

Green Activism: From Planetary Engagement to Criminalization

From 16 to 19 June 2025
In Ascona

*“Explore the shifting
landscape of green activism.”*



COURSE ORGANIZERS & KEY NOTES

[Peter Bille Larsen](#), Department of Sociology / IGEDT, University of Geneva

[Henrik Vigh](#), Centre for Global Criminology, University of Copenhagen

[Philippe Le Billon](#), Department of Geography, University of British Columbia

TARGET AUDIENCE

Ph.D. & Postdoc

TUITION FEES

Junior professionals, External students, UNIGE students : 300 CHF

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This joint summer school between the Universities of Copenhagen and Geneva (both 4EU+ Alliance members) explores the field of green activism with a specific focus on different forms in the context of changing discourses of criminalization, engagement, radicalism and extremism.

Certain forms of green activism, from climate change to mining-related protest, are increasingly subject to criminalization. Rather than working for a cause they are seen as working against the common good, societal needs and functions. At the same time, there is a growing desperation within parts of society, that we are doing far too little and far too late, leading to an increased unconditional call for action. New forms of social mobilization and politics are thus pushing the boundaries of existing protests and practices.

In this summer school we combine the introduction to green activism with cutting-edge conceptual discussions around the concepts of criminalization, the politics of radicalization and critical perspectives in green criminology. Case-study insights from ethnography and political geography are mobilized to ground discussions in specific everyday contexts and political situations.

The summer school will involve a combination of keynotes, case study learning and conceptual perspective.

BIOS

Philippe Le Billon is a Professor at the University of British Columbia with the Department of Geography and the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs. He holds a PhD in Geography (Oxford). Prior to joining UBC, he was a Research Associate with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). A political ecologist, he works on linkages between environment, development and security with a focus on resource-related conflicts. He currently work on the 'green transition' as well as ocean defenders. His publications include Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources (Oxford UP, 2013), Oil (Polity Press, 2017 with Gavin Bridge), and Environmental Defenders: Struggles for Life and Territory (Routledge, 2021 with Mary Menton).

Henrik Vigh is professor of anthropology and director of the Centre for Global Criminology at the University of Copenhagen. He has researched issues of youth and conflict in both Europe and Africa and is currently researching the intersection between war and crime focussing on the criminalized movement of people, goods and drugs from Africa into Europe.

Peter Bille Larsen is a senior lecturer and researcher with the Universities of Geneva and Zürich. Currently 4EU+ visiting professor at the University of Copenhagen, his work addresses the intersection between social equity, environment, rights-based approaches and sustainable development. With longstanding field experience in South America and Southeast Asia, he seeks to combine research with grassroots level work in the global South and policy level engagement with global policy processes and international organizations. Current research includes work on environmental defenders, mining and violence combined with human rights processes in Geneva.

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