



CONSERVATION PLANNER

*Also Known as Conservation Ecologist,
Conservation Scientist, Environmental Planner*

Increased environmental awareness has resulted in a greater focus on waste minimization, resource management, pollution prevention and environmental consideration. This shift in emphasis will provide many new opportunities for conservation planners.

Conservation Planners develop management strategies for priority conservation sites. They decide on the systems, tools and infrastructure to be used for the management and restoration of priority conservation sites. They use computers and information technology to create diagrams or maps to communicate plans often with GIS computer-aided design (CAD) programmes or other mapping or diagramming software. They also conduct environmental impact studies to examine the ecological effects of pollutants, disease, human activities, nature and climate change on specific areas.

The work of Conservation Planners involves an interesting combination of being outside surveying the landscape and collecting or verifying data and working indoors with computers, maps and legal and policy documents.

Skills

Conservation Planners work with other environmentalist and/or authorities to supervise the implementation of environmental management, protection or restoration projects.

- Data collection and interpretation skills
- Knowledge of environmental policy and legislation, trends and patterns
- Report writing
- Developing models
- Innovative problem solving skills

Tasks

- Develop new planning tools, particularly GIS and remote sensing maps
- Process and synthesise complex scientific data into practical strategies for conservation and restoration.
- Monitor and restore conservation sites (e.g. clearing invasive alien vegetation)
- Develop natural resource management plans
- Create graphic representation of conservation sites, i.e. maps and diagrams

Studies

BA specialising in Geography or Regional and Town Planning or BSc in Environmental Science. Some universities offering these courses are UWC, US, UCT, WSU or UZ.

National Diploma in Environmental Management offered at CPUT.

Employers

- Research institutions (e.g. CSIR)
- Parastatals (e.g. SANParks)
- National government agencies (e.g. DWA)



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