

FST Career opportunities

Being trained to act on the science-policy and science-business interface, FST graduates qualify thematically, methodologically and conceptually to become active in sustainable forest and natural resources management, including strategy analysis and development as well as practical decision-making 'in the field'. In FST, the unique combination of forest management practices on the one hand side with a strong socio-economic focus on the other side allows them taking decisions for natural resource management in close connection with institutional setups, policy and economic considerations. The conceptual and methodological understanding of policy analysis and transformation strategies design on national and international level provides graduates with a particular portfolio related to sustainable forest and natural resource management, especially important in times-, and with specific consideration of bioeconomy trends, European green deal and continuous environmental and social degradation. All that requires continuous adaptation and reflection of the own action as well as thinking in alternatives – all of that being included and crucial part of FST.

The competencies FST students gained during their studies are rooted in policy analysis (including policy agenda setting, policy design and impact assessment); economic assessments (including in-depth understanding of market failures, incentive-based instruments, payment schemes, and business models for better natural capital provision and accounting), as well as forest, innovation and transformation management. Graduates are trained in inter- and transdisciplinary modes of work and analysis. This combination allows them to meaningfully connect and communicate within and between science and practice as well as with policymaking and business development to deal with the use of forest and other natural resources in an efficient and reflective manner in the private and public sector.

Fields of work are related to consultancy of administration, firms or organizations that depend on sustainable forest and natural resource uses, including strategy development to deal with challenges through climate change and the related degradation of forests. With a graduation in FST, students are enabled to support companies and administration in the development of new business models, with special focus on (forest) companies affected through climate change, that are therefore in need of changing their hitherto business model. Work options in the private sector therewith includes forest and wood-processing companies, industries in the realm of bioeconomy and for environmental and forest certifications (such as FSC, PEFC, ISO). In the public sector, graduates qualify to work as advisor or referent in the ministry of the environment, agriculture and forestry, as well as for dealing with issues of policy development, rural development and climate change mitigation and adaptation from regional to international level. Largely, graduates are change agents and analyst for environmental assessment such as for emerging carbon and offset markets, and enablers for sustainability and governance innovations for the provision of ecosystem services such as in large-scale protected areas (e.g. as managers of biosphere reserves, Natura 2000 areas or National Parks). As such, NGOs active in the climate and environment sector are important future employers for FST graduates as well. Being trained in scientific concepts and methods, FST MSc graduates are fully qualified to proceed with a further scientific career, following a pathway towards a dissertation, post doc position and professorships in the field of forest, sustainability sciences, social-ecological research, environmental and ecological economics and in environmental policy.