ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE TRUST
Protecting forever, together.

Nature Finance Unit Manager Vacancy

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION:

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has established a dedicated Nature Finance Unit within its Sustainability Portfolio, the market-facing business pillar of the organisation that works with the private sector, NGO's, financial institutions and government. The Unit Manager: Nature Finance will lead this unit and be responsible for turning the EWT's sustainability, conservation science, and field programmes into investable, fundable and financially sustainable nature finance solutions.

The incumbent will design, structure and deliver nature finance mechanisms – including carbon and biodiversity credits, biodiversity offsets, biochar, conservation trust funds, debt for nature swaps, blended finance structures, fiscal incentives such as the Section 37D biodiversity tax incentive, and conservation and tourism levies – and will provide nature-related risk, disclosure and finance advisory services to corporate and financial sector clients. The position carries responsibility for the unit's people, budget, project delivery and income, within the strategy, pipeline and key accounts held by the Executive: Head of Sustainability.

The role works closely with the Wildlife and Infrastructure Unit, the EWT Carbon Project and the EWT's conservation landscapes, so that nature finance becomes a shared capability across the organisation rather than a stand-alone service. It suits a commercially minded conservation finance professional who can lead a small, high-performing team and who is as comfortable in a boardroom or with a lender as in a project landscape.

Responsibilities and tasks:

1. **Unit Leadership and Strategy Implementation**
   - Lead the Nature Finance Unit and translate the Sustainability Portfolio strategy into an annual unit business plan, with clear targets for income, delivery and impact.
   - Set priorities for the unit's product and service offering, focusing on mechanisms that are viable, practical and able to generate real income for conservation.
   - Report on unit performance against plan to the Executive: Head of Sustainability, including income, pipeline, delivery, risk and lessons learned.
   - Ensure that the unit's work is aligned with the EWT's Future Fit strategy, conservation priorities and organisational policies.
   - Support in shaping the Unit's strategy accordingly.

2. **Design and Structuring Nature Finance Mechanisms**
   - Lead the design, feasibility assessment and structuring of nature finance mechanisms, including carbon credits, biodiversity credits and offsets, biochar, payments for ecosystem services, conservation trust funds, debt for nature swaps, outcome-based and results-based finance, and blended finance structures.

- Develop the business case, financial model, governance arrangements and legal structure for each mechanism, working with internal and external advisers as required.
- Advance fiscal and policy-based mechanisms, including the Section 37D biodiversity tax incentive, biodiversity stewardship and conservation and tourism levies, in partnership with landowners, protected area agencies and government.
- Pilot new mechanisms with partners, measure their performance and refine or retire them based on evidence.
- Ensure that every mechanism is backed by credible measurement, reporting and verification (MRV).

3. **Nature-related Advisory Services to Clients**
   - Lead the delivery of nature finance and nature-related risk advisory services to corporate, financial sector and public sector clients.
   - Oversee nature-related risk and opportunity assessments and disclosure support aligned with the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), the ISSB/IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards, the South African Green Finance Taxonomy and related frameworks.
   - Support clients to identify and structure investments in nature-positive outcomes, including offsets, restoration and conservation partnerships linked to their operations and value chains.
   - Ensure that client work is scoped, priced, contracted and delivered to a professional standard, on time and within budget.

4. **Business Development, Fundraising and Proposals**
   - Identify, pursue and secure new income for the unit from donors, development finance institutions, NGOs, climate and biodiversity funds, foundations, corporate clients and impact investors.
   - Lead the preparation of high-quality proposals, tenders and concept notes, and lead the nature finance components of larger multi-partner and consortium bids.
   - Maintain an accurate pipeline of unit opportunities and contribute to the Sustainability Portfolio pipeline held by the Executive.
   - Build long-term relationships with funders and clients that lead to repeat and multi-year funding.

5. **Integration with EWT Programmes**
   - Work with the Wildlife and Infrastructure Unit, the EWT Carbon Project and EWT's conservation landscapes to embed nature finance solutions into project design and implementation.
   - Provide technical support and advice to the EWT programme teams on financial sustainability, revenue models and the finance components of funding proposals.
   - Build internal capacity in nature finance through training, guidance notes and practical tools for the EWT staff.

6. **Financial and Project Management**
    - Develop and manage the unit budget, track income and expenditure, and ensure that the unit meets its cost-recovery and contribution targets.
    - Ensure that all projects are delivered on time, within scope and within budget, and that donor and client reporting meets contractual requirements.
    - Establish and maintain efficient systems for project tracking, time recording, reporting and risk management within the unit.
    - Ensure compliance with the EWT financial, procurement, HR, contracting and governance procedures.

7. **Management of Staff**
    - Lead, manage and develop the unit's staff, including recruitment, work planning, performance management and professional development.
    - Promote a collaborative, accountable and high-performance culture in which team members take ownership of their work and contribute new ideas.
    - Manage external consultants and sub-consultants engaged on unit projects, including scoping, contracting and quality control.

8. **Networking, Representation and Thought Leadership**
    - Represent the EWT in national and international nature finance forums, working groups, conferences and policy processes.
    - Build and maintain relationships with financial institutions, development banks, government departments, regulators, corporate partners and peer organisations.
    - Contribute to the EWT's profile in nature finance through publications, presentations, briefing notes and media engagement, in line with the EWT communication policy.
    - Monitor emerging trends, standards and markets in nature finance and advise the Executive on opportunities and risks for the EWT.

9. **Key Deliverables**
    - A Nature Finance Unit business plan and budget, approved by the Executive: Head of Sustainability within 90 days of appointment, and updated annually.
    - Achievement of the unit's annual income and contribution targets, as agreed with the Executive.
    - A defined portfolio of nature finance products and services, with pricing and delivery standards, in place within the first six months.
    - At least two nature finance mechanisms advanced from feasibility to pilot or implementation within the first 12 months.
    - Quarterly unit reports covering income, pipeline, delivery, risk and impact, delivered to the agreed format and deadline.
    - Timely, accurate donor and client reporting on all unit projects.
    - Annual performance agreements and development plans in place for all unit staff.

Minimum requirements

- A postgraduate qualification (Master's) in finance, economics, environmental economics, business, sustainability, environmental management or a related field.
- A minimum of ten years' relevant experience in conservation finance, climate finance, sustainable finance, environmental markets or related advisory work, including at least three years in a management role.
- Demonstrable experience in designing, structuring or implementing financial mechanisms for conservation, climate or nature-based solutions.
- A proven track record of securing funding or commercial income through proposals, tenders or client work.
- Experience managing staff, budgets and multiple projects at the same time.
- Sound working knowledge of carbon markets, biodiversity offsets and credits, and nature-related risk and disclosure frameworks such as TNFD.
- Strong financial literacy, including the ability to build and interrogate financial models and business cases.
- Excellent written and spoken English, with the ability to write persuasive proposals and clear technical reports.
- The ability to engage credibly with senior stakeholders in business, finance and government.
- Willingness to travel within South Africa and the region.
- A valid South African driver's licence (Code B minimum).
- Eligibility to work in South Africa.

Advantageous

- Experience in South Africa's conservation, protected area or biodiversity stewardship sector.
- Knowledge of the Section 37D biodiversity tax incentive, the Carbon Tax Act and carbon offset regulations, and South Africa's national biodiversity offset guideline.
- Experience working with development finance institutions, impact investors or commercial banks.
- Experience with blended finance, outcome-based finance or conservation trust funds.
- A professional qualification or certification in finance or sustainability (e.g. CFA, CA(SA), CFA ESG Certificate, or equivalent).
- Experience working elsewhere in Africa.
- A network within the South African and international nature finance community.

Level of decision-making, including limitations:

This position falls under the ___**D3**___band in the EWT chosen grading system. The incumbent operates within company policy, subject to support by a dedicated line manager. Consequences of failure will impact internally and externally. Implement strategy within the program under the guidance of the Head of Sustainability. Jobs in this grade are characterized by responsibility for a relatively complex body of work for the Sustainability Portfolio or significant operational areas where the organization relies on the judgment of the incumbent. The incumbent may supervise others in the same area of work. Incumbents in this grade contribute to the organization's strategic understanding of their area of expertise. Consequences of failure will impact internally and, on the organization's, external credibility. Reports to line managers (E), produce results against agreed targets. Initiates change to improve the Sustainability Portfolio processes. Responsible for who, how and support by availing resources for organizational effectiveness.

Why work for us?

By working for one of the most effective conservation NGOs in the region, working for the EWT offers the opportunity for growth, personal satisfaction, and fulfilment. We are a highly congenial organisation focusing on staff empowerment, individual development, and building strong relationships. This position will be based in Midrand, Johannesburg. In line with EWT policies, we offer flexible working hours and arrangements, competitive salary and benefits (in line with our sector), and a chance to be part of a strong team of committed conservationists.

Applicants are requested to submit a CV and a detailed cover letter motivation as to how and why they would be the best possible candidate for this position. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted within 20 days of the closing date. The EWT reserves the right not to make an appointment. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence. Closing date for applications, 20 November 2026. To apply please e-mail your CV to Application link. Applicants who will not have heard from the Endangered Wildlife Trust by 04 December 2026, should consider their application unsuccessful.