

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE INSTITUTE  
COURSE PROPOSAL  
Fall 2010**

Course title: Democracy and Environment: Representation in Natural Resource Management

Amount requested: \$5000

Instructor: Jesse Ribot,  
Associate Professor, Department of Geography

## *Course Narrative*

Most forests, pastures, fisheries and farmlands are used by people who depend on them for their livelihoods. These people have historical claims to the resources and a sense of rights to continue to use and manage them. These natural resources are also of interest to national and global private and public actors as they are sources of wealth and revenue as well as sources of environmental service—for water and climate regulation. As such resource domains are highly charged arena of conflict and cooperation between local and higher scales of political-administrative, economic and social organization. How are local populations represented in decisions over the use and management of the resources they depend on? How are the multiple scales of resource decision negotiated by local populations? Any researcher or practitioner of natural resource management in the modern world needs to understand the effects of local democracy on natural resource management and use decisions and the effects of natural resource management and use interventions on local democracy. They need to grasp how democracy shapes our ability to sustainably manage and use natural resources.

Each decade brings new forms of local community-oriented natural-resource management intervention. Idealization of community and of community ability to manage resources abound. Efforts to engage community in natural resource management have broadened from worker-self management schemes in the 1960s and 70s to the participatory programs and local empowerment of the 80s and 90s. ‘Community-driven development’ has become the largest single intervention methods of the World Bank. A global movement to institutionalize these programs and their participatory ethic started in the 1990s with a tidal wave of democratic decentralization reforms. No policy, program, or project—especially not if it involves natural resource management—can be made without including local people in decisions making. Today local people are ostensibly being involved in project or policy design, management, procurement, implementation, benefits, and evaluation. This course will examine these while asking: Why do we believe that local or democratic forms of resource management are good for livelihoods or for the environment? What is the evidence that local, community-based, decentralized or democratic efforts are efficient, equitable or sustainable?

The course will focus primarily on the latest and most widespread form of community inclusion—democratic decentralization. Many democratic decentralization reforms are well-crafted. Ostensibly these reforms would transfer functions and powers to elected local governments. In implementation and related projects, however, governments, international development agencies and large non-governmental organizations are transferring natural resource use and management powers to a wide range of local interlocutors, including deconcentrated agents, private bodies, customary authorities, and NGOs. Recognition (by being chosen) of these local institutions means that fledgling local governments are receiving few public powers and face competition for legitimacy. When do these choices foster local democratic consolidation? When do they result in fragmented forms of local authority and belonging? When does democracy result in positive social or ecological outcomes?

This course will draw on the theoretical and case-based literature to explore effects of institutional choices and recognition in natural resource decentralizations on three dimensions of democracy: 1) representation, 2) citizenship, and 3) the public domain. It will examine concepts of representation, legitimacy, sovereignty, human rights, belonging, citizenship and the public domain as they relate to the special case of sub-national democracy. It will explore the role of environment and natural resources as a material basis of representation. 'Environment' and 'natural resources' will be explored as points of struggle and bases of power, sources resources and revenues in relations of representation. The course will explore democratic decentralization as it interacts with environmental policy in multiple arenas.

The course will focus on multiple policy scales affecting representation of resource dependent populations. It will draw on case examples primarily from the developing world. For course projects students will be encouraged to analyze cases of representation or to write a policy brief on one arena of environmental intervention that affects representation. Students will come away from this course with a theoretical base and policy-analytic skills applicable to increasing representation and wellbeing of resource dependent populations.

The first teaching of this course will be open to graduate students and advanced undergraduates. It will meet for three hours every week. Participants will also be expected to attend the three to five SDEP Friday lectures during the semester. Each of these SDEP lectures will be used to highlight different aspects of the democracy-environment relation. Subsequently, the course will be offered as an upper level undergraduate course every other year.

## ***General Course Outline***

[General course outline, development timeline, semester the course will be offered (fall, spring or summer of academic year 2009-2010) and, for any field course, location requirements.]

- I. Opening Lecture
  - From Participation to Representation – trends in natural resource management
  - Democracy and Natural Resource Management – justifications and doubts
  - Course Outline
- II. Participation and Representation
  - Community in history
  - Participation in history
  - Participation in natural resource management and development arenas
  - Decentralization and the Emergence of Sub-national Democracy
- III. Representation—Basic Readings in Political Philosophy
- IV. Belonging and Citizenship—Basic Readings in Political Philosophy
- V. Power and the Public Domain—Basic Readings in Political Philosophy
- VI. Environment and Justice in the Developing World
- VII. Decentralization and Environment I: Participation Theory and Evidence
- VIII. Decentralization and Environment II: Representation Theory and Evidence
- IX. Decentralization and Environment III: Access Theory and Evidence
- X. Civil Society—User groups, Committees, NGOs
- XI. Privatization—Enclosure or Liberation?
- XII. Indigenous, Customary and Cultural Authority—Despots or Democrats?
- XIII. Identity and Representation: Gender, Caste, Ethnicity
- XIV. Policy, Implementation and its Discontents

Each section of the course will draw on a mix of theory and case studies.

***Timeline:*** The course will first be taught at the graduate and upper-level undergraduate level in fall 2010 (course number 494). It will not require any field visits or special

equipment. After testing the course and using this first teaching to develop it, the course will be offered every other year.

***Proposed Budget:***

The budget items include an RA. The RA will help with library research during the summer and into the first semester of teaching the course. This assistant will work with me half time in the summer to locate readings for the fall and half time during the fall semester to find additional readings alternative readings for the next year.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
RA	
Summer 1.5 mo.	2238.33
Fall 2 months	3103.82
<b><i>Total:</i></b>	<b>\$5342.15</b>

Total requested is \$5000. I will supplement the budget with my own research funds.

Attached:

- One page vita

To be sent directly:

- Note of approval from Department Chair

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**JESSE C. RIBOT**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF GEOGRAPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA CHAMPAIGN, IL  
[RIBOT@ILLINOIS.EDU](mailto:RIBOT@ILLINOIS.EDU)

### EDUCATION

12/90 **Ph.D.** UC Berkeley, Energy and Resources Group; 5/85 **M.S.** UC Berkeley, ERG.

### CURRENT POSITIONS

10/08- ***Associate Professor, Department of Geography, University of Illinois; Faculty, Beckman Institute; Director, Social Dimensions of Environmental Policy (SDEP) Initiative***

### PAST POSITIONS AND FELLOWSHIPS SINCE 2000

6-7/08 ***Visiting Faculty.*** SUTROFOR Erasmus Mundus Scholar, University of Copenhagen.  
4/99-10/08 ***Senior Associate, Institutions and Governance Program, World Resources Institute (WRI).***  
3-5/07 ***Visiting Scholar, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany.***  
9/04-6/05 ***Fellow,*** Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC.

**PUBLICATIONS:** 3 BOOKS; 4 POLICY RESEARCH MONOGRAPHS; 27 JOURNAL ARTICLES; MANY BOOK CHAPTERS, WORKING PAPERS, PROFESSIONAL REPORTS. RELEVANT TO COURSE:

- Ribot, J.C. In progress. *Making Rural Democracy: Institutional Choice and Recognition in Natural Resource Decentralizations.*
- Ribot, J.C. In Progress. *Democratizing the Market: Rural Councils and Forestry Decentralization in Senegal*'.
- Ribot, J.C. and Anne Larson (eds.). 2005. *Decentralization through a Natural Resource Lens: Experience in Africa, Asia and Latin America.* London: Frank Cass.
- Ribot, J.C. 2008. *Building Local Democracy through Natural Resources Interventions: An Environmentalist's Responsibility.* A Policy Brief. Washington: World Resources Institute.
- Ribot, J.C. 2004. *Waiting for Democracy: The Politics of Choice in Natural Resource Decentralizations.* Washington: World Resources Institute. [Published in French in 2007.]
- Ribot, J.C., Thorsten Treue and Jens Friis Lund. In Progress. 2010[forthcoming]. "Democratic Decentralization in Sub-Saharan Africa: Its contribution to forest management, livelihoods, and enfranchisement." *Environmental Conservation.*
- Ribot, J.C. 2009. 'Access over Authority: Recentralizing Benefits in Senegal's Forestry Decentralization' *Development and Change.* Vol. 40, No. 1.

- Ribot, J.C., Ashwini Chhatre, and Tomila V. Lankina (special issue eds.). 2008. Special Issue Introduction: 'The Politics of Choice and Recognition in Democratic Decentralization'. *Conservation and Society*. Vol. 6, No. 1.
- Larson, Anne, and J.C. Ribot. 2007. 'The Poverty of Forestry Policy: Double Standards on and Uneven Playing Field'. *Journal of Sustainability Science*. Vol. 2, No. 2.
- Ribot, J.C. 2007. 'Institutional Choice and Recognition in the Consolidation of Local Democracy'. *Democracy*. Vol. 50, No. 1, pp. 43-49.