

Final Report: Senior Research Stay at Hebrew University Jerusalem (HUJI)

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### Senior Research Stay at the HUJI

In 2017, I got the chance to visit the Hebrew University Jerusalem, Israel, within the framework of a senior research stay. My aims were to learn more about its programs related to sustainability and educational research and to create cooperation with researchers in the fields of sustainability, Education for Sustainable Development, Climate Change Education, Social Network Analysis, and international agreements. In the following, this report summarizes some major results of my research stay.



The Hebrew University Jerusalem, Israel, consists of seven Faculties and 15 Schools, which are spread over four campuses. Three of them are situated in Jerusalem, one of them in Rehovot. Situated in Jerusalem are: Mount Scopus, the Edmond J. Safra (Givat Ram), and Ein Kerem. At the Mount Scopus Campus you can find the Faculty of Humanities (and its school of education as well as other schools), the Faculty of Social Sciences (and its schools of Economics, Geography, International Relations, Political Science, Psychology, Statistics, The Federmann School of Public Policy and Government and the school of Sociology and Anthropology), the Faculty of Law, the Jerusalem School of Business Administration and the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare. At the Edmond J. Safra (Givat Ram) you find the units of natural sciences and at the Ein Kerem campus you can find the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Dental Medicine. Finally, at the Ravohot Campus outside of Jerusalem you find the Faculty of Agricultural, Food And Environmental Quality Sciences with its units “Institute of Biochemistry”, “Food Science and Nutrition”, “The School of Nutritional Sciences”, “Institute of Plant Sciences and Genetics in Agriculture” and “The Koret School of Veterinary Medicine”.



My senior research stay was mainly focused on my research on the influence of international treaty secretariats in international conventions. In this research, I use a mixed methods research design to investigate the overall research questions:

- How do international treaty secretariats exert influence on the processes, discourses and outcomes of multilateral negotiations over time and across issue areas?

- To what extent does the secretariats' social embeddedness in issue-specific information flows explain this influence?

Until now, theoretically based empirical studies answering these questions are virtually non-existent. Despite the increasing visibility of international treaty secretariats and against a growing body of research on their role in global politics (Bauer, 2006; Biermann & Siebenhüner, 2009; Busch, 2014; Jinnah, 2014), the sources and causal mechanisms of their influence on global policy outputs have not been systematically studied over time and across policy areas. In my research, I aim at contributing to this research gap through combining theories and methods in novel ways: to use social network theory and draw on techniques of quantitative Social Network Analysis (SNA) and qualitative Discourse Analysis (DA) in order to advance the understanding of the causes and mechanisms underlying secretariats' influence in two different policy fields. Altogether, this research project pursues four central objectives that are closely interlinked and address essential advances concerning the empirical, methodological and theoretical state of the art:

1. to empirically reassess the influence of international treaty secretariats in education over time,
2. to compare the influence of treaty secretariats in different areas of education for sustainable development,
3. to combine findings from SNA with qualitative insights gathered with DA in order to identify central determinants of secretariat influence in education, and
4. to theoretically reconceptualize the relationship between the embeddedness (i.e., the relative position or nodality) of international treaty secretariats and their influence on outputs using social network theory



This research focus is very well suited to the research activities of HUJI professors concerning international conventions and discourse analysis (e.g. Itay Fishendler and Eran Feitelson) and I was very happy about the opportunity to meet many different scholars to discuss research projects, publications and prospects for future research in this exciting field.

I was invited and hosted by Prof. Itay Fischhendler, whose research interests focus on similar aspects as my own research interests, such as environmental conflict resolution, governance, discourse analysis, international conventions and decision making under conditions of political and environmental uncertainties. He is a leading scholar on transboundary water institutions and Middle East water issues. I had the possibility to meet many other scholars.





Overall, the scholarship provided by the German Academic Exchange Service offered me the opportunity to establish and to strengthen research networks and cooperation with the Hebrew University Jerusalem, Israel scholars in the fields of sustainability, educational research and comparative and international educational research. This will provide a basis for further collaboration. Results of this cooperation considering the organization of joint teaching initiatives, international conferences, sessions for summer schools or publications are already initiated. For instance, I am organizing an international course for FUB students and students in Israel, we have submitted joint proposal for conferences and we aim to realize a joint publication and research proposal.

