



## RESOURCE ECONOMIST

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*Also known as Environmental Economist,  
Researcher, Sustainable Development Specialist*

This is a relatively new and evolving career field. Much of the work of Resource and Environmental Economists are treading new territory and often ground-breaking in nature.

Resource Economists apply economic theory and methods to environmental problems that require detailed analysis to improve management strategies and policy. The field aims to address the connections and interdependence between economics and ecosystems. The work of a Resource Economist requires awareness of a broad range of social, political and environmental contexts.

Resource Economists spend time in the field and office environment. They often spend a lot of time reading, gathering and processing information.

## Skills

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Resource Economists monitor and analyse economic and environmental trends to formulate recommendations for improved environmental management strategies and policies. Skills required include:

- An interest in social and economic matters in relation to the natural world
- Creative, thorough and analytic in problem-solving
- Enjoys detailed and systematic work
- Strong mathematical and numerical ability, logical and abstract reasoning ability
- Ability to communicate easily and effectively both in writing and verbally
- Ability to work with large multi-disciplinary teams on complex problems
- Ability to analyse and interpret information

## Tasks

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- Assess the costs and benefits of various activities, policies or regulations that affect the environment or natural resources.
- Collect and analyse data to compare the environmental implications of economic policy or practice alternatives.
- Conduct research to study the relationships between environmental problems and patterns of economic production and consumption.
- Develop economic models, forecasts or scenarios to predict future economic and environmental outcomes.
- Perform complex, dynamic and integrated mathematical modelling of ecological, environmental and economic systems.
- Identify and recommend environmentally-friendly business practices.

## Studies

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B.Agric with Ecology/Botany and Economics or B.Economics / B.Com / B. Bus Science with Geography/Botany/Zoology or BSc with Economics. Some universities where these combinations are offered include UWC, UJ, Wits, SU, NMMU and UCT

## Employers

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- International and local financial institutions (e.g. World Bank, Land Bank)
- Research Institutions (e.g. Energy Research Centre-UCT)
- Mining companies (e.g. Anglo American)
- NGO (e.g. Sustainable Energy Africa)



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