



# Centre for Environmental Rights

Advancing Environmental Rights in South Africa

The Centre for Environmental Rights is a dynamic non-profit organisation and law clinic based in Observatory, Cape Town. The Centre's mission is to advance environmental rights in South Africa, and its vision is civil society participation in environmental governance that is stronger, more streamlined, and better legally and scientifically equipped. To achieve this, the Centre supports and represents civil society organisations and communities who wish to participate in environmental decision-making processes or who want to act to protect their environmental rights, and provides environmental legal information, advice and representation to civil society.

More details and supporting documents on the Centre, its programmes of work and its priorities can be accessed at [www.cer.org.za](http://www.cer.org.za).

The Centre hereby calls for applications by suitably qualified and experienced candidates to take up a six-month pilot contract as staff attorney at the Centre, specialising in pollution, waste and land use matters. The staff attorney will ideally be based at the Centre's offices in Cape Town, though he or she will be required to travel regularly to Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal.

The Centre for Environmental Rights strives to reflect South Africa's racial, cultural and gender diversity within its staff complement. All suitably qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.

Gross salary: R30,000 per month for six months

## **Qualifications, skills and experience**

- An LLB or equivalent qualification
- A tertiary qualification in environmental law
- Admission as attorney of the High Court of South Africa
- At least two years' post-qualification experience in High Court litigation, particularly Constitutional and administrative law (experience in environmental litigation, particularly focused on pollution, waste and land use will be an advantage)
- A sound understanding of legal and procedural requirements for environmental decision-making and legal challenges, particularly decisions around pollution, waste and land use
- A sensitivity to social issues and needs
- A commitment to high quality client service

## **Objectives, funding and purpose of pilot contract**

The objectives of this pilot project (and the subsequent longer-term project) are:

- To empower key environmental justice organisations and their stakeholders (communities, community organisations and civil society organisations) through an understanding of the law and how the law is able to assist in their struggle, to raise the level of their engagement and credibility
- To improve environmental decision-making in relation to pollution, waste and land use through improved civil society participation
- To hold both government and industry to their obligations under the Constitution and applicable laws

This six-month pilot contract is funded by the Global Greengrants Fund, and outcomes from this pilot project will form the basis for further fundraising to develop the pilot into a three-year project.

The primary purpose of the pilot contract is to provide legal services to three environmental non-profit organisations, with a special focus on pollution, waste and land-use management and environmental justice: groundWork (based in Pietermaritzburg, but with a national ambit), the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA, based in Durban) and the Vaal Environmental Justice Alliance (VEJA, based in Johannesburg, but working in Gauteng, Free State and Northwest provinces). Together, these three organisations cover a significant portion of South Africa's key environmental justice burning points through their advocacy programmes. At the outset of this project, these include:

- major spatial planning issues in the Durban area;
- legal advocacy and response to the findings of the health study in south Durban;
- responding to the flood of environmental authorisation applications by large industrial facilities in the Vaal, posing both procedural and substantive legal challenges to civil society organisations
- responding to challenges posed by mining in the Vaal area;
- civil society participation in declaration and implementation of statutory Priority Air Pollution Area processes in and around the Vaal;
- addressing some major environmental impact assessments and processes, as well as compliance issues, at fossil fuel and storage facilities; and
- understanding licensing processes in general.

#### **Key responsibilities**

- Providing hands-on expert legal advice, support and representation to the three environmental justice organisations mentioned above, and to other clients of the Centre should time allow
- Legal research in support of legal advice, support and representation
- Liaison and relationship-building with existing legal representatives of the partner organisations
- Providing expert input into draft environmental policies and legislation on pollution, waste and land use matters
- Facilitating the upload of available resources onto the Centre's Virtual Environmental Law Library and other news items on our website
- Training and overseeing the work of legal interns at the Centre
- Reporting and financial management for the project
- Support for fundraising for the subsequent three-year project

Note that this position will require regular travel to Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, *inter alia* for a two-day planning and prioritisation meeting, monthly meetings between individual partners and CER, quarterly collective meetings with all partners, and site visits when required.

To apply, please send a cover letter motivating why you have the necessary qualifications, skills and experience for this position, as well as a comprehensive CV, to [mfourie@cer.org.za](mailto:mfourie@cer.org.za).

Closing date: **22 August 2010**