



**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND  
ENERGY STUDIES**

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG**

**SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

**Risks and Socio-Environmental Sustainability (S2RSSQ)**

**BRIEF LEARNING GUIDE (LG)  
2021**

**Course Title: Risks and Socio-Environmental Sustainability (RSES)**

**Course Code: S2RSSQ**

**Course Credit Value: 8**

**National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level: 5**

**Name of Lecturers: Prof. Isaac Rampedi, Prof. Kowiyou Yessoufou and Dr Lee-Ann  
Modley**

**Name of Module / Course Coordinator: Prof. Kowiyou Yessoufou**

## 1- Background

Students and professionals have been increasingly showing interests to enroll for a short learning programme that offer knowledge and competencies in environmental risk assessment, principles and premises of social and environmental sustainability as well as sustainability science. This demand is necessitated by the growing realization at various geographical scales that human activities are undertaken in an unsustainable manner and we are likely to exceed the limits of acceptable environmental change, thus depleting our natural capital and impairing the functioning of the biosphere. Thus, it is important to introduce a governance strategy that can ensure that the environmental impacts of our lifestyles, products and processes do not adversely affect the biosphere. One way to achieve this goal is through environmental management compliance and meeting a growing number of sustainability targets and goals as minimum requirements for carrying out successful strategies for planning, especially at a regional and global scales.

Furthermore, developing knowledge and interrogating issues around sustainability is in line with many of the Sustainable Development Goals announced by the United Nations in 2015. For example Goal No. 11 seeks to improve resource use and reduce pollution and poverty within human settlements and neighbourhoods by emphasizing pollution prevention and where this is not possible, the removal of wastes from pollution sites for recycling purposes.

Similarly, Goal No.12 is about sustainable consumption and production through resource and energy efficiency, sustainable infrastructure, and providing access to basic services, green and decent jobs and a better quality of life for all. In addition, sustainability is also demanded when it comes to most international environmental conventions which offer guidelines in the development of international codes of good environmental practices. Even at a local scale, manufacturing and service-oriented companies are forced to commit themselves to produce environmentally friendly goods and services.

Given these mega imperatives, there is a surge of interest in the hiring of environmental managers and other professionals with a sustainability outlook, a concept and skill that is not always addressed in a satisfactory manner at high school and university level in terms of what it means, and how it can be measured and enhanced. It is therefore important to orientate all stakeholders towards environmental risk management while creating awareness of the value of sustainable business practices. Sustainable solutions are those that offer stability, durability, resilience, and robustness in specified qualities of human wellbeing, social equity and environmental quality. Therefore, understanding

and managing the different environmental risks associated with human activities and companies is critical towards achieving long term sustainability goals such as saving energy, reducing air and water pollution, and recycling wastes, thus improving environmental quality.

## **2- Purpose of the Qualification**

We are in the middle of the Anthropocene, a period characterised by a global environmental crisis (e.g. the ongoing 6th mass extinction, climate change, environmental injustice, etc.) whose consequences on our social fabric are now a matter of concern. This crisis is mainly driven by unsustainable use of environmental assets in combination with ill-informed decisions whose impacts could be felt across generations. Under the business-as-usual scenario, we risk losing the ecosystem services on which humans rely for their survival. As a result, the future of the human species itself is compromised. In this context, the present SLP aims to train current and future leaders on risk prevention, risk assessment and risk management towards more sustainable human-environment interactions.

Students who complete the short learning programme in risk and socio-environmental sustainability will acquire a number of competencies and skills. This SLP will enable students to be professionally competent and to become acquainted with the different procedures in environmental risk assessment as well basic skills in understanding social and environmental sustainability and its relevance for organizations in their different contexts.

This learning programme is developed in line with some of the objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy III of the Department of Higher Education and Training, notably Goal 4.2 and Chapter 5. Goal 4.2 is set to increase access to occupationally-directed programmes that are in line with (1) Learning Pathways for High Level Skills; (2) Learning Programme Regulations; (3) the Higher Education Qualifications and Skills Framework; (4) the SETA Grant Regulations; and the (5) Professional Graduate Pathway Report. On the other hand, Chapter 5 lays emphasis on the acquisition of green skills for a green economy and makes recommendations for future green skills development in South Africa. Similarly, the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) identifies the green economy as one of the three priority areas for scaling up meanwhile the Environmental Sector Skills Plan for South Africa (ESSA) describes the status quo with regard to the demand and supply of environmental skills, and provides information on scarce and critical skills in the sector from a supply and demand perspective.

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### **3- Academic requirements**

The present SLP is developed to cater for current university graduates but also novice professionals from any background who have interest in specializing in environmental management whether at entry level of the job grading continuum or at post school academic environment. A qualification corresponding to NQF5 in any discipline is required. This implies that, even if you do not have a solid background in environmental management or science, you can still apply, given that you will be introduced to basic relevant concepts at the start of the course.

### **4- Course content**

The course content is summarized in 5 themes summarized as follows:

#### **Theme 1: Environmental and social governance: A brief Introduction**

- The objectives of environmental and social governance
- The importance of environmental and social governance
- Key themes in environmental and social governance

#### **Theme 2: Environmental, economic and social risk assessment:**

- Understand and explain the concept of sustainable finance
- Categorize environmental and social risks
- Conduct environmental and social risks assessment
- Provide mitigation options of risks
- Understand the management of environmental and social risks

#### **Theme 3: Environmental aspects of sustainability:**

- Explain global environmental concerns.
- Explain the concept of carbon footprint
- Provide options for cleaner production
- Provide ways to prevent pollution
- Contribute strategies to meeting SDGs 2030

#### **Theme 4: Social aspects of sustainability:**

- Explain the five dimensions of social sustainability
- Discuss the importance of social sustainability
- Recommend options towards achieving social sustainability within an organization

#### **Theme 5: Sustainability reporting:**

- Understand overview of reporting standards
- Understand material topics and boundaries
- Present and compile a sustainability report

### **5- Mode of lectures and Fees**

Lectures will be delivered using two approaches: the face-to-face sessions or the online sessions (using Zoom or Teams). Given the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, the 2021 batch will have to be done using an online platform. As soon as the pandemic is over, students will have a choice to make between online and face-to-face sessions depending on which option suits each student best. If, for any reason, there is a need to switch from one mode to another, this will be communicated on time by lecturers to all students.

The fee for online sessions is R8,000 whereas that of face-to-face sessions is R10,000.

The fee is payable in advance during registration (If a student discontinues a percentage of this fee can be refunded depending on the date of discontinuation). Please take note that if your employer is going to pay the fees, all arrangements for these payments must be made by the students themselves. If the employer pays the amount via a bank transfer, evidence of payment must be provided during the registration and the student number must be used as reference.

Please take notice of the fact that the university might charge a further administrative fee towards new students not previously enrolled at this university to account for the process of capturing personal data onto the computer system.

### **6- Application**

The application form to enrol for the course is attached at the last page of this document. Applications to attend the course during the must reach the course coordinator before or on **January 30, 2021**. Applications can be made by e-mail and

must be accompanied by certified copies of previous academic records. You will then receive a notification on the success of your application.

To submit an application for enrolment to the course or for further information, contact:

Prof. Kowiyou Yessoufou

Course coordinator

Dept. of Geography, Environmental Management and Energy Studies

University of Johannesburg

P.O. Box 524

Auckland Park 2006

Tel. No. (011) 559-2434

E-mail: [kowiyouy@uj.ac.za](mailto:kowiyouy@uj.ac.za) (preferably).

#### **7- Enrolment:**

Enrolment for accepted applicants takes place as follows:

Department: Geography, Environmental Management and Energy Studies.

Place: D2 LAB 344E

Date: 1 Nov. 2020 – 30Jan 2021

Time: 9:00 – 12:30

The enrolment will be faster if you fill in an application form for study at the university and submit it in order to get a student number (students not previously studying at UJ).



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**REGISTRATION FOR CERTIFICATE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT  
Risks and Socio-environmental sustainability (S2RSSQ)  
FOR CERTIFICATE PURPOSES**

SURNAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_ ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES: \_\_\_\_\_

Courses previously done at UJ? Yes/No\_\_\_\_ UJ Student Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of course(s) and date: \_\_\_\_\_

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS (PLACE THE NAME OF THE INSTITUTION AT THE END  
IN BRACKETS):

\_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ | (PROVIDE POSTAL ADDRESS IF IT IS  
DIFFERENT)

\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. NO: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

WORK ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TEL. NO: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NO: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby declare that I will adhere to the  
general university regulations and the specific regulations of the Department of Geography,  
Environmental Management and Energy Studies, especially those applicable to the computers  
and software, and undertake to pay the course fee of R8,000 (online sessions) or R10,000 (contact  
sessions) in full at registration for the course at the UJ CASHIER and only after an official  
student number has been allocated to me.

NB!! All payments must be made with reference being your student number, if arranged with  
your employer to pay the course fee.

Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE (Student) DATE

Course coordinator

ACCEPTED (Name): \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_