



Defining Green Jobs

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January, 2010

Today the term Green Jobs has moved away from such old notions as careers associated with gardeners, groundskeepers, landscapers, and/or horticulturists. We now think about Green Jobs in terms of environmentally-green employment sectors. These sectors might include but are not limited to work activities in the area of:

1. Alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles,
2. Energy efficiency, including green building and sustainable design,
3. Environmental protection and preservation, including conservation,
4. Organic and recycled products,
5. Renewable energy, including solar, wind and geothermal,
6. Sustainable and organic agriculture, and
7. Sustainable business practices, including cleantech (Cassio, 2009).

Attempts to define green jobs have favored a limited view. For many nationally recognized experts they see green jobs defined as jobs in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors. While these sectors are critical to the green economy Cassio (2009) reminds us that they represent a small portion of a much larger picture.

In early 2009, the White House Task Force on the Middle Class came out with a report on green jobs that included a more inclusive working definition:

Green jobs provide products and services which use renewable energy resources, reduce pollution, conserve energy and natural resources, and reconstitute waste.

Key Concept in Green Jobs is the Idea of Sustainability

Sustainability is the capacity to endure. That includes biological systems that must remain diverse and productive over time. For humans, sustainability means long-term survival and wellbeing, which in turn depends on the well-being of the natural world and the responsible use of our natural resources. The original definition is sustainability, now 25 years old is still relevant today:

Meeting our needs while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission)

Where Should HVRPs Begin the Job Search for Green Jobs?

With the notion of sustainability taking root across the board, green jobs are found in virtually all industries - although not necessarily in large numbers. Some of those green jobs reflect new and emerging occupations, changing occupations, and others reflect traditional occupations where the work hasn't changed much in the last decade. (The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2009)

A. Industries where most green jobs are found in the private sector

Note: for many of these industries (those indicated with a qualifier in parentheses), only a part of the industry reflects green jobs or green/sustainable employers. For example, in the publishing industry, only a small number of firms would be considered sustainable publishers. Other industries - without a qualifier in parentheses - would be considered all or mostly green.

- ✓ Agriculture and food related industries (sustainable/organic)
- ✓ Alternative fuel vehicles and related industries
- ✓ Alternative fuels
- ✓ Bicycle related industries
- ✓ Biotech and life sciences (when committed to green values)
- ✓ Cleaning and janitorial services (green cleaning)
- ✓ Clothing and accessories (organic/recyclable materials)
- ✓ Green building, sustainable design, energy efficiency industries
- ✓ Ecotourism (tourism focused on environmental protection/preservation and education)
- ✓ Environmental services (hazardous materials, groundwater contamination, oil spills)
- ✓ Landscaping and habitat restoration services (sustainable landscape design)
- ✓ Legal services (green business, environmental/regulatory and land-use law)
- ✓ Manufacturing and technology industries (when committed to green values or cleantech)
 - Agriculture technology R&D and manufacturing
 - Biofuel R&D and production (ethanol, biodiesel, synthetic biology, algae)
 - Smart Grid technology R&D and manufacturing
 - Solar technology R&D and manufacturing
 - Transportation technology R&D and manufacturing (electric vehicles, advanced batteries, fuel cells)
 - Wind technology R&D and manufacturing
 - Water technology R&D and manufacturing
- ✓ Pesticide services (natural/organic pesticides)
- ✓ Printing and publishing industries (when committed to sustainability)
- ✓ Public transportation (green/clean)
- ✓ Recycling and salvage industries (when committed to sustainability)

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|--|---|
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy industries (includes biofuel, biomass, geothermal, hydroelectricity, solar energy, tidal power, wave power and wind power) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Socially responsible investing (SRI) services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities, electric and water (when committed to sustainability) |
| | |
| B. Types of Nonprofit Organizations with Green Jobs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate Change <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ecosystems <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Disasters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Economics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Ethics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Legislation/Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forests <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground Pollution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Habitat Conservation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural History <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oceans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sciences <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Business <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Living <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Issues <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waste Management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife |
| | |
| C. Types of Public Sector/ Government Employers with Green Jobs | <div>Federal Agencies with Green Jobs</div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Army Corps of Engineers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bureau of Land Management (BLM) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department of Energy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Protection Agency <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish and Wildlife Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geological Survey (USGS) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Park Service <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) |

State Agencies with Green Jobs

- ✓ Agriculture and Food Safety
- ✓ Coastal Zone Management
- ✓ Community and Economic Development
- ✓ Emergency Services
- ✓ Energy
- ✓ Fisheries and Wildlife Protection
- ✓ Parks and Recreation
- ✓ Planning
- ✓ Pollution Control and Prevention
- ✓ Public Health
- ✓ Water Resources

Local Agencies (e.g., cities, counties and special districts) with Green Jobs

- ✓ Air Quality Management
- ✓ Conservation/Park Land Management
- ✓ Electricity
- ✓ Green Building
- ✓ Green Business
- ✓ Public Transportation
- ✓ Recycling
- ✓ Regional Planning
- ✓ Waste Management
- ✓ Water and Wastewater Treatment

References

Cassio, Jim (2009). Green careers resource guide. www.cassio.com

The Pew Charitable Trusts (2009) The clean energy economy: Repowering jobs, businesses and investment across America. The Pew Charitable Trust, 901 E Street, Washington, DC 2004 http://www.pewtrusts.org/news_room_detail.aspx?id=53254

National Technical Assistance Centers for HVRPs



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