

## **UACES Scholarship 2010**

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### **Outline of project**

My research project was one component of a larger doctoral dissertation project in the political science department at Emory University. My dissertation examines why some states are better than others at complying with international common-pool resource agreements. An agreement in which everyone considers the burden of consumption on the collective instead of the individual leads to a beneficial outcome for all, but it does not remove the incentive to cheat. Even if we assume a world in which the only international agreements made are the ones with which states already planned to comply (as argued by Downs, Rocke, and Barsoom 1996), why would we still see variations around the expectation of compliance? Why do countries sign agreements designed to benefit the common interest, then defect from those agreements at differing levels? What explains cross-country / cross-time patterns of compliance with international common-pool resource agreements? I offer a theory based on the domestic institutions of individual states, and how attributes of special interests like fishermen or polluting industrialists affect the ways those institutions respond to special interest demands. I test the theory on the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy; in order to do so, I conducted interviews as well as archival research in Brussels, Belgium and Den Haag, the Netherlands from May to June, 2010. I gratefully acknowledge the support of UACES and the European Commission in helping me with this project.

### **Academic achievements**

During my time in Belgium and the Netherlands, I interviewed policymakers (members of the European Parliament primarily), bureaucrats with the European Commission, Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, and Pelagic Regional Advisory Council, as well as interest group leaders representing fish processors, the fishing industry, labor, and the environmental movement. Each gave a different viewpoint on the role of interest groups in influencing states' decision on how much to comply with international agreements. I also obtained invaluable historical information directly from the European Commission's archives.

### **Use of resources**

I spent a great deal of time utilizing the resources of the European Commission's library, as well as the European Commission archives. Most of that work was in examining reports from DG-XIV (now DG-FISH) to the European Council from 1977 to the present.

### **Positive and negative aspects of trip**

The one negative aspect of my trip was that Belgian and Dutch legislative elections happened to be scheduled toward the end of my stay, rendering it impossible to interview national parliamentarians, as they were all on the campaign trail. There were numerous positives. The people I interviewed were extremely helpful and giving of their time, and the staff at the European Commission's facilities were both kind and knowledgeable. In all, it was an excellent and productive research trip.