

# career **2** ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER

## WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

An environmental manager is responsible for the environmental performance of a company. S/he is required to develop, implement and monitor environmental strategies, policies and programmes that promote sustainable development. One is also responsible to ensure that the companies' activities- both production and waste disposal are in line with environmental legislations.

## CLOCK WORK

**8:30 am-12 pm:** Education programme  
**12:00 pm-1:00 pm:** Co-ordination and networking with target groups, like-minded organisations  
**2:00 pm-3:00 pm:** Guiding research students  
**3:00 pm-4:30 pm:** Developing education material  
**4:30 pm-6:00 pm:** Monitoring mangrove forest and restoration activities

## THE PAYOFF

Initially one can expect approximately **Rs. 10,000** per month. If one joins a corporate, the salary could increase to **Rs. 50,000** per month. As a consultant the payment on a project basis could even be **Rs. 5** lakh.

## SKILLS

- Knowledge of operational processes involved relevant to that particular industry. Eg. textiles
- Knowledge of environmental standards and relevant legislation
- Ability to liaison with government agencies
- Understanding of global environmental issues
- Strong verbal and written communication skills.

## HOW DO I GET THERE?

One can pursue a bachelor's degree in environmental science after finishing the 12th standard. Fresh engineering graduates or life/natural science graduates/post graduates / industry and finance sector professionals with engineering or life/natural science qualifications would be eligible for a post graduate course in environment management.

## INSTITUTES & URLS

- INDIAN:**
- Institute of Environment Education and Research, Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Pune
- INTERNATIONAL:**
- The School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, UK  
<http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/>



As an environmental manager, Maya Mahajan ensures that companies are more eco-friendly, says Razvin Namdarian

Climate change and global warming are a reality today, increased awareness amongst customers leads them to purchase products from companies that have a 'green' image, forcing corporates to wake up to their social responsibilities and ensure that they have production techniques and products that are eco-friendly. Enter the environmental manager who gets companies on the right track to being environment friendly. Dr. Maya Mahajan, Associate Manager for the Mangroves Project launched by the Godrej group is one such environmental manager. Her career path has seen her grow from a researcher to an activist and finally a manager who creates awareness and implements methods to conserve the environment.

### Roots and shoots

Growing up as a child, Maya was always enthralled by nature. It was these interests that led her to take up graduate studies in botany rather than the typical doctor or engineer career that was expected of her. After finishing her masters in botany she further did her PhD. in forest ecology. When working with the Kerala Forest Research Institute, she got the opportunity to participate in a research forest programme, "it was then that I realised that involvement of the local communities is essential for the success of environment programmes. No law can take care of environment unless it is implemented meticulously with the support and participation of people. India has reasonably good environmental laws but are poorly implemented. Proper implementation requires strong political will and greater support from common people, which is presently lacking," she

says. Her parents were social workers and that foundation saw her becoming an activist for environmental causes, which is how she got involved in the Dahanu Taluka Environmental Welfare Association, which was aimed at the conservation of the fragile ecosystem of the area.

### Grow and nurture

The experience she gained stood her in good stead when she joined the Mangrove Conservation project of the Godrej group. Her job here involves managing the restoration of the mangroves through replanting. They maintain a nursery where even rare species like the red and orange mangrove are being planted increasing the mangrove diversity. Besides, stringent security measures ensure that the mangroves are protected. Dr. Maya proudly states, "this project has been successful in increasing the mangrove Godrej group also has introduced cleaner technologies in its refrigerator department, 'green' buildings in their housing projects etc.

Environmental managers would be able to get employment with NGOs, government environment agencies, corporates, research institutes, teaching posts and consultancies. But Dr. Maya advises that this is not the profession for monetary gains. In order to succeed as an environmental manager one "should inspire others to follow suit and should demonstrate the benefits of the green path in the long run."

### PROS

- Maximum self satisfaction for doing your bit for the planet
- Being in the field can be a real de-stressor