

Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP)

Phase 1 Engagement Summary



Source: UVic Photo Services

University of Victoria



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Executive Summary

Phase 1 Engagement for the Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP) reached at least 1,300 people, with 697 members of the UVic community responding to the online engagement. The following provides key take aways of what we heard during this phase of engagement:

- Broad support for the vision statement, with requested changes to be more ambitious, reflect urgency, include accountability and recognize Indigeneity.
- Indigenous engagement is a priority for the UVic community and respondents provided suggestions to more strongly acknowledge territory, engage Indigenous peoples as leaders across the campus, and work to uphold, respect, and honour Indigenous knowledge.
- Respondents would like to see leadership from UVic when it comes to climate and sustainability action, while enhancing systems of accountability and incorporating equity. Stronger investments need to be made to act to address the climate crisis.
- Many respondents would like to see the UVic Foundation divest from industries causing climate change, including fossil fuel corporations.
- Numerous respondents stated that UVic should pursue an interdisciplinary approach to research and academics, including mandatory curriculum on sustainability and climate across disciplines.
- Hundreds of specific actions were brought forward through the online engagement. Some examples that were emphasized repeatedly include:
 - Provide incentives and additional funding for research related to the climate crisis, ensuring research is not only conducted but also executed to make change.
 - Continue to engage with Indigenous leaders, elders, knowledge keepers and youth, as well as the broad community, on their views of climate and sustainability solutions.
 - Provide affordable opportunities to eat local, sustainable foods on campus.
 - Allow and encourage working and learning from home where possible.
 - Continue to encourage active transportation on campus through bicycle infrastructure and cycle sharing programs.
 - Ban all single-use plastics on campus, and increase access to recycling, composting and container re-use programs.
 - Reduce airline emissions through encouraging more virtual meetings and conferences.
 - Evaluate UVic parking structure so it does not incentivize driving regularly to campus, and encourage EV ridership.
 - Retrofit campus buildings to be zero-emission.

Actions and ideas will be brought forward to the next phase of CSAP.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY2

BACKGROUND4

1.1 CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN (CSAP).....4

1.2 PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT.....4

HOW WE ENGAGED4

2.1 ONLINE SURVEY AND IDEAS BOARD4

2.2 SURVEY PROMOTION5

WHAT WE HEARD5

3.1 PARTICIPATION LEVELS5

3.2 DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPATION6

3.3 VISION STATEMENT6

3.4 INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING8

3.5 LEADERSHIP AND ACTION10

NEXT STEPS: BRINGING ACTIONS AND IDEAS FORWARD15

Background

1.1 Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP)

The University of Victoria (UVic) is developing a Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP) that will provide an accelerated and integrated approach to respond to the challenges and opportunities afforded by climate change, and to guide the UVic's approach to sustainability in every domain. The CSAP will be guided and informed through effective internal and external engagement, and most notably engagement with on-campus Indigenous communities to emphasize the importance of valuing Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the CSAP and across UVic.

The CSAP will be developed through a broad campus and community engagement process consisting of the following four phases:

- **Phase 1 (March – April 2021):** Campus-wide online engagement on vision and ideas for action.
- **Phase 2 (Summer/Fall 2021):** Task Force Groups (made up of students, faculty, staff, and to include Indigenous representation) to meet and develop questions, targets, goals and actions.
- **Phase 3 (late Fall 2021):** Broad campus and community engagement on the goals and actions of CSAP.
- **Phase 4 (Spring 2022):** Final plan review and approval.

The following report outlines the process and outcomes of Phase 1 of engagement.

1.2 Phase 1 Engagement

The first phase of engagement was intended to launch the CSAP and begin engagement with the on-campus community. Phase 1 focused on confirming a long-term vision and ideas to guide sustainability actions and climate solution efforts across the university. Phase 1 was intended to build on successes achieved to date, align with recent and current planning processes (e.g.: Strategic Framework and Accelerated Actions), and build momentum and support for action planning and implementation discussions that will follow in Phase 2. Specific objectives for Phase 1 engagement are to:

- Engage the UVic community on a shared vision for climate solutions and sustainability action.
- Build momentum for the CSAP process and support for the final plan.
- Gather individual and collective action ideas for the CSAP.

How we Engaged

2.1 Online Survey and Ideas Board

Prior to engagement, the members of the CSAP Integration Steering Committee (ISC) were consulted through 1:1 guidance interviews (faculty, staff, student, community relations, and Indigenous representatives) to inform the development of the plan. The engagement plan was shared with the ISC and adjusted based on feedback received.

The engagement team created an online engagement survey and ideas board using the Bang the Table platform. The online survey asked five questions. The ideas board asked one question, whereby responses were made public and available for the UVic community to provide comments and build off each others ideas.

The online survey posed the following questions:

1. Do you support the vision statement?
2. Would you like to see any changes to the vision statement?
3. What does it mean for UVic to be guided by Indigenous ways of knowing and being?
4. What does it mean for UVic to be a global leader in climate and sustainability action?
5. What actions can UVic take to address climate change and sustainability across academics, research, operations and community relations?

The ideas board posed the following the question:

1. What actions could the UVic community (students, faculty and staff) take as individuals to address climate change and sustainability?

The UVic community was invited to share ideas through the website from March 29th to April 23rd of 2021.

2.2 Survey Promotion

A variety of methods were employed by the University Communications and Marketing team and the First Peoples House to promote the online engagement. Promotional channels included social media (including boosted ads), including Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, the *Ring* newspapers, Campus Checklist faculty/staff newsletter, Native Student Union listserve, Student Life newsletter, MyPage portal, broadcast emails, central CSAP website and campus digital screen network. Further, the UVic President sent out an email to all UVic staff, faculty, and students promoting the online engagement.

What we Heard

3.1 Participation Levels

A total of 4,300 visits were made to the Bang the Table engagement website. Out of those who visited the website, 2,900 visited multiple pages on the website (aware visitors in the figure below), while 1,300 clicked on multiple links within the website (informed visitors). In total, 697 people participated in the website through providing comments (engaged visitors). Figure 1 below summarizes these engagement levels.

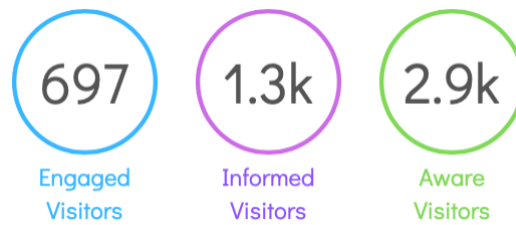


Figure 1: Number of people who participated and level of participation for the first phase of CSAP engagement

3.2 Demographics of Participation

A wide cross-section of the UVic community responded to our online survey. Figure 2 below displays the number of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and visitors that responded to the survey.

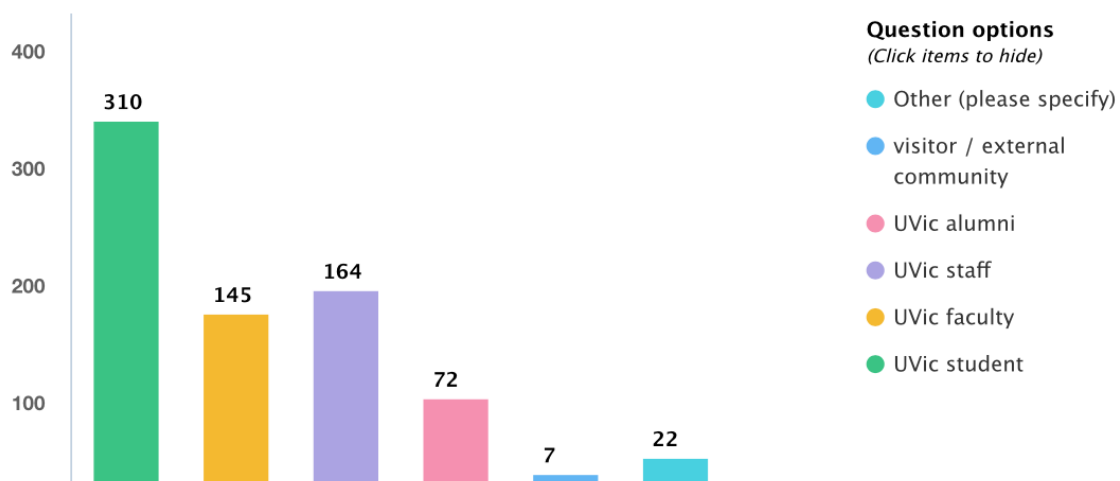


Figure 2: Breakdown of students, staff, faculty, alumni and visitors that filled out the online survey

3.3 Vision Statement

Do you Support the Vision Statement?

In the first question of the survey, the draft vision statement was provided and respondents were asked: **“Do you support the vision statement?”** A five-point Likert scale was provided to capture sentiment, from do not support to fully support.

The vision statement was developed by UVic researchers, sustainability experts and Indigenous leaders on the CSAP Integration Steering Committee. The draft vision statement is as follows:

*The University of Victoria **will inspire** academic, social, cultural, economic, political, scientific, and technical **breakthroughs** contributing to the **mitigation of social and environmental challenges**, and integrate climate solutions and sustainability actions across all university domains.*

We received 670 responses to this question. Support for the vision statement was broken down as follows:

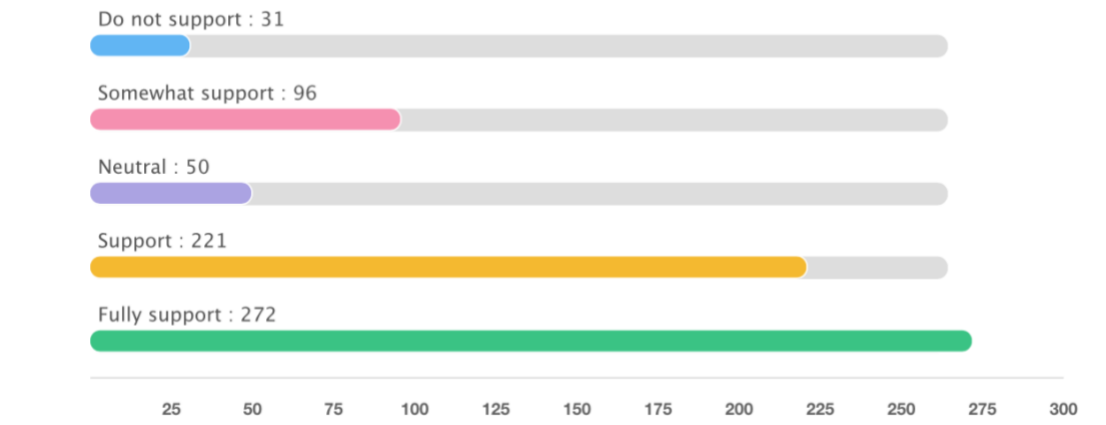


Figure 3: Level of support for the draft vision statement

Would you like to see any changes to the vision statement?

Participants were asked **“Would you like to see any changes to the vision statement?”**. There were 359 respondents who wanted to see changes to the vision statement.

The most common requested changes are summarized below:

- Desire to see the urgency to address climate change reflected in the vision statement.
- Desire for an action statement which includes ambitious targets.
- Request to reconsider the word ‘mitigation’ to reflect more ambitious change and be solutions oriented.
- Request to change the word ‘inspire’ to be more ambitious. Many requested the verb be changed to an action verb that creates measurable accountability.
- Request to change the word ‘breakthroughs’ as it suggests the solutions are still to be found and does not recognize that solutions already exist and need to be implemented with urgency. It also pushes action into the future.
- Desire to include a recognition of respect and uplifting of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

The figure below illustrates the most common topics related to requested changes to the vision statement.

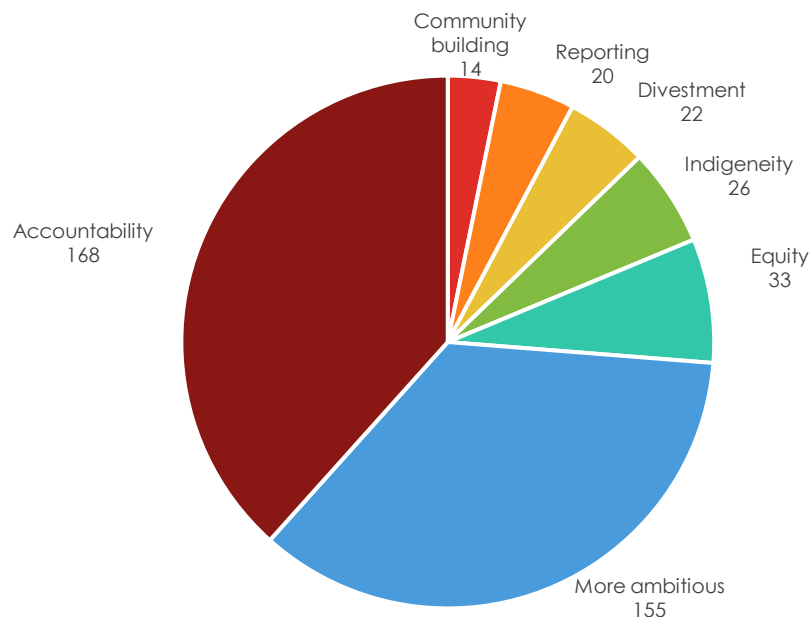


Figure 4: Most common topics and frequency in response to question 1b of the CSAP survey

Respondents brought up additional topics in response to this question, which are summarized as follows with frequency of response provided in brackets:

Natural systems (8); Waste and consumption (8); Energy (7); Less Ambitious (5); Policy (3); Transportation (3); Economy (3); Public space (2); Leadership (2); Existing buildings (2); Decision-making (2); Water (1).

3.4 Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being

What does it mean for UVic to be guided by Indigenous ways of knowing and being?

The second question in the survey asked **“What does it mean for UVic to be guided by Indigenous ways of knowing and being?”** We received 29 comments from respondents who self-identified as Indigenous. The themes from comments include:

- As Indigenous peoples are the original stewards of this land, Indigenous knowledge will be imperative to forming holistic solutions.
- Continue to engage with Indigenous leaders, elders, knowledge keepers and youth, as well as the broad community, on their views of solutions. This includes engaging with local First Nations whose land UVic stands on to ensure their views are reflected in the plan.
 - Ensure we are mindful of the resources it takes to engage, and that communities are properly compensated.
- Centre local Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in the process of developing the plan
 - This can be achieved through circle work, community feasts, land-based consultations and gatherings

- Validate the proposed plan with local leadership, elders, knowledge keepers, youth and the on-campus Indigenous community.
- Recognize the historical stewardship and connection to land of Indigenous people, while also recognizing the colonial history and present of UVic.

The below figure illustrates the most common themes mentioned in Indigenous respondents' comments.

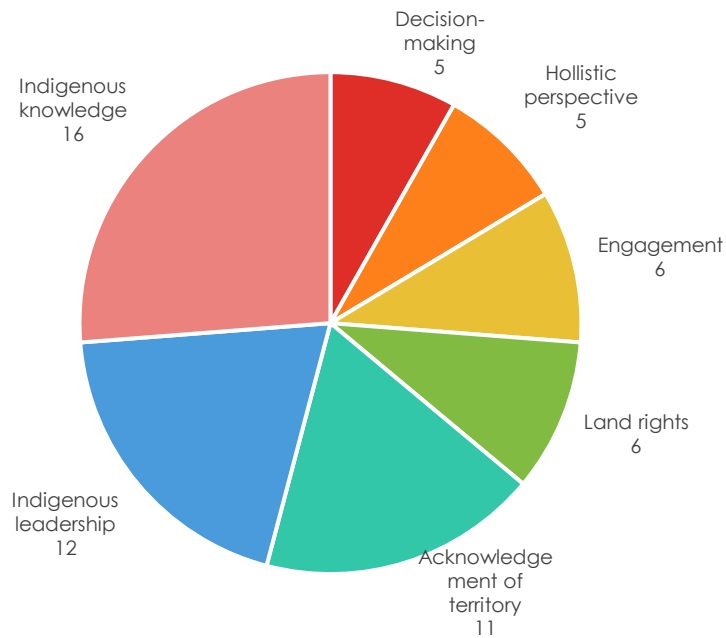


Figure 5: Most common themes and frequency by those who self-identify as Indigenous to question 2 of the survey

Out of the entire UVic community, there were 521 responses to this question. The figure below illustrates the most common themes mentioned in respondents' comments.

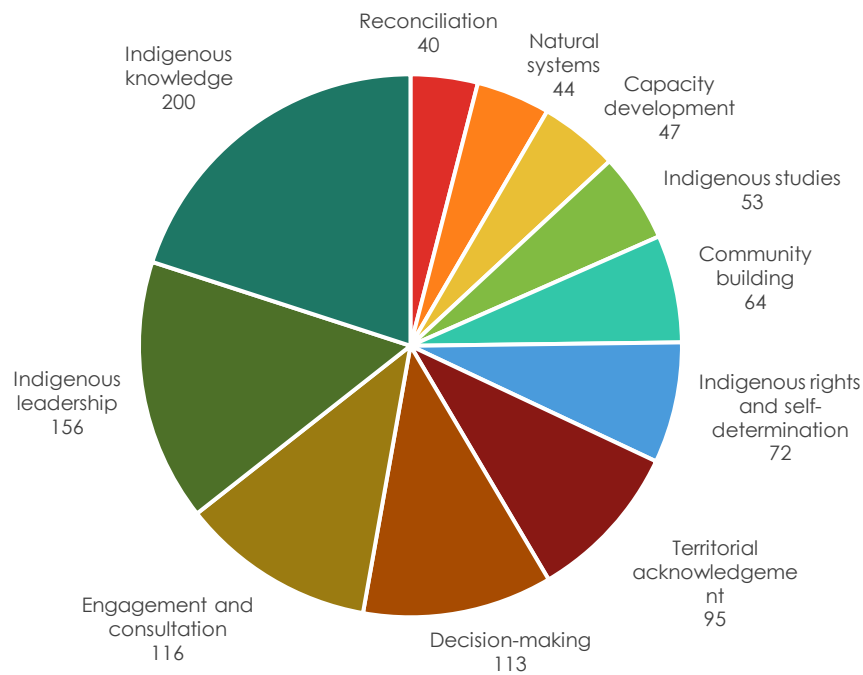


Figure 6: Most common topics and frequency in response to question 2 of the CSAP survey

Respondents brought up additional topics in response to this question, which are summarized as follows with frequency of response provided in brackets:

Future generations (20); Tokenism (13); Divestment (12); Indigenous language (11); Food systems (11); New buildings (1); Economy (2); Existing buildings (2); Transportation (3); Climate impacts (2); Policy (6); Public space (6); Water (8); Land rights (1); Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2); Resilience (3); Reciprocity (6).

3.5 Leadership and Action

What does it mean for UVic to be a global leader in climate and sustainability action?

The third question of the survey asked, **“What does it mean for UVic to be a global leader in climate and sustainability action?”** There were 582 responses to this question.

Most commonly, respondents (138) wanted UVic to initiate climate and sustainability action, while several respondents (34) wanted to see UVic invest in climate and sustainability action. Key message from these comments include:

- Increased accountability and follow-through in displaying leadership related to climate and sustainability action.
- UVic needs to ‘walking the talk’ and take urgent action to address the climate crisis, some examples of action included:

- Providing incentives and additional funding for research related to the climate crisis. Ensuring research is not only conducted, but executed to make change.
- Providing additional funding into UVic’s operations to reduce emissions. For example, retrofitting old buildings, providing lower parking costs for electric cars, eliminating annual parking passes, and free bus passes to all employees.
- Creating academic curriculum across all sectors which prepare students to participate and lead climate solutions after they graduate.
- UVic has a more vocal role in pushing other institutions (universities and levels of government) to take urgent action on climate change as well.
- Need to be bold, that this moment calls for taking risks.
- Many respondents (59) discussed energy more broadly, including clean energy supply and retrofitting of old buildings.
- Consider justice within climate and sustainability leadership.
 - This included greater incorporation of perspectives from Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, women and LGBTQ+ into curriculum of all departments, as well as increased hiring of the aforementioned groups.
- Many respondents (93) mentioned divestment from fossil fuel companies.

The figure below illustrates the most common topics mentioned in respondents’ comments.

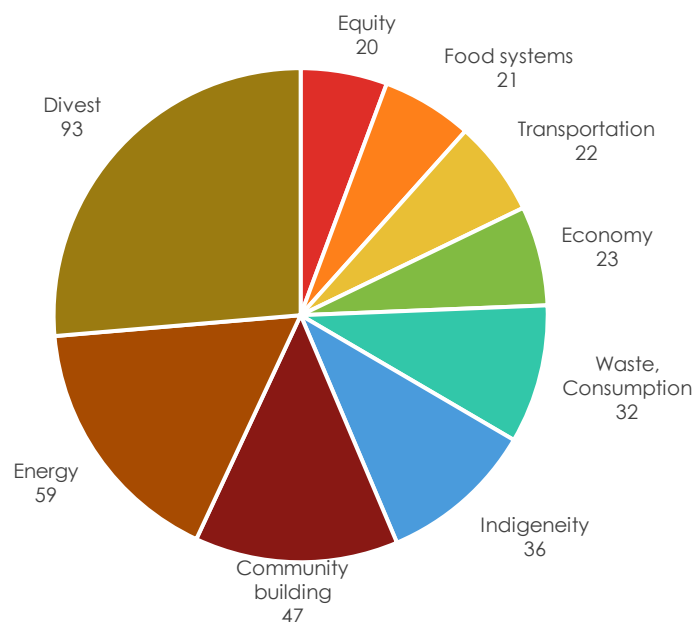


Figure 7: Most common topics and frequency in response to question 3 of the CSAP survey

Respondents brought up additional topics in response to this question, which are summarized as follows with frequency of response provided in brackets:

Existing buildings (17); Policy (11); Public space (10); New buildings (10); Natural systems (10); Engagement (3); Reporting (3); Water (2); Leadership (1).

What actions can UVic take to address climate change and sustainability across academics, research, operations and community relations?

The fourth and final question of the survey asked, **“What actions can UVic take to address climate change and sustainability across academics, research, operations and community relations?”** We received 590 responses to this question.

The following overall themes emerged in response to this question:

- Ensure interdisciplinary approach to research and academics, including:
 - Strong communication between disciplines.
 - Events and programs that support collaboration across disciplines.
 - Require curriculum related to sustainability and climate across all disciplines.
- Collaborate with community and grassroots organizations to disseminate knowledge and encourage solutions, and push for change.
- Ensure equity is incorporated into all actions.
- Collaborating with local First Nations to work towards reconciliation. Two actions included:
 - Include Local First Nation members on the board of governors so that their perspectives are represented at that level.
 - Hire more Indigenous faculty to research and teach environmental solutions from an Indigenous perspective.
- Divest from fossil fuel companies.

Respondents brought forward a wide variety of actions for UVic to take to address climate change and sustainability. The figure below illustrates the most common topics mentioned in respondents’ comments.

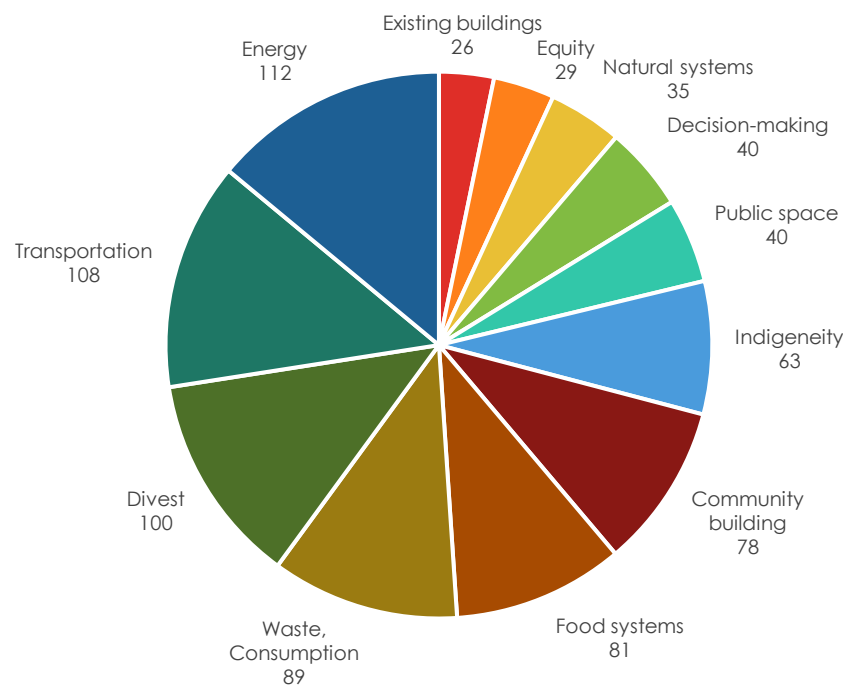


Figure 8: Most common topics and frequency in response to question 4 of the CSAP survey

The following table outlines examples of actions in the most commonly mentioned topics: transportation, energy, waste and consumption. Actions related to other topics are in the process of being extracted from survey comments, and will be brought forward to the next phase of engagement.

Topic	Actions
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommuting – for both learning and to attend conferences. Provide incentives to avoid travelling to conferences and decreasing air travel. • Shrink the amount of parking, and providing incentives for EV – as well as charging infrastructure for both EV and e-bikes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review UVic's parking rates. Currently, hourly parking rates are about four times those of annual and monthly rates, providing an incentive to drive more regularly. • Continue to build up safe cycling infrastructure, including storage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invest in an affordable bike-share program on campus.
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retrofit old buildings and upgrade energy intensive equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not incorporate any new infrastructure for fossil fuel-based energy sources into new buildings/renovations of old buildings. ○ Decarbonize district energy plant. • Produce local energy on campus through solar panels on every building.
Waste and consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban all single-use plastic on campus – especially in the cafeteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where single-use items remain on campus, there is a need for clear instructions on how to dispose of these items, with accessible compost and recycling facilities provided. • Provide local food options on campus. • Support local businesses on campus.

Respondents brought up additional topics in response to this question, which are summarized as follows with frequency of response provided in brackets:

Water (12); New buildings (9); Policy (10); Economy (10); Reporting (9); Capacity (8); Accountability (1).

What actions could the UVic community (students, faculty and staff) take as individuals to address climate change and sustainability?

The ideas board provided an opportunity for the UVic community to publicly display responses to their questions, and respond to others via comments or likes. The ideas board asked, ***“What actions could the UVic community (students, faculty and staff) take as individuals to address climate change and sustainability?”***

We received 70 contributors to this question which included 88 ideas, 61 comments on those ideas, and 403 likes.

While the question asked what action the UVic community could take, no comments exclusively mentioned individual behaviour change. Instead, they focused on actions UVic could take to encourage individual behaviour change such as improving cycling infrastructure to encourage active transportation.

Many actions provided in this question mirrored the responses to the fourth question of the survey (summarized in the section above). The table below outlines the most liked and commented upon ideas, in order of most popular.

1. Divest from industries causing climate change.
2. Reduce airline emissions through encouraging more virtual meetings and conferences.
3. Install Ecosia search browser on UVic computers – which is a carbon negative search engine.
4. Provide reasonable opportunity to eat local, sustainable foods on campus.
5. Create a small wage subsidy for staff that use active transportation to get to work.
6. Adopt work from home where possible.
7. Reduce food waste from University Food Services.
8. Establish differential parking fees based on emissions of vehicle.
9. Overhaul economics curriculum to teach post-growth / ecological economics.

The figure below illustrates the most common topics mentioned in respondents' ideas and comments.

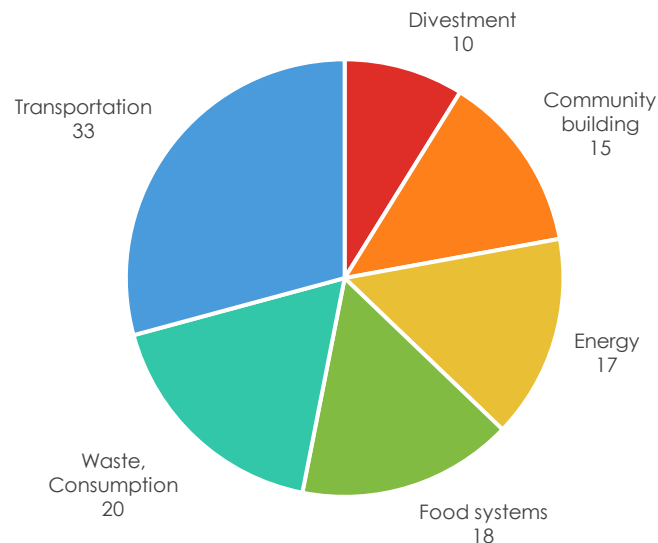


Figure 9: Most common topics and frequency in response to the CSAP Ideas Board

Respondents brought up additional topics in response to this question, which are summarized as follows with frequency of response provided in brackets:

Water (1); Existing buildings (2); New buildings (2); Accountability (2); Equity (2); Invest in action (3); Policy (3); Economy (4); Decision-making (5); Public space (5); Natural systems (6); Reporting (6); Indigenous (7).

Next Steps: Bringing Actions and Ideas Forward

We received a wide variety of feedback from the campus community, and are grateful for every person who took time to participate. Actions and ideas will be brought forward into the next phase of CSAP.

Many of the actions identified by respondents were straight-forward, budgetary restricted operational solutions. In addition, innovative ideas for integrated change were provided. The next step will be to review these actions and ideas, reflect on them in relation to the current context and future vision, and prioritize what actions to advance through the CSAP process.

The ISC have identified five (5) cross cutting Task Force Groups to advance the outcomes of the engagement. Each Task Force will be provided with a summary of comments and ideas as they relate to the themes of each Task Force Group, and be tasked with creating targets, goals, and actions for each theme. The outcomes of the Task Force Groups will be shared during the next round of engagement in fall 2021.