



CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP  
IN GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY  
VIRGINIA TECH



Master of Natural Resources

# PROGRAM GUIDE

CONNECT WITH CLiGS

VISIT: [cligs.vt.edu](https://cligs.vt.edu) ■ EMAIL: [CLIGS@vt.edu](mailto:CLIGS@vt.edu) ■ CALL: 571-858-3338

The Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability (CLiGS) is housed within Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources and Environment and headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, near Washington, D.C.



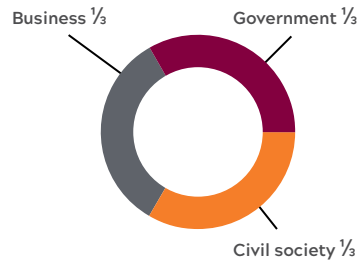
COLLEGE OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT  
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## About the Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability

The Center for Leadership in Global Sustainability (CLiGS) equips current and aspiring environmental and sustainability professionals with the credentials, competencies, connections, and confidence to become more effective leaders, now and in the future.

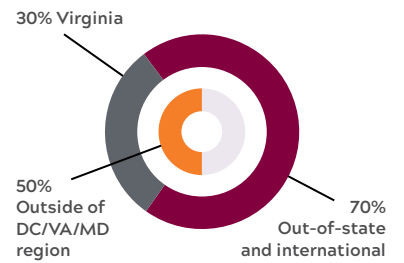
Our mission is to **educate, inspire, and empower** sustainability professionals to create a better future for people and our planet.

### SECTOR



(Where our students work)

### GEOGRAPHY



(Where our students live)



800+ GRADUATES

(All MNR degree  
programs to date)



LET'S CONNECT!

■ EMAIL: [CLIGS@vt.edu](mailto:CLIGS@vt.edu)





## Two Ways to Earn Your Master's Degree

The Master of Natural Resources is delivered in two flexible formats:

- **Online** (fully online course delivery)
- **Executive** (hybrid: online plus in-person; cohort-based and accelerated)
- Both are designed for current and aspiring environmental and sustainability professionals looking to take their career to the next level.

### MASTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

PROGRAM	MNR ONLINE
QUALIFICATIONS	Undergraduate degree
SCHEDULE & TIMELINE	Flexible (12-36 months)
PROGRAM BEGINS	Semester of choice (3 times/year)
LOCATION	Online + international trip
GLOBAL STUDY	A 10-day international trip to one or more destinations. Previous destinations have included Argentina, Brazil, China, Iceland, India, and South Africa.
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	Yes
COST	Please see our <a href="#">website</a> for current pricing

PROGRAM	EXECUTIVE MNR (XMNR)
QUALIFICATIONS	Undergraduate degree
SCHEDULE & TIMELINE	12 months (3 semesters)
PROGRAM BEGINS	January
LOCATION	Hybrid: 11 weekend meetings (5 in Washington, D.C. area + 6 virtual) + international trip
GLOBAL STUDY	One 10-day international trip. Locations are selected by faculty each year. Previous destinations have included China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, and Turkey.
ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	Yes
COST	Please see our <a href="#">website</a> for current pricing

VISIT OUR  
SITE FOR THE  
LATEST UPDATES  
ON PROGRAM  
DETAILS





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## Master of Natural Resources (Online)

The MNR (Online) is a 30-credit, virtual, and flexible degree program that prepares students for careers in environmental sustainability. The program combines online coursework and participation in a 10-day, face-to-face Global Study (an international trip) that takes the place of the typical professional graduate degree capstone project. Students interested in more than one Global Study may pursue additional opportunities through the Study Abroad option, to be discussed with a graduate advisor upon admission.

Whether you're about to graduate with your Bachelor's degree, are a recent grad, or have been working for a decade or longer, this flexible interdisciplinary program instills the conceptual and critical thinking skills necessary for lifelong learning and career development. MNR graduates are prepared to succeed on a truly global stage as natural resource, environmental, and sustainability professionals.

### COURSES

- **Core courses:** Global Issues in Environmental Sustainability, Leadership Communication for Sustainability Professionals, Constructing Sustainability, Strategies for Sustainability, Sustainability Systems
- **Elective courses in these focus areas:** Biodiversity and Ecosystems, Cities and Urban Systems, Climate Change, Environmental Policy, Sustainable Business, Water and Marine Systems

[SEE THE FULL LIST  
OF ELECTIVE COURSES  
ON OUR SITE.](#)



LEARN MORE  
ABOUT THE  
MASTER OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES ON  
OUR SITE

### Important Application Information

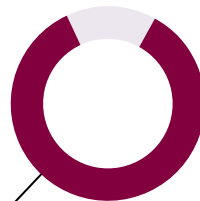
- Completed undergraduate degree
- Completed VT Application for Admission
- No GRE required
- No additional cost for out-of-state or international students
- English proficiency assessment is required for international students per Graduate School requirements



AVERAGE AGE: ~35  
AGE RANGE: ~20-55



AVERAGE ENROLLMENT:  
~15-20 STUDENTS PER  
COURSE



85% OF INSTRUCTORS ARE  
ACTIVE PRACTITIONERS IN  
THEIR FIELDS





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## Executive Master of Natural Resources (XMNR)

The Executive Master of Natural Resources (XMNR) is an accelerated (1 year) graduate degree program that combines the best of online and in-person education in an innovative hybrid and cohort-based curriculum focused on systems learning, leadership, and change. The XMNR is a transformative learning and leadership development experience that educates, inspires, and empowers professionals to address current and emerging challenges in sustainable development, environmental justice, climate resilience, and related topics.

XMNR students learn to make sense of complex environmental and sustainability systems, apply advanced leadership strategies and practices, engage diverse stakeholders in real-world case projects, and improve their overall professional performance to advance their careers. XMNR students typically have demanding full-time jobs, which is why our curriculum is designed to help them improve their performance at work, advance their careers, and have greater impact in the world. Executive-style graduate programs are for anyone who is interested in experiential and peer-to-peer learning focusing on professional and leadership development as related to sustainability systems.

The program is taught as a hybrid of in-person/virtual meetings and online individual and small-group work. Students gather in person 5 times a year for three-day experiential learning weekends, 6 times virtually for two-day meetings, and one 10-day Global Study experience. Meeting with your cohort virtually or in the Washington, D.C. metro area, you'll strengthen your network with access to Virginia Tech's faculty and world-renowned sustainability experts, as well as peers from

across disciplinary and sectoral boundaries. You'll also network with global partners during your Global Study, and apply lessons learned to real-world sustainability projects.

LEARN MORE  
ABOUT THE  
EXECUTIVE MASTER  
OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES ON  
OUR SITE



### Important Application Information

- Cohorts start each January and have a limited number of spaces
- Admissions are processed on a rolling basis
- No GRE required
- No additional cost for out-of-state or international students
- Admission decisions are based on both academic and professional experience
- English proficiency assessment is required for international students per Graduate School requirements

### SUBJECTS OF STUDY

Climate Change and Resilience  
Energy Transitions and Alternatives  
Food and Agriculture  
Water and Marine Systems  
Environmental Justice  
International Sustainable Development  
Sustainable Business and Circular Economy  
Global Resource Flows and Supply Chains  
Urbanization and Sustainable Cities  
Biodiversity and Ecosystems  
Leadership and Innovation  
Communications and Collaboration  
Individual Development, Independent Study, and Career Advising\*

\*Students have the opportunity to focus their studies, specialize, and develop expertise on topics of interest and relevant to their career goals through an Individual Development Process that includes independent study projects and career coaching options.



~30 STUDENTS PER COHORT



AVERAGE AGE: ~40  
AGE RANGE: ~25-60



STUDENTS ENGAGE  
WITH > 50 FACULTY AND  
GUEST FACULTY



## Global Study

MNR students participate in a ten-day Global Study experience—a required part of our degree in both programs—to engage with real-world global sustainability challenges.

For **Executive Master of Natural Resources (XMNR)** students, the Global Study destination for each cohort is chosen by the faculty. Previous XMNR Global Study locations have included China, Egypt, India, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, and Turkey.

Students in the **Master of Natural Resources (Online)** are able to choose from the Global Study options offered while they are degree-seeking in the program. Upcoming 2024 locations, focused on sustainability and ecosystems, include Australia, Fiji, and New Zealand.

Past MNR (Online) locations for Global Study have included Argentina, Bali, Brazil, China, Croatia, Cuba, Estonia, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Finland, Morocco, Turkey, South Africa, and Switzerland.

Those who are interested in emphasizing international experiential learning during their time in the program have an opportunity, if desired, to visit multiple destinations as part of their graduate degree coursework.

## INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Understanding similarities and differences between cultures, and how those factors underlie different perspectives, is a key to success for global sustainability professionals. All students undergo a standardized cultural competence test, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), administered by trained faculty members.



LEARN MORE  
ABOUT GLOBAL  
STUDY  
ON OUR SITE





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## Alums

Our graduates live and work all over the world, but they remain closely connected, both in person and online. Here's a small sample of the types of jobs and organizations where you can find our alums.

*"What was most valuable for me was the confidence I gained in discussing important and complex sustainability issues. I now have the credentials to speak up and make an impact."*

ARSLAN AHMAD

*"Throughout my experience, I learned how to step back and see things at a broad level—only then can problems be identified and broken down to achieve a long-term goal."*

MIKE BECKNER

*"This degree has helped me to build an international work portfolio and is also helpful as I assist in urban renewal programs in my hometown of Detroit. Challenges of sustainability are truly relevant wherever we find ourselves."*

MAGGIE STRIZ CALNIN

*"They're really teaching you the skills you need to be a leader in your field and to understand decisions that other leaders are making."*

VIRGINIA FOSTER

*"I was looking to move my career from a mid-level government employee to an executive position. After graduating, a year and a half later I became the executive director of a non-profit."*

KATE FRITZ



## WHO ARE OUR ALUMS?

- Executive Director, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
- Energy and Sustainability Liaison at District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Sustainability Consultant, Dominion Energy
- International Trade Policy Leader at USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
- Senior Client Engagement Lead at the Global Carbon Capture and Sequestration Institute
- Environmental and Social Specialist at MIGA-World Bank Group
- Conservation Strategy Specialist, Restoring America's Forests at The Nature Conservancy
- Country Director at the Institute for Sustainable Communities
- Sustainability and Environmental Specialist, U.S. Geological Survey
- Senior Product Manager at National Geographic Society
- Utility Programs Manager at project:HOMES
- Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Greenville
- National Program Coordinator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Natural Resource Specialist, U.S. Bureau of Land Management
- USAID Grants Auditor, Macfadden
- Communications Strategist and Science Writer, Duke University
- President, Sustainable Designs LLC
- Site Manager, GE Renewables

FOR  
MORE STORIES,  
VISIT THE ALUMS  
SECTION ON  
OUR SITE



## Student Resources

Whether it's student advising, career coaching and resume help, financial aid, or veterans' benefits, all MNR students can count on the support of Virginia Tech's faculty and staff.

### GREEN CAREERS

As the sustainability field matures, employers look for skills beyond technical expertise. The issues and challenges are complex, global, and interconnected. People working on solving these challenges need to have the ability and the training to think strategically and systemically, and work collaboratively across many disciplines.

### CAREER COACHING AND RESUME GUIDANCE

All our graduate students and recent alums have access to personal career coaching. Even if you have a solid grasp of your values and skills, career coaching can help you advance in your career or pivot successfully to a new one.

### FINANCIAL AID

Students may qualify for financial aid, usually in the form of student loans. Learn more on our [website](#).



## THE VALUE OF A MASTER'S DEGREE



~\$100,000/year average salary of employees in the Environmental, Health, Safety, and Sustainability field\*



~\$5,000/year salary boost with graduate degree for employees with <15 years of work experience\*\*



50% of mid-career sustainability professionals have advanced degrees\*\*

\*Source: 2020 EHS&S Salary Survey

\*\*Source: National Association of Environmental Management (NAEM)



Virginia Tech has been awarded designations as "Military Friendly, Silver Medal" by [militaryfriendly.com](#) and "Best for Vets" by [MilitaryTimes.com](#). Students who are veterans, active military, or military spouses comprise nearly 20 percent of each Executive MNR cohort, and almost 15 percent of each graduating class in the MNR.