

UNEP JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

Post Title	Associate Scientific Affairs Officer, JPO
Unit	Office of the Chief Scientist
Location	Nairobi, Kenya
Duration	2 Years

Background information on UN Environment and the requesting Unit

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) is requested for United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) Office of the Chief Scientist. Based in the Executive Office, at the Nairobi duty station, the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS) operates as an independent office providing support to UNEP's Chief Scientist in the provision of strategic coordination of the science and analytics that inform the organization's decisions, policies, interventions and publications.

Under the overall guidance of the Executive Director, the OCS is proposing a step-change towards an increased focus on enhanced capacity and capabilities for strategic foresight, predictive data analytics, science communication, behavioural and cognitive sciences, as well as improvements the uptake, reach and impact of UNEP's science to policy activities.

The Associate Scientific Affairs Officer (JPO) will be joining a small team whose role includes promoting and coordinating the delivery of quality open science in support of UNEP's mission, enhancing the availability, accessibility and transparency of science-related workstreams, building strategic partnerships within the science community, and ensuring that UNEP's science activities and priorities are well-coordinated across the global programme.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

The medium-term strategy (MTS) for the period 2022-25 plots the direction that UNEP will take in pursuit of an inclusive and effective science-policy interface, where science 'can drive financial, economic and behavioural shifts towards sustainable consumption and production patterns to enable transformation at the pace and scale required'. Improving the delivery, coherence and uptake of science for transformative action, and closing environmental data gaps are key priorities outlined in the MTS. Also crucial, is the need for digitizing scientific knowledge and making data, knowledge and information available and accessible while anticipating emerging issues through improved foresight and horizon-scanning.

The Office of the Chief Scientist, together with divisional teams, is making concerted efforts to deepen UNEP's strategic engagement with a more diverse range of stakeholders and leaders across the scientific spectrum. The OCS will also place significantly more emphasis on solution-oriented approach, and promoting more dynamic and iterative approaches to the Science-Policy Interface.

The requested JPO will play a crucial role in this area of work, where demand for UNEP's support in for strengthening science to policy interventions is expanding rapidly.

The JPO will primarily be working on activities and programmes aimed at strengthening the science-policy interface and mobilizing a critical mass of the expertise and related institutional

capability in the service of key global environmental challenges. The JPO will support and help coordinate regional efforts to achieve a step-change in our strategic partnerships and cooperation with the science and tech community, with the aim of improving the utility of our collective scientific endeavors, and, ensuring that the knowledge and advice that is generated is fit for purpose.

Supervision

Under the overall guidance of the UNEP's Chief Scientist, the Senior Programme Coordinator for the OCS will provide the day-to-day supervision and guidance to the incumbent.

Content and methodology of the supervision

Upon arrival and during the first month, the Senior Programme Coordinator will conduct an induction of the incumbent, which will include:

- A formal brief on the organization and the work of the OCS, including an introduction to key divisional and Executive Office staff, as well as other UNEP offices, as relevant;
- A comprehensive introduction to the vision for the OCS, UNEP priorities, management and oversight structure, and the key workstreams including reading materials and one-on-one discussions with the Chief Scientist and relevant staff.

Following this induction period, a detailed workplan will be jointly prepared by the Junior Professional Officer and the supervisor, identifying and prioritizing deliverables against an agreed timeline. Co-location with the supervisor will ensure that the Junior Professional Officer is guided and supported in the delivery of this workplan through regular (minimum weekly) meetings, designed to monitor progress and address any emerging challenges, as well as discuss job satisfaction, training needs and other issues as needed.

The Junior Professional Officer's performance against the agreed workplan will further be monitored and appraised through the Inspira e-performance appraisal system, through a formal mid-term and end-of-year review including a sit-down meeting to discuss progress and written reviews from both the first and second reporting officers. Performance appraisal reports will be shared with the donor government.

First appraising officer: Jason Jabbour

Title first appraising officer: Regional Coordinator, Scientific

Unit first appraising officer: North America Office

Location first appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Second appraising officer: Andrea Hinwood

Title second appraising officer: Chief Scientist, OCS Executive Office

Location second appraising officer: Nairobi, Kenya

Duties, responsibilities and output expectations

Under the oversight of the UNEP Chief Scientist, and the direct supervision of the Senior Program Coordinator in the OCS, the incumbent will be responsible for the following duties:

- Support efforts to strengthen the science-policy interface; mobilizing the science, research and technology community and science-related institutional capability, in the service of key and environmental challenges;

- Manage projects including engaging implementing partners and sub-contractors through UNEP legal instruments; ensuring efficient project implementation and timely and consistent technical and financial reporting from project partners; establishing systems for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation; reporting to the donor and UNEP; and managing the day-to-day work of the project partners;
- Support efforts to develop and implement an organization-wide framework and approach for strategic foresight (including horizon scanning) and prioritization for input into annual and strategic planning.
- Provide substantive and technical inputs to support the overall science direction and country/regional needs that require UNEP attention; including the preparation of briefing materials, reports and background papers;
- Serve as a focal point for emerging issues and horizon scanning across all disciplines of environmental science, keeping abreast of analyses and reports on latest developments, including dataflows and relevant knowledge products;
- Support the development of a new UNEP Science Strategy including coordination of input across divisions and regional offices;
- Provide substantive support to organize and participate in relevant working groups, meetings, conferences, consultation with other agencies and partners on scientific matters;
- Provide well researched and sound analysis of issues and developments affecting programme/project development, administration and implementation.
- Build positive rapport; effectively and in a timely manner liaise and interact with colleagues and concerned parties internally and externally.
- Perform other duties relevant to the assignment.

Output expectations

With the support of the JPO, the Office of the Chief Scientist will be able to achieve the following outputs:

- Action-oriented Science *strategy* with concrete steps for strengthening key partnerships and key science-policy engagements is furnished and executed as well as proposals for behavioural sciences at UNEP;
- Continued work on the development and collation of metrics to measure the effectiveness and impacts of UNEPs products;
- Enhanced ability to keep up to date on key developments and innovations and emerging issues.
- Development and implementation of a science mentoring program to improve diversity and geographic representation of authors and panel members in UNEP Programmes.
- The development of new relationships and strategic partnerships with key science-related bodies, associations and institutions are established;
- Enhanced liaison and closer relations between science, government and private industry are forged;

Travel

The Junior Professional Officer may be required to travel on missions to attend meetings and/or to support preparations and delivery of key events.

Training and Learning Elements

The incumbent will benefit from a minimum of 5 (and a maximum of 15) training days per year, including, for example:

- training in a variety of areas (programme and project management, professional development and computer skills) offered by the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ);
- substantive short-term training courses offered by academic or other institutions on issues relevant to the environment and the international science-policy interface; or
- short-term skills training offered by external institutions in areas such as programme management, monitoring and evaluation, training or facilitation.

In addition, the Junior Professional Officer will have access to online language training (in one of the six official UN languages) offered by the UNHQ (usually bi-weekly eLearning modules).

Learning elements

After one year the JPO will have acquired a substantive knowledge of the work of UN Environment Programme and the United Nations system and the international architecture for environmental sustainability. The JPO will develop a substantive understanding of the environmental dimensions of sustainable development within the UN system and the relevant environmental dataflows to support the assessment and monitoring of SDG indicators and the significance of the role of science in international decision making. The JPO will also gain key contacts in and outside the UN system in various fields of environmental science and the science-policy interface.

After two years the JPO will: have gained improved editing, writing and reporting skills, along with improved understanding of the process of writing and vetting official reports for the UN system and submission of reports and background documents to intergovernmental processes (e.g., the UN Environment Assembly). The JPO will have gained a solid understanding of the key elements of good project design, including monitoring and evaluation frameworks; the ability to plan, organize and support large gatherings of diverse stakeholders.

Academic Qualifications

Advanced university degree (Master degree) in one or more specialized disciplines of environmental science or a related field is required. A first university degree with a combination of three years professional and academic qualifications may be accepted in lieu of the advanced degree.

Working experience

- A minimum of two years of relevant professional experience with government agencies, non-governmental and/or international organizations working at the science-policy interface and preferably in environmental science, sustainability or a related field;
- Prior experience in contributing to project design or program management in complex socio-economic settings an advantage;
- Candidates with complimentary knowledge or experience on the work of the United Nations and international environmental affairs are preferred.

Skills

- Complete fluency in spoken and written English is required, including the ability to draft/edit a broad range of written reports, presentations and communications materials, and communicate complex ideas and concepts in a clear and concise manner;
- Familiarity with and experience in the use of various research methodologies and sources, including data analysis, visualization and research design;
- Experience as a Research Assistant and background and education in environmental science or related field is desired.
- Demonstrated professional competence in environmental issues and knowledge of topics relating to the work of UNEP;
- Ability to establish and maintain good working relationships with a broad range of stakeholders to implement organizational objectives;
- Ability to plan and organize work; ability to work with tight deadlines and handle multiple concurrent activities; capacity to identify priority activities and assignments; efficiency in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results;
- Computer literacy, especially with MS Word and Excel;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, works collaboratively to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; willing to learn from others, and able to work in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment;

Competencies

Professionalism: Knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts and approaches relevant to particular sector, functional area or another specialized field. Ability to identify issues, analyze and participate in the resolution of issues/problems. Ability to develop sources for data collection. Conceptual analytical and evaluative skills to conduct independent research and analysis, including familiarity with and experience in the use of various research sources, including electronic sources on the internet, intranet and other databases. Shows pride in work and in achievements; Ability to apply judgment in the context of assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities; Demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; Is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; Is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; Shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; Remains calm in stressful situations.

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; Solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; Is willing to learn from others; Places team agenda before personal agenda; Supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; Shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

Client Orientation: Considers all those to whom services are provided to be "clients" and seeks to see things from clients' point of view; establishes and maintains productive partnerships with clients by gaining their trust and respect; identifies clients' needs and matches them to appropriate solutions; monitors ongoing developments inside and outside the clients' environment to keep informed and anticipate problems; keeps clients informed of progress or setbacks in projects; meets timeline for delivery of products or services to client.