



unit for  
environmental  
ethics

## Promoting environmental values in South Africa

### Introduction

The Unit for Environmental Ethics is part of the Centre for Applied Ethics, situated in the Philosophy Department at Stellenbosch University. It is an academic research and consulting body concentrating on the independent analysis and critical evaluation of the values informing environmental policy and decision-making in a developing South Africa. It sets out to achieve this by creating an awareness and critical understanding of the complexities of environmental value issues among leaders in business, non-governmental organizations and government.

### Academic Programmes

Tuition and training in applied ethics research with a specialisation in environmental ethics is offered as the degree M Phil Applied Ethics. The programme consists of structured courses in addition to an independent research component. This course is offered over a two-year period with biannual contact sessions at the University of Stellenbosch.

Environmental Ethics is also offered as a 5-day module in the degree M Phil Environmental Management.

In 2007 a new course entitled The Philosophy and Ethics of Environmental Management is being taught at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in their three-year Environmental Management programme.

For more information on these courses visit our website  
[www.sun.ac.za/enviro\\_ethics](http://www.sun.ac.za/enviro_ethics)

### Consulting Services

The Unit for Environmental Ethics offers research and consultation services to public and private organisations. Examples of our services include:

#### Environmental Ethics Opinion Surveys

The Unit conducted an opinion survey of ethical concerns in environmental decision-making in Cape Town and surrounds. A wide spectrum of stakeholders within the environmental community in Cape Town was interviewed and their opinions sought. Responses highlighted many problem areas including legislation and policy, public participation in Environmental Impact Assessment processes, troublesome relationships that create conflicts of interest, general governance issues and the competency and capacity of environmental decision-makers.

- 1 963kB Adobe Acrobat document  
The study was funded by the City of Cape Town's Environmental Management Department.

#### Ethical inputs in environmental impact assessments

The Unit was approached by Afrosearch Environmental Consultancy to complete an ethical analysis of the value issues surrounding decision-making about nuclear power generation. The study gives a historical overview of the nuclear debate in the United States of America, Western Europe and South Africa. It investigates the ideological dimension of the debate as well as discussing the relationship between nuclear energy and nuclear weapons, whether nuclear energy can be considered clean or not and finally if it is affordable or not.

- 284kB Zipped Adobe Acrobat document

### Contact Us

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## Public Activity

### Research symposia

The Unit hosts a quarterly roundtable symposium to stimulate academic debate on relevant environmental issues. Representative members of a specific industry are invited to present short papers on ethical dilemmas faced by the industry. The papers and a summary of debate is provided on the Unit's website, with opportunity for stakeholders to comment (see E-group below).

### Green Drinks

The Unit is also the host of monthly Green Drinks in Stellenbosch. Green Drinks is an international informal network of people involved in the environmental sector. It is an opportunity for people from diverse interests to build friendly relationships with local peers. Visit [www.greendrinks.org](http://www.greendrinks.org) for more information.

### E-group

Public participation in environmental debate is welcomed and facilitated through our website's E-group. Stakeholders can access all documentation published by the Unit through its electronic Library, including symposium debates, external reports, academic research articles and opinion pieces. Submissions through E-group are distributed to all our mailing list members.

## Training

The Unit offers a two-day 'on the job' workshop on Ethics in Environmental Decision-Making, relevant to public management, private business, as well as civil society organisations. The purpose of the workshop is to develop tools for managers and decision makers who have to deal with the complexities of environmental value issues, and who must consider a variety of interest groups and stakeholders in their activities.

The workshop addresses the following:

- Introduction to ethics and value analysis
- Standard approaches to moral decision-making
- An overview of positions in environmental ethics
- Ethics and critical value analysis in the context of environmental decisionmaking and dispute resolution

For more information on our workshops go to [www.sun.ac.za/enviro\\_ethics](http://www.sun.ac.za/enviro_ethics)

## 2007 and beyond

For the next five years the Unit will focus on actively engaging with environmental ethics capacity building in organizations and the promotion of environmental values in policy decisions in South Africa and the African continent.

To this end the Unit is marketing its consulting services, spearheaded by the intensive Ethics in Environmental Decision-Making Workshop. Revenue created through this service will be employed to support full-time research and advocacy activities, including:

- Extending its academic research program
- Extending its roundtable symposium program
- Bringing debates from research and roundtables into the public awareness through interactive and popular media
- Bringing critical views to bear on public policy processes

The Unit is positioning itself as the preferred strategic partner of the public, civil and business communities in their development of environmentally responsible policy and decision-making processes and as a high profile participant in academic and public debate on matters environmental.

## Funding and Strategic Partnerships

If you or your organization is interested in developing strategic and/or financial partnerships with the Unit for Environmental Ethics you are welcome to contact anyone of our staff members.



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### Training Workshops: Ethics in Environmental Decision-Making

The Unit for Environmental Ethics at the University of Stellenbosch is offering organisations "on-the-job" training on how to deal with the complexities of environmental decision-making. Individually designed to meet the needs of your staff, these two-day courses focus on the ethical dilemmas that hinder effective implementation of sustainable development. The course is relevant to public management, private business, as well as civil society organisations that must consider a variety of interest groups and stakeholders in course of their activities.

Themes include:

- Introduction to ethics and value analysis
- Standard approaches to moral decision-making
- An overview of positions in environmental ethics
- Ethics and critical value analysis in the context of environmental decision-making and dispute resolution

The workshops are learner-centred and designed around action learning principles, drawing on participants' world of professional experience. The practical aspects of ethical consideration and decision-making are emphasised through case studies from the work environment.

The workshops are aligned with the following NQF Unit Standards:

- **US 13669** – Apply introductory knowledge of environmental ethics in the context of personal experience (Level 4, Credits 4)
- **US 13649** – Apply fundamental knowledge of environmental ethics to a field of work or study (Level 5, Credits 6)
- **US 13624** – Apply critical and systematic knowledge of environmental ethics to the field of work or study (Level 6, Credits 8)

A certificate of participation will be issued. A process of assessment and certification of competence can be arranged on request.

For more information or to arrange an assesment and quote, please contact:

- Leanne Seeliger at 072 203 2113, [seeliger@sun.ac.za](mailto:seeliger@sun.ac.za)
- Peter Esser at 083 375 3438, [pjesser@sun.ac.za](mailto:pjesser@sun.ac.za)
- Visit the Unit for Environmental Ethics at [http://www.sun.ac.za/enviro\\_ethics](http://www.sun.ac.za/enviro_ethics)

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