

i Information about the exam

Home exam SGO2302 Environment and Society spring 2021

Please answer one of the following three questions. We are looking for you to “weave together” the themes and readings discussed in the course. However, make sure to address all concepts and explicit tasks listed in the exam question you choose to answer.

Regardless of the question and the type of document it asks you to write (e.g., memorandum, report), your answer should present a structured piece of argumentative writing, containing an introduction, analysis, discussion and conclusion.

You are expected to draw from the course readings and lectures in your response, and to use a consistent style of referencing. Please include references within the text, e.g. (Leichenko and O’Brien 2019), rather than as footnotes or endnotes. You also have to include a list of references at the end of your text.

You can submit your exam in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

The front page of the exam shall contain the course code and your candidate number, which you'll find in Studentweb.

The minimum length of the home exam is minimum 10 pages (excluding references and front page) and maximum 14 pages. Use 12-point font and a spacing of lines 1.5 (approx. 4000-6000 words).

Note that the questions do not require you to do new research or find external literature – you should be able to **use the course curriculum to answer them**. *If you choose to use external literature, it should only be supplementary.*

Questions during the exam

- If you have questions about the exam, you must send an email from your UiO-address to [SV-info](#) . Write the course code in the subject field.
- If any information is given to all candidates during the exam, this information will be posted in Canvas. Make sure that you [receive Canvas notifications](#).

How to submit in Inspira

- [Read about submissions in Inspira](#).
- When you have started to answer the exam / uploaded your file, you will see that it is saved to your submission.
- You can change your exam answer until the test closes.
- When the test closes, your answer will automatically be delivered for grading.

After the exam

- After the submission deadline make sure that you find your submission under **Archive** in Inspira.
- Send an e-mail with your submission immediately to [SV-info](#) [Eller annet kontaktpunkt] if you do not see your submission.

1 Question 1

1. Taking Your Government to Court

Over the last few years, the voice of young people in climate change politics around the world has grown a lot louder. The youth climate movement received a significant boost by Greta Thunberg, the school strikes she has inspired since 2018, and the *Fridays for Future* movement growing out of her individual protests. In addition to school strikes and protests, the youth movement has championed a relatively new approach to climate activism: taking governments to court, often with the claim that a government's actions or inactions violate their legal obligations, e.g., to provide future generations with a healthy environment. Examples of this approach include the case *Juliana vs. the United States*, which reached the US Supreme Court in 2015, and the case of *Greenpeace Nordic and Nature and Youth*, who sued the Government of Norway over issuing licenses for Arctic oil drilling in 2018.

While these two cases failed in court, *Fridays for Future* recently joined a group of plaintiffs in a constitutional lawsuit against the German government and prevailed. The German Constitutional Court ruled in April 2021 that Germany's federal Climate Action Law does not contain sufficiently specific measures to plan for emission reductions after the year 2030 to ensure that the country will meet its goals and obligations relate to the Paris Agreement. The court mandated that the government makes adjustments to this law by the end of 2022.

You have recently accepted a position as an intern with NRK news, and your boss would like to organize a debate on climate change between a representative of Oslo's *Fridays for Future* chapter and a representative of the Norwegian Ministry for Climate and the Environment. In preparation for this debate, she has asked you to write a memorandum on the role of the youth climate movement in Norway and Europe more generally.

Building on what you have learned in *Environment and Society* and with reference to the readings, **analyze and discuss why and how young people have entered the politics of climate change, and which of their strategies have been most successful.** Your memorandum can touch on any of the concepts covered throughout the semester, but you should touch on at least three in the following list:

- Different discourses and worldviews
- Emotions and climate politics
- Climate justice
- Three Spheres of Transformation
- The effectiveness of different strategies, e.g., lawsuits, in the pursuit of transformative change

Note: A memorandum is a document intended to inform a decision maker by describing a problem or issue context, presenting a problem/issue analysis, and discussion, followed usually by action recommendations. In this case, your recommendation should contain two or three topics that should become questions in the planned debate.



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2 Question 2

2. The Pandemic vs. The Climate – What Should India Do?

India is currently facing severe challenges in its efforts to control the Covid-19 pandemic. Infection and death rates have been increasing while the country's health system is being overwhelmed and under-resourced. India is the world's most populous developing country. Fighting poverty, improving social services, and developing infrastructure are key problems the government deals with on a daily basis. These development challenges are limiting the capacity of the Indian government to respond to the pandemic.

On top of these capacity limitations, India's management of the pandemic has been hamstrung by a limited availability of the Covid-19 vaccine. Currently existing vaccines are produced in the US and in Europe and have intellectual property protections that prevent them from being produced and sold by companies in the developing world. While the US is now signaling its willingness to drop these patent protections, the benefits of this promise are still a long way off.

At the same time, India has been an important player in international climate change politics. As a growing global economic power, its national carbon emissions have been rapidly rising over the last two decades, and the country is very vulnerable to a range of climate change impacts, including extreme heat, and migration induced by sea-level rise.

India did not update its international action pledges in 2020 like many other countries did but stuck to its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submitted in 2016. Given India's current struggles with Covid-19, its ability to attend to matters of climate is severely limited, including its preparation for the upcoming climate negotiations in Glasgow (COP26) in November 2021.

You have recently been hired as a new staff member of the Office of India's President – Narendra Modi – with responsibilities for climate change and the environment. You have been asked to write a memorandum about India's vulnerability to these intersecting global stressors and the corresponding priorities for action. The President would like to understand better how to focus his energy and resources in the coming months and in particular what (if anything) to do ahead of COP26. **Building on the insights you gained in *Environment and Society* and with reference to the readings, write a memorandum for President Modi that analyzes the reasons for India's vulnerability regarding the pandemic and climate change, and discusses possible policy approaches and priorities for the rest of the year.** Your memo can use all concepts introduced in the course, but you should touch on at least three in the following list:


- Discourses and the nature of the two problems
- Multiple stressors
- Vulnerability
- Human security
- Resilience and preparedness

Note: A memorandum is a document intended to inform a decision maker by describing a problem or issue context, presenting a problem/issue analysis and discussion, followed usually by action recommendations. In this case, your recommendation should contain two or three specific things the Indian government should do (or avoid doing) regarding the pandemic and COP26.



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3 Question 3

3. The UK Government – In Search of Inspiration for COP26

In November 2021, the UK will host the annual climate change negotiations (COP26) in Glasgow. Many believe that the upcoming meeting is crucial to ensure that the international community will meet the goals set out in the Paris Agreement in 2015 – if countries are not moved to increase their commitments and actions fast, limiting global temperature increase to well below 2°C or even 1.5°C might soon become impossible.

In this situation, UK leadership matters. A well-run conference might make a difference for the future of the planet, especially in a time when many countries are distracted by the urgent demands of managing a global pandemic. While the UK is boasting its own achievements and successes regarding climate change on its [COP26 website](#), it has come under recent criticism for its perceived lack of leadership and coordination in the run-up to the important meeting. The UK government had been slow to establish its leadership team, and recent policy measures (e.g., cutting international aid and issuing licenses for domestic fossil fuel expansion) are undermining the UK's image as a climate leader, potentially affecting the prospects for a successful COP26. As Achim Steiner, the head of the UN Environment Program, put it “It sends a very mixed signal, and makes developing countries very concerned. It certainly does not enhance the confidence with which developing countries come to the table.”

More generally, the UK's presidency seems to lack a clear narrative and vision for the negotiations, which could galvanize governments around the world to increase their climate ambition at this crucial point in time. **You are a strategic advisor to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who has asked you to draft a strategic vision for COP26, using your keen understanding of the importance of discourses, worldviews, emotions, and – importantly – imagination and positive stories about the future.** Using your lessons and the materials from *Environment and Society*, draft a report for the Prime Minister that results in a proposed ‘vision for success’ for the COP. Your report can use all concepts introduced in the course, but you should touch on at least three in the following list:

- Discourses and problem frames.
- Worldviews and emotions
- Engagement strategies using storytelling and imagination
- Goals and measures of success.



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