



Hugh McDonald

BCom (Hons)
Senior Fellow

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As a Senior Fellow at Ecologic Institute, Hugh McDonald applies an environmental economics lens to diverse environmental policy issues. His project work covers the intersection between agriculture and climate mitigation, market-based policy instruments, nature-based solutions, and biodiversity finance, among other topics. Hugh McDonald is a native English speaker and fluent in German. He has worked at Ecologic Institute since 2016.

Much of Hugh McDonald's current work focusses on the topic areas of nature-based climate mitigation. This includes a particular focus on the agriculture and land sector and on the use of market-based instruments. For example, recent projects for the European Commission's DG CLIMA including [Support on Devising a Carbon Removal Certification Mechanism](#) (2020-22) and applying the polluter-pays principle to agricultural emissions (2022-23), as well as for the German Environment Agency on [Nature-based Solutions for Climate Protection](#).

Hugh McDonald also participates in a number of large research projects on biodiversity and nature-based solutions. In the Horizon Europe project [Pond Ecosystems for Resilient Future Landscapes in a Changing Climate \(PONDERFUL\)](#), Hugh McDonald leads a task on financing small biodiversity projects. Previously, Hugh McDonald was part of the leadership team for the EU-funded Horizon 2020 project [Knowledge, Assessment, and Management for Aquatic Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Across EU Policies](#) (AQUACROSS – 2015-2019), where he acted as case study coordinator and led the Azores case study. Hugh McDonald also contributed to the climate adaptation and innovation project [Bridging the Gap for Innovations in Disaster Resilience \(BRIGAD\)](#), and [Demonstrate Ecosystem Services Enabling Innovation in the Water Sector](#), as well as supporting the European Environment Agency's [European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters \(ETC-ICM\)](#) on economic tasks.



Before coming to Berlin, Hugh McDonald worked for three years as a Research Analyst at [Motu Economic and Public Policy Research](#) in Wellington (New Zealand). His work there

centred on climate policy and water pollution, with a particular focus on trading market design, transaction costs in environmental markets, environmental policy evaluation and collaborative stakeholder processes. Alongside this environmental focus, his responsibilities also included quantitative and qualitative research on a wide range of economic policy questions related to New Zealand, including health care utilisation, state housing policy, and wages in the New Zealand economy. Before starting at Ecologic Institute, Hugh also worked as a freelance copywriter and translator.

Hugh McDonald holds a Bachelor of Commerce with Honours degree in Economics from the University of Otago (New Zealand). His honours dissertation considered poverty lines, household equivalence scales and definitions of poverty in sole-parent New Zealand households.

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