

United Nations Environment Programme JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER

General Information

Post Title: JPO, Associate Programme Officer (Synergies for addressing triple planetary crisis)

Division: Policy and Programme Division

Unit: Strategy Planning Sub-Programme Coordination Unit

Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Duration: Two to three years

Background information on UN Environment and the requesting Unit

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UNEP's Policy and Programme Division (PPD) consolidates the policy, programme, monitoring, gender, and social safeguards functions of UNEP as well as its engagement with the United Nations system and key global processes such as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and other landmark global policy decisions in the context of the UN Development System (UNDS) reform.

Triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are posing significant challenges to the humanity and hindering the achievement of the global agendas such as the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the Global Framework on Chemicals. Overcoming these challenges simultaneously and effectively requires synergistic approaches, which takes advantage of the inextricably intertwined nature of these challenges and increases the overall impact of interventions.

The UNEP Medium-term Strategy (MTS) 2026-2029 will outline a set of transformative solutions that target the drivers of climate change, biodiversity loss and land degradation and pollution, and looks at their impact. The three strategic objectives of UNEP MTS will be "climate stability", "living in harmony with nature" and "towards a pollution-free planet". UNEP plans to tackle the three planetary crises through three thematic subprogrammes, on climate action, nature and land action and chemicals and pollution action underpinned by other four subprogrammes on science-policy, environmental governance, digital transformations and financial and economic transformations.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

Overcoming the three environmental crises simultaneously and effectively requires synergistic approaches with a focus on co-benefit in the delivery of UNEP Programme of Work. Post CBD COP16, UNCCC COP 29, and ICCM5 further strengthening of UNEP's support to governments in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) revision and cost-effective implementation, and voluntary implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals in a coordinated manner is a priority.

The Global Framework on Chemicals asks, by 2030, stakeholders identify and strengthen synergies and linkages between chemicals and waste management and other key environmental, health and labour policies, such as those related to climate change solutions, biodiversity conservation, human rights protection, universal health coverage or primary health care.

The tasks undertaken by the JPO will contribute directly towards the priority areas identified in UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2026-2029.

As part of the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) of UNEP PPD and working closely with Global Subprogramme Coordinators (GSPCs), the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will play a role as a focal point across UNEP Divisions, Branches and Regional Offices working on various aspects on advancing synergies and actions that deliver across Climate, Nature and Pollution strategic objectives and promote collaboration and knowledge sharing between the subprogrammes. Tasks will be defined to ensure enhancing synergies among planning, implementation and reporting for climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, and sustainable development processes.

The position will also contribute to strengthening UNEP's support to its Member States by providing technical support and policy advice based on best available science on how to identify and pursue synergies at the national level and foster collaboration across connecting climate, biodiversity, and pollution related efforts.

The Junior Programme Officer assignment will be for two years with opportunities for extension.

Supervision

The JPO will be supervised by the Head of the SPU as First Reporting Officer and by a GSPU as second reporting officer. The E-Performance system will be used to appraise the JPO, a training and development plan will be agreed on an annual basis, and the recently established buddy and mentor system will be fully embraced. The Performance Appraisal will also be submitted to the donor-government.

Content and methodology of supervision

Establishment of a Work Plan:

During the first month of the assignment, the JPO will work jointly with his/her direct supervisors to finalize an agreed upon work plan. The final work plan will be discussed and mutually agreed to by the JPO and his/her supervisors. The work plan will be updated annually.

Evaluation:

The United Nations Performance Evaluation System (e-performance) will serve as a primary platform to evaluate the JPO's performance.

Methodology of supervision:

General objectives, desired results and anticipated problems are discussed beforehand with the incumbent. Following an induction organized in the first weeks whereby the JPO are introduced to the work programme and relevant project teams, regular meetings are held between the incumbent and the supervisors. Regular feedback on the progress of activities is obtained by the supervisors through review of work in progress. The incumbent is expected to carry out the duties under general supervision and to consult with the supervisors on issues of policy or other sensitive matters. Final results of each set of activities are reviewed for attainment of objectives and quality of work.

First appraising officer:

Ms. Kakuko Yoshida

Title first appraising officer: Senior Programme Management Officer/ Head of Strategic Planning Unit

Unit appraising officer: Policy and Programme Division

Location appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Second appraising officer:

Ms. Marieta Sakalian

Title appraising officer: Senior Programme Management Officer, Nature Action Global Programme Coordinator

Unit appraising officer: Ecosystems Division

Location appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

or

Mr. Niklas Hagelberg

Title appraising officer: Senior Programme Management Officer, Climate Action Global Programme Coordinator

Unit appraising officer: Climate Change Division

Location appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

or

Ms. Maria Cristina Zucca

Title appraising officer: Senior Programme Management Officer, Chemicals and Pollution Action Global Programme Coordinator

Unit appraising officer: Industry and Economy Division
Location appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

The direct supervisors of the Junior Programme Officer will be the first reporting officer and the additional and second reporting officer who jointly will:

- Introduce the Junior Programme Officer to the UNEP architecture, Medium Term Strategy and its three strategic objectives on Climate stability, Living in harmony with nature and Pollution free planet and the Programme of Work.
- Introduce the Associate Programme Officer to the ongoing and planned activities and relevant staff working on those activities.
- Introduce the Junior Programme Officer to the specific elements for which he/she will be responsible.
- Develop, jointly with the Junior Programme Officer, and in consultation with the second reporting officers a clear personal work programme with milestones and indicators against which performance would be measured.
- Meet weekly with the Junior Programme Officer to assess progress with the implementation of the duties assigned to him or her, review problems encountered and evaluate his or her level of job satisfaction as regards professional development and learning objectives.
- Meet twice a year with the Junior Programme Officer for a more formal discussion and evaluation of work progress.
- Provide regular feedback, guidance and mentoring as regards work-plan development and project implementation.

Duties, responsibilities and output expectations

Terms of reference

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Head of the Strategic Planning Unit, the incumbent will be responsible for the following:

1. Advise, inform, and communicate to senior management and project teams about key emerging issues and strategic partnerships in synergies and co-benefits to address the three planetary crises.
2. Assist the preparation of analytical research and guidance on win-win-win action including interacting with programme managers to gather data and best practises from current and past UNEP supported initiatives.
3. Support UNEP's work on delivery of on multiple thematic objectives of the GBF, UNFCCC Paris Agreement and chemicals and pollution related MEAs.
4. Contribute to UNEP's work on promotion synergies between diverse environmental policy instruments (NDC, NAP, NBSAP, national action plans and roadmaps concerning chemicals management and pollution control, etc.).
5. Contribute to strengthening the capacities on synergies across climate, biodiversity and chemicals and pollution agendas within UNEP and Member States.
6. Support the strategic planning processes. These include mainly but is not limited to strengthening the synergies across subprogrammes and programmatic approaches in the new Medium-Term Strategy and Programme of Work.
7. Assist in undertaking other functions of Subprogramme Coordination Unit, as may be assigned by the supervisors.

Output expectations

The incumbent will

1. Analysis of the status of implementation of the synergy's element of the current UNEP's MTS/PoW.
2. Documented UNEP progress on delivering synergies across its three thematic objectives to UNEP senior management and member states.
3. In collaboration with Regional Offices the needs of Member States for delivery of the GBF, UNFCCC Paris Agreement and chemicals and pollution related MEAs in a synergistic way are identified and the areas of support as well pathways to enable the support are mapped.

4. In collaboration with technical divisions and in consultation with Regional Offices support development of a project portfolio which delivers in a cost-effective way across climate, nature, and pollution objectives.
5. Increased number of cross-cutting initiatives which deliver in a synergetic and coordinated way to climate, nature and pollution objectives.
6. Increased number of the Member States with strengthened capacities on synergies across climate, biodiversity and chemicals and pollution agendas.

Travel

One mission is envisaged during first year of assignment.

One mission is envisaged during second year of assignment.

UNEP's Subprogramme Coordination Unit, Policy and Programme Division will provide any part of the mission cost that exceeds those covered by the donor government.

Training and Learning Elements

Training

The formal training that the Junior Professional Officer will receive in the Policy and Programme Division includes all mandatory training for UN staff (such as security in the field, gender mainstreaming, ethics, information security etc.), on-the-job training, and opportunities for language and computer training. In addition, the JPO will have the opportunity to be trained within the context of the programme activities which include the following training aspects:

- Policy formulation and international environmental diplomacy.
- Multilateral Environment Agreements and the interlinkages with the relevant SDGs.
- UNEP's support for implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements.
- Project preparation, management, monitoring and reporting.

Learning elements:

The JPO will be offered the opportunity to participate in project management and result-based management training organized for UNEP staff. This will not only enhance his/her understanding of results-based management, but also expose the JPO to the role and responsibilities of other parts of UNEP.

Depending on the academic background, experience and interests of the JPO, other learning elements will include participation in conferences or expert meetings, Massive Open Online Courses, introductions to the wider-UN, and timebound on-the-job learning periods in related teams (gender, chemicals, etc.), for example in the lead up to a major meeting.

The JPO will be encouraged to learn about all aspects of UN Environment's work, including its governance and the UN Environment Assembly.

After one year the Junior Professional Officer will:

- Have full knowledge of intergovernmental processes, roles and functions of biodiversity, climate and chemicals and pollution related MEAs, as well as the roles and functions of the UN system.
- Enhance Understanding of UNEP strategies, processes and procedures.
- Acquire an understanding of the role of UNEP within the UN system.
- Understand the main intergovernmental processes on climate, biodiversity, pollution and the interlinkages of the 2030 Agenda and the relevant SDGs.
- Have a comprehensive overview of UNEP's climate, nature and chemicals and pollution Programmes and their portfolio of projects, as well as key challenges and opportunities faced by developing countries and emerging economies in order to meet the UNFCCC climate objectives and accelerate the implementation of GBF and their own commitments.
- Gain experience in working with the actors and partners at global, regional and national level which work with UNEP to support the effective implementation of policies, voluntary measures, partnerships and capacity building activities in the context of preparedness for NDC and NBSAPs implementation.
- Enhance his/her negotiating, editing, writing, reporting, organizational and evaluation skills.

- Draft reports and briefing documents according to standards required and consistent with UN Environment's style and format and protocol.
- Prepare high-quality correspondence consistent with UNEP's style and format and protocol.

After the second year the JPO will:

- Have an excellent understanding of the functioning of the UN system and UNEP's role in specific, and intergovernmental processes related to this.
- Have an excellent understanding of interlinked global crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution in the broader context of achieving the SDGs.
- Have an excellent understanding of activities and processes which deliver impact across climate, nature and chemicals and pollution objectives.
- Have a thorough understanding of the challenges and barriers that countries face in delivery on multiple thematic objectives of the GBF, UNFCCC Paris Agreement and chemicals and pollution related MEAs, and the actions that can overcome these barriers and challenges.
- Have an excellent understanding of the intergovernmental processes on climate, biodiversity, pollution and the interlinkages of the 2030 Agenda and the relevant SDGs.
- Have a good understanding of the personal skills needed to make effective contributions to meetings and negotiations and of the skills needed to make effective presentations to various target audiences.
- Prepare inputs to support decision-making by Senior Management.

After three years (if applicable) the Junior Professional Officer will be able to:

- Support intergovernmental consultations on ways to enhance understanding and promoting synergistic approaches as well as the concept of the interlinked global crises and other related concepts.
- With minimal supervision analyze specific aspects of programme/project implementation and provide well-reasoned recommendations for decision-making.
- Collect evidence and monitor programme performance on synergies with minimum supervision, have improved writing/editing skills that contribute to higher level programme reporting and outreach, and shows a high level of understanding of working in a multi-cultural working environment in a United Nations setting.

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications

Education: Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in environment sciences, natural resources management, international development or related fields.

Skills:

- Excellent analytical, communication, planning and organization skills.
- Excellent research and writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to understand and analyse information and derive relevant findings and understanding of the science underpinning environmental issues.
- Knowledge of project cycle management and results-based reporting.
- Familiarity with data and indicators, database management and data visualization
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relations within a multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary working environment.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to perform in a team and deliver on time.
- Good computer literacy skills.

Work Experience:

At least 2 years of work experience in sustainable development, natural resources management, engineering, and implementation of environmental related programmes, projects and activities is required. Prior experience with developmental projects, emerging economies and developing country contexts is asset as well.

Languages:

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For the position advertised, fluency in English (oral and written) is required. Working knowledge of another UN language would be an asset.

Competencies

Professionalism: Knowledge of intergovernmental processes, roles and functions of biodiversity, climate and chemicals and pollution related MEAs; knowledge of policies/procedures in environmental sustainability and sustainable development issues; good research, analytical and problem-solving skills, including ability to identify and contribute to the solution of problems/issues; ability to plan, prioritize and deliver tasks effectively and on time; familiarity with and in the use of various research methodologies and sources and sound judgment.

Communication: Clear and effective verbal and written communication; listens to others, correctly interprets messages and responds appropriately; asks questions for clarification and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; willing to learn from others; places office agenda before personal agenda.

Living conditions at duty station

Nairobi has normal living conditions for a developing country in Africa.

Eligibility

Please read the vacancy carefully. In addition to the job specific requirements outlined in the above pdf vacancy announcement, the following requirements are applicable:

- Finnish citizenship
- Knowledge of Finnish or Swedish
- Maximum of 32 years of age at the time of application
- Master's degree