

UN Offers Climate Fellowships to Young Professionals

Posted by **News Editor** in **Air/Climate, Latest News, RSS** on May 15, 2017 10:29 am / **no comments**

BONN, Germany, May 15, 2017 (ENS) – Young professionals from developing countries will be better able to advance implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement and the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals with the help of a new fellowship program announced today. It will be run by two key United Nations agencies based in Bonn.

To be known as “early career climate fellows,” those accepted into the program will work in the international policy environment of the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNFCCC, headquartered in Bonn.

The United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security, UNU-EHS, will help identify and recruit the young professionals. When their fellowship ends, the early career climate fellows will have developed skills that enable them to work in their home countries or internationally.

“There are 1.8 billion young people in the world today, more than ever before in human history, and about nine out of 10 live in developing countries. Efforts for sustainable development and climate protection must build on their enthusiasm and ideas,” said UNU-EHS Director Professor Dr. Jakob Rhyner.

Academically outstanding young graduates from developing countries who are less than three years into their careers, especially women from least developed countries, are encouraged to apply.

Fellowships may last from six months to two years and the work experience with the UNFCCC will be tailored to fit the specific skills and backgrounds of each fellow.

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa is excited by the opportunity to work with the young professionals. “Young, qualified professionals from developing countries represent one of our best resources for building capacity for climate action,” she said.

“As we move with determination into the new era of implementation of the Paris Agreement, we need to equip young people with the skills to green economies and build resilience, and this initiative is an example of how organizations can prepare young people for the challenges of the future,” she said.

The announcement came today at the ongoing Climate Change Conference which opened May 8 in Bonn and continues through Thursday.

Government negotiators from throughout the world are hammering out the details of the Paris Agreement such as: nationally determined contributions and adaptation plans; a transparency framework for action and support; clean technology, global stocktaking; implementation and compliance; and financial resources.

Members of civil society have been staging demonstrations calling for nationally determined contributions to go up, and reminding delegates they must not back out of their commitments to curb climate change.

Agreed by nearly all world governments in December 2015, the Paris Agreement took effect less than a year later, in November 2016.

With 197 Parties, the UNFCCC has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 2015 Paris Climate Change Agreement.

The main aim of the Paris Agreement is to keep a global average temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The objective of all agreements under the UNFCCC is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, in a time frame which allows ecosystems to adapt naturally and enables sustainable development.

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