CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY
ACTION PLAN 2030 STRATEGY

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TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

RELATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

As we at the University of Victoria aim for a resilient and sustainable future, we are mindful that we must ground ourselves within our responsibilities. We hold our relationships as sacred and foundational to this climate and sustainability strategy:

The UVic community commits to honouring relational responsibilities to climate action for past, present and future generations. We will develop goals and processes that are grounded in local Indigenous Knowledge Systems, worldviews and protocols. We aim for climate action, justice and sustainable practices for the health and well-being of the lands, waters, air and more-than-human relations.

MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT HALL AND ELDER DR. SKIP DICK

Advancing climate and sustainability research and teaching alongside operational planning and practices are key priorities for our university. Our multi-faceted approach to sustainability prepares new generations of leaders through our academic programs, develops climate solutions through research, and manages our campus operations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate and Sustainability Action Plan pulls together all these elements and sets out specific goals and actions that are the responsibility of the entire university.

The way in which we enact this plan will be key to the success of the outcomes. Elder Dr. Skip Dick teaches us to be careful with our words, that's why, with the guidance of local Elders, the plan has chosen the lək̓ʷəŋən words x̱éʔx̱ ətáŋəxʷ and the SENĆOŦEN words XAXE TEN̓EW, or Sacred Earth as an overarching theme for the plan. Sacred Earth refers to important relational responsibilities, which involve honouring and perpetuating relationships to the lands, waters and Nations of this territory, with a goal to go beyond standard practices of sustainability toward abundance - which entails giving back more than is taken. This plan moves us to embed Indigenous ways of knowing and being and to listen, learn, and to be open to innovative ways of thinking and doing.

When we think about the kind of university we want to be in 2030, I feel emboldened by this plan, not just by the challenges we seek to overcome and problems we seek to solve, but by the way we will work respectfully together to truly feel proud of our accomplishments.

Kevin Hall, PhD
President and Vice-Chancellor

FIRST WORDS: ELDER DR. SKIP DICK

Fifty years ago, we couldn't have this conversation about climate change within the university. Unfortunately colonialism just goes one way and upholds the status quo. Within a colonial context, Indigenous peoples are managed and not served. However, today we can discuss these topics and be heard; our community ways of thinking and seeing things are just as strong as ever.

The *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan* that you are about to read is our blueprint for working respectfully together. We're sharing our ways with you so that the Indigenous students who come into this university are respected as they bring their values back home and are armed with knowledge.

I ask that people read this *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan* with their hearts and listen deeply to the messages within. The lək̓ʷəŋən word lalamut tells us to be careful with our words and to speak thoughtfully to the listener. It's about listening deeply to the words of encouragement and action in this plan. Also, I urge you to be aware of the language we're using when speaking about climate action – we're not "trying" or "attempting" to do something but actually making a commitment to do something. Don't just try – do what you've set out to do in this plan. This document is about walking together and not just talking it. Also, Indigenous peoples are not just program people – we're holistic people. We're remembering and honuoring those who went before us and are welcoming those yet to come.

Finally, remember that our sovereignty is our culture. Indigenous peoples are grounded in family-based values, which are not to be confused with the money-based values of the status quo. Instead of talking about community, we live as community. We look forward to working with you as we take on these future challenges together.

Hay'sxw'qa,
Elder Dr. Skip Dick, Songhees Nation

INTRODUCTION

AN URGENT CALL TO ACTION

The world, including the University of Victoria, must respond to global climate change, which is tightly linked to biodiversity and human well-being. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *Special Report Global Warming of 1.5°C*[1] states we must limit global warming to 1.5°C to reduce risks to biodiversity, ecosystems, resources and their functions. The global community needs local, immediate action across regions to curb emissions and limit global warming. At the same time, steep losses in biodiversity need to be met as stated under the Convention of Biological Diversity Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework[2], and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) Strategy[3]. As well, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *Transforming Our World* provides 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets to address critical issues of importance to planetary well-being and humanity.[4]

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1 IPCC Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability 2022: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/

2 https://www.cbd.int/article/draft-1-global-biodiversity-framework: outlines global commitments to protect 30 per cent of land and ocean by 2030

3 https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/

4 https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

PURPOSE OF THIS CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The University of Victoria is responding to this urgent call to action by working in partnership with governments, communities and industry, valuing Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and offering ambitious, creative and integrated solutions. We are a global leader in environmental, social and institutional climate action and sustainability, and this strategy is our commitment to ongoing, amplified and accelerated action. [5]

As part of the larger university strategy, the *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2030* (CSAP) is comprised of a Strategy (this document) and an associated Action Plan, which provide integrated responses to the challenges and opportunities afforded by climate change, and guide the university's contribution to sustainability and planetary health. The CSAP Strategy presents the vision; guiding principles; three Integrated Initiatives that will involve deep collaboration between actors from across campus and the broader community; and three targets supported by 11 goals. Four themes express how we view our place in the world and in the work we are choosing to do:

- xʷéʔxʷə tə́ŋəxʷ I XAXE TEN̓EW I Sacred Earth
- Innovator and partner
- Educator and learner
- Climate solutions and sustainability leader

The Strategy demonstrates the university's leadership within a growing movement of organizations—government, not-for-profit, academic institutions and industry to accelerate responses and impacts.

The Action Plan identifies how people will work across the institution and with many partners and communities to achieve measurable short-, medium- and long-term goals.

WORKING WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES

UVic is committed to excellence in community-engaged teaching, research and innovation to advance human knowledge, improve and enrich lives, tackle global challenges and promote sustainability of the planet. We know that broad and deep collaboration is the key to success. Our goals, strategies and actions require strong working relationships across campus and with communities locally, nationally and globally. We will work with those communities and forge key partnerships to co-create positive change.

5 See Appendix: Context for regional climate projections, climate and sustainability action progress to date, historical greenhouse gas emissions and the CSAP planning process

OUR COMMITMENT

VISION

From our campus on lək̓ʷəŋən territory, people at the University of Victoria work together on ambitious academic, social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technical innovations and community solutions to solve social and environmental challenges, integrate climate solutions, justice and sustainability actions across all lands, waters and relationships.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

UVic's *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2030* is a path-based approach to our climate and sustainability targets, goals, strategies and actions. Our goals are evolutionary and interdependent; the success and potential impact of each is informed by the relationships amongst the others as well as by meaningful engagements within and beyond the university.

These principles guide the development and implementation of the Strategy:

Centre local Indigenous Knowledge Systems and worldviews: We recognize the importance and value of Indigenous ways of knowing and how they influence the university's understanding of sustainability. We enhance campus planning and environmental management practices with Indigenous knowledge systems, values and relational responsibilities.

Innovation and excellence: We take bold action to advance low-carbon resilience across the campus, including operations, academic and research programs. We track performance, incorporate learning, lead innovation and respond to emerging best practices. Innovation may also lead us to return to past practices of sustainability, such as those rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Integration: We enhance and support collaboration across the campus community amongst people, departments and academic and research programs.

Inclusive and empowered leadership: We build inclusive decision-making structures with a diversity of voices from across campus and the community. We also recognize that responsibility, too, is shared across campus.

Climate justice and equity: We identify and shift cultural norms to advance and support justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. We recognize that there may be barriers to participating in climate action, especially as it relates to extended impact emissions, for under-represented and marginalized communities.

Community engagement: We engage the UVic community and external partners to develop and nurture mutually beneficial, inclusive and strategic partnerships that positively impact people and the planet. Community engagement and collaboration are fundamental underpinnings to achieve the Strategy's goals.

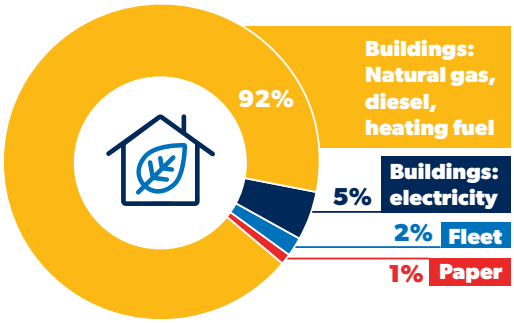
TARGETS

The university has set three ambitious targets in greenhouse gas emissions, sustainability more broadly and the advancement of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These will be achieved via 11 measurable and robust short-, medium- and long-term goals.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

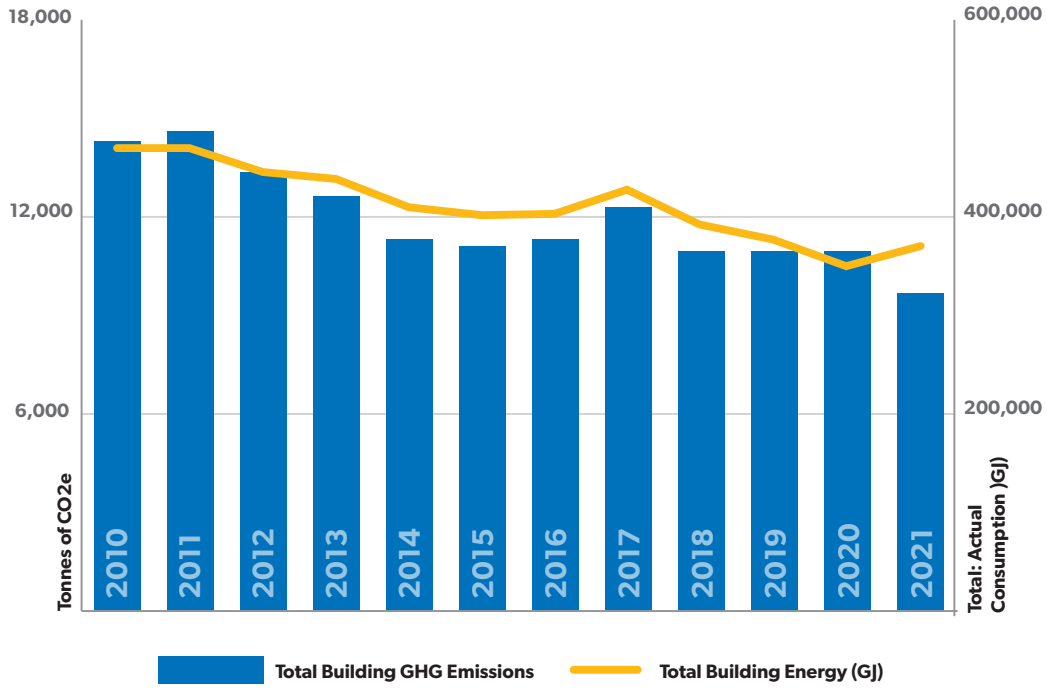
Target 1: Reduce campus operations[6] greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 50% below our 2010 baseline by 2030 and Net Zero by 2040. Further, the university will work with researchers to explore, develop and incorporate emerging technologies and approaches to achieve a climate-positive campus by 2050.

Since 2010, the university has achieved a 30% reduction of total emissions. Buildings have historically been the largest source (97%), followed by fleet vehicles and paper. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of emissions based on source.



Our building portfolio includes all properties owned and leased by UVic and its subsidiaries (including off-campus), such as UVic Properties. Building-related GHG emissions on the UVic Gordon Head campus constitute over 90% of our entire profile.

Figure 2: UVic Buildings: GHG Emissions vs Total Energy Consumption



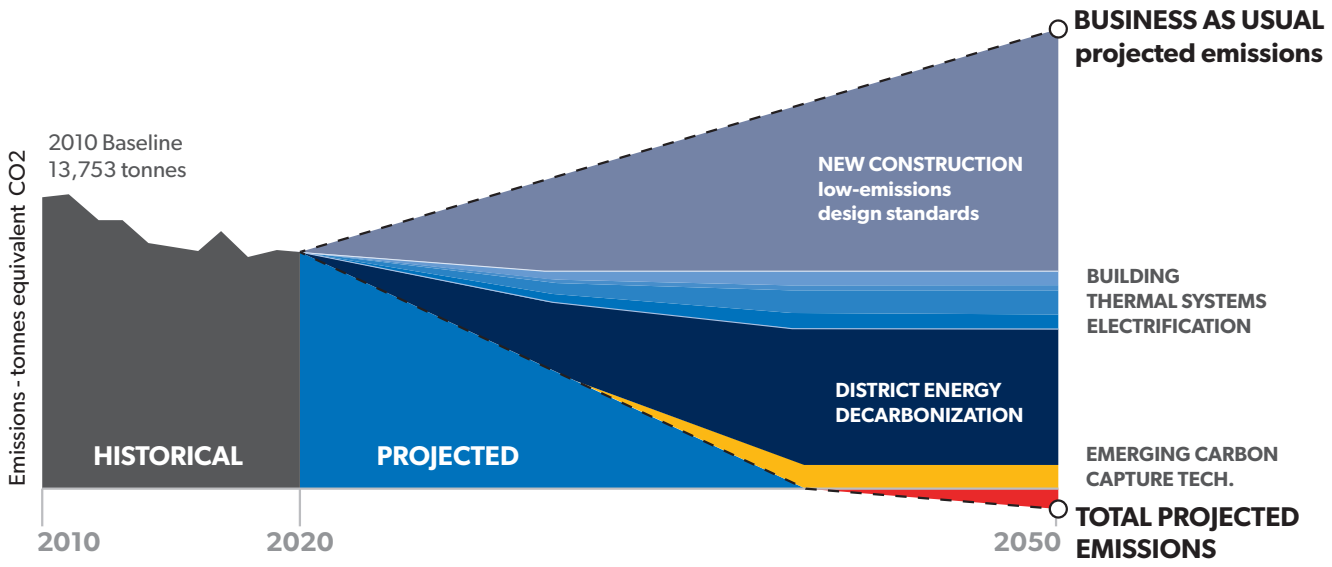
6 Refers to GHG reductions relating to UVic owned and leased building space heating and cooling, hot water heating, lighting, electrical infrastructure, fleet vehicles and vessels, select paper supplies in accordance with the BC Carbon Neutral Program.

Achieving net zero from campus operations will require a multi-pronged approach that:

- reduces energy demand (outreach and communications, space planning);
- continually optimizes building systems (HVAC optimization and renewals);
- transitions to low-carbon energy sources for space heating and hot water; and
- develops carbon capture and storage technologies.

Recognizing that buildings located on the Gordon Head campus account for such a significant portion of our total GHG emissions inventory, the university has explored pathways to net zero emissions, without offsets, for Gordon Head campus buildings that address the existing campus District Energy System and standalone fossil fuel-based infrastructure. This included detailed analysis of the implementation of new infrastructure that supports the use of low-carbon energy sources such as BC Hydro electricity, biomass, geothermal and renewable natural gas (RNG). We have developed multiple technical pathways and will continue to refine, design and implement them to meet our operational targets. Beyond the Gordon Head campus, we will continue to critically review and evaluate procedures and strategies to reduce emissions related to external properties, fleet, and paper.

Figure 1: Gordon Head campus emissions projections



The transition from a net zero to climate positive campus will require that UVic address remaining emissions from low-carbon energy. This will call for collaboration across portfolios to innovate, develop and test new carbon capture and storage technologies, as well as to use nature-based solutions.

Scope 3 emissions are generated by activities that the university doesn't completely control. However, they may be influenced through our policies, plans, guidelines and purchasing decisions. Scope 3 emissions that UVic intends to address include commuting, food, business travel, waste and embodied carbon in building construction. We are currently establishing baseline data and methodologies and when those are ready, we will set emissions reductions consistent with the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

SUSTAINABILITY

Target 2: Achieve Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS) Platinum rating certification by 2026.

The university began reporting with the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)'s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) in 2014. STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework for universities to measure their sustainability performance. This comprehensive report is completed every three years and includes the following areas:

Figure 2: STARS university-wide categories

STARS is the AASHE global sustainability standard for the higher education sector, which measures sustainability performance across the following categories:

- Academics
- Engagement
- Operations
- Planning and Administration
- Leadership and Innovation

UVic has continually improved our standings in Gold ratings over submissions in 2014 (67.97 points), 2017 (76.79 points) and 2020 (80.17 points). A platinum rating is 85 points.

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Target 3: Each year, demonstrate advancement towards UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The 17 SDGs are an urgent call for action by all countries — developed and developing — in a global partnership. They provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth — all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

Every year UVic participates in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings that assess progress against the UN SDGs. Combined with our additional efforts as a CIFAL campus, we will continue to participate in these rankings as a key indicator to help us track and report our contributions.

Figure 3: 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

INTEGRATED INITIATIVES

To reach UVic's vision for the *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2030*, three new initiatives will require effort and collaboration across campus.

THE SEEDLING PROJECT

Conceived of and led by Carey Newman, Impact Chair in Indigenous Art Practices at UVic, the artistic concept for this initiative is straightforward: plant a western red cedar tree, design a virtual 3D totem, and commit to carving and raising the totem when the tree is mature, 600-1,000 years in the future.

Rooted to Indigenous Knowledges and governance, this project involves much more than providing soil, water, and sunlight to nurture a tree. Implementing this promise enables us to consider climate change, deforestation and social challenges, and brings together research initiatives across campus to seek innovative solutions to by expanding our relationships and thinking around land, law, governance, art, time, and technology.

The initiatives that will bring this strategic initiative project to life are:

Initiative 1: Plant a western red cedar tree

Initiative 2: Design a virtual 3D totem

Initiative 3: Commit to carving and raising the totem when the tree is mature, 600-1,000 years in the future

CAMPUS AS A LIVING LAB

Campus as a Living Lab (CLL) will be a university-wide program that coordinates academic research and teaching projects to use the campus and surrounding areas as places for students, staff and faculty to engage with, trial and advance real-world climate and sustainability solutions. CLL programs will be designed to encourage innovation, learning and exchange and to fulfill the aims of UVic's strategic plans and policies. This program will respect, uphold, and uplift Indigenous Knowledge systems and further support Indigenous-led initiatives, such as the Living Lab Project and Campus as Living Lands.

These initiatives will drive the development of UVic's Campus as a Living Lab program:

Initiative 4: Investigate, design and develop formal structures to create Campus as a Living Lab

Initiative 5: Integrate academic research and teaching with campus planning, operations and services to respond to climate and sustainability challenges

Initiative 6: Create opportunities for developing climate solutions on campus so that it becomes an exemplar of climate action and sustainability innovation

Initiative 7: Create opportunities for students and faculty to work with solution seekers from local First Nations, communities, government and industry for collective decision making on equitable climate solutions, mitigation and adaptation projects

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY HUB

The Climate and Sustainability Hub is an entity to coordinate, enhance and promote climate and sustainability solutions across education, research, operations and UVic's internal and external communities. This hub will uphold and uplift Indigenous Knowledge as well as Indigenous groups and individuals on campus and in surrounding communities. The initiatives to build the hub are:

Initiative 8: Explore, design and develop structures to create a Climate and Sustainability Hub

Initiative 9: Coordinate and enhance university communications to amplify climate and sustainability teaching, research and operational practices at UVic

Initiative 10: Embed community into climate and sustainability policy and programming across the university and act as a nexus of resources and matchmaking to internal and external communities

GOALS

ẋéʔẋə táŋəxʷ | XAXE TEN̓EW | SACRED EARTH

These goals were developed by the ẋéʔẋə táŋəxʷ | XAXE TEN̓EW Task Force and are expressed here in their voice.

When considering the scope of our future work together, we ask how our actions will benefit the lands, waters and communities of this area. The Ləkʷəŋən words ẋéʔẋə táŋəxʷ and the SENĆOŦEN words XAXE TEN̓EW mean sacred earth, and contain important relational responsibilities contained in the goals, strategies and actions below. ẋéʔẋə táŋəxʷ | XAXE TEN̓EW involves honouring and perpetuating relationships to the lands, waters and Nations of this territory and recognizing their self-determination, authority and stewardship. Through an ethic of climate justice, decolonization, reciprocity and generosity, our goal is to go beyond standard practices of sustainability toward abundance, which entails giving back more than is taken.

We also strive to centre local Indigenous Knowledge Systems and worldviews in order to confront the realities of ongoing colonization and climate change. Indigenous Knowledge Systems are not confined to Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) forms of legibility — they are a complex web of relationships grounded in languages, communities, living histories, ceremonial life, governance, stories, laws, lands, waters and more-than-human relations.

Goal 1: Honour and respect the lands, water, air and all living things including the spiritual and interconnected elements of the earth with acknowledgement for the important relationship with local Indigenous Nations and Knowledge Systems

Goal 2: Uplift and amplify Indigenous voices within climate and sustainability conversations and actions both intergenerationally and in ways that reflect the diversity of Indigenous communities

Goal 3: Centre and uplift Indigenous Knowledge Systems in relation to climate change and sustainability

INNOVATOR AND PARTNER

The University of Victoria supports diverse research as it relates to climate and sustainability. This includes seeding new and expanded climate and sustainability research and innovation, advancing research partnerships with industry, business and community, and supporting knowledge mobilization and dissemination to advance climate action and sustainability.

UVic leads research on climate modelling, climate and adaptation, innovative clean energy technologies, and the human dimensions of climate change, ecological restoration, sustainability and planetary health. Across campus, Indigenous researchers are developing decolonizing and community-informed approaches to sustainability and climate solutions, grounded in Indigenous knowledge and perspectives. Further, researchers across all faculties and research centres work in partnership with governments, industry and community groups to find effective public policy and technology solutions to the challenges posed by climate change.

We lead inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects by using our campus as a test-bed of innovation, engaging students and visiting professors in collaborative climate research, supporting entrepreneurs to carry innovation into the marketplace and working with communities on locally-based priorities.

Goal 4: UVic is recognized as an international leader in climate and sustainability research

Goal 5: We lead transformative impact and innovative research on climate and sustainability solutions

Goal 6: We advance and model sustainable research practices

EDUCATOR AND LEARNER

Climate and sustainability are integrated into the university's academic curriculum in nearly every major field. We offer more than 600 undergraduate and graduate courses including either a sustainability or climate theme. Already internationally recognized, UVic will continue to integrate climate and sustainability into existing academic and experiential learning and teaching. We will develop new academic programs and courses, including experiential learning, and focus on educating and inspiring the next climate and sustainability leaders.

This Strategy and the Action Plan will strengthen the university's profile as an educator and learner in the realm of climate and sustainability. We will continue to explore the university's approaches to community-engaged learning and course content and the relationships between sustainability, climate action, equity and reconciliation. Partnerships amongst on-campus leaders will support interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary curriculum development to further connect educators, learners, researchers and community.

Goal 7: UVic offers education on climate and sustainability that is available to all

Goal 8: Students, faculty and staff are engaged and empowered to be climate and sustainability change agents and leaders

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY LEADER

University operations support climate mitigation, adaptation and sustainability practices across campus operations and planning. This includes targets to reduce Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions, and developing goals for university buildings, energy, food, grounds, purchasing, transportation, waste, water, investments, and internal communications and engagement.

Goal 9: UVic prioritizes sustainability and low-carbon resilience in service delivery on campus

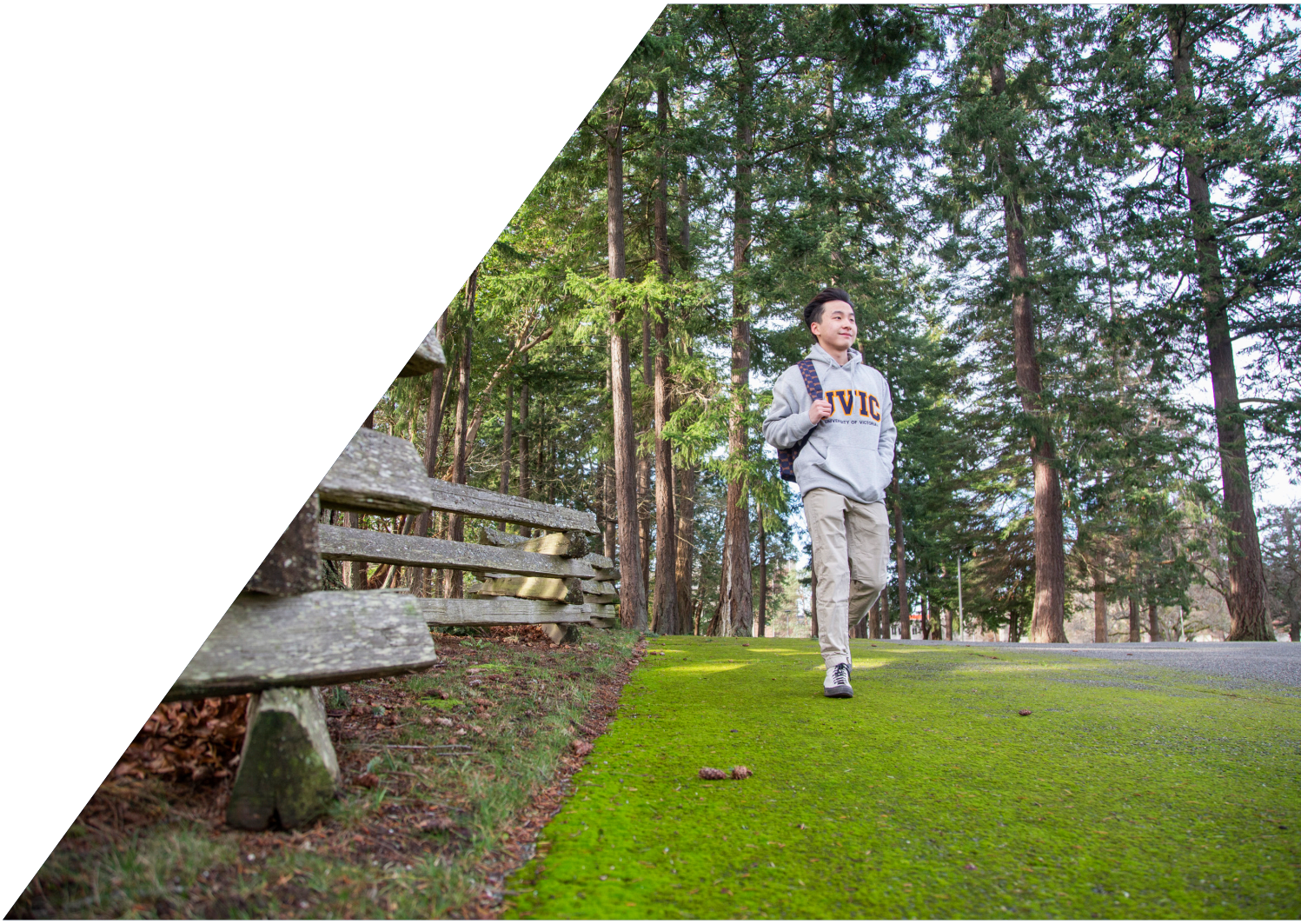
Goal 10: Sustainability and low carbon resilience are key considerations in asset acquisition and management decisions at UVic

Goal 11: We have established baseline, tracking, reporting and reduction procedures for Scope 3 extended impact emissions

A LIVING DOCUMENT

The *Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2030* is a new and unique approach to sustainability and climate action at UVic. This Strategy brings all campus portfolios, academics and curriculum, research and innovation, external, Indigenous, international relations, community and government relations, communications, finance and operations together, to guide UVic as we address and adapt to global challenges faced by all universities.

UVic launches CSAP as we embark with a new university strategic plan, global strategy, Indigenous plan and equity and diversity strategy, along with our recently launched research and creative works strategy, *Aspiration 2030*. Our integrated approach to advance climate action and sustainability brings growth and positive change to our organization as a whole. This Strategy is a living document and will respond as our university community continues to learn how to embed sustainability practices and climate action into all that we do, amid the future's ever-changing climate.



APPENDIX: CONTEXT

LOCAL AND REGIONAL CLIMATE PROJECTIONS

We see changes to our climate at local and global levels. More frequent extreme weather events are projected to occur and increase in intensity over the coming decades. According to a regional Climate Projections Report commissioned by the Capital Regional District (CRD), temperatures on the university campus and across the region will increase over the century, resulting in notable temperature and precipitation changes over time.

Specifically, the CRD can expect more extreme heat days, longer dry spells in summer, more precipitation in spring, fall and winter, warmer winters, and more intense extreme weather events. There will also be more variability of climate within and between years.

A changing climate could have many implications in this region, affecting health, infrastructure, water supply, agriculture, ecosystems and species. The scientific community agrees that the more we reduce total greenhouse gas emissions in the short term, the less intense these climate changes will be over time, and that acting earlier is likely to be less costly than delaying action.

Global climate change is also increasing the region's susceptibility to sea level rise. The most vulnerable areas to sea level rise are low lying and have gently sloping beaches, such as Cadboro Bay, adjacent to UVic.

Figure 4: Climate change will have important impacts for our communities, economy, health and wellbeing[7]

7 https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/adaptation#impacts

PROGRESS TO DATE ON CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION

The University of Victoria is a global leader in environmental, social and institutional sustainability through its research, academic programs, campus operations, and the through the positive impact and influences of its students, faculty, staff, alumni and communities. The timeline below is a selection of climate and sustainability initiatives the university has implemented within the last few decades:

1974:
Environmental Studies program launched

1989:
Institute for Integrated Energy Systems (IESVic) founded; became an interdisciplinary research centre in 1994

1996:
Environmental Law Centre established

Restoration of Natural Systems program established

1999:
UVic Student Society's UVic Sustainability Project (UVSP) formed

Campus Community Garden formed; first university garden in Canada

School of Environmental Studies established

2000:
Awarded first Canada Research Chair (in Atmospheric Sciences)

2004:
First Sustainability Coordinator position created

POLIS Project on Ecological Governance founded

First Canada Research Chair to examine biodiversity (in Experimental and Applied Community Ecology)

2006:
First university Sustainability Report published

First Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold building certified (Medical Sciences Building)

2007:
First greenhouse gas inventory completed (overview)

Ocean Networks Canada founded

2008:
Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) formed; UVic host and lead organization

2009:
First Peoples House built (LEED Gold)

Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE) formed (originally known as the Centre for Aboriginal Health Research)

Board of Governors approved first university-wide Sustainability Policy

First Carbon Neutral Action Report published (overview)

First Sustainability Action Plan: Campus Operations (2009-2014) published

2010:

Facilities Management Waste Reduction Unit and Energy Manager Program formed

Greenhouse gas emission for Scope 1, 2, 3 (paper) baseline established for campus and external properties operations (quantitative)

2011:

The Centre for Social and Sustainable Innovation (in the Gustavson School of Business) formed

Revolving Sustainability Fund for energy reduction and water conservation projects created

First campus-wide waste audit conducted

Significant energy upgrading and building retrofit programs begin

2012:

First water audit conducted

2014:

Achieved first Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) Gold rating; 67.97 points

Sustainability Action Plan: Campus Operations (2014-2019) published

Green Civil Engineering program created

2015:

Campus Plan published

2016:

Invasive Species Management Strategy established

2017:

Achieved second STARS Gold rating: 76.79 points

2019:

First Campus Cycling Plan published

Campus Greenway: Landscape Plan and Design Guidelines published

Climate Solutions Navigator Initiative formed

2020:

First Times Higher Education United Nations Sustainable Development Goals submission

Sustainability Action Plan: Campus Operations (2020-2021)

Achieved third STARS Gold rating: 80.17 points

Responsible Investment Policy established

Began Climate and Sustainability Action Plan (CSAP) development

2021:

Began Carbon Reduction Plan development

Pledged commitment to Race to Zero campaign, UNFCCC

2022:

First Vice-President Indigenous appointed

Joined UN CIFAL membership / UNITAR-UVic partnership

Opening of first Passive House and LEED V4 Gold Student Housing and Dining (Building 1)

In the fall of 2021, UVic joined 28 other universities in Canada in signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Race to Zero Campaign, pledging to reach net zero GHGs as soon as possible and by mid-century at the latest, in line with global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. The pledge further commits the university to explain what actions will be taken to achieve both interim and longer-term pledges, especially in the short to medium term.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

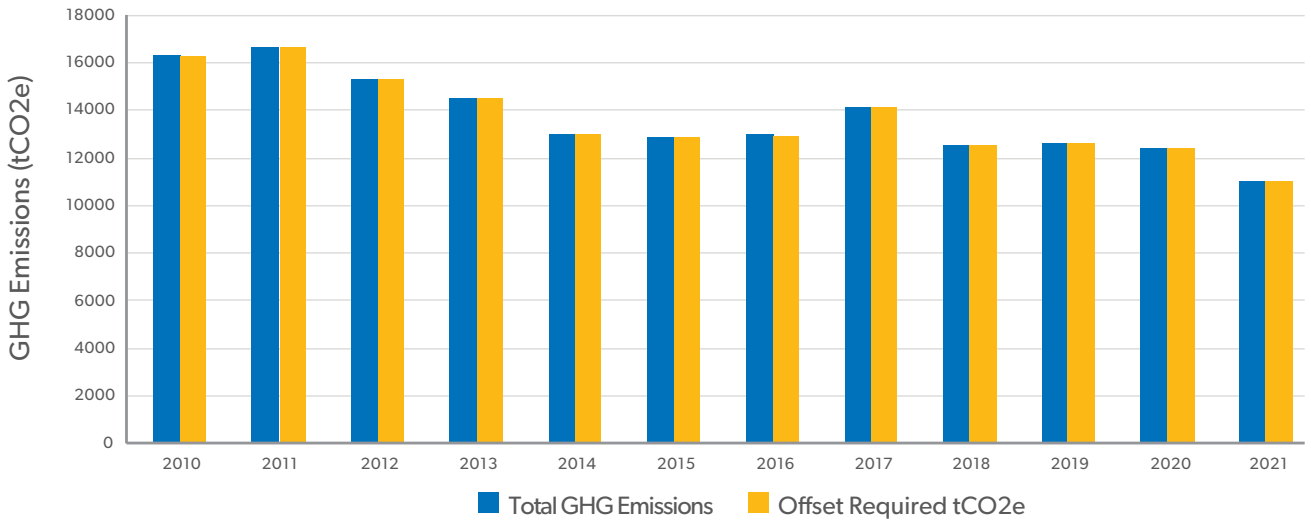
Greenhouse gas emissions are categorized into three groups or "scopes." For UVic-owned buildings and leased properties, Scope 1 emissions result from the consumption of natural gas (which is mostly methane), diesel, propane and heating fuel, as well as Scope 2 indirect emissions from the generation and transmission of purchased hydroelectricity. For UVic fleet vehicles and vessels, Scope 1 emissions include the combustion of gasoline, diesel and propane. Scope 3 emissions that the university has tracked to date are limited to select office paper supplies.

Figure 5: Classification of greenhouse gas emissions

HISTORICAL MEASUREMENT OF SCOPE 1, 2 AND 3 (PAPER) GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Since 2010, the university has tracked Scope 1, 2 and limited Scope 3 emissions from campus operations[8]. The university publishes an annual Climate Change Accountability Report that is submitted to the BC government and summarizes the university's greenhouse gas emissions profile, the amount of offsets purchased to reach carbon neutrality, the actions undertaken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the university's plans to continue reducing emissions.

Figure 6: UVic's operational GHG emissions from 2010 baseline year to 2020



Since 2010, the university has achieved its target of a 30% reduction in total operational GHG emissions. This was achieved through optimizing and electrifying building systems, a new geoexchange system, fleet electrification and ongoing workplace digitization.

UVic's District Energy System and standalone infrastructure for heating buildings and domestic hot water accounts for 91% of the university's operational GHG emissions. Electrifying this infrastructure and moving away from natural gas as the primary fuel source is a critical step in reducing GHGs in campus operations. The university's new student housing and dining project is an example of decarbonization at scale. Constructed to the Passive House standard, the buildings use heat pumps for space heating and hot water.

8 Space heating and cooling, hot water heating, generators, lighting, electrical infrastructure, fleet vehicles and vessels, 20 lb. weighted paper

BASELINE IN DEVELOPMENT FOR SELECT SCOPE 3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

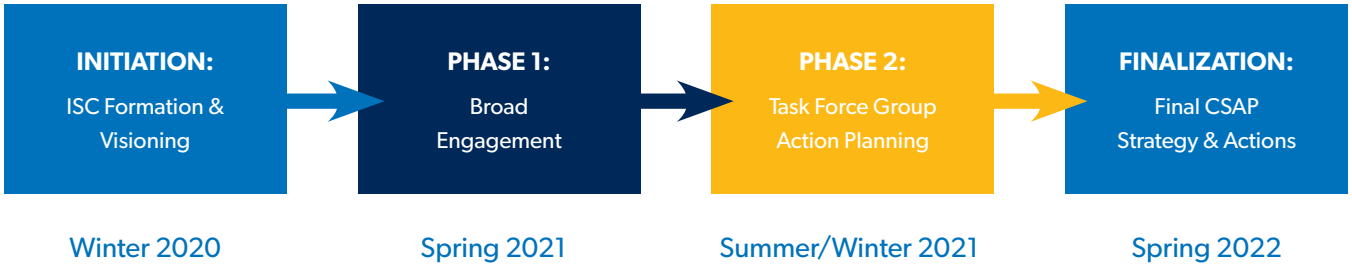
UVic does not currently track additional Scope 3 indirect emissions, also known as extended impact emissions. The university does not always have direct control over these emissions and does not pay carbon tax or offsets toward them. However, as a first step toward addressing them, we are currently developing baseline data collection and methodologies for select Scope 3 GHGs from commuting, food, business travel, waste and embodied carbon in building construction.

PLANNING PROCESS

Creating this Climate and Sustainability Action Plan brought together many groups across the campus and community to develop an integrated approach, in line with the university's 2018-2023 Strategic Framework and with the development of the next university Strategic Plan. The process began by convening the Integrated Steering Committee (ISC), comprised of a diverse set of faculty, staff and students representing research, academics, operations, administration, Indigenous leadership and the student body. This group ensured that the Strategy and Action Plan built on UVic's existing structures, expertise and activities, and sought new opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

To effectively integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into this Strategy, CSAP was informed through outreach and engagement with internal and external communities, including engagement with Indigenous scholars, practitioners, students and communities.

Figure 7: The four phases of the planning process



At the start of the planning process, the ISC developed a draft vision to put forward for broad engagment with the UVic campus and communities. The project team engaged more than 1,300 students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members to gather input on a long-term vision for climate and sustainability, and gather ideas to guide sustainability actions and climate solution efforts across the campus and beyond.

Figure 8: Five Task Force Groups of internal engagement

Five Task Force Groups engaged in the planning process:

- xʷéʔxʷə táŋəxʷ | XAXE TEN̓EW Sacred Earth
- Innovator and Partner
- Educator and Learner
- Climate Solutions & Sustainability Leader
- Community Collaborator

Building on broad engagement outcomes, the ISC formed five theme-based Task Force Groups representing students, faculty, staff and community members — all experts in their respective areas of climate and sustainability. These groups developed recommendations for strategies, goals and actions that now comprise CSAP. Input from the Community Collaborator Task Force Group has been integrated across the four themes.

To provide overview and insight during the creation of the Strategy and Action plan, a review team was established with participants from each Task Force Group. UVic leadership and student society committees were also consulted at this stage.

University of Victoria