

UN ENVIRONMENT JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

Post Title:	JPO – UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration
Office/division/MEA	
Division:	UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration/Ecosystems
Unit:	no
Location:	Nairobi
Duration:	2 or 3 years

Background information on UN Environment and the requesting Unit

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of the sustainable development agenda within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UN Environment implements legislative mandates of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), the United Nations General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF), ensuring coherent delivery of its programme of work. Its mandate is to, among others, coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of the governments and the international community for action.

On 1 March 2019, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, with the aim to ‘prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems worldwide’. It requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to lead the implementation of the UN Decade, in collaboration with the Rio Conventions and other partners. The UN Decade covers terrestrial as well as coastal and marine ecosystems. A global call to action, it draws together political support, scientific research and financial muscle to massively scale up restoration. The implementation of the Decade is guided by a Strategy (available on the UN Decade website) as well as an Advisory Board.

This post is located in UNEP’s Ecosystems Division, at Nairobi duty station, and linked to the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. JPO will report to the Coordinator of the Decade and contribute to the Decade’s implementation in terms of coordination tasks, as well as provide support on the monitoring and evaluation of the UN Decade MPTF (and other related funding) operations in an assigned functional area. She/he will be part of a small core team in FAO and UNEP, which manages the implementation of the core activities of both co-lead agencies of the Decade.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

Demand for restoration activities is growing as the UN Decade is scaling up its operations. Junior Professional Officer is needed to assist in connecting UNEP/UN expertise and activities of the Decade partners to the work of Rio Conventions and other MEAs, relevant global and regional frameworks and activities. UNEP aims to respond in particular to country requests on support in relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (with a dedicated Target 2 on restoration) and the demand of better linking climate and nature agendas (recently re-confirmed during the UNFCCC COP28) with broader targets such as SDGs and beyond – the fields in which the Junior Professional Officer support is requested.

These coordination and multi-agendas activities offer a good opportunity for early career professionals to build on extensive networks and knowledge across several sectors, as well as gain technical environmental/restoration expertise with clear linkages to policy frameworks and MEAs. Two-three years would definitely allow for the possibility to deep dive in the UN Decade activities and provide specific support to the implementation on the ground.

Supervision

UNEP Coordinator of the UN Decade will be the Junior Professional Officer's supervisor and work in daily collaboration. An annual workplan is to be established together and the UNEP staff E-Performance system used for appraising performance.

Content and methodology of the supervision

The Junior Professional Officer will receive an introduction to UN Environment, the UN Decade and its partnership (including FAO as co-lead), as well as orientation on the overall work, deliverables and future plans of the UN Decade.

The Junior Professional Officer will carry out regular discussion and evaluation with the supervisor in light of a previously established workplan. This will include the frequency and nature of assessments of accomplishments, review of problems, discussions on job-satisfaction; discussion of development plan and learning objectives, guidance to be provided in development of the workplan and project implementation.

Guidance will be provided through interaction with the supervisor on a regular basis, through the work with other senior staff in the office and through regular engagement with the colleagues in the Secretariat and beyond. The overall context of management and guidance includes discussion of general objectives, desired results and anticipated challenges. Regular feedback on the progress of activities is obtained by the supervisor through review of work in process. The incumbent is expected to carry out the duties under general supervision and to consult with the supervisor on issues of policy or other sensitive matter. Final results of each set of activities are reviewed for attainment of objectives and quality of work. In addition, guidance will be provided to the Junior Professional Officer through a supporting team structure.

First appraising officer: Ms. Natalia Alekseeva

Title first appraising officer: Coordinator, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

Unit first appraising officer: UN Decade

Location first appraising officer: Nairobi

Second appraising officer: Mr. Bruno Pozzi

Title second appraising officer: Deputy Director

Unit second appraising officer: Director office, Ecosystems Division

Location second appraising officer: Nairobi

Duties, responsibilities and output expectations

Terms of reference

The UN Decade Junior Professional Officer will support the daily work of the Secretariat, contributing to the implementation of the UN Decade on Ecosystem restoration, in particular:

- Contribute to the core team tasks according to the UN Decade Strategy, 5-year programme document and MPTF planning, and operationalising related activities and building on UNEP corporate priorities.
- Identify and support opportunities to connect UN Decade to global policy priorities, including nature-climate nexus, futures thinking or food systems.
- Provide support to implementation activities of the UN Decade.
- Collaborate with UN Decade partners and restoration actors around the world in building synergies with global, regional and national restoration priorities and activities in support of the UN Decade.
- Prepare briefing documents, meeting reports and other materials as appropriate.
- Support the UN Decade coordination work.
- Assist in project management related to the UN Decade.
- Assist in preparing and organising meetings with Member States, partners, MEAs etc.

Output expectations

Coordination backstopping planned and supported in consultation with all relevant players and partners of the UN Decade.

Synergies with Rio Conventions and other MEAs are advanced in support of the restoration targets and the UN Decade implementation.

Operational support in relation to the UN Decade activities and on the ground action.

Travel

Travel will be based on requirements/needs that will arise and availability of funds.

Training and Learning Elements

Training

On the job training: The Junior Professional Officer will receive unique experience and training within the HQ/Nairobi of a UN organisation, including the functioning of intergovernmental negotiations and inter-agency coordination mechanisms. The

successful candidate will receive an overview of the range of environmental sustainability issues within UN Environment's work programme, the role of UN Environment in setting the global environmental agenda and its coordination role within the UN system. The Junior Professional Officer will receive exposure to the functioning of intergovernmental bodies and will obtain an in-depth understanding of the UN system organisations working on sustainable development.

UN training courses: The Junior Professional Officer will be required to take several training courses that are mandatory for UN staff. He/she will also be invited to take other training courses developed by the UN system or by UN Environment to enhance his/her performance.

Learning elements:

After one year the Junior Professional Officer is able to: Draft reports and briefing documents according to standards required by UNEP and FAO and consistent with UN style format and protocol. Prepare high-quality correspondence for the UN Decade official communication and exchanges with partners and member states. Have a clear understanding of restoration frameworks and links with the UN Decade. Solid knowledge in relation to main actors and activities across nature-climate agendas linked to restoration and UN Decade implementation.

After two years the Junior Professional Officer is able to: Provide coordination support to the restoration activities both within the UN and outside in the context of the joint actions. Prepare and lead relevant meetings. Prepare Terms of References for individual consultants and supervise their work.

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications

Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in a field related to the environment, sustainable development, economics, law, international relations, or political science.

A first-level university degree in combination with additional qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

A keen interest in the work of the United Nations in general and of UN Environment Programme in particular, and a personal commitment to UN Environment's mission and to the ideals of the UN Charter.

Skills

Languages: English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For the position advertised, fluency in English is required. Knowledge of other UN languages would be an asset.

Working experience

At least 2 years of relevant work experience in sustainable development and environmental activities or related work is required. Prior experience at the international level is advantageous and a development-oriented employment history or previous experience in development is desirable.

Competencies

Professionalism: Knowledge of policies/procedures in the area of biodiversity and climate change, sustainable development; good research, analytical and problem-solving skills, including the ability to identify and contribute to the solution of problems/issues; familiarity with and in the use of various research methodologies and sources; and sound judgement.

Planning and organising: Strong organisational skills, including proven ability to effectively plan and coordinate own work as well as that of others; allocating appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work.

Teamwork: Good interpersonal skills and ability to establish and maintain effective partnership and working relations in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity and gender in organisation and management of meetings and in project implementation.

Living conditions at duty station

Normal living conditions.