

ESG Specialist

BNOS PROFILE

ROLE OVERVIEW

The ESG Specialist in the blue economy integrates environmental, social, and governance principles into marine and coastal operations to promote sustainable ocean use and responsible business practices.

They analyze marine and ESG data, evaluate organizational goals, and develop strategies to ensure regulatory compliance and alignment with international frameworks. The specialist assesses social and economic impacts, manages ESG initiatives, coordinates teams, and engages diverse stakeholders to support informed decision-making and sustainable growth.

Candidates typically need a background in environmental science, marine studies, sustainability, or related fields, often at the bachelor's or master's level. Experience in data analysis, ESG reporting, and project management in marine or environmental contexts is essential. Knowledge of marine legislation, ESG standards, and blue finance supports strategy development and compliance. Strong communication, problem-solving, and collaboration skills are key to working effectively with industry, Indigenous groups, regulators, and NGOs.

INDEX OF POTENTIAL TITLES

- Sustainability Specialist
- Sustainability Analyst
- Sustainability Advisor
- Business Analyst

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION

41400 - Natural and applied science policy researchers, consultants and program officers

STRATA LEVEL

3A – Technical Specialist

RELATED CAREER PROFILE(S)

Environmental, Social, and Governance Specialist – ECO Canada, 2024

Sustainability Advisor – Job Bank Canada

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

3-5 years of experience in business analysis, ESG strategies, or other relevant experience.

Completion of post-secondary diploma and/or degree in:

- Environmental management
- Environmental Science
- ESG or Sustainability
- Climate Change
- Public Policy



TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

DATA ANALYSIS

Uses established statistical methods to analyze ESG data, revealing trends, patterns, and opportunities that inform strategic decisions and enhance the organization's ESG performance.

- Collects and analyzes marine and coastal data (to evaluate ESG performance and recommend strategies for improving marine-based operations).
- Builds and maintains a central repository of sustainability content, research, policies, ESG metrics, and action plans to better analyze an organization's ESG history and goals.
- Analyses and interprets oceanographic data and other ESG data to prepare comprehensive reports and present recommendations that guide senior management in improving marine sustainability performance.
- Applies advanced qualitative data analysis techniques and methods to determine organizational activity characteristics, trends, and impacts.
- Collects baseline and trend data on operational metrics to develop insights and report on crucial sustainability performance indicators.
- Identifies ESG data inconsistencies or errors to take appropriate action to remedy or recreate data..

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE STRATEGY

Evaluates the organization's ESG objectives to determine the steps required to synchronize business activities with its obligations to the environment, external stakeholders, and society.

- Integrates an organization's ESG plans into the supply chain, business operations, and investor relations to establish a unified approach to meeting the ESG goals.
- Assesses an organization's short-term, medium-term, and long-term ESG goals (and associated risks and solutions) to formulate a strategy that will meet its goals and mandatory reporting requirements.
- Develops a comprehensive timeline and roadmap to comply with regulatory and voluntary reporting by setting meaningful and measurable goals.
- Identifies ESG metrics in alignment with international marine frameworks to evaluate the organization's effectiveness in achieving sustainable ocean use and governance.
- Examine material risks and opportunities, including scenario analysis and quantifying potential impact.
- Provides education and interacts with staff members to equip them with the knowledge and motivation needed to provide necessary and pertinent data.
- Analyzes industry best practices, inventor expectations, and other stakeholder requirements to identify emerging sustainability trends and guide strategic ESG planning.



TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Examines proposed projects to understand their potential benefits and drawbacks, offering a detailed assessment of the organization's ESG impact to support informed strategic decisions.

- Applies knowledge and experience to understand how ESG factors relate to risks and opportunities for the organization.
- Evaluates potential business actions based on their impact on the organization's social reputation, enabling decisions that preserve or enhance the company's public image.
- Applies impact methodologies to understanding the consequences of action and inaction to promote sustainable business actions and plans and align short-term actions with long-term ESG goals.
- Incorporates ESG risk and opportunities into making investment recommendations to promote the organization's long-term sustainability and durability.
- Assesses the effects of marine-based operations on coastal communities, Indigenous peoples, and marine ecosystems to identify environmental and social impacts that inform sustainable management.
- Applies inclusive impact frameworks incorporating ocean justice, small-scale fishery livelihoods, and intergenerational equity to guide equitable and responsible decision-making.

SUSTAINABILITY BUDGETING STRATEGY

Crafts detailed strategies to establish, track, and assess operational budgets and expenses, covering every aspect of project activity. This approach ensures the organization's sustainability over time, considering financial health and social/environmental responsibilities.

- Incorporates ESG risk and opportunities into making investment recommendations to analyze which investments could be sustainable in the long term.
- Incorporates marine ecosystem services valuation into budgeting and investment analysis to support biodiversity conservation, ensure sustainable ocean resource use, and manage financial risks to company assets and revenue.
- Evaluates blue finance instruments to guide sustainable investment decisions in ocean-based projects.
- Uses scenario modelling to forecast financial and operational outcomes of alternate mitigation actions.
- Executes ESG plans and strategies within a corresponding budget to ensure that ESG strategies are sustainable for the organization over a long period. .

PROJECT TEAM MANAGEMENT

Oversees a team of professionals to effectively and efficiently produce the required output to ensure project[s] are completed on time and budget.

- Develops and executes project management plans, schedules, and reports to coordinate tasks, allocate resources, and lead teams, ensuring ESG and blue economy goals are met on time and within budget.
- Directs and supervises staff in designing, implementing, and monitoring ESG initiatives to maintain clear communication, aligned deliverables, and consistent integration of sustainability standards.
- Represents the organization in strategy sessions with industry experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to co-develop blue economy ESG metrics, influence sector standards, and contribute to policy recommendations.
- Assigns, monitors, and adjusts team responsibilities to meet deliverables, optimize workflow, and ensure compliance with ESG and regulatory requirements.
- Designs and oversees on-site training programs in blue economy facilities to build staff capability and ensure ESG duties meet performance and compliance standards.



PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

PROBLEM-SOLVING

Identifies problems and uses logic, judgment, and evidence to evaluate alternative scenarios and recommend solutions to achieve a desired goal.

- Analyzes operational data to evaluate ESG operations and understand trends and potential areas of concern to take appropriate action where required.
- Evaluate the effects on the organization, environment, and society while assessing project objectives and goals, ensuring projects are in harmony with long-term ESG objectives.
- Conveys potentially difficult and inconvenient information accurately and honestly to ensure that the appropriate persons, including management, understand risks, incidents, and other lagging indicators about ESG investigations.
- Analyzes an organization's long-term ESG goals against its immediate reality to determine a clear path to achieving its intended position.
- Balances economic, ecological, and cultural considerations in marine-based projects (to resolve ESG challenges and achieve sustainable, socially responsible outcomes).

COMMUNICATION

Positively directs outcomes by delivering communication that better understands goals and objectives, captures interest, and gains support for immediate action.

- Works to identify, develop, and implement opportunities to engage stakeholders with sustainability/ESG efforts and operationalize the organization's ESG roadmap.
- Collaborates with clients and other stakeholders to assess an organization's social standing and generate awareness of ongoing projects.
- Conveys the organization's ESG objectives and strategies to employees, ensuring alignment towards a common goal.
- Creates and publishes ESG reports highlighting the organization's progress and performance and keeping stakeholders informed.
- Engages with diverse coastal stakeholders to communicate ESG priorities and gather insights to inform collaborative decision-making.
- Translates marine science and ESG data into accessible formats for policy briefs, community meetings, and public engagement to enhance stakeholder understanding and support informed actions.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Review completed work by monitoring and checking information, organizing tasks and resources efficiently, and assessing all areas involved in achieving an objective.

- Identifies nuances in everyday speech to position an organization with a higher social standing.
- Accurately completes documents and report logs to ensure safe and efficient operations.
- Deliver timely ESG updates and organizational progress in language tailored to the audience for effective communication.
- Routinely checks in with clients, stakeholders, and the general social climate to consider changing priorities or expectations and produce results that improve relationships and business objectives.



LEGAL, POLICY, & REGULATORY COMPETENCIES

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Adheres to specific ESG regulations, codes, and legislation within a defined jurisdiction to ensure the health and safety of others and increase transparency on business operations.

- Determines and understands an organization's mandatory reporting requirements to meet all relevant regulatory obligations.
- Prepares environmental and social impact assessments to measure an organization's progress toward its commitments and identify areas for improvement.
- Engages third-party assurance providers for blue economy data, systems, and reports to meet compliance obligations.
- Develops, maintains, and executes appropriate disclosure controls and procedures related to ESG to standardize the process of reporting ESG metrics.
- Monitors and applies marine environmental legislation and international conventions (e.g., UNCLOS, MARPOL, Marine Protected Areas guidelines) to ensure full regulatory compliance.



ENVIRONMENTAL COMPETENCIES

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND GOVERNANCE POLICY EVALUATION

Evaluate the organization's policy(s) to ensure they align with the stated ESG goals.

- Pinpoints the interconnections, common requirements, and order of implementation among ESG standards to establish a strategic approach.
- Evaluates ESG policies to ensure alignment with blue economy principles such as sustainable harvesting, marine spatial planning, and ocean equity, supporting responsible ocean management.
- Assesses the organization's ESG reporting ambition to determine whether further reporting than base compliance is desired.
- Supports and oversees the development of the organization's ESG strategy and policy to align short-term solutions to a long-term business plan.
- Compares the organization's ESG performance with its peers, industry trends, and best practices to identify potential issues, risks, opportunities, and emerging trends that could affect the company.
- Benchmarks organizational practices against blue economy indicators and sustainability certifications (e.g., ASC, Ocean Stewardship Council) to identify gaps and drive continuous improvement.