

Climate change is analyzed from the perspective of the social sciences

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This image depicts a balance between environment and law. Credit: Carlos III University of Madrid

Research being carried out at Carlos III University of Madrid analyzes the key factors in climate change and the risks to public policies that it implies. This study approaches the issue from the perspective of Sociology, Economics and Law.

The researchers base their work the fact that climate change has become one of the main problems of the 21st Century, as is demonstrated by numerous studies that confirm the seriousness of its effects. In this

sense, similar to what occurs in the area of energy, the issues that are raised regarding its characteristics, extent, and consequences have a decisive effect on public policy and, therefore, on the Law, which is the means of formalizing and enforcing those policies. "In this way, the Law, which has always been called upon to generate confidence and certainty by adequately controlling risks, is confronted with the challenges raised by the inevitable innovations that are part of the fight against climate change", explains the head researcher, Professor Luciano Parejo, of the Public Administration Law Department of the UC3M.

The project, which is called "Law in the face of the innovation and risks derived from climate change", poses issues that go from the questioning of established principles, techniques and solutions to the search for new focuses and solutions to the problems that such questioning may generate. In order to do this, "interdisciplinary collaboration is essential, mainly between [sociologists](#), economists, [political scientists](#) and [legal experts](#)", Prof. Parejo points out. As a result of this team effort, several interesting works have already been published, he adds, such as "a study of the 'Acquatorium', the coastal ecosystem formed where land and sea meet, or another study regarding the situation of [energy policy](#) throughout Europe, which is fundamental in the struggle against climate change ", he concludes.

This multidisciplinary group of researchers seeks to do an in-depth study of a society based on science and technology, which finds itself on a fast-moving evolutionary path that causes some degree of uncertainty. In this context, they are examining the role that Law can play in facing the challenges that climate change raises. "Is it acting as a hindrance or, on the contrary, is there a need to innovate the Law in such a way that it may be of service in reaching the social objectives that have been set?" wonder the researchers, who intend to resolve this type of question from an international perspective.

The objectives of this research are established around three main lines of activity. First, they hope to identify the risks and essential factors involved in [climate change](#), as well as the derived consequences that influence [public policy](#), legislation and executive actions aimed at preventing and counteracting those consequences. Second, this research is designed to determine the impact of innovations on the main legal institutions and techniques, in order to determine the current degree of ability and flexibility that the [Law](#) has to respond adequately to these innovations. Finally, this research project aspires to formulate a set of proposals that would guarantee the Law's flexibility as [public policy](#) regarding this issue evolves, while at the same time maintaining its mission of offering confidence in the decisions taken by both public and private figures.

Provided by Carlos III University of Madrid

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