

Claire Duval, Graduate of the Sciences Po Law School, Master in Economic Law, Programme Global Governance Studies (GGS), 2020



Meeting with Claire Duval, Graduate of the Sciences Po Law School (2020) - "Do not let these setbacks become roadblocks"

I began my academic journey by pursuing an undergraduate degree in Political Science at McGill University. I then completed my first Master's in International Relations at the London School of Economics, determined to work in an international setting but not yet fully knowing in what capacity.

Upon graduation, I assisted the former UN Special Rapporteur with his mandate on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes. Only then did I begin to envision a legal career. Around the same time as I took on this position, the negligence of a mining company had led a collapsing dam to unleash 20,000 Olympic swimming pools of toxic sludge in Minas Gerais, making this incident the worst environmental disaster Brazil had ever seen. Conducting research on the remediation process, I came to understand the extent to which the country's legal framework had contributed to a culture of impunity. This experience made me reflect on the potential for the law to bridge the gap between human rights and the investment system. If the law was an instrument powerful enough to perpetuate the corporate status quo, could its power be alternatively harnessed to advance sustainable development-oriented investment?

Looking for answers, I changed career paths and enrolled into Sciences Po's Master of [Economic Law](#). As a francophone, the conventional pathway would have been to follow the French track of the program. I was however looking for a **comparative approach to my legal studies**, and therefore joined the English

track, which was the perfect fit to this end.

In my second year, I specialized in [Global Governance Studies](#), a program which welcomes students from an array of legal systems and provides **an interdisciplinary approach to legal issues in a global context**. That year allowed me to make several encounters, which fundamentally shaped my professional aspirations going forward. I am particularly thankful for Professor [Mbengue's course](#) and mentoring during the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, which gave me the impetus for a career as an international lawyer. I am also grateful for the hours spent debating the future of the international investment system in

Professor Radi's course, as well as for Professor Robé's thought-provoking views on the global governance role of multinational enterprises which dramatically changed the lenses through which I saw the legal field.

Upon graduation, I was fortunate to accept an admission offer from Stanford's LL.M. Program in International Economic Law, Business and Policy, which I deferred until September 2021 as a result of COVID-19. In the meantime, I have worked as a Fellow at the International Law Commission and I am meant to pursue an internship in the International Arbitration and Public International Law Practice of the law firm Freshfields in Paris starting in January 2021.

The road to fulfilling one's aspirations is paved with trials and failures. In fact, my first application to Sciences Po was rejected. Do not let these setbacks become roadblocks. In the year that followed this rejection, I reflected on what I could do to be more competitive before applying again, successfully. This included refining my motivations for the program and acquiring further work experience to that end. So if you are certain that Sciences Po is an ideal fit for you then **I advise you to put all your resources at your disposal to craft your skills and background towards achieving this**, even if it takes multiple tries. In my opinion, it was worth the wait.

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