate law (UNFCCC) and key concepts; climate law and litigation in Pacific Island countries.

**Lesson 6: Common Legal Tools for Environmental Protection**

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), protected areas, prohibiting and restricting activities and substances, licensing and permits.

**Lesson 7: National Environmental Legal Frameworks**

Environmental Legal Framework in Fiji and Papua New Guinea (PNG),

**Lesson 8: The Role of the Judiciary in Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development**

The role of judges and lawyers in environmental law, challenges in judging environmental disputes, interpreting the law, environmental courts and tribunals and alternative environmental dispute resolution

**Lesson 9: Evidence in Environmental Cases**

General evidence in environmental cases, authenticating technical proof, managing and evaluating technical, scientific and expert evidence

**Lesson 10: Remedies and Enforcement**

Types of remedies, calculation of compensation for environmental damage