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## Summary of the SUNRAISE end-user survey conducted in the Altai Republic, Russia

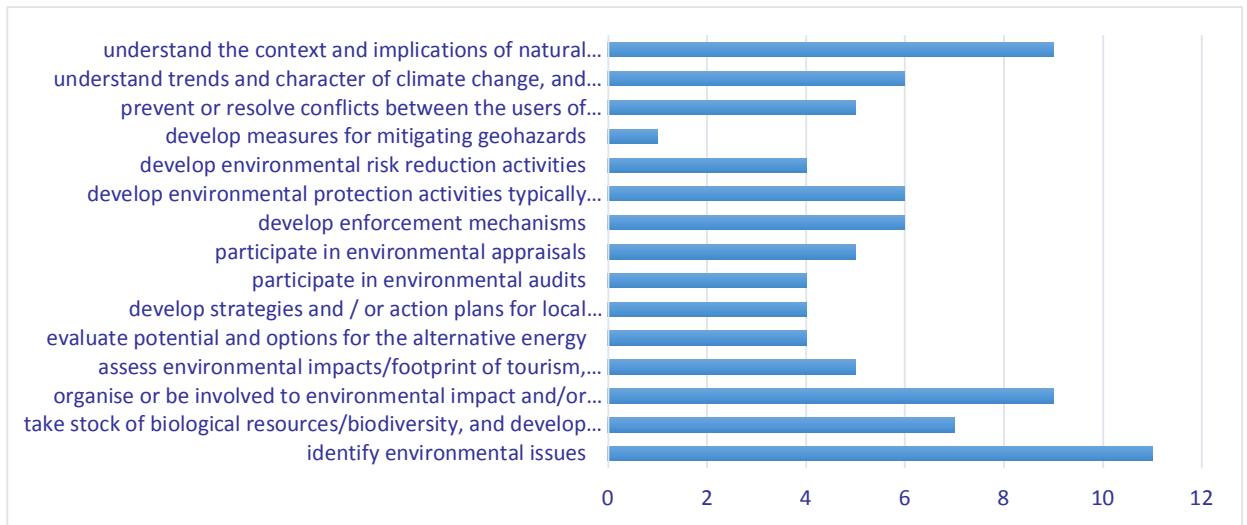
The present-day realities prove that labor market can actively influence the professional educational activities. From the employer's point of view, the key success criteria of any higher educational institution is the quality of professional training of their graduates. Despite the interest of the universities in the preparation of in-demand specialists, most employers still consider that the current level of professional training is insufficient, as today's graduates have good theoretical knowledge, but lack practical and communication skills. Such situation has many causes, including the ignorance of requirements of market economy, the inertia of curricula, and the conservatism of teachers who do not want to implement innovative educational technologies in their work. The solution to the problem stated above should become one of SUNRAISE project's outcomes.

The results presented below are based on the survey of employers as main consumers of "final product" of educational services. The total number of respondents was 18: representatives of the ministries and departments, nature protection organizations, local enterprisers, i.e., those who form labor market in the field of ecology and environment-related activities in the Altai Republic.

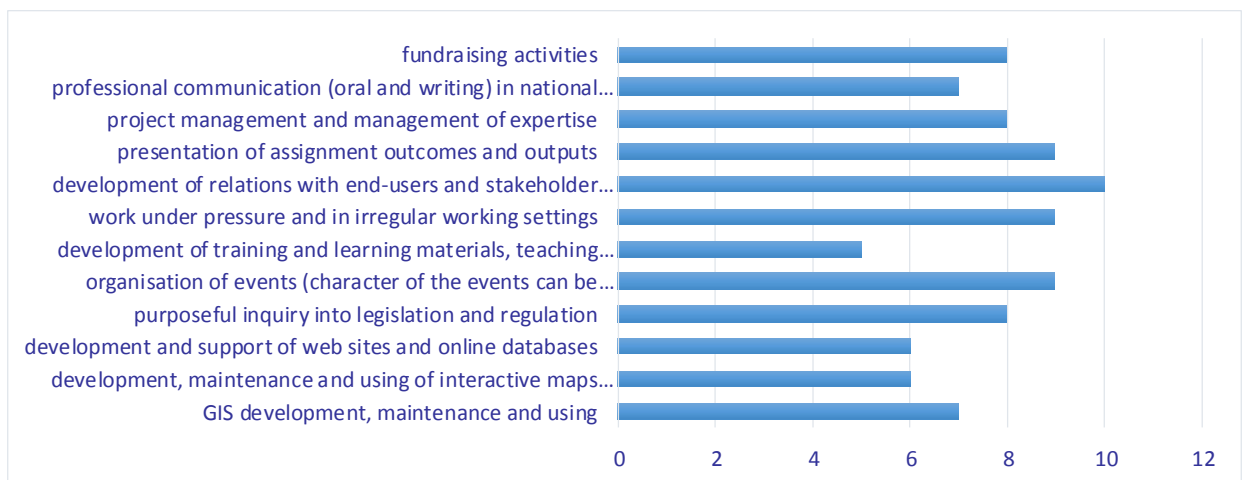
The respondents were asked to answer the following questions:

1. What tasks would you need your future employees to perform?
2. What generic skills would you expect your employees to have?
3. Would you employ relevant graduates within 3-5 years?
4. Would you (or your colleagues) guest lecture or moderate workshops for university students? If so, what would be the topics?
5. What kind of re-training your employees might require?
6. What kind of re-training would you like for yourself?
7. What is your standing on distant learning in terms of the utility, usability and preferences?
8. Would you (or your colleagues) have any experience in distance learning? If so, could you please reflect on this?
9. Would you have in your organization any colleagues you would recommend to enroll to master's and/or PhD studies? If so, in what fields?
10. How many of your colleagues (c.a. %) have good commands of foreign languages (sufficient for professional purposes)?
11. Would your employees need foreign language courses? What conditions would be acceptable / desired? (learning / training formats, level, schedule, size of the course and the group etc)
12. Why would your colleagues need foreign languages? (please, prioritize):
13. What cooperation formats with universities you deem the most relevant / useful / important?

The first question concerned the estimation of the importance of performing professional tasks. The analysis of results revealed the following preferences: to understand the context and implications of natural resource management and governance in the areas inhabited by indigenous people or other communities with traditional life styles; to organise or be involved to environmental impact and/or strategic environmental assessments. The least popular answer was "to develop measures for mitigating geohazards." In our opinion, it can be explained by specific interests of the employers involved in the survey (fig. 1).



Answering the question about the generic skills of potential employees the majority of respondents noted the importance of being able to develop relations with end-users and stakeholder groups, including public bodies. The least important was the ability to develop training and learning materials, teaching and training (fig. 2).



Questions from 3 to 11 did not have response options.

№3 Only 30% of respondents were ready to employ relevant graduates within 3-5 years.

The answers to the question №4 were more unanimous. 80% of respondents showed their interest in giving guest lectures or moderating workshops for university students.

Among the most highly sought re-trainings for employers and their employees (№5-6) were legal literacy courses, administrative management, and English courses.

70% of employers positively reacted to the questions about distant learning (№7-9); either they supported that idea and had such experience, or were interested in the distant learning opportunities for their employees.

The questions №10-12 were designed to identify the level of foreign language proficiency, the needs for foreign language courses, and the purposes for which local employees should know foreign languages. It was anticipated that the respondents would specify several purposes. The most popular answers were "extra-curricular communications when abroad" and "organisation of international events by your company"(fig. 3).



Answering the question №13 about the most relevant / useful / important cooperation formats with universities most respondents chose "master classes (practices) for university students and/or teachers" to be conducted on the basis of their organizations. The second most popular answer was "involvement of the employees to the educational process."

Among other problems noted by the respondents during their in-depth interviews were weak practical skills, lack of knowledge of legal framework, inability to apply the knowledge gained at the university while meeting professional challenges.



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Today, the professional functions of environmentally literate specialists employed in the project-related organization consist in the development of nature protection documentation, concurrence and technical support of ecological projects. Such activities imply good knowledge of a regulatory framework, as well as engineering and technological aspects and processes occurring in the environment under the influence of economic and other human activities.

As a result of the conducted survey, the main objectives for strategic partnership of Gorno-Altai State University and regional employers have been developed:

- joint development of content of education courses "Environmental design and expertise", "Waste management", and "Sustainable development of mountain territories";
- more active participation of employers in the implementation of compulsory and optional courses at GASU;
- more joint research projects;
- more systematic use of the organizations-employers as bases for practical training of GASU students.