

CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

2025 - 2030

TRADITIONAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that the University of New Brunswick stands on the unceded and unsundered traditional homeland of the Wolastoqiyik. The Wolastoqiyik have lived with and on this land since time immemorial.

This land is covered by the Treaties of Peace and Friendship which the Wolastoqiyik, Passamaquoddy, and Mi'kmaq signed with the British Crown between 1725 and 1779.

The river that connects our university's two campuses is known as the Wolastoq, along which live the Wolastoqiyik – the people of the beautiful and bountiful river. The Wolastoq is also called the Saint John River.



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INTRODUCTION

Universities and colleges have the power to make the world a better place, and the University of New Brunswick Toward 2030 strategic plan (UNB Toward 2030) outlines a future for UNB that strengthens our ambitious response to the grand challenges of our time.

UNB Toward 2030 states that our institution aspires to be financially and environmentally sustainable, and working to become a carbon neutral institution by 2050. To achieve these aspirations, a key action is listed in UNB Toward 2030. That key action is to 'lead sustainability and environmental stewardship across Canadian universities'.

This Climate Action and Sustainability Plan was developed to support UNB in achieving that key action. UNB uses the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) program managed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) to measure our sustainability performance. The STARS program is the most widely recognized standard for sustainability in higher education in the world, therefore it was used to guide the development of this Climate Action and Sustainability Plan. UNB's previous 2020 - 2025 Climate Change Action Plan and 2020 - 2025 Campus Sustainability Plan were also used to guide the development of this plan which replaces both of them in UNB's sustainability journey.

This Climate Action and Sustainability Plan also addresses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 13 (Climate Action) and connects to the other 16 SDGs.



KEY DEFINITIONS

SUSTAINABILITY: Meeting the world's current needs without hindering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability is more than just protecting the natural environment - many definitions of sustainability also focus on economic development and solving social issues. At UNB, we view sustainability as a simultaneous pursuit to achieve not only environmental stewardship, but also economic prosperity and social equity.

CLIMATE CHANGE: A major sustainability issue; the long-term shifts in average temperatures and weather conditions. The climate varies naturally by processes linking the atmosphere, ocean, land, and sun, however the type of climate change that we are currently experiencing is being caused by human activities that release greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the Atmosphere.¹

GREENHOUSE GASES (GHGs): Gases within the Earth's atmosphere that absorb energy from the sun and trap heat in the atmosphere.² Examples of some of the most significant greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride, and nitrogen trifluoride.³

CLIMATE ACTION: Work being done to combat climate change and its impacts. Climate action is just one significant form of building a more sustainable world.⁴ At UNB, one of our largest climate action commitments is to become a carbon neutral institution by 2050.

CARBON NEUTRAL: When the amount of carbon dioxide emissions (and the carbon dioxide equivalent emissions of other greenhouse gases) released into the atmosphere from UNB's activities is balanced by the same amount of carbon dioxide emissions being removed from the atmosphere.⁵

SCOPE 1 EMISSIONS: Refers to all greenhouse gas emissions that originate directly from sources that are owned or controlled by UNB.⁶ Included in UNB Fredericton's Scope 1 emissions are the combustion of fuel for the Central Heating Plant, other stationary fuels, fleet fuels, and refrigerants. Included in UNB Saint John's Scope 1 emissions are the combustion of other stationary fuels and fleet fuels.

SCOPE 2 EMISSIONS: Refers to all greenhouse gas emissions that originate from sources within the organizational boundaries of UNB, but that are owned and controlled by another entity.⁷ Included in UNB Fredericton's Scope 2 emissions is purchased electricity, and included in UNB Saint John's Scope 2 emissions are purchased electricity and purchased steam.

SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS: Refers to all other indirect greenhouse gas emissions that are not included in Scope 2 that occur in UNB's operations and value chain.⁸ Included in UNB Fredericton's and UNB Saint John's Scope 3 emissions are items such as business travel, commuting, waste, purchased goods and services, and more.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs): In 2015, Canada and all of the other United Nations Member States adopted The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This agenda includes the 17 SDGs which together are an urgent call for action by all countries in a global partnership.⁹ This Climate Action and Sustainability Plan addresses SDG 13, and the Areas of Focus within this plan have been connected to all of the other 16 SDGs, as noted by the SDGs icons placed throughout this document.

LONG-TERM INVESTMENT FUND: Is a pooled investment fund for philanthropic gifts provided by donors to the University of New Brunswick in support of its mission. This includes endowed gifts that are intended to be held in perpetuity, and expendable gifts that have a long-term spending horizon. The fund also includes amounts generated from operations that have been restricted for a specific purpose by the university's Board of Governors.²⁷

EMISSIONS BASELINES

Emissions baselines for each of our two campuses (UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John) were established during the development of UNB's 2020 - 2025 Climate Change Action Plan. The baselines were determined by following the recommendations provided in the STARS Technical Manual Version 2.1.

Separate emissions baselines were established for each campus to account for differences in data availability and the varying timelines of projects completed under UNB's Energy Management Program (EMP). Additionally, since each campus operates differently and their emissions are tracked separately, having separate emissions baselines ensures tailored, accurate reporting for both campuses.

UNB FREDERICTON EMISSIONS BASELINE (2007 - 2010)

The UNB Fredericton emissions baseline is the average greenhouse gas emissions of UNB's three fiscal years (May 1 to April 30) 2007 - 2008, 2008 - 2009, and 2009 - 2010. This baseline accounts for some major projects that were completed through the EMP.

UNB SAINT JOHN EMISSIONS BASELINE (2008 - 2010)

The UNB Saint John emissions baseline is the average greenhouse gas emissions of UNB's two fiscal years 2008 - 2009 and 2009 - 2010. Data for the 2007 - 2008 fiscal year was not available, and to maintain consistency with UNB Fredericton's emissions baseline, the 2010 - 2011 year was not included in the UNB Saint John emissions baseline.



CURRENT EMISSIONS DATA AND TARGETS

UNB maintains an inventory of our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions for both of our campuses. Figure 1 shows UNB Fredericton's total Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions as well as the 65% reduction (from the emissions baseline) target by 2025. UNB Fredericton has another target of a 70% reduction by 2035, and the overall goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

Figure 1: UNB Fredericton Total Scope 1 and Scope 2 Emissions

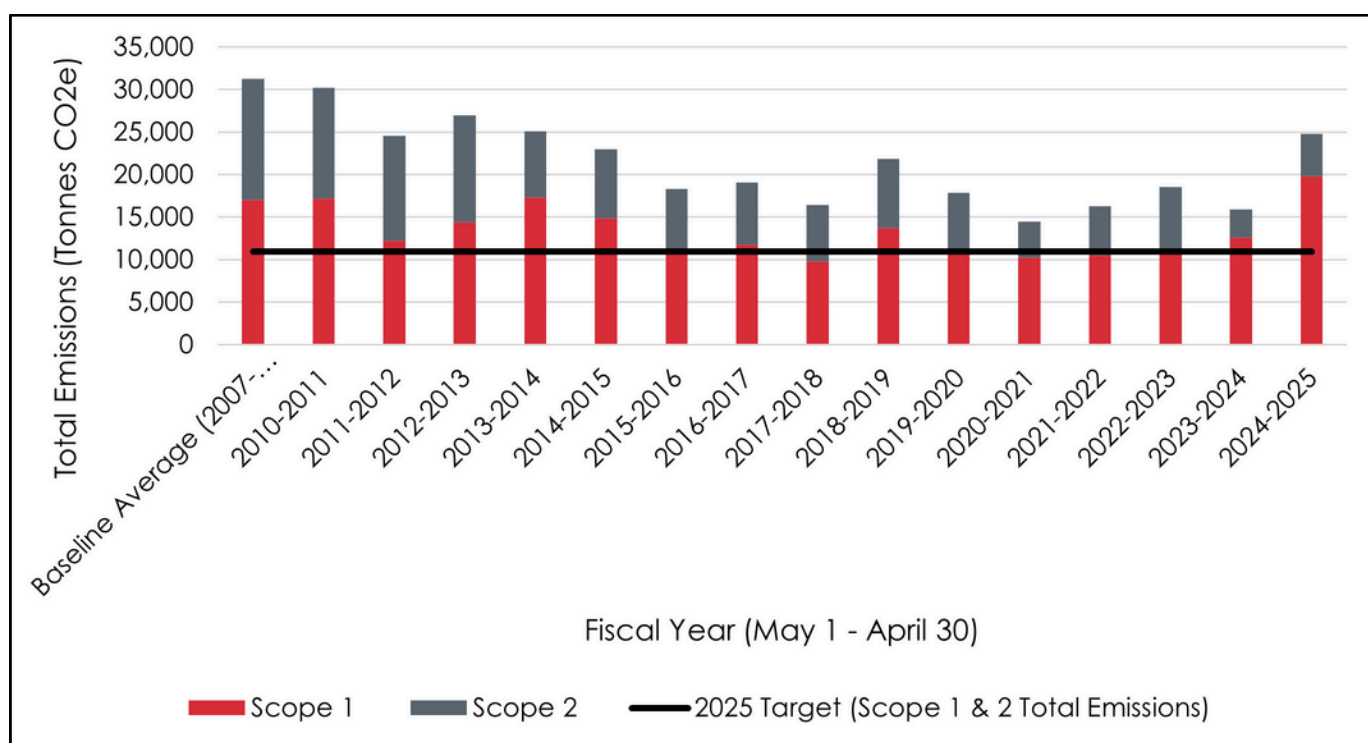
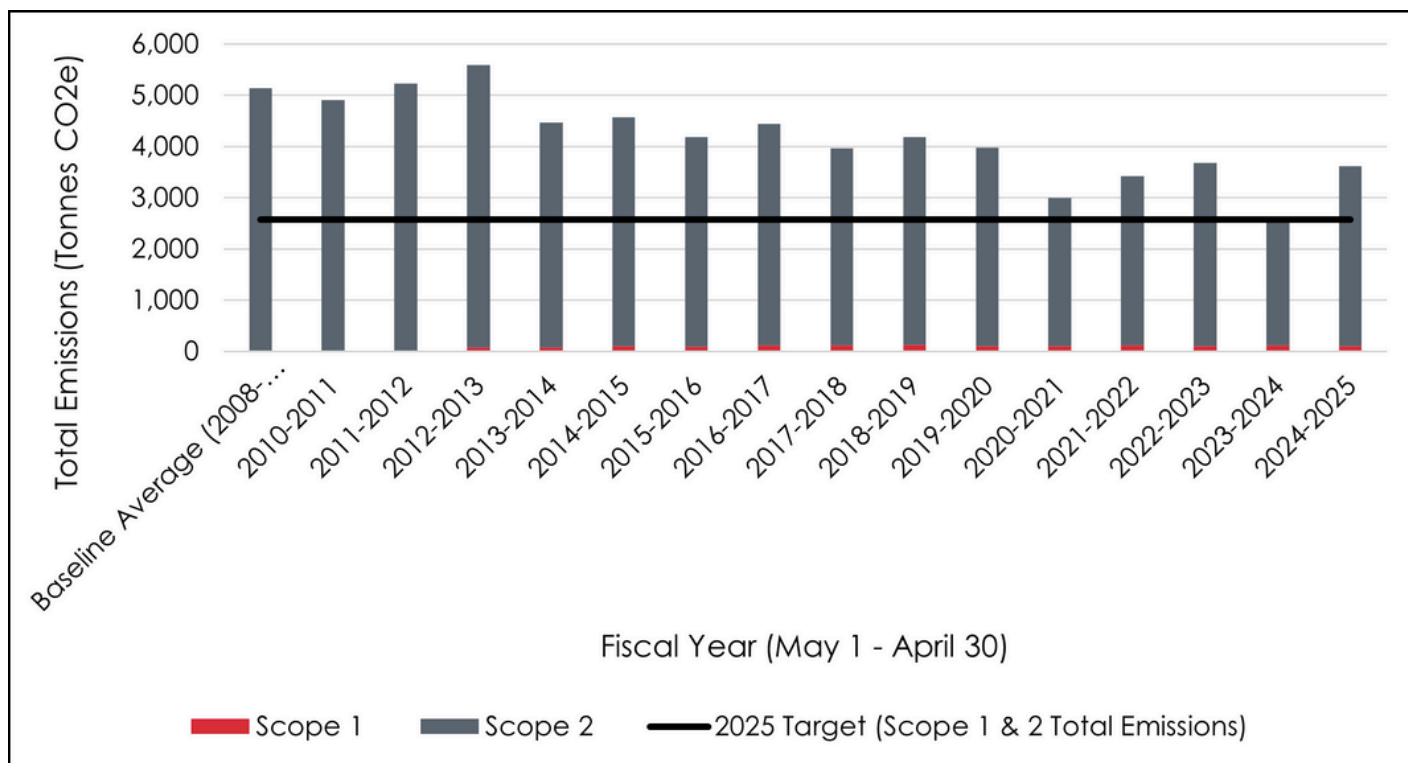


Figure 2 shows UNB Saint John's total Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions as well as the 50% reduction (from the emissions baseline) target by 2025. UNB Saint John also has two other targets that match with UNB Fredericton's, which are a 70% reduction by 2035, and the overall goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

Tonnes CO₂ e: The unit of measurement for metric tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂) equivalent (e). To more easily show and compare the atmospheric impact of all the different greenhouse gases that we emit, we standardize them to one unit mass of carbon dioxide based on their global warming potential (their carbon dioxide equivalent).¹⁰

Figure 2: UNB Saint John Total Scope 1 and Scope 2 Emissions



UNB Saint John produces less emissions than UNB Fredericton mainly because UNB Fredericton is a much larger campus than UNB Saint John. Another significant difference in emissions between our two campuses is that UNB Fredericton produces steam for heating on-site at our Central Heating Plant, while UNB Saint John purchases steam for heating from the Saint John Regional Hospital. This difference explains the main reason why UNB Fredericton produces more Scope 1 emissions and why UNB Saint John produces mostly Scope 2 emissions. This also explains why the 2025 emissions reduction targets are different for each campus.

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, UNB has been making progress on reducing our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. However, our campuses also produce Scope 3 emissions, which need to be tracked, managed, and reduced as well. Many universities and colleges across Canada have begun this work, and with this Climate Action and Sustainability Plan, UNB is doing the same.

In 2024–2025, emissions temporarily rose at UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John despite reduction targets. Fredericton’s increase reflects the temporary shutdown of its wood boiler for replacement with a larger, high-efficiency biomass unit, advancing UNB’s 2050 carbon-neutral goal. Saint John’s rise is due to higher Heating Degree Days, infrastructure upgrades, and new building construction, which increased steam demand. These short-term impacts were anticipated as part of long-term sustainability improvements.

CATEGORIES, AREAS OF FOCUS, AND ACTIONS

This Climate Action and Sustainability Plan contains 50 actions which have been divided into 14 areas of focus, and the 14 areas of focus have been sorted into four overall categories.

The actions, areas of focus, and categories within this plan support UNB in becoming a leader in sustainability and environmental stewardship as they align with UNB's 2020 - 2025 Climate Change Action Plan, UNB's 2020 - 2025 Campus Sustainability Plan, the STARS program, and the United Nations SDGs.

Please note that each one of the 50 actions listed in this plan is intended to be implemented on both of UNB's campuses.

CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2025 - 2030				
CATEGORIES	ACADEMICS	ENGAGEMENT	OPERATIONS	PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION
AREAS OF FOCUS (AND ACTIONS)	CURRICULUM (ACTIONS 1 - 4)	CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT (ACTIONS 7 - 12)	BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS (ACTIONS 16 - 20)	CLIMATE RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT (ACTION 43)
			ENERGY AND EMISSIONS (ACTIONS 21 - 26)	INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE (ACTIONS 44 - 45)
	RESEARCH (ACTIONS 5 - 6)	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT (ACTIONS 13 - 15)	FOOD (ACTIONS 27 - 29)	INVESTMENT (ACTION 46)
			PROCUREMENT AND WASTE (ACTIONS 30 - 36)	SOCIAL EQUITY (ACTIONS 47 - 48)
			TRANSPORTATION (ACTIONS 37 - 42)	WELLBEING (ACTIONS 49 - 50)



ACADEMICS

AREA OF FOCUS: CURRICULUM

When students learn about sustainability through their post-secondary studies, they can take what they have learned into their careers and contribute to building a more sustainable world. The actions within this area of focus ensure that more of our students have the opportunity to learn about sustainability during their studies at UNB.



ACTION 1: Provide support for academic staff to integrate climate change and sustainability into the curriculum.

ACTION 2: Maintain a public multidisciplinary listing of sustainability course offerings.

ACTION 3: Develop and maintain an inventory of undergraduate and graduate qualifications awarded that have sustainability-focused learning requirements.

ACTION 4: Regularly assess the sustainability literacy of students, staff, and faculty.

AREA OF FOCUS: RESEARCH

UNB's mission includes undertaking research that addresses societal and scientific challenges. Sustainability issues, including climate change, are some of the largest challenges of our time, making it crucial to ensure that UNB has researchers focusing on and connecting their work to sustainability.¹¹ The actions within this area of focus ensure that sustainability research is supported at UNB.



ACTION 5: Provide support for students, staff, and faculty to conduct sustainability research.

ACTION 6: Create and maintain a public multidisciplinary listing of sustainability research.

Sustainability-focused: A primary focus on the integrated concept of sustainability or the interdependence of ecological and social / cultural / economic systems.¹²

Sustainability literacy: A person's knowledge and understanding of the interconnectedness of environmental, economic, and social issues as well as their capacity to address these issues effectively.¹³





ENGAGEMENT

AREA OF FOCUS: CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Engaging students, staff, and faculty in sustainability through training, events, and other initiatives is important because their daily decisions impact UNB's sustainability performance. The actions within this area of focus ensure that students, staff, and faculty are engaged in sustainability to improve UNB's sustainability culture and performance.



ACTION 7: Support students with their sustainability-focused initiatives on campus.

ACTION 8: Integrate climate change and sustainability information into new staff and faculty orientation.

ACTION 9: Develop an annual sustainability training session for staff and faculty.

ACTION 10: Develop an engagement program for staff and faculty.

ACTION 11: Continue to host an annual Sustainability Month.

ACTION 12: Regularly assess the sustainability culture of students, staff, and faculty.

AREA OF FOCUS: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with the public and building partnerships is incredibly important at UNB, especially when it comes to helping solve problems in our province and beyond. UNB's mission includes engaging with partners to build a more just, sustainable, and inclusive world, and the actions within this area of focus directly support this mission.



ACTION 13: Continue to participate in a sustainability network for educational institutions.

ACTION 14: Create and publish guidelines for developing and maintaining sustainability-focused community partnerships.

ACTION 15: Create and maintain sustainability-focused community partnerships and promote their initiatives to students, staff, and faculty.

Sustainability culture: The shared sustainability-supportive attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution like UNB.¹⁴



AREA OF FOCUS: BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

There are environmental, economic, social, and human health benefits when buildings and grounds are designed and managed to be sustainable or 'green'.¹⁵ The actions within this area of focus ensure that UNB is working to gain these benefits, as well as working to build awareness and knowledge around water conservation and efficiency on campus.



ACTION 16: Publish an institutional green building guideline.

ACTION 17: Publish an institutional green cleaning policy.

ACTION 18: Publish an institutional sustainable landscaping policy.

ACTION 19: Continue implementing projects that reduce water consumption.

ACTION 20: Develop initiatives to build awareness and knowledge around water conservation and efficiency.

AREA OF FOCUS: ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

UNB has invested over 17 million dollars into energy-saving projects as part of our EMP since its launch in 1996. We have also re-invested 4.5 million dollars received from third-party funding sources to support our efforts. Energy conserved and costs and emissions avoided through this program continue to contribute significantly to UNB's 2050 carbon neutrality goal. The actions within this area of focus play an important role in our work to become carbon neutral by 2050, and several of them will be implemented through the EMP.



ACTION 21: Continue to invest in renewable energy and more energy efficient technologies.

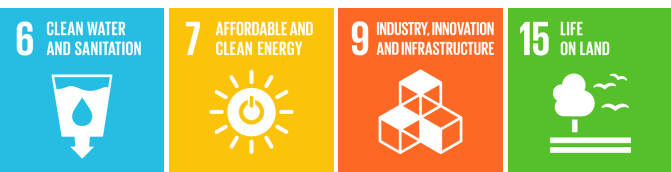
ACTION 22: Continue to improve steam distribution systems.

ACTION 23: Complete lighting retrofits in all buildings.

ACTION 24: Research and collate options for developing carbon offset programs.

ACTION 25: Develop and maintain an inventory of Scope 3 emissions.

ACTION 26: Develop initiatives to build awareness and knowledge around energy conservation and efficiency.





OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

AREA OF FOCUS: FOOD

A significant amount of environmental and financial resources go into growing, producing, and distributing food to our campuses.¹⁶ Prioritizing sustainably and ethically produced food is key to building a more environmentally and financially sustainable food system at UNB, and the actions within this area of focus support this.



ACTION 27: Continue to support opportunities to access, grow, and purchase local food on campus.

ACTION 28: Develop and maintain an inventory for food and beverage spend that meets sustainability criteria.

ACTION 29: Develop initiatives to build awareness and knowledge around healthy and sustainable food options.

AREA OF FOCUS: PROCUREMENT AND WASTE

Each purchasing decision at UNB is an opportunity to better understand and evaluate the environmental, social, and financial costs associated with a product's production, distribution, use, and disposal.¹⁷ The actions within this area of focus support a more sustainable procurement system, as well as support the reduction and diversion of the purchased products / waste that our campuses could not avoid generating.



ACTION 30: Integrate sustainability into the Procurement Policy.

ACTION 31: Continue to invest in multiple stream waste bins with signage to build consistency in waste sorting across campus.

ACTION 32: Maintain regular waste audits.

ACTION 33: Maintain a reuse initiative through which students, staff, and faculty can donate personal items for redistribution.

ACTION 34: Create a reuse program for UNB-owned items that are no longer needed.

ACTION 35: Develop an organic waste collection pilot program in food service buildings on campus.

ACTION 36: Develop initiatives to build awareness and knowledge around waste reduction and diversion.



OPERATIONS (CONTINUED)

AREA OF FOCUS: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is one of the largest sources of emissions at UNB and in our province.¹⁸ The modes of transportation that our students, staff, and faculty use each day for work, commuting, and business travel have a large impact on the sustainability of our transportation system at UNB. The actions within this area of focus support our students, staff, and faculty in making more sustainable transportation choices for not only the health of the environment, but also for their own physical, mental, and financial health.¹⁹

ACTION 37: Integrate sustainability into the Travel Policy.

ACTION 38: Maintain a fleet inventory and continue transitioning to a lower emission fleet.

ACTION 39: Expand active transportation infrastructure on campus.

ACTION 40: Expand electric transportation infrastructure for students, staff, faculty, and campus visitors.

ACTION 41: Develop initiatives to encourage the use of active and alternative transportation.

ACTION 42: Regularly assess the commuting behaviours and modes of students, staff, and faculty.



Commuting: Travelling between one's home and place of work or school on a regular basis.²⁰

Active transportation: The movement of goods or people by human activity, including walking and cycling as well as hybrid mobility aids which include micromobility (such as electric bikes and electric scooters).²¹

Alternative transportation: For the purposes of this plan, alternative transportation includes transportation modes such as public transportation, carpooling, ride sharing, and more.



PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

AREA OF FOCUS: CLIMATE RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT

Assessing the climate change vulnerabilities and resilience of our campuses helps to identify areas, individuals, and infrastructure that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.²² The action within this area of focus ensures that we can continue to adapt our campuses to climate change and build their climate resilience.



ACTION 43: Update our campus climate change vulnerability and resilience assessments.

AREA OF FOCUS: INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

Engaging leaders at UNB in sustainability helps ensure that it remains a priority. The actions within this area of focus ensure that leaders at UNB are trained in sustainability and up to date on UNB's sustainability initiatives and performance.



ACTION 44: Provide student union executives with sustainability training annually.

ACTION 45: Regularly provide staff and faculty leadership with campus sustainability updates and resources.

AREA OF FOCUS: INVESTMENT

Universities and colleges with transparent investment processes promote accountability as well as engagement by their campuses and communities.²³ The action within this area of focus ensures transparency in UNB's Long-Term Investment Fund.



ACTION 46: Continue to report on the Long-Term Investment Fund annually, including measurements of the carbon emissions of the total portfolio as available.



PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION (CONTINUED)

AREA OF FOCUS: SOCIAL EQUITY

To lead sustainability and environmental stewardship, UNB must practice and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in our student, staff, and faculty experiences. Indigenous, racialized, and ethnic minority communities are often underrepresented in post-secondary settings in Canada, and they simultaneously suffer disproportionate exposure to sustainability issues including the impacts of climate change.²⁴ The actions within this area of focus support practicing and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion to make UNB more sustainable.



ACTION 47: Support initiatives for students, staff, and faculty from underrepresented groups.

ACTION 48: Conduct and publish an assessment of students, staff, and faculty to determine their levels of feeling welcomed, valued, and supported at UNB.

AREA OF FOCUS: WELLBEING

Sustainability issues including climate change can be detrimental to our physical and mental wellbeing.²⁵ Many of our students, staff, and faculty feel overwhelmed in terms of sustainability issues, and the actions within this area of focus address this. Also to improve wellbeing and air quality at UNB, our campuses have been smoke-free since September 2022 and we are working towards making them idle-free as well.



ACTION 49: Develop and promote resources for reducing ecological anxiety among students, staff, and faculty.

ACTION 50: Establish idle-free campuses.

Ecological anxiety: Also called "eco-anxiety", ecological anxiety refers to a broad range of negative emotions related to environmental threats including climate change.²⁶

PROGRESS TRACKING AND REPORTING

Undertaking these 50 actions to become a leader in sustainability and environmental stewardship across Canadian universities requires collaboration with various individuals and teams across our campuses. The UNB Energy and Sustainability team is currently working with a number of individuals and teams, and we are looking forward to working with even more over the next five years to implement the actions outlined in this plan.

The Energy and Sustainability team will track the progress of the 50 actions outlined in this plan and report on their progress regularly to UNB's President's Advisory Committee on Sustainability (PACS), and annually to the UNB community.

The Energy and Sustainability team will also continue to submit our data to the STARS program on a regular basis to measure our sustainability performance and receive updated ratings. In addition, the Energy and Sustainability team will continue to support UNB in collecting sustainability data required for other post-secondary rating and ranking systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Energy and Sustainability team would like to thank the PACS as well as several staff and faculty members ("Friends of PACS") who provided their expertise to guide this plan to completion.

The Energy and Sustainability team would also like to thank the students, staff, and faculty from both of our campuses who provided their thoughts and ideas for this plan at the UNB Sustainability Open Houses and Free Stores held throughout October (Sustainability Month) 2024.

WITH OVER 14,000 STUDENTS, STAFF, AND FACULTY, INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TOWARD A MORE SUSTAINABLE UNB CAN TRULY ADD UP.



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