

CONTACT

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LANGUAGES

German – Native; English – C2;
Spanish – C1; Portuguese – B1;
French – B1

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Advanced proficiency with:

- Office and project management software
- Qualitative coding software (e.g. MAXQDA)

Working knowledge of:

- ArcGIS, QGIS, R

EDUCATION

The University of Freiburg, Freiburg, Germany

*Dr. rer. nat. Forest and
Environmental Policy*

Grade: summa cum laude
(highest possible grade in
Germany)

DEC. 2021 – NOV. 2025

*MSc Environmental
Governance*

Final grade: 1.3 (1 – 1.5 =
excellent, 5.0 = insufficient)
SEPT. 2016 – OCT. 2019

BSc Environmental Sciences

Final grade: 1.5
OCT. 2012 – SEPT. 2016

ERASMUS+: Polytechnic University of Madrid, Spain

BSc Environmental Engineering
SEPT. 2014 – JULY 2015

Dr. Laila Berning

Global environmental policy & governance

PERSONAL PROFILE

I am a global environmental policy and governance scholar, focusing on global supply chain regulatory governance in the forest and agricultural sectors. I have conducted fieldwork across Europe, Indonesia, Brazil, and Costa Rica, and I bring extensive experience in leading the coordination of diverse projects, as well as publishing and communicating high-quality outputs.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Results-based project management & leadership
- Grant and proposal writing (funding acquisition)
- Teaching and public speaking
- Multi-stakeholder workshop organisation and facilitation
- Qualitative policy and governance research
- Publication of peer-reviewed articles, reports, and briefs

WORK EXPERIENCE

The University of Freiburg DEC. 2017 – present

Chair of Forest & Environmental Policy

SEPT. 2025 – present: Affiliated senior researcher & lecturer

- Research and teaching on the legitimacy of extraterritorial EU sustainability regulations

MAY 2020 – SEPT. 2025: Doctoral researcher, research associate & lecturer

- Global supply chain policy and governance research, consultancy and teaching
- Particularly familiar with the EU Regulation on Deforestation-free products, EU Timber Regulation, EU FLEGT Regulation & FLEGT VPAs, and certification schemes (e.g. FSC, RSPO)

Chair of Finance, Controlling & Entrepreneurship

MAY 2021 – DECEMBER 2023: Lecturer

- Conceptualisation and delivery of e-learning material and an MSc seminar on Sustainable Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Governance, & Management

Chair of Environmental Governance

DEC. 2017 – APRIL 2020: Scientific assistant

- Project assistant at KERNiG, a research project on sustainable municipal food systems

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Gerhard-Speidel 2025 Prize for outstanding dissertations

WILEY 2023 Top Cited Article in Regulation & Governance

IFC TechEmerge East Africa Grantee, 2021

BW Goes Mobile Award Winner, 2020

Fraunhofer Venture TechBridge Award Winner, 2019

Dubai Expo Live Grantee, 2019

Top 3 Next Economy Award Winner, 2019

European UN Young Champion of the Earth Finalist, 2019

United Nations – Hult Prize Global Finalist, 2018

Regional Hult Prize Tunis Prize Winner, 2018

CampusWELTbewerb Prize Winner, 2017

SCHOLARSHIPS

Müller-Fahnenberg Foundation Conference scholarships (2024 & 2025)

DAAD-Conference scholarship (AUG. 2024)

Georg-Ludwig-Hartig Foundation Conference scholarship (MAY 2024)

DAAD-PROMOS scholarship (SEPT. 2017 – OCT. 2017)

IAESTE & DAAD scholarship (SEPT. 2015 – OCT. 2015)

ERASMUS+ (SEPT. 2014 – JULY 2015)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Noor Medical

DEC. 2017 – AUG. 2020: CEO & Co-founder

- Co-founded Noor Medical to provide medical instrument sterilisation to low-resource settings
- Secured in excess of €240,000 in funding from state and non-state sources
- Oversaw compliance with laws and regulations
- Established strategic partnerships with NGOs, research institutions and industry partners

VOLUNTARY WORK

APRIL 2019 – OCT. 2023: Entrepreneurship consultant

- **Consultancy** on partnership and capital development, project management and sustainability strategies
- **Judge & Mentor:** **Hult Prize** in Paris, France and at the Ashridge House (Hult Ashridge Executive Education) in England; **Foundersclub**, Freiburg's student group for entrepreneurship

FIXED-TERM RESEARCH ASSISTANT POSITIONS

- **Bioersivity International**, Turrialba, Costa Rica (Sept. 2017 – Oct. 2017); **National Park Centre Baltrum**, Lower Saxony, Germany (Aug. 2016); **Office for Ecological Assessments and Peatland Studies**, Kandern, Germany (July 2016); **Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro**, Seropédica, Brazil (Sept. 2015 – Oct. 2015)

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

- **APRIL 2018 – NOV. 2019:** BadenCampus Business Accelerator
- **MARCH 2018 – SEPT. 2018:** Hult Prize Social Impact Business Accelerator
- **JAN. 2018 – APRIL 2018:** Smart Green Business Accelerator

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS (selection)

- **Berning, L.,** Garrett, R. D., & Sotirov, M. (2025). How does the European Union's pluralistic institutional system influence policy change? The case of the European Union Regulation on Deforestation-free products. *Sustainable Development*.
- **Berning, L.,** & Sotirov, M. (2024). The coalitional politics of the European Union Regulation on deforestation-free products. *Forest Policy and Economics*.
- **Berning, L.,** & Sotirov, M. (2023). Hardening corporate accountability in commodity supply chains under the European Union Deforestation Regulation. *Regulation and Governance*.

A complete list of my peer-reviewed articles is available here: lailaberning.com

RESEARCH PROJECTS

EMMA4EU: Innovation alliance for training programmes for deforestation-free supply chains in Europe

ERASMUS+ Programme.
Co-funded by the European Union, ERASMUS2027- project ID 101111729

JAN. 2024 – SEPT. 2025

Roles: Grant writing support, research & teaching, donor reporting support

CLEVER: Creating leverage to enhance biodiversity outcomes of global biomass trade

European Union Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme. Grant agreement No. 101060765

NOV. 2022 – AUG. 2025

Roles: Grant writing support, research

Study on FLEGT implementation in Indonesia and Europe and the implications of current and planned policy changes on timber legality and deforestation in Europe, USA and China.

Funded by the UK Government's FGMC programme and the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Berlin, Germany.

MARCH 2022 – OCT. 2022

Roles: Grant co-writing, research consultant, donor co-reporting

POLICY SUPPORT & CONSULTANCY (selection)

- Börner, J., **Berning, L.**, Braun, D., Dietz, T., Dürr, J., Martinelli, F., Mortara Baticic, P., Nunes, F., Oliveira, G. M., Pacheco, A., Soares-Filho, B., Sotirov, M., Vargas, D., & Ziegert, R. F. (2024). *The EU Regulation on Deforestation-free products at odds with forest conservation in Brazil?* Agricultural Policies in Debate.
- **Berning, L.**, Ziegert, R. F., Cramm, M., & Sotirov, M. (2023). *Map of public and private policies and governance mechanisms. Final report.* Zenodo.

INVITED SPEECHES (selection)

- **2023:** GIZ IND SNRD Event: 'deforestation free timber – a contradiction or opportunity?'
- **2022:** Policy forum on incentivising good forest governance of FLEGT-VPA countries through Broader Market Recognition of Timber National Systems, London, UK.

GUEST LECTURES (selection)

- **2025:** Guest lecture on the 'EU Regulation on deforestation-free Products (EUDR)' at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada
- **2025:** Guest lecture on 'methods of data collection' at the Free University of Berlin, Berlin, Germany

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (selection)

- **2025:** Panel on 'natural resource management and conservation (I)' at the ECPR General Conference 2025, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece (panellist).
- **2025:** Session on 'leverage points and governance implications for biodiversity conservation' at the conference & science-policy panel debate on 'mainstreaming biodiversity in policy making', Brussels, Belgium (panellist).
- **2024:** Session on 'designing for impact: success and failures of forest-risk commodity policies and governance mechanisms' at the GLP's 5th Open Science Meeting, Oaxaca, Mexico (session chair & panellist).

WORKSHOP ORGANISATION & FACILITATION (selection)

- **2025:** Company forum on deforestation-free supply chains – challenges and opportunities in implementing the EUDR, Bonn, Germany (organiser & working session facilitator).
- **2025:** EMMA4EU in-person Project Steering Committee Meeting and roundtable discussion on opportunities and challenges for effective EUDR implementation in the forest sector and the role of certification schemes, Freiburg, Germany (project steering committee meeting & roundtable organiser).

A complete overview of my policy support studies and outreach activities is accessible here: lailaberning.com