



# Programme syllabus

## Environmental Communication and Management - Master's Programme

*Miljökommunikation - masterprogram*

120.0 hp

Programme code: NM026

Finalized by: Fakultetsnämnden vid fakulteten för naturresurser och lantbruksvetenskap,  
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### Programme board

The programme board for education in natural resources and agriculture

### SLU ID

SLU.ua.2025.3.1.1-112

### Revised

2025-01-22

### Revised by

The programme board for education in natural resources and agriculture

### Entry requirements

Admission to the Master's programme Environmental Communication and Management requires a first-cycle qualification comprising 180 credits and including specialised studies

comprising 90 credits within a single subject (e.g. Biology or Economics) within one of the following disciplinary domains:

- natural science
- technology
- social sciences. (e.g. sociology, psychology, economics, political science, human geography, media)

Applicants with the equivalent qualifications obtained by means of a degree from another country, or with the equivalent knowledge obtained in some other way, may also be regarded as fulfilling the specific entry requirements.

This programme is taught in English. The applicant must further have a level of English equivalent to upper secondary school English, called English 6. An applicant with a first-cycle qualification from SLU comprising 180 credits automatically fulfils this requirement. Special rules apply for applicants with qualifications from one of the Nordic countries and some English-speaking countries.

Specific requirements apply for admission to the individual courses included in the programme.

## **Objectives**

### **General objectives**

The general objectives for first- and second-cycle courses and programmes are specified in the Swedish Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, Sections 8–9).

### **Objectives for a degree of Master**

In accordance with the annex to the Ordinance for the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, for a degree of Master (120 credits) the student shall:

#### *Knowledge and understanding*

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in certain areas of the field as well as insight into current research and development work, and
- demonstrate specialised methodological knowledge in the main field of study.

*Competence and skills*

- demonstrate the ability to critically and systematically integrate knowledge and analyse, assess and deal with complex phenomena, issues and situations even with limited information
- demonstrate the ability to identify and formulate issues critically, autonomously and creatively as well as to plan and, using appropriate methods, undertake advanced tasks within predetermined time frames and so contribute to the formation of knowledge as well as the ability to evaluate this work
- demonstrate the ability in speech and writing both nationally and internationally to clearly report and discuss his or her conclusions and the knowledge and arguments on which they are based in dialogue with different audiences, and
- demonstrate the skills required for participation in research and development work or autonomous employment in some other qualified capacity.

*Judgement and approach*

- demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant disciplinary, social and ethical issues and also to demonstrate awareness of ethical aspects of research and development work
- demonstrate insight into the possibilities and limitations of research, its role in society and the responsibility of the individual for how it is used, and
- demonstrate the ability to identify the personal need for further knowledge and take responsibility for his or her ongoing learning.

**Degree****Degree awarded on completion of the programme**

Upon completion of the programme, the degree of Master of Science is awarded. Other general qualifications may be awarded, provided that the requirements for them are fulfilled. More information can be found in SLU's degree regulations.

Students who fulfil the qualification requirements for a degree will be issued a degree certificate upon request. The degree certificate will specify the qualification as Degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a Major in Environmental Science.

**Degree requirements**

A degree of Master of Science (120 credits) with a major in environmental science is awarded to students who fulfil the course requirements (courses with a Pass grade) of 120 credits, of which at least 90 credits at second-cycle level, according to the following:

- at least 30 credits of courses with specialised study in the main field environmental science (A1N; A1F),
- at least 30 credits from an independent project (degree project) in the main field environmental science (A2E).

In addition, the student must hold a degree of Bachelor or professional qualification of at least 180 credits or an equivalent qualification.

## **Content**

### **Programme description**

The aim of this programme is twofold: First, to help students develop social-science based knowledge and skills for understanding and analysing environmental communication and its role in environmental management and governance. Second, to enable students to use these skills and knowledge to work with environmental communication related practices, particularly where these practices require communication between multiple and diverse actors. This could include organizing collective action, preparing communication strategies, coordinating multi-stakeholder initiatives, designing and facilitating processes for public deliberation and managing conflicts.

After completing the programme, students are expected to be able to demonstrate theoretical, analytical and practical knowledge about communication processes within environmental management and governance. Students are expected to be able to apply this knowledge in different contexts such as nature conservation, forestry, food production, climate change, mining or urban planning.

The pedagogical principles for the programme include experiential learning, critical analysis and reflection, and application of theory. Theoretical and practical components of courses are interwoven in teaching activities including experience-based workshops, case study investigations, group projects and reflective assignments. Through the programme, students progressively develop an understanding of communication as mechanisms that can both foster and impede change towards increased sustainability, and of communication as the foundation of social and cultural processes, including the formation of social norms and power structures which, again, both enable and constrain social and environmental change. The programme begins by introducing diverse theoretical perspectives for understanding environmental communication as it occurs in everyday life, including casual conversations, environmental campaigns and policies, as well as in multi-stakeholder decision-making. Woven into these theoretical sections are also more practical components, that involve the production of visual communication artefacts and the facilitation of dialogue processes. Later in the programme, these theories and practices are further developed by engaging a

variety of theoretical perspectives on communication and their relationships to different models for developing communication strategies.

The programme continues by focusing on constructive and destructive aspects of conflicts, democratic approaches to conflict management and facilitation of deliberative processes. Students explore these topics in the analysis of real world cases from Sweden and other countries and suggest ways to facilitate inclusive multi-stakeholder processes. Students also engage critically with environmental governance and develop in-depth insights into how governance plays out in practice. They do this by investigating, assessing and suggesting improvements to ongoing environmental governance practices in Sweden or other countries, based on different theoretical perspectives and interaction with actors involved in these cases.

The second year of the programme includes the opportunity to do an internship in an organisation working with environmental communication or related practices. Students can choose an organisation of their preference but are required to secure the internship on their own. In preparation of the thesis work, students learn about and practice the skills required for conducting research within the area of environmental communication. This includes learning about different approaches to research, data collection and analysis as well as academic writing.

The programme also offers elective courses for students that do not do an internship. Alternatively, students have the option to conduct exchange studies at universities abroad or take courses relevant to their own area of interest within environmental communication and related practices in other programmes at SLU or other Swedish universities.

The programme concludes with an independent thesis project in which students conduct research on an environmental communication and management related phenomenon or practice of their choice, based on their own interests and with the opportunity to connect the work of ongoing research themes and projects at SLU.

### **Courses in the programme**

Main fields of study *LU=Rural development, MX=Environmental science, ÖÄ=Other subject*

#### **Year 1**

Introduction to environmental communication - Understanding and addressing environmental challenges from a communication perspective, 15 cr MX A1N

Communication theory and strategy, 15 cr MX A1F

Conflict, democracy and facilitation, 15 cr MX A1N

Engaging critically with environmental governance practices, 15 cr MX A1N

**Year 2**

The context and process of research I: Theories and methods, 7.5 cr LU/MX A1N

The context and process of research II: Theories and methods, 7.5 cr LU/MX A1F

Internship in environmental communication, 15 cr MX A1F

The process of research: Qualitative methods, data analysis and academic writing, 15 cr LU/MX A1N

Governance of natural resources, 15 cr LU A1N

Master thesis in environmental science, A2E, 30 cr MX A2E

The courses offered may change during the course of the programme. Decisions on the courses offered are taken well in advance of the next academic year.

For each course, there is a course syllabus providing more detailed course information. Information on when courses are offered is available on the SLU student web.

## **Additional information about the programme**

### **General regulations for first- and second-cycle courses and programmes**

For more information on semester dates, examination and credit transfer, see the Regulations for education at Bachelor's and Master's level available on the SLU student web.

### **Possibilities for further studies**

Students who complete the programme and are awarded a degree of Master have the option to continue their studies at doctoral level.