

ALUMNI

Spotlight

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

★ Gabriele

EMP
B28



BUILDING NETWORKS & GAINING INSIGHTS

ASSOCIATE, ESG ASSURANCE

HELSINKI, FINLAND

Deloitte.

★ Hélène Rigert-Robert

FOCUSING ON WHAT'S POSSIBLE IN AN IMPERFECT WORLD

CLIMATE ADAPTATION ADVISOR

NGĀMOTU NEW PLYMOUTH, AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



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★ Lauren Brach

BREW CONNECTIONS, BREW SUCCESS

CLIMATE LEAD

SWITZERLAND

NESPRESSO.



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READ MORE ABOUT THE ALUMNI'S INSIGHTS

Gabriele

What do you enjoy the most and least at your current job?

As an Associate in ESG Assurance, my job focuses on verifying the information that the client publicly discloses. This requires rigor, knowledge of ESG topics, and a healthy degree of skepticism – components that I value as an employee and as a person. I used to work in the Consulting function at Deloitte, and I must say, I am rather enjoying **the move from an environment focused on supporting companies in their journey of improving ESG performance/reporting, to a controller position**. The least enjoyable aspect is the unstable workflow, which is a bit of a double-edged sword. Typical of a project-based career, sometimes the workflow is as calm as a creek, while other times it's more like Niagara Falls! However, as mentioned before, this **instability can be enjoyable; long hours are worth it when a project is interesting or challenging**, and the “low tide” period can be a good way to recover your wellbeing after a hellish week!

EMP & Insti Stories

It might sound a bit cheesy, but EMP holds a place close to my heart. Having a theoretical background, I was **amazed by the practical aspects and issues we had to tackle in the program**. Most of all, **EMP helped me realize the importance of interpersonal relationships** – how much you can learn just by conversing with your peers, and how valuable it is to have a network of like-minded, witty people with whom to have discussions and share insights.

Life-changing book

Journey to the Ants by Bert Hölldobler - extremely inspiring for professionals that want to understand complex systems and dynamics!

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B28**EMP Graduate 2023**

Associate, ESG Assurance at Deloitte



Helsinki, Finland

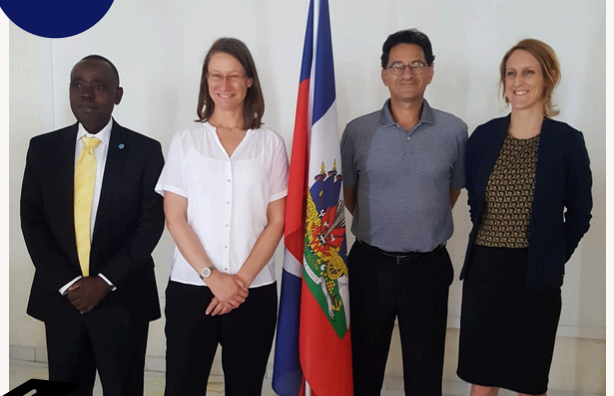
Any advice for non-EU students seeking jobs in the EU/Sweden?

Begin your job search before graduating and consider writing your thesis in collaboration with a company. The EU job market is already competitive for EU citizens, and I cannot imagine how challenging it could be for non-EU citizens. **Sustainability-related positions are also often open to individuals without a sustainability background**, increasing the competition. Many companies are driven by regulations when it comes to sustainability and having knowledge about these regulations can be a significant advantage. Lastly, do not give up! **It may take time, but you likely have more relevant experiences than others** from non-sustainability backgrounds.

Hélène Rigert-Robert

Please share an interesting project you've been involved in

I was working with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) to design a project to **improve climate change resilience of smallholder farmers in Haiti**. This focused on policy, capacity development, and climate-resilient agriculture interventions. I witnessed the impacts of climate change on a very vulnerable mountainous country where **these issues are exacerbated by extreme poverty, political instability, and inequality**. This was extremely pivotal for me. I visited a forest protected by armed guards to stop deforestation for charcoal production, a major local livelihood. River sedimentation was so bad that we saw people digging to access the river water. From the top of a hill, I could see the sedimentation spilling out from the river into the sea, impacting marine ecosystems. One of **the big drivers for this sedimentation was from deforestation for charcoal and farming**, which both leave the hillsides vulnerable to increasingly frequent weather events like hurricanes. Unfortunately, the trip ended due to civil unrest after the government increased the price of fuel, and we were stranded for a couple of days as the country went into lockdown. The injustices left me feeling helpless, but they also compel me to work in the climate space.

EMP
B23 **EMP Graduate 2016** Climate Adaptation Advisor at New Plymouth District Council Ngāmotu New Plymouth, Aotearoa New Zealand

Most valuable learning?

The Insti helped me figure out how to **stay positive despite dealing with the harsh realities of social and environmental injustices**. I was perplexed by how Håkan always oozed positivity even when discussing such difficult topics. This helped me figure out my own approach to **staying positive by focusing on what is doable rather than what isn't within my reach**. Learning about the economics that underpin and drive economic harm was very useful for me (e.g. externalities), as well as different market-based mechanisms and policies. Learning about the best and worst practices from around the world was also invaluable.

Lauren Brach

What is your daily work life like?

My day always begins with a rich cup of Nespresso coffee and a quick catch-up with my colleagues. Then I dive into the evolving world of our net-zero strategy. Each day brings something new, **whether it's refining our insetting and agroforestry plans or collaborating with forward-thinking innovators in the climate space.** The work is dynamic and deeply focused on driving sustainable transformation.

What is the most valuable learning from EMP for your current work?

The most valuable lesson from EMP was **learning to balance a demanding workload with personal time.** Whether it's catching up with friends, enjoying a fika at Broder Jakobs, or completing assigned readings, **finding harmony between work and relaxation is essential.** I'm thankful I took time to spend quality time with my fellow Insti friends and soak in the experience. Leading Nespresso's net-zero strategy carries significant responsibility, but one of the most valuable lessons from my IIIIEE experience was mastering the balance between work and play.



 Climate Lead at Nespresso

 Switzerland

Any advice for non-EU students seeking jobs in the EU/Sweden?

LinkedIn is your friend! **Network as much as possible by messaging people on LinkedIn that have a career that inspires you and ask them for a coffee chat,** or reach out to the alumni network. You'd be surprised how many people are willing to chat if you just ask.

Life-changing book

- *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein
- *Doughnut Economics* by Kate Raworth

