

Your future after Governance of Sustainability



**Universiteit
Leiden**
The Netherlands

Your future after Governance of Sustainability

With a MSc degree in Governance of Sustainability you are well prepared for a career in the field of sustainability, working with or for governments, at consultancies or companies, or pursue a career in a research institute or university.

After completing the programme, you are able to analyse complex sustainability issues from both a natural sciences and governance perspective. You will know how to integrate these perspectives in order to develop and implement solutions, and to assess their consequences. You will have acquired a wide variety of skills, including qualitative and quantitative research skills, and transferable skills, which are essential for effective interaction with a diverse group of stakeholders.

Career

The programme prepares you for positions at (semi-) governmental institutions or the private sector on sustainability issues, and to take leading broker-roles connecting different actors. You can be a change agent on sustainability, through the synthesis of different scientific fields and non-scientific knowledge and insights. Thus, graduates will contribute to the development of integrated solutions needed to achieve a sustainable society and contribute to the implementation of these solutions.



Alumni stories

The stories of Governance of Sustainability (GofS) alumni in this booklet show the diversity of career possibilities after completing the programme. We hope their stories inspire you to think about how you can apply the skills, methods and contents you will learn during your GofS degree!

You will find the stories of:

- **Kristin Hustrulid** - Environmental Consultant at COWI in Norway
- **Emanuele Cazzola** - Product and Sustainability Specialist at xFarm Technologies in Italy
- **Joel Marsden** - Senior Researcher at Circle Economy in the Netherlands
- **Sabine de Graaff** - PhD Candidate at the Institute of Sustainable Development, Utrecht University in the Netherlands
- **Krisna Baghouzian** - Junior Advisor on the Energy Transition at the Municipality of Delft in the Netherlands



Kristin Hustrulid

MSc Governance of Sustainability 2019-2021
Environmental Consultant at COWI, Norway
Before GofS: BSc Engineering



How did your experience in your bachelor's lead you to pursuing an MSc in Governance of Sustainability?

During my bachelor I focused on engineering and practical solutions for the climate and energy crisis. However, I started to realise that there is much more to sustainability than just needing more renewable energy. In addition to this, I became aware that a lot of the technological solutions were ready for implementation, but the rate of implementation was very slow. Therefore, I was looking to expand my knowledge on sustainability, and learn how to help expedite the necessary shift.

What courses did you enjoy most during the MSc?

There were a lot of interesting courses, but my favourites were the thematic courses on Climate Change and the Energy Transition, and Biodiversity and Ecosystems. The first one since ties well with my bachelor and the second I enjoyed because it was completely unknown to me. I had no knowledge on biodiversity, but I found it very intriguing and the professors were great.

What is your current job role?

Currently I work in consulting at a Norwegian company named COWI. They are a big consultancy firm focused on engineering. I work in the environmental department, mostly on calculating and finding solutions to reduce emissions from buildings and infrastructure projects. I also do climate budgeting for companies. Targets and emission reduction in regards to infrastructure and buildings are

becoming more common, and entrepreneurs are looking for ways to do this. This is where I come in. I calculate the difference between certain choices in regards to materials or work site management. This makes it easier to make an informed choice in the early stages of a project and can contribute to reducing emissions and costs.

What did you learn at GofS that you now apply in your work?

The transdisciplinary skills come in handy when working in a team with multiple disciplines and backgrounds; different branches of engineering, entrepreneurs and management, or even biologists. Furthermore, the insight into multiple aspects of sustainability is very helpful when thinking of solutions to the difficulties we encounter.

GofS trained you to be a change agent, and knowledge broker between policymakers and scientists. Could you give an example of putting that skill into practice in your work?

Every day when meeting with clients I try to inspire positive change. In projects I focus on showing alternatives and compare solutions with regards to both environmental and economical parameters. It is part of my job to guide decision makers in projects to choose the solutions I propose. So I am in a way selling a solution that I believe will be better for the environment. The challenge is that this is often new ideas that entrepreneurs don't have experience with, and hence comes with a bit of risk. Risk of going over budget, or going over the expected project time.



“The transdisciplinary skills come in handy when working in a team with multiple disciplines and backgrounds; different branches of engineering, entrepreneurs and management, or even biologists.”



“I chose this particular MSc because I loved the fact that it aimed to provide professionals with knowledge of both policymaking and environmental sciences.”



Emanuele Cazzola

*MSc Governance of Sustainability 2019-2021
Product and Sustainability Specialist at xFarm
Technologies, Italy*

Before GofS:
BSc Political Science and Government



What inspired you to choose the MSc in Governance of Sustainability?

During my bachelor's in Political Science, I chose an elective on Sustainability. Though I had always been interested in the topic, that was definitely the trigger of a more profound awareness on what my call was. I chose this particular programme because I loved the fact that it aimed to provide professionals with knowledge of both policymaking and environmental sciences.

During the MSc, which courses did you enjoy the most?

Definitely the thematic course on Biodiversity and Ecosystems. Inspiring professors and the topic I felt closest to, both intellectually and emotionally.

Could you tell us a bit about your current job?

Currently I work as Sustainability Specialist for xFarm Technologies, a leading FMIS in Europe that offers a range of products and services to digitalize farm and agri-food supply chain management. One of the core objectives is to improve resource efficiency and foster farmers' engagement with Regenerative Agriculture. We developed a first carbon footprint, water use, acidification and eutrophication calculator for on-field operations, a simulator of carbon sequestration (based on regenerative agricultural practices), and we are currently developing a biodiversity estimator for farmers.

GofS trained you to be a change agent and knowledge broker between policymakers and scientists. Could you give an example of putting that skill into practice in your work?

I often have to explain sustainability-related concepts and theories to a non-scientific audience, such as farmers or other stakeholders. At the same time, I have to look into EU policies and be able to explain those to colleagues or partners who do have a scientific background. An example is the elaboration of our upcoming tool for measuring carbon sequestration, for which I have to monitor the coming EU directives on carbon credits and at the same time ensure the tool is rigorously science-based, while also being able to explain farmers and food companies how to use it, and why.

What would you advise to current GofS students?

Try to integrate academic knowledge with “on-the-ground” knowledge, for instance on stakeholder engagement, in both policy and business sector. Do internships besides your study and expose yourselves to different kinds of working environments as much as possible. And most of all, enjoy the journey - you are on track to make a difference in this troubled world.

Joel Marsden

MSC Governance of Sustainability 2019-2021

Senior Researcher at Circle Economy

Before GofS:

BSc Economics

What inspired you to choose the MSc in Governance of Sustainability?

Having worked as an economist for 10 years tackling policy issues, I was increasingly aware of the urgent need for brokers who can effectively work at the interface between science and policy. The masters provided me the opportunity deepen my knowledge of governance processes, environmental science and cutting-edge research techniques to open up a new set of career opportunities.

Could you tell us about your current job?

Circle Economy is an impact organisation based in Amsterdam that combines research, data and digital tools to promote and scale an economic system that ensures the planet and people can thrive. I'm a senior researcher in the Circular Jobs Initiative where my job is to research and advocate for a circular economy (CE) that positively impacts workers and communities.

GofS trained you to be a change agent, and knowledge broker between policymakers and scientists. Could you give an example of putting that skill into practice in your work?

Our Circularity Gap Reports combine scientific data on a country or region's material flows with scientific evidence and stakeholder interviews. With this, we identify the CE strategies that will reduce environmental emissions and the enabling levers to make them achievable in practice and at scale. In doing this work for Northern Ireland,



I engaged with a scientific panel of experts and policy practitioners to identify and communicate our recommendations so that they can directly influence the Northern Ireland Government's forthcoming strategy.

What would you advise to current GofS students?

Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone! Have a go at learning technical quantitative skills through input-output analysis, modelling, or life-cycle analysis; sign up for that ecotoxicology fieldwork. Even if you don't end up excelling in the area, or never end up directly manipulating data or conducting scientific fieldwork again - the knowledge and understanding it gives you will set you up to help better interpret and communicate scientific findings to influence policymakers and industry leaders.



“Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone! Have a go at learning technical quantitative skills through input-output analysis, modelling, or life-cycle analysis; sign up for that ecotoxicology fieldwork.”



Sabine de Graaff

*MSc Governance of Sustainability
2019-2022
PhD Candidate at the Copernicus
Institute of Sustainable Development,
Utrecht University
Before GofS: BSc Global Sustainability
Science*

What is your PhD research about?

I am working at the Innovation Studies department of the Copernicus Institute and look at innovation policy in the context of sustainability transitions, specifically focussing on policy processes. There is a call for innovation policy to contribute more to the transformative change needed in transitions. This requires reflecting on desirable futures and the different pathways to get there. We make many normative assumptions about what we want, but this is not a given. There can be a lot of political debate about what we want. So, for innovation policy to be more directional, there needs to be more research on how to navigate different transition pathways. In my PhD I compare policy processes between Norway and the Netherlands.

What brought you to the Governance of Sustainability programme?

After my bachelor's, I had a strong drive to make impact and I got the opportunity to work at DRIFT, the Dutch institute for transitions in Rotterdam, for almost a year. Afterwards, I came to the conclusion that I still wanted to do a masters in environmental governance, which was also the topic of my bachelor's. I was looking for a master that combined sustainability science in an interdisciplinary way, and Governance of Sustainability was a new master that came up. After doing my bachelor's at Utrecht University, I wanted to expand my views with insights from other professors, new places, and new people, and that's how I got to Governance of Sustainability at Leiden University.

What did you like about studying Governance of Sustainability?

I really liked the content related courses in the first year, and also how they connect in different ways. We encounter many different sustainability challenges, yet they are all complex, with different actors involved, and uncertainties. This is where the governance theory comes in. It helped to explain and navigate the challenges that sustainability brings in terms of how to engage with different actors, framing, or multilevel governance. So, for me, diving into specific topics, seeing the overview and the line throughout it all, was nice.

What did you learn during the programme that you still use in your work?

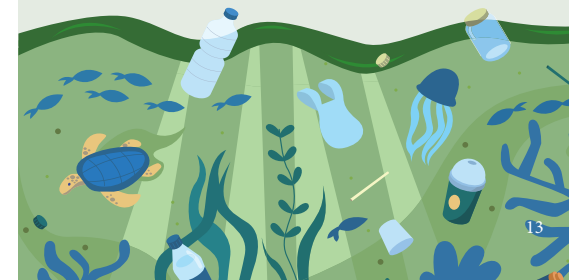
Governance theories, so, concepts like framing and multilevel governance but also elements of the policy process which were covered in the masters. Also, I took a lot away from the governance part of the climate change course and being reflective of the role of technology in sustainability transitions and what that means politically. It's not just about stimulating innovation or technology because it's going to be better or helpful, but also reflecting on what it means and what kinds of values and subjectivity are underlying those technologies and the policies trying to stimulate them.

What advice would you give to GofS students?

Enjoy your studies, as it is a short and special phase in your life. It's hard work, but it is two full years dedicated to your personal and academic development, and that is very valuable. All the materials you get to read and the lectures you attend are not something you will encounter for a while afterwards. So try to appreciate and enjoy it.



“We encounter many different sustainability challenges, yet they are all complex, with different actors involved, and uncertainties. This is where the governance theory comes in.”



Krisna Baghouzian

MSc Governance of Sustainability
2019-2021

Junior Advisor on the Energy
Transition at the Municipality of Delft

Before GofS:

BSc Governance, Economics, and
Development

During your bachelor, what inspired you to take on the MSc in Governance of Sustainability?

With climate change as a topic of interest, I attended Leiden University College (LUC) where I was inspired to major in Sustainability or Governance, Economics and Development. I chose Governance, Economics and Development because I felt that I wanted a better understanding of institutional change if we must transform the way we organise our lives in order to justly live on this planet. I took most of my electives from the sustainability track which further affirmed my interest in this field. At the time of my graduation the Governance of Sustainability programme did not exist yet. During my gap year I took the time to orient myself in follow-up studies whilst doing an internship at the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, on the topic of deforestation linked to agricultural products imported to the Netherlands. During this time I saw that one of my former sustainability professors at LUC, Thijs Bosker, posted that this master was being developed. This piqued my curiosity; what if I could further deepen my knowledge in sustainability while nurturing my knowledge in governance? So I decided to take the chance to register as one of the students in the first year of this programme.

Could you tell us a bit about your current job?

I currently work at the municipality of Delft as an advisor on energy transition. I am mainly responsible for a neighbourhood approach to the transition in which citizen participation plays an important role in determining a sustainable heating alternative for homes. What is the most fulfilling about my job is that we have a comprehensive approach to the transition. We do not only focus on home heating, but also other topics which might be more top-of-mind when it comes to the daily lives of citizens. By addressing these other topics we aim to take steps in the energy transition that will benefit citizens long term.

What did you learn at GofS that you now apply in your work?

As we work with a lot of stakeholders, learning to deal with differing interests has been very helpful in my work; from mapping professional and informal stakeholders, to understanding that a fair and transparent process is always crucial. I also learned practical skills which can be broadly applied in many settings I work in. Before the master I was not particularly keen on group projects but the



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Foto: Erwin Dijkgraaf

many and differing exercises in varying teams taught me valuable communication and delegatory skills which I directly adopt in my work. The Sustainability Challenge was one of these exciting projects in which we had to collaborate within the team as well as collectively with our commissioner.

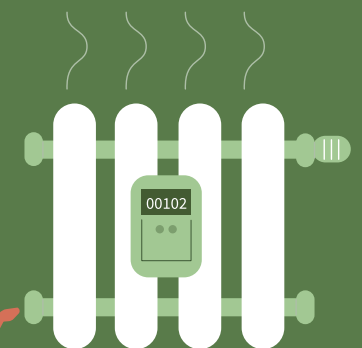
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The energy transition is an interesting field because municipalities have been tasked to execute the transition at a local level. Whilst different municipalities collectively figure out how to design a local approach, they also inform national policy makers about signals from local stakeholders. In shaping a local approach, I

appreciate that we broadly touched upon many sustainability topics in the master. This taught me to stay critical of 'sustainable alternatives'. Are we just focusing on carbon emissions, or do we also account for material use, or the biodiversity loss that may come with some new technologies. There is also a social side; are we ensuring a just transition, who are the winners and losers in each decision?

What would you advise to current GofS students?

Sustainability is a complex topic that can sometimes feel like an overwhelming field to work in, especially if you are driven by a sense of justice. Know that we can lean on each other to problem-solve, share frustrations, and get inspired. Where one might find the narrative that change is 'too difficult', it presents a chance to approach a situation from a completely different (and perhaps more simple) way. In my experience, in such situations you will find more like-minded people who want to cooperate in this alternative way of working than you may have imagined. There just needs to be someone who will voice or take initiative. So seek these chances. And during your studies, do not underestimate the knowledge you gain. Meeting GofS alumni in my field of work has already been an invaluable source of insight and boosts of energy to me.



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