

Proposal for Jobs Summit Colloquium

Post graduates bridging into work for strengthened environmental management

Under the auspices of the

National Environmental Skills Planning Forum of the

Department of Environment Affairs (NESPF-DEA)

Proposal submitted by World Wide Fund for Nature, South Africa

Dr. Glenda Raven, Senior Manager: Environmental Leaders Programme

1 Problem statement

Please provide no more than half a page providing an outline of the impediments to job creation that exist and how the proposal will meet the challenges.

Over the past decade and a half, post schooling institutions have gone a long way to reorient curriculum, in line with requirements for environmental management in the job market. In addition, on the supply side of skills, universities are producing sufficient environmental management graduates for replacement and growth demand for professional skills. In 2016, at least 788 new graduates were seeking work in environmental management. Graduates are often unaware of where the jobs are, particularly in new and emerging streams of work. Despite attempts to line supply up to demand, many graduates continue to struggle to find their way into employment generally (31% of South Africa's youth are amongst the unemployed, 7,4% of these youth are graduates, StatsSA, 2016) and environmental management more specifically.

The Environmental Sector Skills Plan (DEA, 2010) and the Biodiversity Sector Human Capital Development Strategy (SANBI and Lewis Foundation, 2010) began to indicate the potential replacement and growth demand for environmental management skills in the period 2010 to 2030. Though some impact has been made in addressing environmental management skills needs, there remains some key skills in high demand required for improved environmental governance. A number of development contexts have emerged since these two studies that have implications for environmental management, including but not limited to the Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs) and Operation Phakisa. While there are in theory many jobs in environmental management, in practice organisations fail to recognise and realise these jobs.

This problem statement is framed within this disjuncture between demand and supply. Graduates, in relevant numbers and skills for environmental management struggle to access and enter into work where these skills are required. Effective environmental governance is compromised as a result, and the growth in graduate unemployment continues to grow year on year. This proposal seeks to facilitate transitions from supply to demand where environmental management skills are needed, to effectively deploy environmental management skills and at the same time address increasing graduate unemployment.

2 Jobs impact

Indicate the impact on employment of the proposal and what is required to make sure that there will be a positive impact on employment. Please also indicate other anticipated benefits from the proposal, if any.

Various studies have indicated the need for environmental management skills in development contexts, for example the need for 300 environmental managers in the municipal contexts to facilitate development that does not compromise socio-ecological integrity in the Strategic Infrastructure Projects. Few of these positions have come to fruition since the need was first established. In another example, Operation Phakisa estimates the creation of between 800,000 and one million jobs in this natural resource management context. This proposal seeks to facilitate the transition of supply into green jobs where these have been identified in these big development projects.

Organisations often do not recognise the need for environmental management within their mandates and / or strategies. This proposal would, firstly, require engagement with employer organisations to quantify and quality the need for environmental management skills. Once the skills needs are agreed, post graduates would be placed in these organisations for work-based learning. Mentoring interactions and skills development interventions will support the development of these new entrants and ongoing lobbying for the institutionalisation of these skills beyond the work-based learning placement, will be undertaken. The response is therefore framed as a means to strengthening organisations for improved environmental management.

Anticipated outcomes of this proposal are the unlocking and creation of an increased number of environmental management jobs in development contexts where these are or have been anticipated and needed. In addition, this proposal would facilitate contextualised work-based skills development, increased employability and enabling access to and entry into jobs for improved environmental management for new youth graduates qualifying from South African universities. While the impact on direct jobs is not huge, the multiplier effect in the long term can be significant as one graduate job in environmental management can unlock more jobs.

3 Theory of change

Please provide no more than half a page that indicates in practical terms, how the proposal would work – what has to be done, what the outputs would be, how that would lead to the desired outcomes.

The desired outcome of this proposal is the creation of an increased number of environmental management positions in key institutions (municipalities, public sector and private sector institutions) to guide improved environmental management in the context of infrastructure and socio-economic development.

Towards this anticipated outcome, the demand side for environmental management skills would have to be adequately scoped, within for example, the eight metro, 44 district and 205 local municipalities across South Africa, mandated agencies for environmental management at a provincial level, the construction sector, amongst others to quantify and qualify the required skills for improved environmental management. This will involve engaging with organisations that have a direct environmental mandate or where strategies, processes and programmes impact the environment, to enable a better understanding of the need for environmental management skills.

A similar analysis of the specific supply of environmental management skills will be required, as this proposal attempts to align supply to demand.

Through a work-based learning placement, the necessary skills will be developed *in situ*. Further lobbying will be undertaken for the institutionalisation of these positions, based on the demonstrated contributions of new graduates through this work-based placement to the expected mandate of these institutions.

4 Existing initiatives/experience

Indicate if the proposal has been attempted or piloted, and broadly what was learned.

Two programmes of work-based learning in the environment sector provides the model, background and experience for this proposed programme, namely the WWF-SA Environmental Leaders Programme and the sector wide Groen Sebenza Programme.

Groen Sebenza facilitated the placement, training and employment of 800 new entrants into working for improved environmental management between 2013 and 2016. Since 2011 WWF-SA's programme has supported 128 post graduates at Honours and Masters level to transition into jobs for conservation and environmental management. Both programmes focus on aligning supply of skills to the demand for skills in high demand, supported by dedicated and trained mentoring, and structured skills planning and development.

36% of the WWF-SA interns have transitioned into entry level jobs in their host organisation, over the years, with an increasing trend observed in more recent years, 42% in the 2017 cohort. Most of these placements have been growth positions, expanding environmental management activities of host organisations. This indicates the potential of work-based placements to unlock new jobs within organisations and expand mandates for strengthened environmental management.

Of the 120 respondents in the most recent tracer study of the WWF-SA programme in February 2018, 88 are employed and only one of the interns supported through the programme remain unemployed, four months after finishing a two year contract at the organisation that hosted her for an internship. 18 past interns are pursuing further studies, nine at doctoral level. The overall employment rate amongst responding past interns, excluding 14 who have just entered the job market in the second quarter of 2018 after the internship, is 98%, reflecting significant value in this programme in supporting transitions into work. 96 % of these interns are fully employed and two have entered into a further internship.

Further analysis of employment trends reflect that 82 % of new entrants into the job market transition into work either immediately or within three months of completing the internship and a further 15% enter into work between three and six months of concluding an internship.

This work-based learning model proves to be a useful mechanism for expanding jobs and growing organisational capacity for environmental management and supporting transitions into full employment.

5 Constituency participation in implementation

What is the potential for constituencies to participate in the implementation of the proposal.

The WWF-SA programme is based on a partnership approach. Various partners are required to scale up the scope of this programme for expanded value in job creation and enabling access to work. Partner categories, include:

- Co-ordinating partners - These include organisations who take on a co-ordinating role for a group of host organisations and related placements. These co-ordinators could either take on a regional focus, for example provincially or they could be sector specific for example in the marine or construction environments as two examples. The WWF-SA programme continues to play an advisory and quality assuring role.
- University partners – These include all universities across South Africa in working together with this programme to strengthen the supply of appropriately trained graduates, particularly at post graduate level.
- Host organisation partners – These include host organisations for work-based placements, and also collaboratively exploring the job creation potential for these positions within organisational mandates.
- Funding partners – The placement and development of interns, for a 12 month work-based placement is R195,000 in the WWF-SA programme, made up of monthly salaries, workshop training and programme co-ordination. This cost is however only a catalyst to institutionalising the position and subsequent costs of employment would have to be committed by participating organisations.
- Strategic partners – These are representative partners of a particular constituency and might be the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs for example as the oversight authority on performance of municipalities, through whom to lobby for institutionalising positions. Another example, is the Department of Public Service Administration who has the mandate of increasing state capability, one of their initiatives and directives being to facilitate internship placements for skills development and organisational strengthening.

6 Benefits

What social/economic groups would benefit from the proposal directly and indirectly? Please use the following table, and do not list more than 5 groups. Please describe the benefits as precisely as possible.

Group	Job creation	Other benefits	Time frame for success
Youth graduates	These are direct beneficiaries of access to and entry into jobs		15 months
Universities	These benefit from student throughput into employment		15 months
Employer organisations	Employer organisations benefit from expanded capability for environmental management.		3 years to ensure growth into a sustainable, institutionalised job

7 Cost and potential sources of funding

What social/economic groups would bear the cost of implementing the proposal directly or indirectly? Please use the following table, and do not list more than 5 groups. Please describe the costs as precisely as possible. In the case of financial costs, who would pay them?

Group	Anticipated costs	Potential sources of funding to implement the project	Time frame for impact
Public sector entities – municipalities, provincial environment agencies	R195,000 per work-based placement	Training budgets made up as 1% of annual salary bill	1 year to institutionalise positions and 3 years for effective performance
Private sector entities – construction for example	R195,000 per work-based placement	Training budgets	1 year to institutionalise positions and 3 years for effective performance

8 Risks

What are the main risks that would prevent the proposal from achieving the anticipated outcomes? Describe at least two.

The biggest risk to this proposal is the lack of institutionalisation of the proposed environmental management positions. This would mean a continued focus on the supply of skills without uptake on the demand side.

A further risk would be the lack of supporting partnerships through which to implement an expanded programme.

9 Risk mitigation

What should be done to mitigate the identified risks? Which stakeholder would be responsible for the risk mitigation activity?

Both risks noted might be mitigated through strategic interventions from oversight authorities for example COCTA, in the case of building municipal capability. This would require securing support from the most strategic institutions that might enable placements and institutionalising jobs, at a very early stage in the implementation of the project.

10 Additional comments