

20 Environmental Science Careers to Consider

1. Environmental specialist

National average salary: \$28,460 per year

Primary duties: monitoring the impact the environment has on a group of people and uncovering and proposing solutions to environmental issues; commonly work in chemical and power plants; perform samples on food, water, soil or air and implement prevention programs to help minimize environment-related problems.

2. Environmental technician

National average salary: \$34,125 per year

Primary duties: work to identify, assess and prevent various forms of contamination within the environment. They may work in either the field or a lab and often work alongside environmental engineers; common duties include overseeing waste operations, collection samples and helping to maintain equipment.

3. Environmental science teacher

National average salary: \$39,811 per year

Primary duties: often teach high school students of various grades about environmental science; common areas of study that an environmental science teacher may cover in their class include ecology, geology, chemistry and biology.

4. Marine biologist

National average salary: \$48,017 per year

Primary duties: focuses on researching life within the ocean; may also study life in other saltwater areas such as wetlands. They typically observe and collect data, perform experiments and study marine animals and life.

5. Environmental chemist

National average salary: \$61,413 per year

Primary duties: responsible for collecting and testing soil, air and water samples to determine their quality and how they affect the environment; identify and prevent environmental threats that would affect people, plants and animals.

6. Wildlife biologist

National average salary: \$64,119 per year

Primary duties: primarily study animals and may assess them in their natural habitat to determine the effect it has on the animals; also study animal characteristics to classify them and to identify new species.

7. Microbiologist

National average salary: \$66,849 per year

Primary duties: typically spend most of their time in a lab performing studies on microorganisms and how they live and thrive in the environment; may study viruses, fungi, bacteria and other microorganisms and analyze the effects these have on our environment.

8. Environmental consultant

National average salary: \$67,580 per year

Primary duties: offer expert advice to clients on how to manage environmental issues and reduce a company's overall carbon footprint; may measure a client's current levels of environmental contamination and devise systems for how to eliminate future environmental damage.

9. Environmental scientist

National average salary: \$69,869 per year

Primary duties: work to identify and eliminate various forms of pollution that impact the environment; goals include to improve and protect the health of both humans and the environment.

10. Environmental geologist

National average salary: \$70,083 per year

Primary duties: analyze and collect data related to the geological components of the environment; may study minerals, soil and groundwater as well as assess industrial work areas such as mining operations.



11. Geographer

National average salary: \$72,727 per year

Primary duties: analyze various aspects of the earth as well as the earth's phenomena; often use global position systems (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS) to collect and display geographic data to assist others.

12. Ecologist

National average salary: \$74,247 per year

Primary duties: responsible for studying and assessing ecosystems to determine how humans impact the ecosystems and their environments; may work for an environmental or government agency or at an aquarium, museum or zoo.

13. Environmental manager

National average salary: \$74,283 per year

Primary duties: responsible for overseeing an organization's compliance with environmental regulations to reduce the company's overall carbon footprint and waste output; common areas that they analyze include clean water, pollution, air quality and waste as it relates to an organization.

14. Environmental lawyer

National average salary: \$74,337 per year

Primary duties: specialize in legal aspects pertaining to land, air and water; may lobby to enact new environmental compliances and laws and to protect ecosystems, agriculture and biodiversity; may represent clients regarding matters such as water law, climate change law and land management.

15. Environmental biologist

National average salary: \$75,756 per year

Primary duties: assess current environmental conditions and determine the impact that various factors are having on the environment; may collect various samples from the environment to study and analyze and create plans to aid in the protection of various life forms.

16. Environmental engineer

National average salary: \$79,617 per year

Primary duties: responsible for designing systems that promote environmental protection. Common projects an environmental engineer may work on include systems to convert waste to energy and water reclamation; may also ensure that various facilities maintain permits and standard operating procedures as they relate to the environment.

17. Environmental health officer

National average salary: \$82,879 per year

Primary duties: work both in the public and private sectors to help maintain proper environmental standards; may monitor and enforce various environmental and public health standards such as safety at work, pollution control and injury prevention.

18. Meteorologist

National average salary: \$85,647 per year

Primary duties: duties include analyzing the atmosphere of the earth to predict weather conditions and patterns; may use various technologies—such as satellites and radars—to obtain and study the climate and weather.

19. Water quality scientist

National average salary: \$87,297 per year

Primary duties: test and analyze water taken from surface water, groundwater and drinking water; provide solutions for maintaining and improving water quality and report any water quality issues such as pollution; typically work for the government, non-profit environmental agencies and commercial businesses.

20. Environmental health and safety officer

National average salary: \$88,780 per year

Primary duties: inspect and analyze various processes within a working area that relate to the environment to ensure they meet safety regulations and industry standards; assess current processes and formulate solutions to maintain and improve the safety and health of customers, employees and the environment.