MSc in Water and Sustainable Development

MODULE

Policy analysis

Complex problems in the fields of water and environmental policy demand a good understanding of the various natural system, policy and actor dimensions. Skills to apply and critical reflect on analytical methods and tools are needed for improved policy development. Nevertheless, policies regularly do not fully achieve set objectives, have unintended outcomes and/or are contested by other actors. It is therefore essential to understand processes of formulating, implementing and evaluating policies and develop skills to critically design policy analysis processes, whereby science and analysis can be used to further policy debates and decisions. This module provides skills to conduct a systematic exploratory analysis of complex problems in the fields of water and environmental policy, in a multi-actor context. The module will also provide skills for comprehensive and critical analysis of the different perspectives, roles and 'critical theory' of policy problem and processes. The knowledge gained is used to prepare an issue paper. The shared part of the module presents, first, the concepts, applications and limitations of policy analyses within a multi-actor process, describes the methodological tools used in policy analysis design, and critically reflects on policy problems and processes. The students apply these concepts and approaches in case studies related to their thematic track.

In the Water Hazards, Risks and Climate track e.g. climate adaptation, resilience.

In the Water and Health track e.g. water sanitation and health policies.

In the Water, Food and Energy track e.g. agrarian change, biofuels, reuse.