Advertisement

Junior Professional Officer

Associate Legal Officer

United Nations Environment Programme

UN environment programme

Opening date: 20 January 2026
Closing date: **20 February 2026**

I General information

Title:	**Associate Legal Officer**
Sector of Assignment:	P2
Country:	Kenya
Location (City):	Nairobi
Agency:	UNEP
Duration of Assignment:	Initially one year with the possibility to extend up to a maximum total of 3 years
Grade:	P2 step 1 in the first year

This post is opened in the context of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) scheme sponsored by the Government of the Netherlands and is addressed exclusively to **PEOPLE WITH THE DUTCH NATIONALITY.**

Maximal age limit is 32 years as of 31 December of the year of application.

For the minimum qualification requirements see the website of Nedworc Foundation:
Junior Professional Officer Programme - Nedworc Foundation
Please read the criteria and FAQ section carefully before considering applying

II Duties and responsibilities

The JPO is required to support the work of UNEP in successfully implementing the Montevideo V Programme. There is a significant amount of work needed to fulfil UNEP's functions as Secretariat, as well as in undertaking and supporting the substantive environmental law activities required to be implemented under the programme at the request of Member States. The JPO would play an important role in supporting these functions. It is a very exciting opportunity for a young environmental lawyer and a platform to work with all Member States.

Responsibilities

- Under the overall guidance of his/her supervisor, the JPO will:
- Assist in performing UNEP's roles and functions as Secretariat under the Montevideo V Programme, including the servicing of meetings, preparation of background documents, and preparing meeting reports;
- Conduct legal research on a diverse range of assigned issues in environmental law under the Montevideo V Programme;
- Assist in administering capacity building programmes for Member States on environmental law under the Montevideo V Programme;
- Assist in the review of legal documents, instruments, or other material on environmental law and related areas under the Montevideo V Programme;
- Assist in the preparation of legal opinions/advice on a wide range of environmental law issues under the Montevideo V Programme; and

- Perform other relevant duties as assigned.

III Training component: Learning elements and expectations

Training and Learning Elements

On the job training: The JPO will receive unique experience and training within the Law Division of UNEP on environmental law under the aegis of the Montevideo V Programme, as well as skills in diplomacy thorough interacting with Member States.

UN training courses: The JPO 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 UNEP to enhance his/her performance.

Upon completion of the assignment the JPO will have/ will be able to:
After one year the JPO can:

- Draft background materials and summaries of environmental law meetings according to standards required by the Law Division and consistent with UN style format and protocol.
- Prepare high-quality well-reasoned and clearly written recommendations, opinions and identification of issues on environmental law issues.
- Have a clear understanding of the main intergovernmental and inter-agency processes relevant to international environmental law, the global environmental sustainability and sustainable development agendas.

After two years the JPO can:

- Conduct high quality legal research on international environmental law including analysis and presentation of key information to facilitate decision-making.
- Develop and implement capacity building programmes in environmental law.
- Diplomatically interact *with confidence and effectiveness with Member States.*

The JPO training programme includes the following learning elements:

- Some travel anticipated of two to three missions a year, subject to funding.
- The JPO position includes a Duty travel and training allowance (DTTA) of $4000 per year which may be used for learning activities related to the assignment and career development.

IV Supervision

Title of supervisor: TBD

Content and methodology of supervision

The structure of the Law Division is currently under review following an ongoing functional review of UNEP and a new structure is anticipated to be in place in Q1 2026. The JPO will be placed appropriately into this new structure, together with supervision by a suitable colleague.

The JPO will receive an introduction the Law Division and the Montevideo V Programme, as well as on the overall work of UNEP, including the UN Environment Assembly and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and of the UN, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, and the High-Level Political Forum, and relevant UN specialised agencies, funds and programmes.

The JPO will carry out regular discussion and evaluation with his/her supervisor in line with an agreed workplan. This will include, inter-alia, a review of accomplishments, problems, job-satisfaction, development plans and learning objectives.

V Required Qualifications and Experience

Age limit: Maximal age limit is 32 years as of 31 December of the year of application.

Education:
Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in law, preferably environmental law or international environmental law.

Candidates with a Bachelor's degree plus a minimum of 4 years relevant working experience can be considered.

Skills:
Computer literacy skills, excellent drafting/writing skills and ability to establish and maintain effective working relations with multicultural working environment.

Working experience:
Minimal two (2) years (with master's degree) or four (4) years (with bachelor's degree) *of progressively responsible experience in environmental law, including legal analysis, research and writing.*

Prior experience at the international level is advantageous.
Work experience within the UN system should not exceed 1 year, including UNV, (paid) UN internship and UN consultancy.

All paid work experience since obtaining Bachelor's degree may be considered. Unpaid internships will be counted at 50%. UN Volunteer positions in a relevant field will count at 100%.

Languages: For the post advertised, fluency in oral and written English is required. A good working knowledge of another UN language is also desirable.

Key competencies
Professionalism: Knowledge of policies/procedures in the area of environmental sustainability and 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.

Communication: Good spoken and written skills, including the ability to draft clear and effectively policy and technical reports, correspondence, studies and other communications to various counterparts and to articulate ideas in a clear and concise manner; and active listener, correctly interpreting messages and open to sharing information with others.

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.

VI Background information on Agency/Department/Section

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 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. This position is in UNEP's Law

Division at its Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The Law Division is the lead Division charged with carrying out the functions of UNEP in the field of environmental law, governance and related policy issues, including those related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

The Law Division also leads UNEP's role as Secretariat to the Fifth Montevideo Programme on the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo V Programme). The Montevideo V Programme is ten-year intergovernmental programme adopted by the UN Environment Assembly at its fourth meeting in March 2019. The Montevideo V Programme will promote the environmental rule of law, strengthen the related capacities in countries, and contribute to the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The programme formally commenced in January 2020 and is a flagship initiative of the Law Division.

VII Information on living conditions at Duty Station

The UN classifies Nairobi as a class B duty station. Nairobi enjoys normal living conditions for a developing country in Africa. Comprehensive security advice and support is provided upon arrival.

VIII How to apply

Applicants can apply via the email indicated below before **20 February 2026.**

UNEP Website: Work with us | UNEP - UN Environment Programme

Please send your complete application package, incl. Motivation letter and a resume/CV for this position to the email address below and indicating the subject line: "JPO Position – Law Division – Nairobi – UNEP 2026/01"

Please submit the motivation letter, CV and PHP as PDF files only.

***Email**: UNEP-HR-JPO unep-hr-jpo@un.org*

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their submission.
Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.