Connecting Paths
Your Environmental Career Journey Starts Here
At ECO Canada, environmental careers are our business. Defining your career path can be daunting, so we’ve put together some resources to help you identify which path may be right for you.

- **CHOOSING YOUR PATH**
- **THE OPTIONS ARE ENDLESS**
- **NARROWING THE FIELD**
- **GROW YOUR EXPERTISE**
- **FINDING HELP ALONG THE WAY**
Choosing Your Path
Navigating The Environmental Sector

Who Are The Environmental Professionals?

To navigate the industry, you need to know the key landmarks

- 364,000 Environmental Workers in Canada
- 60% Hold a Diploma or Higher
- 25% Are Women, 6% Are Indigenous
- 65% Have 4 or More Years of Experience
- 62% Are Under 44 Years of Age

Where do you find them?

Environmental work is spread across every province and territory. From government policy-makers in the capitol to workers at remote northern sites, environmental work is critical to Canada’s economy.

Below are three provinces with the highest concentration of workers in the environmental sector, based on analysis of environmental job postings across the country.

BC 22%
AB 17%
ON 41%
Discover the ABCs of the Canadian environmental sector

In Canada’s green economy, the sheer number and range of green careers can be overwhelming. We’ve broken down the industry into 3 sectors, comprised of 13 individual sub-sectors, to help you determine where your path will lead.

**A. Environmental Protection**
- Air Quality
- Water Quality
- Site Assessment & Reclamation
- Waste Management
- Health & Safety

**B. Resource Management**
- Energy
- Fisheries & Wildlife
- Natural Resource Management

**C. Resource Sustainability**
- Sustainability
- Education & Training
- Research & Development
- Policy & Legislation
- Communications & Public Awareness

Let’s break it down...

- **SECTOR A – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**
  1. Air Quality
  2. Water Quality
  3. Site Assessment & Reclamation
  4. Waste Management
  5. Health & Safety

- **SECTOR B – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**
  1. Energy
  2. Fisheries & Wildlife
  3. Natural Resource Management

- **SECTOR C – RESOURCE SUSTAINABILITY**
  1. Sustainability
  2. Education & Training
  3. Research & Development
  4. Policy & Legislation
  5. Communications & Public Awareness

**TOP 5 IN DEMAND SUB-SECTORS**

- Natural Resource Management
- Environment, Health and Safety
- Sustainability, Policy & Legislation
- Water Quality
- Energy Efficiency
If a career in Canada's environmental sector is part of your plan, start off by setting a strong foundation

Environmental work often involves technical skills and knowledge. The majority of post-secondary environmental programs focus on equipping students with the knowledge they will need to enter the workforce after graduating.

Our survey shows that 60% of environmental employees have a college education or equivalent. This number is expected to increase as the workforce gains younger, highly-educated members.

Not all environmental jobs require specialized technical knowledge. The rapid growth of jobs related to sustainability, climate change, and environmental policy mean there are opportunities within the sector for graduates of non-scientific programs.

A growing number of environmental professionals work in areas such as:

- Policy and Legislation
- Environmental Law
- Communication
- Environmental Education and Outreach
- Stakeholder Engagement

TOP 5 AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EMPLOYMENT

- Regulatory Officers and Technical Inspectors
- Agriculture and Horticulture
- Engineering: Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical
- Managers: Financial and Business Services
- Life Science Professionals

With 22% of the current workforce expected to retire in the next 10 years, there's more space for green job-growth to open up. Combined with a surge in environmental education programs, Canada is poised to be a leader in green job growth and have a strong base of environmental professionals at all career levels.
Transitioning into an Environmental Career

Even if you began your career in another field, there are opportunities to transfer your skill set into a rewarding environmental career.

Within Canada, the workforce has grown ten-fold in two decades.

90,000 additional jobs are expected to be created by 2024.

22% of the workforce is expected to retire in the next ten years.

27% of hiring managers recruited recent post-secondary graduates.

The environmental sector is diverse and employers need a variety of skills.

Both existing and emerging roles often require more than a science degree or environmental diploma.

When hiring candidates for environmental roles, employers are looking for these 3 things:

Opportunities exist for people with skills in:

- Information Technology
- Communications
- Social Sciences
- Research and Education
- Marketing and Events
- Planning and Strategy
- Business Administration
- Financial Management

I work in the environmental field because it connects my passion with a purpose. As a Communications Specialist, I connect with people every day about the importance of swimmable, drinkable, fishable water and how to get involved in public decisions about water.

- Shane Schofield, Lake Ontario Waterkeeper
The Options Are Endless
Emerging Environmental Careers

With the growth of the environmental sector comes new and exciting areas of employment. Below are examples of 2 emerging careers.

Climate Change Specialist

Roles and responsibilities may include:

- Implement projects supporting climate resiliency
- Project development and management
- Stakeholder engagement: determine social impact measurement of policies
- Develop environmental management systems
- Environmental economics
- GIS and remote sensing
- Greenhouse gas quantification

Requirements typically include a bachelor’s degree in:

- Environmental science
- Atmospheric sciences
- Social sciences
- Policy
- Urban planning

Salary expectations:

- Starting: $45,000 per year
- Top end: $100,000 per year

Environmental Data Analyst

Roles and responsibilities may include:

- Conduct site visits and collect baseline information
- QA/QC for environmental data
- Make predictions and recommendations
- Data and database management
- Review and organize field notes and data
- Understand environmental legislation
- Conduct studies and research to fill data gaps

Requirements typically include a bachelor’s or diploma in:

- Geography
- Computer science
- Natural resource management
- Engineering
- Environmental science

Salary expectations:

- Starting: $44,000 per year
- Top end: $100,000 per year
Picture Yourself
Imagine you are standing at the rail of a research vessel hundreds of kilometres off the Canadian coastline. You are an oceanographer and you've spent the last three hours directing an underwater vehicle that is gathering data from the ocean floor.

You have been aboard this ship sailing for the past four weeks studying a portion of the ocean floor for a large oil exploration company. The company has hired you to help determine the location of a new pipeline where it will be at the least risk of damage from the ocean.

Conditions at the ocean's bottom can change quickly, so before a new pipeline can be approved, the maps must be updated and the data kept current. That's why you are part of this research expedition. Your radio-controlled underwater vehicle is equipped with a sonar system to survey the ocean floor and gather data on geological threats such as active fault lines and you can direct it to take seawater samples that will be analyzed for an accurate chemical composition of the water.

All this information will be included in your report on the safest location for the pipeline.
Imagine you are standing in the middle of a rough pasture full of alfalfa and tall fescue grass to determine how and when to begin using this pasture as part of a growing sheep farm. You are here to collect samples and survey what must be done to use this patch of land next spring.

As an agrologist, you're interested in the nutrient levels of the grass and alfalfa stands. Your sample results determine if grazing sheep can acquire all the necessary dietary nutrients from the pasture alone or if they will need supplements.

You're also checking if plants are infected with fungi or bacteria that could be toxic to the sheep. In addition, you're evaluating the pasture's general health and abundance of growth, which will indicate how much sheep can be pastured here and for how long. This will also help you estimate the age of the pasture stands and to reseed the grass.

Finally, you're checking to make sure there is adequate fresh water for the sheep and keeping an eye out for signs of predators, such as coyotes, that could threaten the flock. Finally, you include your findings in a range management plan.
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Snapshot: Hydrology

Hydrologists study the dynamic nature of water. They examine issues such as precipitation pathways and the effects of precipitation on soils and various landscapes.

Hydrologists play a critical role in protecting Canada’s water resources.

Picture Yourself

You are standing in a new residential development high on a ridge overlooking a river valley. You’re a hydrologist for an environmental consulting firm hired by the municipality to study the impact of residential development on the local environment.

Before the City approves more building, it wants to ensure this community isn’t negatively affecting the river’s water quality. As the lead hydrologist, you will be monitoring and evaluating water quality around the area to detect any changes that might result from this new community.

First, you identify issues that might arise from a residential development, such as contamination in surface runoff. The houses along the ridge all have yards that slope toward the valley, so when it rains, excess rainwater flows into the river. As part of your study, you will collect samples of surface runoff to analyze water quality.

Area homeowners also use the river for recreation, so the river will be monitored carefully to make certain rafters, swimmers, and sport fishers aren’t negatively affecting water quality. Your evaluation will help planners make wise decisions with respect to further residential development.
Grow Your Expertise
Take the next steps to forge ahead in your career

If you’ve chosen your path, and it leads to a career in the environmental sector, there are steps you can take to keep moving up and get ahead.

Mentorship

Mentorship is a great way to achieve professional growth. Research shows that people who have a mentor fare better and are more confident in the workplace.

- Give back by sharing your own knowledge
- Mentorship doesn’t have to be formal
- Be open to learning from others at different career levels
- Take advantage of industry programs such as ECO Canada’s Mentorship Program for Environmental Professional (EP®) and Environmental Professional-in-Training (EPt) members.

Put Some Letters Behind Your Name

Are you a specialist in your field? A generalist? Join a community of professionals that share your knowledge, education and experience.

Getting a professional designation shows that you’re serious about the work you do! Many employers require a certification for senior positions, or professional signing authority. Many designations are province/territory specific.

ECO Canada offers Canada’s only national designation. Environmental Professional (EP™) Certification
We’ve certified close to 6,000 environmental professionals to date.

Why Become an EP?

- Join a community of professionals coast-to-coast
- Save on professional development training courses and webinars
- Get access to our Research Community
- Exclusive insurance coverage and more

With 3 levels of membership based on your experience, there’s an EP® certification that’s right for you.
Finding Help Along the Way
Resources To Help You On Your Career Path

1.
ECO+ Enterprise

This membership is tailored for organizations who want to recruit top industry talent, keep their employees' skill up-to-date, increase business visibility and branding, and access the latest industry insights.

Starting at just $299 per year, members can experience up to $2,000 in annual savings. Visit www.eco.ca to learn more.

2.
ECO+ PRO

This unique membership is designed for professionals that are looking to enhance their skills, expand environment industry knowledge, connect with their peers and be the first to access latest labour market insights.

For only $49 per year you can save on online training courses & webinars, networking events, and more, while saving you up to $300 annually.

3.
Training and Development

Our online training programs were developed based on the skills employers told us they need most. Become more valuable by taking one of our soft-skill training courses such as Technical Writing or Project Management, or learn about the latest legislation with our Environmental Law courses and bundles.

Get quick hits of knowledge by tuning into our webinars (available on demand) to stay on top of industry trends.

Upgrade your education with one of our unique degree programs developed in partnership with Royal Roads University. Choose from:

- Bachelor’s in Environmental Practice (BEP)
- Master’s in Environmental Practice (MEP)

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Continue Your Journey

You’re one step closer to growing your environmental career - let us help you continue on your way.

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