

UN ENVIRONMENT JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER REQUEST

General Information

- Post Title:** Junior Professional Officer (Circular Economy and Sustainability)
- Unit:** Asia and the Pacific Office
- Location:** Bangkok
- Duration:** Initially one year with the possibility to extend up to a maximum of 3 years
- Opening Date:** 20 January 2022
- Closing Date:** 18 February 2022

Background information on UN Environment and the requesting Unit

The UN 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. Our mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

UNEP's Asia and the Pacific Office, located in Bangkok, geographically serves 41 countries across the region to promote and implement sustainable development solutions. It works in close partnership with key stakeholders including governments, the private sector, civil society, and other UN agencies. Asia Pacific is the largest and fastest growing region in the world. At UNEP, we are striving to decouple economic development from resource use and environmental degradation, while reaping the benefits of this transition to ensure inclusiveness and poverty eradication.

Our work focuses on the following areas:

- Engaging with governments in their transition to inclusive green economies.
- Fostering partnerships with business and industry for cleaner production and green investments.
- Influencing consumer information and choice for sustainable lifestyles; and
- Strengthening and communicating the knowledge and scientific base for resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production.

UNEP is leading on SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) which provides the perfect mixture of downstream and upstream indicators for circular economy to close the loop as local as possible in the most environmentally and economically efficient manner with social benefits. As SDG 12 supports all the other SDGs, circular economy is one of the key tools to support the implementation of most of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. UNEP is providing technical support to the member states and stakeholders on Circular Economy for Resource Efficient, Pollution Free and Carbon Neutral Asia and the Pacific and a major project is being developed encompassing current work and future areas of work with a title, “Circular Economy for Asia and the Pacific (CEAP)”.

Why is the Junior Professional Officer requested/needed?

The Asia and the Pacific region is rapidly moving towards resource efficiency and carbon neutrality due to various emerging scenarios such as multilateral agreements including SDGs, the Paris Agreement and so on; due to the national policies including plans to go carbon neutral by 2050 and 2060; and also to create resilience in the wake of disasters and pandemics.

To accelerate the pace, many countries in Asia and the Pacific region have started focusing on circular economy in line with SDG 12 and Paris Agreement. However, the term “Circular Economy” still means differently to different countries and stakeholders due to its initial major focus on end of pipe solutions for recovery and recycling of materials and energy. Thus, capacity building and knowledge sharing are required for a uniform understanding across the region on “Circular Economy” for whole value chain to create “cradle to cradle” economies.

UNEP has been supporting member states and stakeholders on raising the awareness, capacity and knowledge on “Circular Economy.” Now, for the furthering of its support at national, sub-regional and regional level through the governments, UN Country Teams, sub-regional and regional fora, UNEP is building its in-house capacity.

To support UNEP’s focus on “Circular Economy” a JPO will strengthen UNEP’s outreach to member states, private sector and other partners to advance the best practices in areas of policy analysis, circularity in value chains and environment sustainability and leverage partnerships.

Over two years initially, the JPO will:

- Support national, sub-regional and regional work initiatives by UNEP to advance the Circular Economy approach in the Asia Pacific Region including awareness-raising, policy analysis and outreach, partnership establishments and stakeholder engagements
- Facilitate joint partnership initiatives development and innovative financing to support member states, involving governments, private sector and other relevant stakeholder
- Facilitate platforms for dialogue, knowledge sharing and technical experts

Content and methodology of the supervision

The receiving office and supervisor will aim to provide a high quality of supervision and mentoring to the JPO including the following elements:

- The supervisor will brief the JPO on arrival, as well as carry out introductions to colleagues in the office. Relevant internal orientation documents will be provided to enable the JPO to explore elements of interest in more detail independently.

- Expectations and activities/outputs will be discussed clearly in advance of assignments. The style of supervision will involve regular consultations and feedback on the attainment of objectives and quality of work will be given on delivery of agreed outputs. The supervision will include work programme discussion and evaluation in light of the performance appraisal, discussion of development plan and learning review of problems, discussions on job-satisfaction. The JPO and the supervisor will use Inspira, the UN Secretariat platform for online performance appraisal, to structure the timing and methodology of feedback and tracking of performance.
- The JPO is expected to carry out the duties under general supervision and to consult with the supervisor on issues of policy or other sensitive matters.
- The Asia and Pacific Office will identify a Buddy and Mentor for the JPO

Duties, responsibilities and output expectations

Terms of reference

The JPO under the supervision of the Regional Coordinator for Resource Efficiency subprogramme will provide policy analysis and outreach, technical support and facilitate knowledge sharing to UNEP, member states and stakeholders:

1. Enhance Member States and other actors' engagement on development and implementation of "Circular Economy" in line with the SDG 12, Paris Agreement and other regional and national agenda on sustainable development:
 - Participates in the development, implementation and evaluation of the regional activities and implementation of circular economy; monitors and analyses project implementation of various activities and develops comprehensive review of the region on the circular economy pathways
 - Reviews relevant documents and reports; identifies problems and issues to be addressed and proposes corrective actions; liaises with relevant parties; identifies and tracks follow-up actions.
 - Works with UN Country Teams, Regional and Sub-regional bodies including Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) to develop and implement the activities on circular economy.
2. Enhance the knowledge on circular economy in the region
 - Organizes, in collaboration with internal and external partners, by planning facilitating workshops, through other interactive sessions and assisting in developing action plans that Governments, private sector and youth and universities networks will use to manage the knowledge transfer.
 - Researches, analyzes and presents information gathered from diverse sources.
 - Assists in policy development, including the review and analysis of issues and trends, preparation of evaluations or other research activities and studies related to sustainable consumption and production, circularity and inclusive green economy.
 - Undertakes survey initiatives; designs data collection tools; reviews, analyses and interprets responses, identifies problems/issues and prepares conclusions.
 - Prepares various written outputs, draft background papers, analysis, sections of reports and studies, and inputs to publications.
3. Supports the development of a comprehensive portfolio on circular economy initiatives for Asia and the Pacific region for partnerships

- Provides substantive support to consultative and other meetings and conferences to include proposing agenda topics, identifying participants, preparation of documents and presentations.
- Undertakes outreach activities; conducts training workshops, seminars, makes presentations on assigned topics/activities.
- Participates in or leads field missions, including provision of guidance to external consultants, government officials and other parties and drafting mission summaries.
- Coordinates activities related to budget and funding and prepares related documents/reports.
- Performs other duties as required, related to the resource efficiency portfolio in the region

Output expectations

1. Member States and other stakeholders are well aware and well knowledgeable on the circular economy as a mechanism to achieve the SDGs, especially SDG 12, Paris Agreement and other relevant commitments on sustainable development and green economy.
2. Greater awareness among UNEP, UN Country Teams and its partners on circular economy frameworks, policies, technologies, business models and stakeholder engagement for socioeconomic and environment nexus across Asia Pacific.
3. Successful partnerships to advance Circular Economy initiatives and mobilizing their implementation and monitoring in Asia and the Pacific region.

Travel

As required by the Regional Office, the JPO will undertake missions and/or conduct (in collaboration with the Ecosystem Management team) workshops/events in the region. Many of activities will also be held online due to impact of COVID pandemic. The costs will be covered by UNEP.

Training and Learning Elements

Training

The JPO will be offered the opportunity to undertake at least one of the following training courses:

- External courses such as PRINCE 2 (Projects in Controlled Environment), organizational management consulting, and project design and management as these would greatly facilitate performing his/her duties.
- Other project management training and career development: The JPO will be offered to undertake relevant training programmes organized by the learning center of the UN in Bangkok and by UN Office in Nairobi.
- Technical training in the field of circular economy focusing on sustainable consumption and production and sustainable lifestyles also including green public procurement and life cycle assessment.
- Policy writing and communications outreach using digital technology

Learning elements:

After one year, the JPO is expected to be able to:

- Have full knowledge of the UN system and the role of UNEP within the UN system. Understand UNEP’s programmatic and operational structures and related rules and regulations, which can be extended to other UN organizations as the UN moves toward One-UN programming.
- Develop policy papers to brief various audiences
- Promote information and knowledge management on digital platforms
- Familiarize with the UN Reform and engagement with other UN Agencies in UN Country Teams systems and processes
- Draft technical reports and assessment reports.
- Draft UNEP “project implementation documents” such as “Small Scale Funding Agreements” and “Memorandums of Understanding” with external project partners.

After two years, the JPO is expected to be able to:

- Strengthen expertise and skills acquired in Year One
- Assess project proposals and formulate remedial action proposals
- Apply skills gained within government agencies, non-governmental organizations, research institutes, and the private sector and UN Systems including UN Country Teams

After three years (if applicable), the JPO able to lead independently various activities on the development and implementation of circular economy processes in the region.

Technical learning elements:

- Strengthen expertise and skills acquired in Year One and lead on many areas especially in-depth understanding of the policies, institutions, technology, financing, business models and stakeholder engagement with behavior change for deployment of circular economy at regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national level
- Be a resource expert in UNEP providing valuable and practical experience in sustainable consumption and production, resource efficiency for mainstreaming circular economy
- Ability to actively engaged by UNEP staff for lesson learning and better applications programmes and provide technical support to UNEP staff.
- Develop and lead dialogue with UNEP teams for member states and UNEP partners raising the awareness on circular economy.
- Design and present ideas for key activities to support the work programme

Qualifications and experience

Qualifications

Advanced university degree (Master’s degree or equivalent) in any of the relevant fields having any of the aspects of the Environment (engineering, economics, management, etc.)

Skills

Capable of using Microsoft Office (word, excel, powerpoint) efficiently and have good negotiation skills with policymakers and stakeholders. Analytical skills for data analysis are also required.

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For the post advertised fluency in oral and written English is required. Basic knowledge of Finnish or Swedish languages is required. Knowledge of another UN language would be an advantage.

Working experience

A minimum of two years of progressively responsible experience in environment and sustainability and experience working with government, private sector, or civil society with a focus on one or more aspects of circular economy.

Experience working with UN entities or other international organizations is desirable. Experience working in regional setting especially in the Asia-Pacific region is an advantage.

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.

Planning and Organizing: Develops clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; identifies priority activities and assignments; adjusts priorities as required; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.

Teamwork and Communication: 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.

Additional Requirements

This position is sponsored by the Government of Finland and is open only for nationals of Finland. The maximum age is 32 years by 31 December 2022.

Living conditions at duty station

Normal living conditions for a large city in Asia (Bangkok).

How to apply

To apply for this job, submit your application to the Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Email contact: KEO-90@formin.fi

This post is in the context of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme sponsored by the Government of Finland. Only nationals of FINLAND are eligible to apply. The maximum age is 32 years by 31 December 2022.