

The Role of International Environmental Law in Addressing Climate Crises: An Analysis of Iran's Compliance with Its Environmental Obligations

Extended Abstract

Introduction: In recent decades, climate crises such as global warming, widespread droughts, recurrent floods, and air pollution have emerged as critical challenges for the global community. In response to these challenges, International Environmental Law (IEL) has evolved as a nascent yet crucial branch of international law, aiming to guide nations toward environmental responsibility through binding agreements and soft law instruments. This research seeks to clarify the role of IEL in addressing climate crises and critically examines Iran's engagement with key international environmental commitments, including the 2015 Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Materials and Methods: The study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology based on the review of international treaties, national policy documents, institutional reports, and scholarly literature. The research is structured into two main parts: first, an exploration of the principles and institutional frameworks underpinning IEL; second, an evaluation of Iran's commitments, actions, and obstacles related to international environmental agreements.

Results: The findings reveal that while Iran has formally acceded to various international environmental treaties and agreements, the actual implementation of these commitments remains limited and fragmented. Key principles of IEL—such as sustainable development, the polluter pays principle, cooperation, and precaution—are only partially integrated into Iran's domestic legal and policy framework. Institutional weaknesses, financial limitations, international sanctions, and insufficient political will have further hindered effective climate action.

Discussion and Conclusion: The research underscores the gap between Iran's international commitments and its domestic environmental governance. Although Iran participates in international negotiations and has established policy instruments like the National Climate Change Document, practical enforcement and coordination remain inadequate. To bridge this gap, the study recommends reforms to strengthen Iran's legal framework, establish a centralized climate governance body, and foster international partnerships for technical and financial support. Such measures are vital for enhancing compliance with international obligations and mitigating the impacts of the escalating climate crisis.

Keywords: International Environmental Law, Climate Crisis, Iran, Paris Agreement, UNFCCC, Environmental Governance, Sustainable Development.