

## **Overview sustainability related courses and programs offered by the University of Amsterdam**

November 2007

### **Undergraduate programs (BSc, 180 EC)**

*Future Planet Studies, Bèta-Gamma, Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies and the Faculty of Science* (still to be developed, starting September 2008)

FPS is a new track within the existing Bèta-Gamma program, in which matters are not studied from a mono disciplinary but from an interdisciplinary perspective. With this new bachelor program, the University of Amsterdam hopes to enhance the transfer of knowledge from science – specifically the beta sciences – to society, by combining and integrating the various disciplines involved in the global challenges at hand. Climate change obviously forms one of the most telling examples.

*Biology, Faculty of Science*

*Life and Earth Sciences, Faculty of Science*

Earth Science focuses on processes and patterns that happen in landscape and soil, and the interaction between factors as animal, human, relief, soil, water, rock, atmosphere and vegetation. In the bachelor one of the main questions is how the quality and processes of earth surface are changed by human behavior.

### **Undergraduate minors (30 EC)**

*Sustainable Development, Expertise Centre of Sustainable Development, Faculty of Science*

The minor consists of the undergraduate course "Introduction in Sustainable Development" followed by a relevant work placement that can be chosen by the student himself.

*International Development Studies, C.M. Kan-Instituut, Faculty of Social and Behaviour Sciences*

The selection program of International Development Studies is made up of a yearly international lecture series, with each year a new topic, and different thematic working groups. The lecture series 2007/2008 was about "Priorities of the Poor: the role of local governance in reducing poverty".

*Earth and mankind, Physical Geography, Faculty of Science*

*Earth and Environment, Physical Geography, Faculty of Science*

*Earth and Nature, Physical Geography, Faculty of Science*

Next to the standard minors with the regular lectures of Physical Geography, specific sets of pre-programmed lectures in the above fields can be chosen.

## Undergraduate Courses

### *Faculty of Science, Master School of Life and Earth Sciences*

#### *Bachelor Biology and/or Earth Sciences*

- *Paleo Ecology (12 EC)*: climate reconstruction of the past; modelling future climate fluctuations/ global warming issues et cetera.
- *Nature Preservation and Biodiversity (12 EC)*
- *Aquatic Ecotoxicology (6 EC)*
- *Introduction in Sustainable Development (12 EC, Expertise Centre of Sustainable Development)*: Discussion in multi disciplinary working groups about the concept of sustainable development, based on scientific literature, including a research assignment
- *European Virtual Seminar (English, 5 EC, Expertise Centre of Sustainable Development)*: research assignment in the field of sustainable development in relation to the EU, together with students from other European countries by communication via internet.
- *Atmospheric Physics (6 EC)*: focus on physical processes of come into being of wind, atmospheric pressure, clouds and rain, and the consequences of greenhouse effect.

#### *Bachelor Chemistry*

- *Environmental chemistry (6 EC)*

### *Faculty of Social and Behavior Sciences, Educational Institute of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies*

- *Sustainability in the Arena (6 EC)*: the course focuses on the area of tension between concrete (physical and social) context of environmental problems, the theoretic points of view from which the problems are defined, and the research and planning methodology.
- *Environment and Sustainable Development (6 EC)*
- *Bachelor thesis project Indian Coastal Resource management (30 EC)*: The thesis project in India focuses on 'geography of coastal lowlands'. (Experiences of students showed that that sustainability is an important issue in this theme, red.)
- *Bachelor thesis project environmental management in Kenya (30 EC)*: The thesis project focuses on environmental management in Kenya (idem, red.)

### *Faculty of Social and Behavior Sciences, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Education, bachelor Political Science*

- *Dynamics of international organizations (10 EC)*: International organizations are characterized not only by formal and financial structures, but also by the dynamics of human behavior in a functional and organizational context.

### *Faculty of Economics and Business, Educational Institute Faculty of Economics and Business, bachelor in Economics and Business*

- *Environmental Economics (English, 5 EC)*
- *Organization and Environment (English, 5 EC)*
- *Sustainable Management (5 EC)*: Sustainable management is addressed from an international and strategic management perspective.
- *Research project sustainable management (5 EC)*: The theme of the project is international business and the interaction of firms with their (economic, political, and societal) environment.

### *Faculty of Law, Amsterdam Law School*

- *Climate Change; Legal Aspects (English, 5 EC)*: In this course several legal aspects regarding Climate Change will be addressed from an International, European and national

perspective. After an introductory lecture on the environmental and policy issues regarding Climate Change, the course will focus on topics such as the Kyoto Protocol, Emission Trading Schemes, Ozone layer Protection, the 'Clean Development Mechanism' and other measures concerning energy and emissions.

*The inter-university Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation (CEDLA), minor Latin America Studies*

- *Tourism, sustainability and local development in Latin America (5 EC)*
- *Globalization and the development perspectives (5 EC)*

### **Sustainability related courses offered by the Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies**

Courses are destined for 3<sup>rd</sup> year undergraduates and graduates. Most lectures are open. The following courses include sustainability issues, but are not especially focused at them (except the corporate social responsibility course)

- *Corporate Social Responsibility seen from an interdisciplinary perspective (start March 2008)*
- *People and the Sea (start March 2008, English):* In this lecture series, the relationship with the sea is examined from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Natural scientists will speak about topics such as continental drift, sea level rise, and chemical pollution. Social scientists highlight human uses, such as fisheries and coastal tourism. Finally, representatives from the humanities explore the reach of the Law of the Sea and various aspects of maritime history. The aim is to integrate the various viewpoints into a meaningful framework, and to define an agenda for future action.
- *Future in extend:* In the lecture series will be looked ahead further than usual.
- *From natural landscape to risk society (start March 2008):* the lecture focuses on the reaction of mankind to the risks of natural processes like hurricanes, floods and earthquakes.
- *Turning points in Science:* developments in science determine the dynamics in life and society in a high level. The lectures go into the main turning points in human history and the outcomes and effects.

### **Graduate programs (60 - 120 EC):**

*International Development Studies (MSc, English, 60 EC), International School for Humanities and Social Sciences*

International Development Studies offers international and Dutch students the opportunity to broaden and deepen their knowledge of international development issues and their academic and professional skills to analyze such issues. The program provides thorough background knowledge of contemporary theories and debates on international development, as well as more specific insights into key themes within the international development sector, such as globalization, transnationalism, (urban) governance, sustainable development, and community-based natural resource management.

*Research Master Human Geography, Planning and Development Studies (MSc, 120), Educational Institute of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies, Faculty of Social and Behavior Sciences*

The master's aims at pre-selecting students for an academic career or a career in applied research. It allows students to tailor their program to individual interests, both thematically and regionally. Conducting independent academic research and reporting on the results by way of a thesis and a (draft) scientific article constitutes a major part of the curriculum. Students can opt for a variety of specialist courses within the disciplines concerned as well as in related fields. The program covers two years of 60 EC each. In the first year, the program makes a distinction between two tracks: Human Geography and Planning; and International Development Studies.

***Environmental Sciences (Chemistry) (MSc, 120 EC), Master School of Sciences, Faculty of Science***

This master program is intended for students with a Bachelor degree in Chemistry.

***Earth Sciences (MSc, 120 EC), Institute of Life and Earth Science, Faculty of Science***

In this master the focus is on the processes at and near the earth's surface, including the strong feedback between the earth and atmosphere on the one hand and biological systems on the other. The research master's in Earth Sciences comprises four different topics, offered through separate tracks: Computational Bio- and Physical Geography; Earth and Environmental Science; Earth Surface Processes; and Landscape Ecology. Each of the four tracks has its own dedicated course program. The MSc in *Computational Bio- and Physical Geography* focuses on the quantitative analysis of landforms and processes. The MSc *Earth and Environmental Science* focuses on environmental problems within the earth sciences with an emphasis on environmental soil chemistry, environmental toxicology and general environmental sciences. The MSc in *Earth Surface Processes* focuses on processes at or near the earth's surface. Emphasis is laid on processes in water, soils and landscapes on various spatial and temporal scales. The MSc in *Landscape Ecology* focuses on interactions in the landscape between geosphere, pedosphere and biosphere, with special attention to soil and vegetation development, their interactions and current threats.

***Ecology and evolution (MSc, 120 EC), Master School of Life and Earth Science, Faculty of Science***

The Master program in Ecology and Evolution offers courses that convey new theoretical insights in ecology and evolution, expert training in a broad range of tools and applications, and – most importantly – allows master students to participate in state-of-the-art research projects. Human impacts on ecosystems receive special attention within the program.

***The Amsterdam MBA Program (MBA, 60 EC), Amsterdam Business School, Faculty of Economics and Business***

The MBA Program aims to give students a high-quality business and management education to enable them to develop into effective leaders: internationally oriented and with a strong understanding of the importance of a genuine personal approach. The MBA offers four tracks: Entrepreneurship; Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR); Finance; and Real Estate. The CSR track has started in 2006. In the course *Corporate Governance, Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility* students learn an understanding of the development, background and current situation regarding corporate governance, ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The course *Business and Sustainability* provides students with an understanding of sustainability issues and dilemmas in (international) business and management.

***Law of Surrounding Areas (LLM, 60 EC), Amsterdam Law School, Faculty of Law***

## Graduate Courses

### *Faculty of Science, Expertise Centre for Sustainable Development*

- *Research project Brazil (21 EC)*: the focus of the research project will be on sustainable development in general and more specifically on commercialization of tropical flowers by small scale growers from the outskirts of Porto Velho, the capital of Rondônia. The main aim of the study is that the research results will lead to practical recommendations, which in turn can be used by the local stakeholders.

### *International School for Humanities and Social Sciences, International Development Studies*

- *Environment and Development (English, 10 EC)*: the lectures on major environmental problems deal with climate change, deforestation, the deterioration of coastal regions and fish stocks, increasing scarcity of land and water resources, access to energy, and urban environmental management.
- *World Bank Seminar on Global Challenges*: web based on line discussion on big screens.

### *Faculty of Social and Behavior Sciences, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Education*

- *Corporate social responsibility (30 EC)*: What is corporate social responsibility? How do governments and business give account? Under what conditions is 'corporate social responsibility' believable and effective?
- *Corporate social responsibility in the worldwide political economy (10 EC)*: Many great companies operate in a number of countries. This course focuses on unraveling the structures to obtain insights about the how and why, with special attention to what extent private and voluntary regulations of global ethical standards is possible, desirable, effective and legitimate.
- *Instruments for Sustainable Technological Development (English, 10 EC)*: This course will draw on recent experiences in the development of sustainable practices and technologies, in particular the shift from a focus on technological development alone to enlisting a variety of societal actors.

### *Faculty of Law, Amsterdam Law School, Centre for Environmental Law*

- *International Environmental Law (English, 5 EC)*
- *European environmental law (English, 5 EC)*

### *Faculty of Economics and Business, Educational Institute Faculty of Economics and Business*

- *Strategy and Sustainability (English, 10 EC)*: In this course students will learn how different theoretical insights from strategic management and organization theory can be applied to analyze how firms deal with the social and environmental issues that they face.

### *Faculty of Humanities, School of Philosophy*

- *Bio Ethics (10 EC)*: about the moral relation with future generations.

## Honors Course:

### *Faculty of Science*

- *The Scientific Basis of Sustainability (2 EC)*