



# Career Focus - NATURE CONSERVATION

## Inside this issue:

WHAT IS A NATURE CONSERVATIONIST?	1
REQUIREMENTS	2
PROS AND CONS OF THE JOB	3



*Dear students*

Welcome to our Career Focus on Nature Conservation. In this edition you will get to know more about the education and preparation needed to become a conservationist. Get a quick view of the requirements as well as details about degree programs and job duties to find out if this is the career for you. If you intend to go into the Nature Conservation field you should read a lot of articles and books. The *Namibia Nature Foundation* have quite a number of projects and updated information on conservation and sustainability in Namibia. To learn more about it follow the link to their webpage: [www.nnf.org.na](http://www.nnf.org.na)

*- Martina*

## WHAT IS A NATURE CONSERVATIONIST?

The job of a **Nature Conservationist** is to work to protect and manage our local natural environment, including grasslands, forests, coastal areas, mountains and rivers.

Nature Conservationist do not only ensure the well-being of the environment, they also set up conservation laws, provide farmers with advice, control natural resources like fisheries that are being utilised and they make the general public aware about conservation matters.

## WHAT DOES A NATURE CONSERVATIONIST DO?

- ◆ understands our natural environment and teaches the public to use it treating it with respect
- ◆ promotes the concept of sustainability
- ◆ talks to communities, planners, land owners, developers, community leaders and other groups
- ◆ plans programs for sustainable management
- ◆ helps with environmental impact studies
- ◆ helps with ecological surveys
- ◆ look for new nature conservation sites
- ◆ maintains records
- ◆ prepares applications for funding
- ◆ supervises staff and volunteers

## *Are you ... ?*

- ◆ interested in the environment?
- ◆ always reading and researching up on environmental issues?
- ◆ willing to work under extreme weather conditions?
- ◆ fit and able?
- ◆ a team player?
- ◆ good at expressing yourself?

## REQUIREMENTS

### **Secondary Education**

Possession of at least a **HIGCSE** Grade 12, or equivalent qualification, with matriculation exemption is required to be admitted to a South African university. A HIGCSE or outstanding **IGCSE** Grade 12, or equivalent qualification, is needed to be accepted by a South African technikon.

For studies at **UNAM** or the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST), candidates must have at least passed five subjects on IGCSE/HIGCSE level and have obtained a minimum score of 25 points on UNAM's or the NUST point evaluation scale. Candidates wishing to enroll at NUST will also be subjected to an additional screening process, encompassing a week of practical exercises and tests.

### **Compulsory subject**

Mathematics and Biology (South Africa)

Biology, Mathematics and Chemistry or Physical Science (UNAM)

Biology or Biology-related subject (NUST)

### **Recommended subject**

A third language (South Africa)

### **Tertiary Education**

A BSc. Forestry Science degree can be obtained at the University of Stellenbosch. The University of Pretoria offers a **BSc. (Hons)** in Nature Conservation, and a **BSc. (Hons)** in Wildlife Management. A BSc. Agriculture degree, will also provide good basic training for those who want to pursue a career in conservation management.

UNAM offers a four-year B. Sc. degree in Rural Resources and Conservation (Wildlife Ecology and Management)

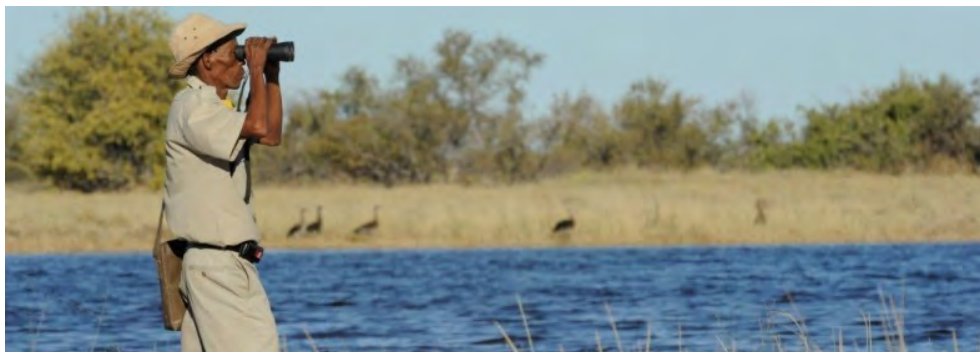
Most South African technikons offer a **N. Dip.:** Nature Conservation. The Polytechnic of Namibia (NUST) offers a **N. Dip.:** Natural Resources Management (Nature Conservation).

### **Personality**

Prospective nature conservators should have an interest in nature, be willing to work in different weather conditions, be healthy and have self-discipline and perseverance for dull, routine and unpleasant tasks, such as the culling of animals.

### **Work Opportunities**

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism offers employment for nature conservators. Private ranches or farms also employ professional and experienced people.



## THE PROS & CONS OF A JOB IN CONSERVATION

### Pros:

- You really *can* make a difference.
- Conservation jobs often involve working outdoors.
- You may get to visit wild and wonderful places.
- No two days are the same.
- You find yourself working with people who have the same values.

At the end of the day, it's immensely rewarding.

### Cons:

- Unfortunately, most of the time it will feel like you *can't* make a difference.
- For every day in the field, you may well have to spend several behind a desk, in the lab or at meetings.
- Fieldwork – in the driving wind and rain – can take it's toll.
- You might long for the stability and normality of an ordinary 8-5.
- Normal people will think you're fighting a lost cause.

A job in conservation is extremely unlikely to make you rich.

Many useful things can be taught in the classroom, but when it comes to topics like conservation and the environment, there is really no substitute for experience. Put your free time and school holidays to good use with some of the following and you will be grateful for the experience when you come to finding a job later.

1. Volunteer for as many things as possible. Try anything once, find your niche and your motivation.
2. Attend talks or meetings like the excellent Explore Conference
3. Take the plunge and join your first expedition
4. Become a Citizen Scientist
5. ...and all the time, read, read, read. (These are a good place to start).

Reference: <http://www.jamesborrell.com/how-to-get-a-job-in-conservation-and-love-your-work/>



we're on the web:

[www.tucsin.org](http://www.tucsin.org) as well as  
on Facebook

Tel #: 061 224840

Williams@tucsin.org

References : Namibia Careers

Previous newsletters can be found on the TUCSIN  
website:

<http://www.tucsin.org/index.php/en/project/documents-for-students/career-prospect>.