

CLIMATE EMERGENCY AT UBC

REPORT PROGRESS 2022-23



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Sustainability Hub

**Climate Emergency
Response**

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The UBC Point Grey campus is situated within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam). The larger UBC community is on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Sel̓íl̓wítulh (Tsleil-Waututh) and Syilx (Okanagan) Nations. In our pursuit of sustainability, climate action and climate justice, we understand that protecting human rights is indelibly woven into the fabric of sustainability. As guests and settlers on Indigenous lands, we share an important responsibility for learning with and about our host Nations and strengthening these relationships.

Our hosts teach that the ancestors of these lands fortified this area to “raise our warriors to protect Mother Earth...”¹ We remain committed to our collective responsibility to honour these teachings and adhere to the guiding principles and protocols shared with us from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and Syilx Okanagan Nation Elders and leaders. We respect and practice our shared responsibilities to engage in meaningful dialogue with our hosts and continue to build relationships grounded in mutual respect, trust, and reciprocity.

1 [Morgan Guerin, 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force Report](#) 

"In UBC, I unearthed more than academic knowledge; I found a vibrant community fervently dedicated to the cause of our planet."

- ABUL BASHAR RAHMAN, UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS

"My mental health burden from climate anxiety has really been lightened as a result of UBC's climate commitments."

- CARMEN WAN, MSC GRADUATE, INSTITUTE OF RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT, AND SUSTAINABILITY

"As a small NGO, our partnership with UBC on climate change is incredible. Together we're addressing climate justice head-on."

- SARAH BELEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT WORKING GEAR

"If UBC is to continue to lead, we must now see an even bigger surge of ambition, resources, and commitment than we did in 2019."

- AVI LEWIS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UBC GEOGRAPHY

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There is no other university in this country that is showing the leadership that UBC is demonstrating when it comes to comprehensive, systemic and material climate and climate justice action. UBC has squarely placed itself in the vanguard of climate education, research and partnerships.

Not only is UBC publicly committed to embed climate justice throughout all its operations, academic activities and community partnerships, but it has cut its greenhouse gas emissions significantly since 2007 despite considerable expansion over that time.

By committing to address the climate crisis through the University's core functions of research, learning and engagement, UBC is going above and beyond other universities in Canada to harness and mobilize its full powers to address this overwhelming crisis. The fruition of that commitment is now tangible across its two campuses, and is cause for celebration.

It is my hope that in reading this latest Report on Progress for UBC's Climate Emergency Task Force Report that covers Year Two (2022-2023), you will come to appreciate how UBC's unique and comprehensive response to the climate emergency makes it a leader among its peers. By taking more ownership of this increasingly valuable and relevant trait, we must build on this exciting, university-wide momentum and foster, support and catalyze further climate action here at UBC.

The climate is changing before our eyes with brutal effect. Here at UBC we have both the means and duty to act. This summer both our Vancouver and Okanagan campuses saw multiple air quality advisories as the province suffered its worst fire season ever. Then on August 19th the entire UBC Okanagan campus was evacuated as multiple spots around Kelowna caught fire from what fire chief Jason Brolund described as "100 years of firefighting all at once in one night." Thankfully the campus emerged unscathed physically but as Lesley Cormack, Principal and

Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UBC Okanagan wrote: "This is undoubtedly going to leave a scar on our community." Meanwhile the 2021 Heat Dome here in BC — a heat emergency scientists conclude was "virtually impossible" without the effects of human planet-warming emissions — was responsible for a 13% increase in levels of anxiety related to climate change among British Columbians². Direct mental health supports, such as climate grief and climate change and mental health toolkits³ developed here at UBC are part of the remedy. But evidence suggests that visible and appropriate efforts to address the climate crisis also allay the mental health burden of climate anxiety in youth⁴. In other words, change, in the form of visible and meaningful climate solutions, drives hope and hope, in turn, drives change. And this synergy is taking shape here at UBC.

There is no doubt that these worsening climate impacts are directly affecting our students, faculty and staff — the very same students, faculty and staff that formed the Climate Emergency Task Force in 2020 and produced the nine strategic priorities and 28 specific recommendations that provided the blueprint for visionary and impactful climate action that the University boasts today.

As you will see in the details of this progress report, the University continues to mobilize impressively in response to the climate crisis and is continuing to make its mark. But as the crisis grows more acute, the response here at UBC must sharpen too. There is still more for us to do.


UBC is showing the world that it is no longer part of the problem when it comes to climate change, but is part of the solution. This is a significant shift and one to be proud of.

We know what UBC is doing on the climate front is working; to remain a climate leader, we must do even more.

LINDA NOWLAN

Senior Director, Sustainability Hub

2 [Mental Health and Climate Change Alliance](#) 

3 climateemergency.ubc.ca/wellbeing/ 

4 ["Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey"](#) 

UBC's community of students, faculty, staff and residents are deeply committed to climate action. They value UBC's commitments highly. Below are three overall themes we heard while working on CETF implementation over the past year and while compiling this report.

1. Leaning further into, not away from, leading edge climate endeavours

UBC has emerged as a leader in Canada when it comes to climate action, but to remain at the fore, and continue to reap the benefits and advantages of that distinction, the University must signal an even stronger commitment to keep UBC at the leading edge of climate work among Canada's universities and follow through with tangible results.

Canadians, especially youth, are jaded with the empty climate pledges of various provincial and federal governments. The leadership at UBC has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to model what climate accountability and follow through look like. With the Climate Emergency Declaration and Climate Emergency Task Force report UBC has begun that work. Now it must see it through with greater ambition and even stronger results.

There are concerns among UBC faculty and staff that since UBC's seminal and prescient 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration effort is petering out, resources are dwindling and words are not being met with concomitant material climate action. There is a need for a high-level champion to lead and integrate UBC's climate work, stable ongoing funding and renewed sustainability governance structures.



"At the UBC Centre for Climate Justice, we are ramping up our capacity and commitment, working with partners both on- and off-campus to ensure that justice is centred in all climate action. The emergency is only deepening, and our response is to urgently widen the circle — building deeper connections with Indigenous communities, housing advocacy groups, labour federations and more. UBC has an opportunity to play an even greater role in the next phase of climate action."

– Naomi Klein, Co-Director of the UBC Centre for Climate Justice and Associate Professor of Climate Justice



Image: courtesy of UBC Brand and Marketing

2. Better reconciling climate change and UBC's investments

"A compelling business case exists for universities to align their endowment policies and practices with responsible investing frameworks, including climate change. Research shows that these practices correlate with a six percent increase in donations⁵."

– C.D. Howe Institute, 2022

In 2022 the C.D. Howe Institute ranked Canada's universities on their climate change and endowment activities. UBC tied with McMaster University for the highest ranking in the country with a score of 4.2 out of 5. For UBC to lead on all fronts when it comes to climate leadership among its peers in Canada, it must execute the remedies to surge ahead to first place in this ranking.

The C.D. Howe report did not evaluate divestment activities and we are disappointed to report backsliding

with UBC's Staff Pension Portfolio, reporting a 20% increase in emissions between 2021 and 2022.

UBC is committed to reducing the carbon emissions of the Main Endowment Pool's equity holdings by 45% by 2030. The University is also committed to eliminating all portfolio exposure in its Main Endowment Pool to companies that extract or process fossil fuels by 2030.

But UBC can do better. Concordia University and the University of Guelph have committed to divesting from fossil fuels by 2025. This means that UBC is lagging on this front, not leading. Given that it boasts the second largest endowment of any university in Canada, this is significant.

3. Better implementation of all 28 priorities identified in the 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

There is a need to make good on the implementation of all the priorities in the Climate Emergency Task Force report. Watch this space as the Sustainability Hub rolls out the Climate Emergency (CE) Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework in the next few months.

5 ["Put to the Test: Ranking Canada's Universities on Their Climate Change and Endowment Activities" 2022 C.D. Howe](#) 

One of the most important roles that institutions have today is in clearing the path for explosive climate action. What we see two years into UBC's nascent Climate Emergency governance and commitments is incredibly exciting. When put together, the myriad of climate initiatives at UBC paint a picture of an institution that is a true leader on the climate front, more than any other in Canada. Here, we review the steps, commitments, investments and governance structure that got us here, and what comes next to keep us at the leading edge.

UBC's Climate Commitment: A duty to act

"The era of global boiling has arrived. It is still possible to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C [above pre-industrial levels], and avoid the very worst of climate change. But only with dramatic, immediate climate action."

– UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, July 2023

Extreme weather events escalated this year dramatically. 2023 is set to be the warmest year on record. The global authority on climate change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, issued the Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report, a comprehensive overview

of the state of knowledge on the science of climate change. Its findings are sobering. The report noted that the impacts of climate change are more widespread and severe than expected, and future risks will escalate rapidly with every fraction of a degree of warming.

As trusted sources of knowledge, universities have a key role to play in addressing the climate emergency. The UN Secretary-General has pointed out that universities are "essential to our success" on climate action. As Universities Canada states: "Canada's universities play a leading role in fighting climate change, by educating the next generation of climate leaders, broadening our understanding of climate change and its impacts, developing sustainable technologies and implementing climate-friendly measures on campus."⁶

6 <https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-launches-climate-initiative>

"That UBC as a public institution is a recognized leader in taking action to combat climate change and has a mandate to effect change beyond our institutional boundaries, with a fundamental responsibility, as outlined by our purpose statement, to advance a sustainable and just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world.

That addressing the climate crisis is critical to the University's key functions of research, learning and engagement as UBC strives to prepare students for their futures and conduct leading research on pressing societal issues.

That meaningful climate action must take active steps to support and amplify Indigenous Peoples' human rights."

- 2019 UBC Climate Emergency Declaration

UBC's Climate Commitment: The blueprint for action

2019 - UBC's Climate Emergency Declaration

In 2019 the President of UBC issued a Climate Emergency Declaration, which was endorsed by the Board of Governors. The Declaration noted the UBC community's strong support for climate justice demonstrated by over 5,000 members of the campus community participating in the September 27, 2019 Climate Strike and over 1,600 signing onto the open letter calling on UBC to declare a climate emergency, in addition to decisive student and faculty referendums in support of fossil fuel divestment.

2020 - UBC's Climate Emergency Task Force

As called for by the Declaration, former President Santa J. Ono formed a Climate Emergency Task Force to conduct community engagement and consolidate input into a public report defining the pillars of climate emergency and outlining recommended actions. The final Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) report was published in January 2021, featuring climate justice and Indigenous engagement as key themes. In February 2021 UBC President Santa J. Ono, the UBC Board of Governors, and the UBC Senates endorsed the CETF report unanimously in principle.

2021 - UBC's CETF Report: 3 Commitments, 9 Priorities, 28 Recommendations

"Moving swiftly ahead with the report's strategic priorities is another big step in UBC's journey to further advance global shift toward a just and sustainable future — inspired by the advocacy of students and other youth, both on our campuses and worldwide."

- *Statement from Former UBC President Santa J. Ono and Grace Nosek, student co-founder of the UBC Climate Hub*

UBC's CETF report includes three overarching commitments: to address the impacts of climate change, address past and ongoing contributions to climate change and shifting practices and policies at UBC and beyond that minimize or eliminate human-related climate change, and embed a lens of climate justice.

The report has nine strategic priorities and 28 recommendations as shown on page 16. UBC is working hard to embed these commitments, address the strategic priorities and implement the recommendations, but there is still more to do.

One new aspect of the University's response under development is a framework to monitor, evaluate and learn from actions by the campus community. This approach will allow UBC to track progress and understand how and where to invest further in climate emergency response actions in the future.

The Role of the Sustainability Hub

The CETF report recommends regular annual reporting⁷ — both publicly and through the UBC Executive to the Board and Senates — to reinforce accountability and to highlight progress made and upcoming priorities.

In February 2021, the Sustainability Hub was assigned responsibilities for “convening and tracking implementation planning of the CETF strategic priorities and recommendations, including these activities, for which new resources will be required.”⁸

Regular updates on “Actions Underway on the Climate Emergency” were provided to the Board of Governor's Sustainability and Climate Action Committee throughout 2021 and 2022. At the Board of Governors meeting on March 21, 2023, the Board agreed to dissolve the Sustainability and Climate Action Committee on the recommendation of the Governance Committee. Climate and sustainability reports will now be presented to the full Board twice a year.

UBC's Climate Commitment: Climate action through the lens of climate justice

“Climate justice means putting equity and human rights at the core of decision-making and action on climate change.”

- *UN Development Program*

“As a normative concept highlighting the unequal distribution of climate change impacts and opportunities for adaptation and mitigation, climate justice calls for transformative pathways for human and ecological well-being.”

- *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Sixth Assessment Report 2022*

Climate justice is an increasingly influential concept in the global response to the climate emergency. It recognizes the global links between colonial history, resource extraction, unequal socio-economic development patterns and the disproportionate vulnerability to climate change's impacts of those who did the least to cause the problem.

At UBC, climate justice is a critical part of the Climate Emergency Task Force report and as a hallmark of the University's response to the climate crisis. A highlight of progress from last year was the release of a [Climate Justice Toolkit](#) ⁹ intended for a broad range of institutions and organizations seeking to embed equity and justice approaches in their climate emergency responses. The toolkit was highlighted in last year's report “[Higher Education's Role in Advancing Climate Justice](#)” ¹⁰ released by Second Nature, a US-based non-profit committed to accelerating climate action in, and through, higher education.

7 [2021 Climate Emergency Task Force Report, p.21](#) ⁹

8 https://bog3.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2021/01/5_2021.02_Climate-Emergency-Actions-Underway.pdf ¹⁰



Image: courtesy of UBC Sustainability Hub

In 2021 students persuaded senior leaders to create the Climate Emergency Fund or CEF. This initiative is a global first in higher education. What sets it apart? The two-year, \$1.5 million Fund was exclusively designated for climate action by and for students. Equal numbers of students and faculty/staff formed a Committee that evaluated the applications. Paid student work was imperative. Hundreds of positions were created. The CEF drove significant action on climate justice. Projects included an interdisciplinary PhD with Metro Vancouver, Social Impact Labs by Climate Action Mobilizers, and ten applied research Sustainability Scholar projects. UBC's experience will interest educational institutions addressing work-integrated learning, campus as a living lab, city-university partnerships and community engagement. Finally, this is a story of hope. It shows how universities can tackle one of the planet's most pressing problems.

UBC's Climate Commitment: Already Impactful

"[UBC's Climate Emergency Declaration] committed UBC to develop a systems response that embedded climate justice throughout its activities and priorities. Climate action continues to be a top strategic priority for UBC."

- 2022 UBC Climate Change Accountability Report, a mandatory report submitted annually to the government of BC as part of the province's climate law regime

Here at UBC, the scope of ambition continues to grow. More and more faculties are including climate change content in their courses. More faculty are being hired with climate as a specialty. Faculty and students are exploring the intersections between climate change, Indigenous rights, anti-racism and equity. Climate Emergency Week at UBC expanded this year, featuring multiple events across campus.

Climate change was further cemented as a central concern of UBC's academic mission of education and research. The second year of the Climate Emergency Fund drove impactful student climate action and climate change was a focus of UBC's partnerships with corporations, community groups and governments. Meanwhile, operational plans to accelerate UBC's transition away from fossil fuels were ratcheted up even further.

What's in this year's report?

This year's report focuses on progress made the second year after the adoption of the 2021 CETF report and covers Year Two of the climate emergency at UBC from April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023. Some programs, centres and initiatives are mentioned in several places in this report due to their cross-cutting activities that involve multiple CETF priorities.

The Sustainability Hub will continue to consult with and canvas all members of the UBC community to discover other pockets of action to report on next year. We invite you to share what you're doing. Please get in touch.

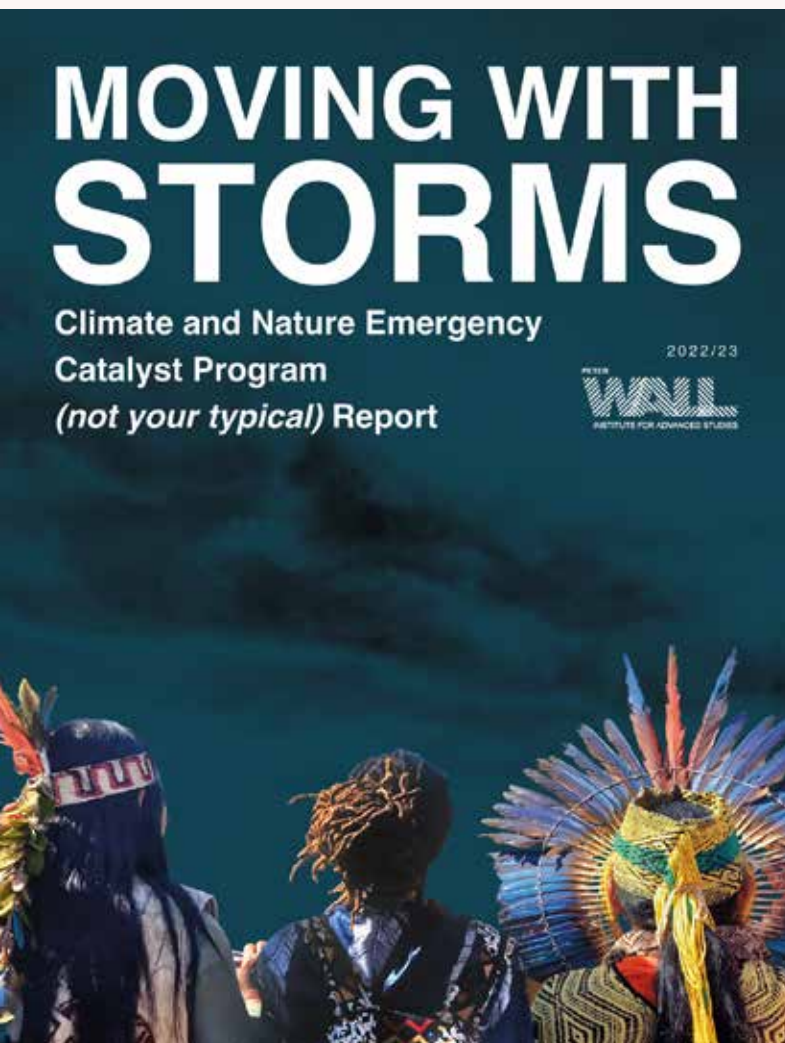


Image: *Moving with Storms* report, courtesy of the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies

Highlights from this year include:

- The final year of the Climate Emergency Fund, a demonstration of the power of student-led climate advocacy. The ripple effects of the disbursement of the \$1.5 million Fund to climate action by students and for students are spreading into waves of change.
- The Peter Wall Institute of Advanced Studies sponsored a year-long Catalyst Program initiative on the Climate and Nature Emergency, which culminated with the *Moving with Storms* [report](#).
- The Centre for Climate Justice or CCJ expanded its network of faculty and graduate students, and sponsored numerous research projects.
- The Interdepartmental Climate Committee grew across campus, bolstered by the creation of new faculty-led Climate committees.
- The Sustainability Hub expanded key programs such as Sustainability Scholars, Sustainability Ambassadors and faculty grants.
- Collaboration between academics and operational staff through the Campus as Living Lab (CLL) program, managed by the Sustainability Hub, continues to grow. The impact of the CLL program on policy is considerable, particularly in the area of green buildings.
- The Climate Hub entered its sixth year of operations focusing on climate action by students at UBC and in nearby communities.
- [Campus Vision 2050](#) [report](#) and the [Housing Action Plan](#) [report](#) address critical climate justice issues such as affordable housing, climate resiliency and accessibility.
- UBC's ambitious Climate Action Plan 2030 was approved by the Board of Governors, smoothing the way for accelerated action on all emission sources at UBC. UBC is now targeting net-zero operational emissions by 2035, 15 years ahead of its previous 2050 target. This report does not cover operational issues in detail. See the [CAP2030 website](#) [report](#) for more details on this critical work.

In a world desperate for tangible, meaningful climate action, UBC's commitment to climate action is a beacon. As UBC mobilized its resources to implement the nine Strategic Priorities identified in the CETF report, it has become clear that this prescient report wasn't meaningful only because of the tangible, results-oriented climate work it precipitated across our campuses and community. It is deeply impacting those in our community.

Abul Bashar Rahman, Student

Rahman was one of nine delegates from UBC who travelled to Egypt to attend COP27, the world's most important conference on climate change. Last summer, he biked across his home country of Bangladesh to film a documentary about the impacts that climate change is having on its people. He will be attending COP28 again in 2023 as a delegate from UBC.

"In UBC, I unearthed more than academic knowledge; I found a vibrant community fervently dedicated to the cause of our planet. UBC's climate emergency commitment means so much to me. Organizations like the Climate Solutions Research Collective (CSRC), Climate Justice Research Collective (CJRC), Climate Action Mobilizers (CAM), and the Sustainability Hub have been beacons, guiding and amplifying my efforts. Their unwavering support, coupled with the selfless sharing of insights and wisdom, has deeply enriched my journey, cultivating a profound sense of gratitude and a renewed purpose within me.

The spirit of UBC is embodied in the tireless advocates I've had the privilege to work with. Their unwavering commitment, from organized groups like the Climate Solutions Research Collective to invaluable individuals like Cait Murphy [an engagement specialist at UBC's Sustainability Hub], has been a driving force in my journey. Every gesture, including the heartwarming act of sharing a personal GoPro, serves as a reminder of the boundless support and belief that surrounds me.

Journeys are defined not just by destinations but by the companions we meet along the way. At UBC, I have been extremely lucky to have folks to illuminate my path with hope, mentorship and profound kindness. Together, we stand as a testament to the power of collective action and the boundless potential that lies in unity."





Dr. Lauren Emberson (She/Her/Hers), Associate Professor, Department of Psychology

"UBC's Climate Emergency Task Force report and Climate Action Plan are positive forces in my academic life. As someone whose research doesn't directly connect with climate change, there can be a disconnect in my academic life between the urgency that I feel around the climate crisis and what I do in the day-to-day.

However, it is very comforting and positive for me to be part of an institution that is stepping up to make meaningful changes in response to this crisis.

It contributes to my sense of pride being faculty at UBC and also gives me a broader sense of belonging and purpose."

Sarah Beley, Executive Director, Working Gear, a volunteer-run charity located in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood of Vancouver, BC

"As a small NGO, our partnership with UBC on climate change is incredible. It's a big issue for the Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood in Vancouver where we work.

We're excited about our graduate student Sustainability Scholar who helped us prove the environmental, social and economic benefits of our clothing exchange program. This year we've been part of the CLEAR project (Climate Equity, Action and Resilience) with the Sustainability Hub, Learning Exchange and other groups.

Its goals are to empower DTES residents with the opportunity to learn more about climate change impacts and help develop climate research and policy that directly benefits them. Together we're addressing climate justice head-on."



Avi Lewis, Associate Professor, UBC Geography

"The Climate Emergency Declaration was a watershed moment for climate action in the academy, and it's the reason I was excited to come to UBC. But four years later, climate breakdown is accelerating, and Canada is still doubling down on the fossil fuel industry driving our emissions and consequent disasters. If UBC is to continue to lead, we must now see an even bigger surge of ambition, resources, and commitment than we did in 2019."

Elizabeth Stevenson, Library Specialist

"Much of the Library #ClimateAction Team's work this year focused on deepening relationships with other sustainability groups, both on campus and beyond. It's inspiring to see more and more groups forming spontaneously at UBC in support of our climate emergency commitments. Climate education will remain a priority for L#CAT as we move forward, supporting the UBC community in understanding how they too can take action."

Carmen Wan, MSC graduate, Institute of Resources, Environment, and Sustainability

"It's stressful thinking about the future we face as a result of our collective failure to act on climate change. My mental health burden from climate anxiety has really been lightened as a result of UBC's climate commitments. Over the past year as a graduate student, I worked with the Climate Action Mobilizers through the Centre for Community Engaged Learning or CCEL. The Cool 'Hood Champs Climate Action workshops that we did with community groups were action-oriented and were a great antidote to my climate anxiety. I'm grateful the Climate Emergency Fund supported CCEL with this work. Getting to know such a fantastic and energizing group of students, faculty, staff and community partners was an added bonus!"





Operationalize UBC's commitments to climate justice: Support climate leadership and initiatives led by Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour

1. Support fair compensation and representation for UBC's IBPOC community leading climate initiatives
2. Support off-campus IBPOC-led climate initiatives
3. Engage further with Black and POC Communities
4. Examine and transform institutional practices and policies that reproduce inequalities for IBPOC communities at UBC



Demonstrate institutional leadership on climate justice

1. Establish climate justice standards for the university's activities
2. Demonstrate and advocate for justice-based climate action
3. Enact commitments to divestment and sustainable investment



Establish mechanisms and processes that ensure Indigenous perspectives, communities, and worldviews shape the development and implementation of climate-related initiatives and policies

1. Leverage UBC's Indigenous Strategic Plan and Inclusion Action Plan as a basis for long-term engagement with Indigenous communities
2. Provide resources that support staff to work on Indigenous engagement around UBC plans, policies and initiatives
3. Create a standing Indigenous community advisory committee on the climate emergency
4. Welcome and develop greater institutional capacity for engaging with the full range and complexity of Indigenous perspectives



Expand, strengthen and coordinate climate research at UBC

1. Establish a body for climate research
2. Start a climate emergency fellows program
3. Conduct climate-focused faculty hiring
4. Recognize and reward community engaged scholarship



**Foster a culture of engagement
& advocacy on climate action**

1. Encourage civic engagement
2. Increase capacity and resources for engagement



**Support community wellbeing in the
face of the climate crisis**

1. Build capacity for mental health, resilience and community care strategies
2. Update emergency preparedness and response plans
3. Collaborate to expand public discourse around climate change and public health impacts



**Expand climate education
opportunities and resources for the
UBC community and broader public**

1. Advance climate education opportunities across disciplines
2. Support climate education pedagogy and curriculum development
3. Expand climate education and professional development for UBC community members and UBC partners



**Develop new and strengthen
existing partnerships to tackle the
climate emergency**

1. Coordinate a climate knowledge to action central contact
2. Scale up Living Lab research collaborations with diverse partners beyond campus
3. Community Councils - expand and deepen external engagements
4. Develop a strategic partnership framework



**Accelerate emissions reductions at
UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan in
response to the Climate Emergency:
Climate Action Plan 2030**

1. Support the forthcoming recommendations and new interim emission targets emerging from the Climate Action Plan 2030 process, which establish specific emissions targets responding to UBC's alignment with 1.5°C



STRATEGIC PRIORITY I

Operationalize UBC's commitments to climate justice: Support climate leadership and initiatives led by Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour

"In the Climate Emergency Declaration, UBC made a bold commitment to advance 'just and inclusive climate solutions that work towards dismantling historic and existing barriers faced by marginalized communities.' Building on priorities laid out in UBC's Inclusion Action Plan, the Indigenous Strategic Plan, and other related strategic commitments, it is essential to honour and amplify the labour of IBPOC community members through adequate compensation and integration of their ongoing feedback throughout UBC's climate emergency response."

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year, university funding was allocated for campus programming that promotes land-based engagement, creating new opportunities for ethical dialogue and mobilization of perspectives on Indigenous health and wellbeing. Engagement also extended beyond the University campus, with student, staff and faculty-led projects that supported grassroots and municipal action.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Support fair compensation and representation for UBC's IBPOC community leading climate initiatives

Representation among new hires improving. Each year UBC's Equity & Inclusion Office prepares an Employment Equity Report in order to better understand where disparities in proportional representation may exist across community groups, including Indigenous, Black and People of Colour (IBPOC).

Following UBC's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019, a noticeable uptick in representation for UBC's IBPOC community can be seen in the data. This is in part due to an expanded group of "University Teachers" that includes post-docs now incorporated in the report, and also due to increased attention to this issue. However, continued attention must be paid to recruiting and retaining Indigenous community members in order to maintain progress.


Representation among New Hires at UBC Vancouver, 2019 - 2021

YEAR	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	RACIALIZED PEOPLE
2019	5%	33%
2020	7%	41%
2021	3.3%	38.7%

Representation among New Hires at UBC Okanagan, 2019 - 2021

YEAR	INDIGENOUS PEOPLE	RACIALIZED PEOPLE
2019	8%	12%
2020	9%	21%
2021	8.2%	23.8%



Student Audrey Irvine Broque and professor Jess Dempsey worked with West Moberly First Nations (WMFN) on Dancing with the Land (Nun ke' Daahwéhsats). The project aims to advance understanding of how climate change impacts and policies will impact Indigenous self-determination as well as the cultural values/rights associated with terrestrial and aquatic environments. A workshop helped address key knowledge gaps that have prevented WMFN from factoring climate impacts into decision-making, and consultation processes pertaining to land uses and activities that contribute to, or intensify, the impacts of climate change. The [full project report](#)  was published in April 2023.

NUN KE' DAHWÉHSATS DANCING WITH THE LAND

Image: Cover detail of report on Nun ke' Daahwéhsats / Dancing with the Land courtesy of Audrey Irvine Broque and Jess Dempsey

1. Support fair compensation and representation for UBC's IBPOC community leading climate initiatives

Funding for UBC community projects includes many IBPOC-led climate-focused projects, provided by various grants including the Partnership Recognition and Exploration (PRE) Fund, Community University Engagement Support (CUES) Fund, Indigenous Strategic Initiatives (ISI) Fund, Chapman and Innovation Grants from the Centre for Community Engaged Learning, and the Climate Emergency Fund for Public Scholars, Sustainability Scholars and SEEDs projects.

New collaborative research group "Urban Climate Justice from Below" was formed and led by Dr. Paroma Wagle, Department of Geography, to gather and amplify insights from grassroots and city-level activists across the Global South building more just urban living conditions for all.

The Sauder School of Business selected two BC-based projects to offset Scope 3 carbon emissions associated

with operations, including the Great Bear Rainforest Project — in partnership with nine different First Nations groups.

School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA) students designed pop-up drinking fountains and cooling misters for the Powell Street Festival as part of the Fuki no Mizu initiative, celebrating Japanese Canadian culture while addressing water access inequity in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

The UBC Climate Hub's Climate Justice Research Collaborative 2022/23 cohort engaged in five student-led, community-focused projects: Fuelling Change: Rethinking Education for Climate Justice in BC Schools (with Rootbound Universe), Contamination and Conflict (with Mountain Protectors & Wilderness Committee), Pipe Up, Banking on Student Futures (with Banking on a Better Future), Breaking Barriers in Climate Justice (with Hua Foundation), Weathering Injustice (with Climate Hub).



Image: courtesy of the Sustainability Hub

3. Engage further with Black and POC Communities

Endorsed by UBC's leadership, the Strategic Equity and Anti-Racism (StEAR) Framework is a planning tool developed to guide UBC's approach to implementation of equity and anti-racism priorities and evaluation of progress and launched this year. In particular, the StEAR framework includes a focus on 'Interactional Change', to develop individual proficiencies that build campus community capacity to foster positive and effective intergroup relations and cultivate a climate that promotes human rights, dignity, equality and belonging through equity and anti-racism training, education and dialogue.

All cohorts of the Peter Wall Institute of Advanced Studies' year-long Catalyst Program on the Climate and Nature Emergency engaged deeply with IBPOC communities on and off campus guided by 4 principles:

- Ethical Collaborations: Transdisciplinary, intergenerational, and community relationship building grounded on trust, respect, reciprocity, consent, and accountability.
- Intellectual Depth: (self)Critical and relational rigour in moving beyond common patterns of simplistic solutions, paternalistic forms of engagements and ethnocentric ideals of sustainability, justice and change.
- Reparative Redistribution: Allocation of resources prioritizing populations most affected by the Climate and Nature Emergency and precarity, and research areas of greatest urgency and impact guided by principles of reparation.
- Engagement with the Indigenous Strategic Plan: Deepening understanding of settler responsibilities and supporting the aspirations of Indigenous scholars and communities.

Celebrating Voices of Diversity in Youth Climate Action, an event hosted by the Centre for Community Engaged Learning's Climate Action Mobilizers highlighted IBPOC youth leaders in climate and engaged participants to map IBPOC-centred community climate assets.

4. Examine and transform institutional practices and policies that reproduce inequalities for IBPOC communities at UBC

StEAR focuses on 'Structural Change'. A major focus of the StEAR framework of the Equity and Inclusion Office is to **develop institutional principles, paradigms and processes that build organizational capacity to enable, drive and sustain systems change** through equitable and anti-racist leadership, governance and accountability. Over 50 actions in the StEAR Roadmap will focus on improving UBC policies and practices through enhanced training for senior leadership, access to data, ongoing monitoring, new surveys, protocols and other measures.



Demonstrate institutional leadership on climate justice

“To meet the goal of embedding climate justice throughout UBC’s activities and address the inequities associated with the causes, impacts and solutions to climate change, UBC must demonstrate consistent institutional leadership on climate justice. This includes acknowledging and reckoning with its own contributions to the climate crisis while leveraging its power for social change beyond its institutional boundaries.”


- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report


This year saw the initiation of a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning framework to track institutional progress on climate justice, as well as further divestment of university investments away from fossil fuels and towards climate positive funds.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Establish climate justice standards for the University’s activities

A new Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning (MEL) Framework is under development by the Sustainability Hub that is exploring UBC-wide indicators and targets, and examining the development of university-wide climate justice standards. The Climate Justice Advisory Committee of 20 faculty, staff and students from diverse backgrounds is one of the groups that is providing input on the development of the MEL.

[Indigenous Finance Guidelines](#) . The Indigenous Finance Guidelines continue to receive positive uptake from faculties and administrative units across both UBC campuses, as well as from external academic institutions, NGOs and industry groups. The positive support shown for providing culturally appropriate financial gifting and honoraria to Indigenous partners would be strengthened by University leadership setting a policy directive for all research activities involving Indigenous partners to use the Indigenous Finance Guidelines when providing financial gifts and honoraria. Over the next year, the Indigenous Research Support Initiative will be (re)developing an Indigenous Finance Guidelines 2.0 to address gaps and user issues that have been noted over the last year of usage.

[Climate Justice Research Collaborative \(CJRC\) student project Banking on Student Futures](#)  investigated the social license gained by the largest Canadian banks at UBC.

2. Demonstrate and advocate for justice-based climate action

Student organization Climate Justice UBC launched a “Complicity in the Climate Emergency” Report and co-hosted a teach-in with the UBC Climate Hub on “The Role of Universities in the Climate Crisis” highlighting student research findings into the current state of fossil fuel funding at UBC.






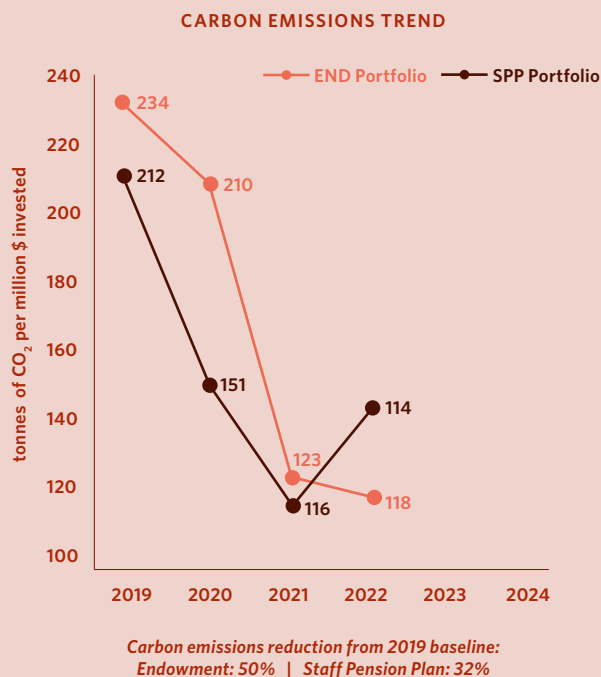
In operation since 2021, UBC's Centre for Climate Justice (CCJ)  supports collaborative, interdisciplinary and intersectional research across diverse knowledge systems, and connects critical research and community engagement to meet the demands for climate justice. The CCJ has 41 affiliated faculty  to date from a wide variety of disciplines, and works on eight research streams  to date including climate, just housing, transportation, infrastructure, debt and reparations and Indigenous-led climate action planning. Over the past year, the CCJ hosted a number of events  raising critical issues of climate justice including a panel on the Egypt COP27, a Climate Migration panel, and Fiscal Justice for Caribbean Climate Action. In collaboration with Simon Fraser University Community-Engaged Research Initiative (CERi), the CCJ hosted a one-day symposium  to convene a community of practice around community-engaged research to create meaningful change.

Image: Banner by Oskar Steiner courtesy of Centre for Climate Justice





Graph source: [UBC IMANT Responsible Investing Report 2022](#), pg. 4

3. Enact commitments to divestment and sustainable investment

The UBC Endowment has achieved a 50% reduction in carbon emissions vs. 2019 baseline. In addition, the UBC Staff Pension Plan's carbon footprint has decreased by 32% during the same period.

However, while the carbon emissions of the UBC Endowment have continued a downward trajectory, carbon emissions of the UBC Staff Pension Plan have increased by over one fifth (~20%) from 2021 to 2022, negating most of the carbon-intensive divestment gains it accomplished from 2020 to 2021. Despite the UBC Endowment, valued at over \$2 billion, has seen a reduction in its emissions, the rate of divestment has slowed considerably over the last year and we will be watching for steeper reductions over the next year to keep the endowment on track to decarbonize its assets entirely by 2030.

As part of its sustainable investment commitments, UBC Investment Management made a \$40M USD investment in the climate growth equity fund BeyondNetZero.

The fund invests in high-growth businesses that have the potential to combat climate change at scale, specifically in the areas of decarbonization, energy efficiency, resource conservation and emissions management solutions.

UBC Investment Management published a Quarterly Portfolios Review and Responsible Investing Update to inform the Finance Committee on the performance of the University's investment assets. The report observes the Responsible Investment Strategy endorsed by the Board of Governors to be in line with the University's declaration of a climate emergency, with key updates on public equity, decelerating inflation data and portfolio returns.

UBC published a Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) Report — the first of its kind at a Canadian university to provide transparency of UBC's financial climate-related risks and opportunities on an annual basis. UBC Finance is committed to producing annual TCFD disclosures along with supporting TCFD's global mission of market transparency.



Establish mechanisms and processes that ensure Indigenous perspectives, communities, and worldviews shape the development and implementation of climate-related initiatives and policies

“The negative impacts of climate change disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples due to their relationship and dependence on the environment. In addition, Indigenous peoples’ legal position in settler societies and institutionalized colonialism limit their ability to adapt to and cope with climate change. This amplifies the need for Indigenous perspectives, communities and worldviews within broader institutional climate emergency plans, strategies and activities.”


- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year featured several points of connection for Indigenous faculty and researchers at UBC to form and grow relationships, as well as student and staff-led initiatives that sought to engage reciprocally with Indigenous peoples at UBC campuses and in neighbouring communities. Seeking Indigenous leadership and supporting Indigenous priorities in climate emergency plans, strategies and activities will not only help address institutional colonialism but also provide the necessary actions for bold, actionable climate solutions that promote planetary health and justice for all.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Leverage UBC’s Indigenous Strategic Plan and Inclusion Action Plan as a basis for long-term engagement with Indigenous communities

UBC is changing the way it engages with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and Indigenous students, faculty and staff for the planning of the Pt. Grey campus. Through the development of a Relationship Agreement with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, a structured approach to ongoing engagement is being developed and several projects are underway to strengthen Musqueam presence on campus, along with Indigenous land knowledge and practices. The recent Campus Vision 2050 process also piloted a range of new engagement activities with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and campus Indigenous students, faculty and staff.

The Indigenous Strategic Initiatives Fund, supporting implementation of the Indigenous Strategic Plan, funded 47 projects, including several climate-focused projects. Recipients include [Homegrown Climate Justice](#) , a student-led initiative to mobilize greenspaces in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside informed by Indigenous worldviews and practices.



1. Provide resources that support staff to work on Indigenous engagement around UBC plans, policies and initiatives

The UBC Okanagan West Campus Lands Conceptual Structure Plan included an emphasis on Syilx engagement around land-based research activities and conservation initiatives to support innovation, respect the agricultural character and honour the land's traditional uses. Priorities include protecting the unique saline ecosystem around Robert Lake, preserving wildlife movement within the lands and seeking Syilx engagement and partnership for research and use of the lands.

The UBC Okanagan Indigenous Microforest project launched to create a self-sustainable, biodiverse micro-forest, guided by Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge. The goal is to reintroduce native, drought-tolerant plants into the built environment, while preparing for and adapting to climate change in consultation and collaboration with the Syilx community, environmentalists, engineers, forestry, soil scientists, and UBC Campus + Community Planning.

The Indigenous Research Support Initiative (IRSI) Principles of Engagement document [continues to be shared](#) with researchers interested in conducting Indigenous-partnered research projects. This document guides researchers through a set of community-developed principles for ethical engagement with Indigenous partners, and it is a core component of IRSI's Indigenous Research Framework.

The IRSI experiential workshop “**Respect, Reciprocity, and Mutual Understanding: Fostering relational engagement between researchers and Indigenous communities**” was designed and delivered to Sustainability Scholars and Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions Interns. This workshop was developed as an opportunity to deepen participants' working knowledge of the practices that enable meaningful, ethical and collaborative research partnerships. Originally run as a pilot project in May 2023, the workshop will undergo refinement for 2024 and 2025, as well as being developed into an online, legacy training hosted through Canvas Catalog.

Indigenous Initiatives, a program at UBC's Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology [supports](#) the community to work with Indigenous communities and collaborates on Indigenous Foundations [an information resource](#) on key topics relating to the histories, politics and cultures of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

3. Create a standing Indigenous community advisory committee on the climate emergency

Indigenous Rights and Climate Justice Circles were initiated as one response to meaningfully engage with Indigenous faculty, staff and students at UBC on climate justice. These circles were developed as an alternative to a traditional committee, and as a way for Indigenous community members to form connections and build relationships centered on a common cause to address the climate crisis. Held at the UBC Farm at the Yurt, the Circles this year explored the leadership needed to mobilize action for a climate just world (Abundance of Light with Dr. Tabitha Robin, Dr. Shandin Pete and Kasey Stirling) and reflected on and reimagined expressions of abundance (Harvest of Abundance with Dr. Bernard Perley, Victor Guerin and Dr. Shandin Pete).

4. Welcome and develop greater institutional capacity for engaging with the full range and complexity of Indigenous perspectives

A new UBC Okanagan Research Cluster is focusing on Indigenous-led impact assessment. This new interdisciplinary group aims to work with Indigenous organizations to help outline information management requirements, define best practices for impact assessment and develop case studies to help communities design new approaches to conducting impact assessments. The cluster hopes to support Indigenous people across Canada as they manage resources while protecting the values that define their lands and cultural relationships.

The PWIAS Climate and Nature Emergency Catalyst Program [held more than 50 events](#) led by program participants who supported critical, artistic, interdisciplinary and intergenerational engagements. These included the artist project



Image: Dr. Bernard Perley leading Climate Just Futurities courtesy of Sustainability Hub

“Liberated Planet Studio,” key events and partnerships, critical interventions at COP27 and efforts to amplify Indigenous voices and to support Indigenous aspirations.

Collective Climate Knowledges: Amplifying Indigenous and Critically Engaged Voices [🔗](#) at COP27. PWIAS Student Fellow Charlotte Taylor collaborated with Camilla Cardoso, Dr. Pasang Yangjee Sherpa, Dr. Shannon Waters and Chief Ninawa Huni Kui on the Critically Engaged Voices interdisciplinary research collaborative project.

Climate Just Futurities, a Climate Emergency Week workshop, was co-led by the Sustainability Hub with

Dr. Bernard Perley, Dr. Dallas Hunt and Dr. Sharon Stein to creatively engage with peers in reflections on cascading climate disasters, and to imagine alternative and more just climate futures.

19 Sustainability Scholars worked in clusters on complex projects for a First Nation Government and five NGOs supporting Indigenous perspectives. Applied research projects completed by UBC graduate students on behalf of regional partner organizations included work with T̓silhqot̓in National Government, Living Lakes Canada, Comox Valley Land Trust, Public Health Association of Canada and Fraser Basin Council.



Expand, strengthen and coordinate climate research at UBC

“UBC’s core contributions to the climate crisis will be made through its primary roles of teaching and research. There are still many gaps preventing a full understanding of the complex consequences of climate change, the potential pathways towards a just and equitable future and the best avenues to meaningful action at the scale of the crisis. As a major global research university, UBC can address this challenge within and across wide-ranging disciplines.”

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year marked progress on collaboratives, clusters, and initiatives that brought together students, staff and faculty to engage in cross-disciplinary research and knowledge sharing. It also featured the expansion of programs that engaged community partners in research collaborations.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Establish a body for climate research

UBC’s Centre for Climate Justice (CCJ) initiated a Climate Justice Study Collective to support climate justice practitioners and knowledge holders from the greater Vancouver area to examine what climate justice means in our region. The CCJ also formed new research projects and partnerships with climate justice intersections with tenant vulnerabilities to extreme weather, Indigenization, equitable forest restoration economies, community just transition planning, intergenerational impacts from mining and front-line activism in the Global South.

Emerging research excellence clusters at UBC Vancouver include Climate Change Health Effects, Adaptation, and Resilience (HEAL); Climate Justice

Partnerships; Cluster for Microplastics; Disaster Resilience Research Network; Future Minerals Working Group; and an Indigenous Land-Based Health, Wellness, and Education Research Cluster.

Newly funded research excellence clusters at UBC Okanagan include battery innovation; affordable, sustainable, disaster resilient housing construction; living with wildfire through academic and Indigenous knowledge; and solar energy.

Green Infrastructure Research Cluster focuses on climate resilience. Through innovative technologies, researchers are working to create civil infrastructure that is safe, durable, energy-efficient and affordable. With an expanded focus on resilient urban infrastructure, the cluster is designing an interdisciplinary program to help BC withstand natural disasters like flood, fire and earthquakes, predicted to increase with climate change.

2. Start a climate emergency fellows’ program

UBC launched a Transdisciplinary Collaborative PhD Pilot for the Climate Emergency, enabled by the Climate Emergency Fund, supporting a diverse PhD student cohort to work directly with Metro Vancouver on regional decarbonization projects.

The Public Scholars Initiative (PSI) also enabled by the Climate Emergency Fund deepened commitments to climate action by supporting six existing Scholars, adding ten new incoming scholars in a new Climate Emergency Cohort, and maintaining three existing Scholars.

3. Conduct climate focused faculty hiring

No data available. The Sustainability Hub’s new Climate Emergency Monitoring Framework will look at how to obtain this data and report on this foundational recommendation.



Image: Shorebirds at Brunswick Point courtesy of David Bradley

4. Recognize and reward community engaged scholarship

Community engaged scholarship exists throughout UBC, and climate-focused work continues to grow in many corners including:

The **Centre for Community Engaged Learning** facilitates projects and programs between the University and community organizations, and works with faculty members to integrate community engagement into their research and teaching in a variety of ways, including through Community Engaged Teaching Fellows and City Studio.

The **UBC Learning Exchange** is a non-traditional academic space in the Downtown Eastside community of Vancouver, in operation since 1999. Its work is grounded in the value of a learning exchange — the idea that learning is a ‘two-way street’.

The **Centre for Teaching Learning and Technology**, **Extended Learning UBC** and many other departments and units focus on community engaged learning spaces.

The **Sustainability Scholars program** [↗](#), with support from the Climate Emergency Fund created 10 new positions, contributing to a total of 100 UBC graduate students participating in applied sustainability scholarship. The Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative (FERC) is a special stream of the program, to protect and restore the vital watershed of the Fraser Estuary, facing threats from climate change.

As part of the **Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies’ Scholars Catalyst program on the Climate and Nature Emergency**, 12 UBC faculty scholars built connections, cultivated relationships, and initiated collaborations that engage with the urgency, scale and complexity of the emergency.

This year’s climate-focused **Social Ecological Economic Development Studies (SEEDS) Sustainability projects** spanned student research on cooling the campus through urban forests; transportation experiences of students during the 2022 winter storm event; and a Climate-Ready Food Garden Management Plan and Plant List. A research cluster additionally created Climate-Friendly Food System Procurement Guidelines.



Foster a culture of engagement & advocacy on climate action

“Fostering a culture of engagement and advocacy across campus is foundational to a just climate emergency response. To succeed, UBC’s community members must be equipped with the tools, resources and support needed to flourish. This includes recognition of the time and resources necessary to engage in difficult conversations, rebuild damaged relationships and create spaces for the University to receive critical feedback from communities that have been systemically marginalized.”

– 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year, student and staff-led engagements offered opportunities for the UBC community to come together to share their perspectives and feedback on the University’s climate emergency response in both formal and playful settings. Funding was further allocated to support related work that falls outside of departmental budgets.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Encourage civic engagement

POLICY AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT AT UBC

Campus Vision 2050 [↗](#) held extensive community consultations. The Vision was revised based on

community feedback, and ‘Climate Mitigation and Adaptation’ was added as one of the Big Ideas. The plan now includes a focus on energy systems, building technology, design and construction and community planning, while preparing the campus to be adaptive to a changing climate, supporting the health, wellbeing and safety of the campus community and surrounding ecosystem.

CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Climate Emergency Week [↗](#), coordinated by the Sustainability Hub, UBC Climate Hub, AMS, Campus + Community Planning, Wellbeing and other partners offered 32 events over two weeks in partnership with 29 groups from UBC and beyond. The week offered workshops, webinars, talks, theatre performances, outdoor education, direct action through a waste audit and a Fair in the Nest and numerous opportunities for creative expression.

“Climate Stories from UBC” [↗](#) showcased the work of several Public Scholars. The biggest event of the PSI ever, it was held at Van Dusen Botanical Gardens and attended by over 240 guests, including chiefs from 3 First Nations, 11 speakers, keynotes from David Suzuki Foundation Executive Director, Severn Cullis Suzuki, and Professor Avi Lewis and a screening of the documentary film *Terra Libre*. The event was held in collaboration with the PWIAS and is described in the *Moving with Storms* report.



The Sustainability Hub partnered with SDSN Canada and Colleges & Institutes Canada (CICan), to organize and host the **first-ever SDG Week Canada** [🔗](#). Modelled after the UN Global Goals Week, SDG Week Canada brought together 57 academic institutions across Canada to showcase and accelerate action on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including several events related to climate anxiety, education and justice.

CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS - FACULTY

New departmental **Climate Emergency Committees** formed in Forestry, Educational Studies and Sociology in addition to existing committees in Geography, Library, Earth Ocean and Atmospheric Studies and Asian Studies. All are part of the Interdepartmental Climate Emergency Committee (IDCC), an informal group that meets regularly to connect other units and departments and share best practices.

The **Interdepartmental Climate Emergency Committee** deepened engagement and advocacy activities by sharing information and providing peer support for department-level climate work (e.g. green days, business air travel, curriculum), advocating with the Faculty Association, providing information to encourage civic engagement and meeting with the Faculty of Arts Dean's office to offer support for actions to strengthen climate initiatives.

Geography Climate Action Committee started Green Days on the last Friday of every month as a day for working, teaching and learning from home and highlighting climate change in lesson plans while collectively decreasing transit emissions.

A grassroots advocacy group called **Academics Concerned about Academic Travel (ACAT)** formed in the fall of 2022 with the goal of reducing carbon-intensive academic travel.

CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS - STUDENTS

The Sustainability Ambassadors program doubled its capacity to **50 students** divided into five themed climate and sustainability cohorts led by peer mentors.

Throughout the year, the program partnered with 12 organizations and directly engaged over 1,200 individuals.

The **Climate Action Mobilizers (CAM)** [🔗](#) project, a youth-led and community-engaged approach to collective action on the climate emergency, enabled UBC students to co-create innovative climate solutions in collaboration with communities to make real, on-the-ground change. Funded by the Climate Emergency Fund, and delivered by the Centre for Community Engaged Learning, students delivered 18 events and engaged a total of 425 participants.

Student organization **Climate Justice UBC** [🔗](#) campaigned through workshops, rallies and petitions calling on the Alma-Mater Society (AMS) to divest from RBC and reinvest in local communities.

The **UBC Okanagan Community Service Learning Program** offered students opportunities to connect classroom learning with real-life experiences in the community. The focus is on service and the beneficiary is both the student and the organization served. The goal is to educate students about their roles as engaged citizens and leaders in their communities, including on climate action.

2. Increase capacity and resources for engagement

UBC held an open and transparent selection process for a limited number of observer badges for the 27th UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP27). A group of **8 faculty and student delegates participated in COP27** and presented at a COP27 Live! Webinar for community members, and post-event panel co-hosted by UBC Sustainability Hub, SFU Sustainability and the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions.


UBC's Climate emergency website [🔗](#) was revamped by the Sustainability Hub to create more access and visibility of UBC climate initiatives, stories and ways to connect and get involved.


Introduction to Climate Action at UBC course launched. The Sustainability Hub partnered with Campus + Community Planning on an "Introduction to Climate




Image: UBC Food Hub Market courtesy of Kaitlin Wu


Action at UBC" course for students on Canvas, as well as developing and facilitating training for orientation leaders.


A Food Hub Market  to reduce food insecurity was launched in UBC's Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) providing low-cost healthy groceries for the UBC Vancouver campus community, particularly students. Climate change, war and economic shifts are all impacting global agriculture practices and food prices, and this situation is likely to become more challenging in the next few years. The Food Hub aims to be a scalable platform which can link to intersecting areas with the common thread of food (e.g. climate, sustainability, wellbeing).

UBC Connects at Robson Square  funded a total of \$11,800 for climate-focused public engagement programming. UBC Connects at Robson Square is a two-year pilot program that provides funding and staffing support for equitable knowledge exchange between UBC and the public in downtown Vancouver.

The **Climate Emergency Fund** continued to support UBC Vancouver faculty and staff-led programs that mobilized and cultivated learning, research and community engagement efforts in climate action by students.

The **PWIAS Climate and Nature Emergency Catalyst**  program awarded three rounds of grants.

Workplace Sustainability Fund  grants were awarded in 2023 totaling \$3,990 to Sustainability Coordinators in four departments to support unit sustainability projects such as a circular loop lab plastic recycling project, a department-wide sustainability shoreline cleanup, the pilot of a sustainable events project and a project addressing student educational travel and the climate crisis.

UBC has received large amounts of funding for research in a diverse array of disciplines from the provincial **Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions** .



Support community wellbeing in the face of the climate crisis

“A holistic approach to wellbeing must be community-based, intersectional and systemic, with a focus on improving wellbeing through community building and collective action. Both Vancouver and the Okanagan experience a range of climate-related events and hazards every year, and as the frequency and severity of climate-related events increase, we must build community resilience and wellbeing more strongly into risk reduction and emergency preparedness.”

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year, students at UBC have engaged with their peers to prepare coping resources and University staff units have responded with toolkits to encourage greater dialogue about the implications of the climate crisis on our collective wellbeing.

YEAR TWO PROGRESS

1. Build capacity for mental health, resilience and community care strategies

Activate Wellbeing Toolkit launched [↗](#). With employee mental health and wellbeing in mind, the HR Wellbeing units at both UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan, in partnership with the Office of Wellbeing Strategy, launched an online toolkit designed to guide teams through a process of identifying and accelerating action in workplace settings.

New **resources developed by the Climate Hub's Wellbeing Engagement Network** [↗](#), included extreme heat and cold coping resources and five climate wellbeing resources translated into four languages. The network also published the 'Climate Doom to Messy

Hope' theory-to-practice handbook to foster deeper understanding and strategies for how to communicate and navigate magnifying climate change impacts on individual and community mental health and wellbeing.

Dialogue from the Margins, a climate wellbeing planning session [↗](#) to highlight the intersections between IBPOC experiences, climate justice, and personal and community wellbeing, was co-hosted by the UBC Wellness Centre and Sustainability Hub. A Facilitators' Handbook for Student-led Dialogue Events was created as a result.

A **climate anxiety toolkit** [↗](#), developed by UBC graduate student and registered nurse, Natania Abebe, provides new resources for educators and the general public.

New Campus as a Living Lab funding stream for health and wellbeing. Through a competition managed by the Sustainability Hub, and in collaboration with the Office of Wellbeing Strategy, new funding was dedicated to projects that advance ideas and innovation in the areas of health and wellbeing. This initiative highlights UBC's focus on addressing interrelated sustainability and wellbeing issues while fostering health and wellbeing within its campus community.

UBC Okanagan Picnic wellness space. In January 2023, the Student Wellness team at UBC Okanagan launched 'Picnic' in the University Centre Building, a student-focused wellness space designed to enhance wellbeing, improve food skills and build community on campus. This space hosts a variety of free and low-cost programs and services to support students, including food skills workshops, the Students' Union Okanagan Pantry, grab and go breakfast options and tips on safe substance use from the Harm Reduction Team (HaRT).



Image: xʷčičəsəm Garden courtesy of Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC Farm

2. Update emergency preparedness and response plans

UBC's Emergency Preparedness team, managed by Safety & Risk Services, is supporting efforts to incorporate community resilience and wellbeing into emergency response planning. This includes accounting for future climate projections and impacts in mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery strategies and advocating for continued development of emergency potable water access, community refuge space and extreme heat/cold resilience and response measures.

3. Collaborate to expand public discourse around climate change and public health impacts

The Emergency Management office links climate change and public health in its community emergency response, resilience and wellbeing work such as Mass Care & Shelter Program and community recovery planning.

The [Faculty of Medicine](#) is heightening its role in advancing planetary health through research, innovation, education, and partnerships related to climate inter-sections with air pollution, nature prescriptions, healthy aging, respiratory health services for Indigenous communities and more.

UBC Okanagan is striking a **Working Group of Canadian Post Secondary Institutions to develop a framework that can guide how Wellbeing and Accessibility departments actively prepare for, and respond to, extreme weather events** in a manner that safeguards and supports students who utilise Campus Health and Counselling Clinics, Accessibility Services, and Spiritual and Multifaith Services. Once developed, the framework will be shared with all post-secondary institutions in Canada.



Expand climate education opportunities and resources for the UBC community and broader public

“A comprehensive climate education should address knowledge deficits by improving climate literacy, expand climate-themed educational and professional opportunities and experiences, engage with Indigenous scholarship and incorporate principles of wellness for UBC community members and the public. Educators must not only integrate new climate content but empower students to think critically, make moral judgements and engage in social change.”

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year new interdisciplinary learning opportunities created spaces for students to build and share knowledge with peers across faculties. Additional funding has further provided faculty with the means to integrate climate content and pedagogies into existing courses.

YEAR 2 PROGRESS

1. Advance climate education opportunities across disciplines

UBC’s new Climate Studies and Action Certificate completed its pilot year with new interdisciplinary and justice-based classes and action labs for undergraduate students across faculties to address pressing climate issues. With the interdisciplinary nature of the courses — combining students from different degree backgrounds and years and community partners from outside the University — students worked together to put what they learned into action.

UBC Okanagan launched the Bachelor of Sustainability (BSust) program [↗](#) to inspire students to address complex environmental challenges by integrating

knowledge from different academic subjects, with hands-on and community-based learning.

UBC Okanagan hosted a Teach-In on Climate and Justice, an educational forum attended by faculty, students and staff to share ideas and inspiration for researching climate solutions and engaging in community climate action. Evaluation feedback reported that the event supported an increase in participant awareness of climate action currently underway at the campus.

Sauder School of Business has created a new MBC Climate Career Track [↗](#) with new and updated course content. They have also created new courses in Climate Literacy for Business and Climate and ESG Accounting and Reporting for the undergraduate Concentration in Sustainability and Social Impact.

Allard School of Law hosted a variety of climate-related public events and lectures spanning topics on emissions pricing [↗](#), land defenders [↗](#), greenwashing and financial markets [↗](#), the frontiers of green capitalism [↗](#) and more.

Supported by four faculties, UBC Okanagan’s Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies (IGS) degree in Sustainability (MA, MSc, and PhD programs) hosted **thirty-three students** investigating such diverse topics as sustainable food systems, culture and climate change, eco-criticism, industrial ecology and sustainability measurements.

The UBC Okanagan Community Service Learning (CSL) program hosted over 20 students for two film screenings and discussion sessions featuring prominent documentaries focused on climate change. The sessions were aimed at creating a collective consciousness on responding to climate change and mobilizing students to continue to act.



Image: detail of *Coextinction* film poster

Several departments, units, and student organizations hosted film screenings and discussions throughout the year to highlight various aspects of the climate crisis [↗](#) including the Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office (SVPRO), Anthropology department (featuring filmmaker Jan Haaken), and UBC Surf Club.

2. Support climate education pedagogy and curriculum development

A Sustainability Fellows cohort, composed of eight interdisciplinary faculty teams representing eight different faculties, initiated and advanced new sustainability education projects including curriculum projects around climate topics such as forest-fire weather, citizen engagement, communications and immersive media. Faculty were supported with \$86,612 of grants and fellowships from the Sustainability Hub. Examples of courses include:

- Sustainability in Global Health: Developing an Interdisciplinary Course on the Global Health Policy and Systems
- Forest-fire Weather and Climate, An Element of Applied Meteorology and Sustainability
- Climate Communications: Developing a Transdisciplinary Approach to Understanding and Engaging the Social Complexity of Climate Action

Funded by the Sustainability Hub, **Seven Climate Education Grants** totaling \$32,239 supported climate change curriculum projects from seven different faculties on topics ranging from the anthropology of electronic waste to witchcraft and ecological events to climate education in occupational therapy. Examples of courses include:

- The anthropology of electronic waste
- Climate analysis in chemical, biological and environmental engineering capstone courses
- Climate change education in the Occupational Therapy program

A UBC Okanagan Curricular and Teaching Innovation Grant was awarded to Dr. Natalie Forssman and Dr. Astrida Neimanis to complete a multi-year project “Social and Digital Infrastructures for Place-Based Pedagogical Collaboration” to advance UBC Okanagan’s Climate Action Plan’s equity considerations.

1,700 students received climate education through the Climate Hub and Sustainability Hub’s Climate Teaching Connector [↗](#).

The ALT-2040 Fund supported UBC Okanagan faculty to develop innovative teaching and learning transformations with climate-related educational opportunities [↗](#) added as a priority focus area in 2023.



UBC Medical Students for Climate Action [↗](#) collaborated to develop climate action learning modules that are now part of the curriculum at UBC's Faculty of Medicine.

The Sustainability Hub brought together faculty members to share their learnings at the **CTLT Spring and Winter Institutes** with sessions on "Health, Equity and Climate Change in the Classroom" and "Integrating Sustainability and Climate Change Content in your Course" reaching over 60 faculty members.

Environmental Humanities Field Methods — Accessibility and Inclusion in Place-Based Pedagogies. Supported by the Aspire-2040 Learning Transformations Fund, this new state-of-the-art pilot course is drawing on emergent practices to address equity, diversity and access as key dimensions of sustainability.

3. Expand climate education and professional development for UBC community members and UBC partners

A growing number of climate and sustainability-related non-credit micro-credentials are now offered by UBC to off-campus audiences by:

- Forestry [↗](#), on topics like Climate Vulnerability and Adaptation, Forest Carbon Management, and Environmental Footprints of Organizations. A separate stream of forestry micro certificates focuses on mass timber including a credential on zero carbon building solutions.
- Land and Food Systems [↗](#) on environmental metrics.
- Allard School of Law [↗](#) on mining law and sustainability.
- Sauder School of Business [↗](#) in a number of business excellence areas.

New micro-credentials at UBC Okanagan [↗](#) provide learners with the knowledge and skills needed to increase awareness and action on sustainability in the workforce, including:

- Circular Economy: Principles and Applied Methods
- Wetland Delineation and Assessment
- Wildland Fire Ecology and Management

Pacific Museum of Earth launched a new online escape room video game called **Climate Hero** to educate and inspire the next generation of scientists, policymakers, and global citizens.

The Sustainability Hub launched the new **Catalyst Program with more than 115 UBC community members enrolled in the pilot year** to offer recognition and validation in existing and emerging sustainability and climate leadership experiences on- and off-campus.

UBC Climate Hub's Youth Climate Ambassadors Project (YCAP) delivered 48 workshops to over 945 **students in 20 local schools and alongside six community partners**. At Byng Secondary, YCAP workshops became part of a new curriculum for all Career 8 students. Climate Hub also partnered with Be the Change Earth Alliance and the Canadian Red Cross to reimagine the YCAP peer-to-peer workshop model to develop a Climate Anxiety Resilience Education (CARE) workshop to support youth and students in central BC impacted by the 2017 wildfires.

The Sustainability Hub participated in and facilitated **educational workshops on the topics of Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Pedagogy for K-12 educators** at the Vancouver School Board's Professional Development Day and through UBC's Professional Development and Community Engagement outreach programs.

The **University Climate Change Coalition (UC3)** hosted a public panel event called "The Race to Zero: Universities Working to Catalyze Climate Action" that featured representatives from UBC, University of Toronto, Tecnológico de Monterrey and University of Arizona. This was part of the UC3 Summit that hosted representatives from 13 Northern American universities at lead university UBC.

Embark Sustainability Society and UBC Climate Hub hosted a Sustainability Career Night [↗](#) showcasing storytellers and professional climate justice communicators.



Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to tackle the climate emergency

“UBC’s external engagements and partnerships are a critical component of its capacity to accelerate the global shift towards a 1.5°C-aligned future. To leverage these engagements effectively, UBC can support new initiatives and innovations of UBC community members and scale up those that already demonstrate success. Most importantly, UBC’s external engagements cannot be effective without recognizing the importance of active, ethical partnerships with Indigenous, Black, POC and marginalized communities.”

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

This year the expansion of the Campus as a Living Lab program at UBC Vancouver and Okanagan campuses offered more opportunities for staff and faculty to collaborate with partners on innovative projects. Several of the recommendations under this strategic priority have not been advanced yet in the first two years of the CETF report’s implementation, due to the lack of an internal champion, lack of resources or development of alternative ways of addressing the idea behind the recommendation.

YEAR 2 PROGRESS

1. Coordinate a climate knowledge to action central contact

Execution of this recommendation remains outstanding.

2. Scale up Living Lab research collaborations with diverse partners beyond campus

Campus as a Living Lab (CLL) expanded at both UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan to respond to climate change and biodiversity crises by collaborating between researchers, students, staff and external partners to

incubate, test and demonstrate innovative research ideas in a real-world setting, embedded on campus lands or local communities.

UBC Vancouver held its third annual Fund Competition

and distributed awards totalling up to \$200,000 to six new projects, with an additional \$50,000 in partnership with UBC Wellbeing to provide seed funding for projects focused on intersections between sustainability/climate and health/wellbeing. Climate projects funded include “Creating an inclusive, climate and COVID-resilient outdoor learning space @ UBC” and “Campus Trees, Microbes and Insects: A database for understanding how tree traits mitigate climate change and enhance biodiversity.”

UBC Okanagan established a Campus as a Living Lab Steering Committee and launched its first Campus as a Living Lab competition, awarding \$100,000 in seed funding including a project between the School of Engineering and Construction Management Office to make the concrete structures on campus more sustainable and durable.

The Sustainability Hub launched a new **Campus Living Lab website** to profile the diverse array of Living Labs projects, collaborators and programs across the University.

3. Community Councils – expand and deepen external engagements

Execution of this recommendation remains outstanding.

4. Develop a strategic partnership framework

Execution of this recommendation remains outstanding as far as a framework for strategic partnerships. However, there are numerous partnerships involving governments, corporations, and community groups that have been developed in the past year of note.



Image: courtesy of Adhitya Andanu via Pexels

Below are just a few select examples:

- A key recommendation of the UBC Okanagan Transportation Plan, the ProPass program was developed in 2022 through a partnership between UBC Okanagan, the City of Kelowna and BC Transit. Designed to provide better **access to transit passes for UBC Okanagan faculty and staff**, the program's discount rate increased from 15% to 50%, and has provided 511 four-month passes to faculty and staff so far.
- **UBC's Air Travel Community of Practice addresses emissions** [🔗](#). Initiated by the Library #ClimateAction Team (L#CAT), this group continued to deepen relationships and knowledge exchange between several universities across Canada to address institutional change to reduce academic travel.
- UBC Procurement is working with top UBC vendors, offering **free Board and Executive training around sustainability and climate disclosure**. Provided by the UBC/York University Canada Climate Law Initiative.
- **BC Pulp and Paper BioAlliance** – Western Economic Diversification Canada funding of \$2.38M supported an academic-government-industry consortium between UBC, FPInnovations, BC provincial government and all BC pulp and paper companies for research and testing of clean technologies that generate renewable natural gas (RNG) from forest residues. Managed in collaboration with the UBC BioProducts Institute and UBC Faculty of Applied Science.
- **BC Sustainable Marine, Aviation, Rail & Trucking (BC-SMART) Consortium** — a government-academic-industry consortium to enable research, production and use of low carbon intensity fuels for long-distance transport. The team includes BC government, academic researchers and 16 consortium members from the oil and long-distance transportation business sectors, BC government and academia and helps deliver the BC government's CleanBC GHG emission targets.
- **UBC Okanagan's Clean Tech Hub, which launched in November 2022**, received an additional \$1.04-million in funding from the Pacific Economic Development Agency of Canada for circular economy research.



Accelerate emissions reductions at UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan in response to the Climate Emergency: Climate Action Plan 2030

CAP 2030 TARGETS

UBC Vancouver

By 2030: 85% reduction in campus operations emissions

By 2030: 45% collective reduction in emissions from extended impact sources

By 2035: Achieve a 100% reduction in operational greenhouse gas emission

UBC Okanagan

By 2030: 65% reduction in campus operations emissions

By 2030: 45% collective reduction in emissions from extended impact sources

By 2050: Achieve a net-positive performance in operational energy and carbon

"Taking strong action to reduce emissions from UBC's operations across its two campuses is critical to demonstrate genuine climate leadership. The university has a history of ambitious actions... and [its] performance has received international acclaim. With UBC's adoption of the Climate Emergency Declaration, it's become clear that even more needs to be done, leading to the establishment of the Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP2030) process at both campuses."

- 2021 Climate Emergency Task Force report

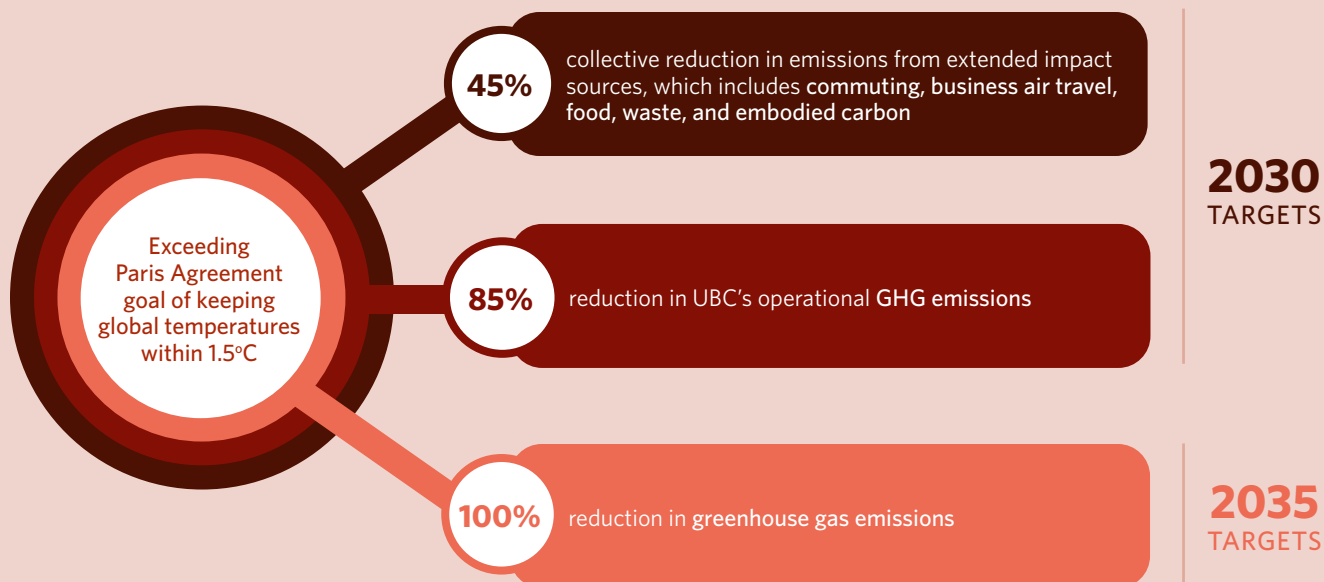
Through UBC Vancouver's Climate Action Plan 2030 and the Okanagan's Climate Action Plan 2030, the University has committed to an accelerated path to net zero emissions for buildings and energy supply, and set targets for significant emissions reductions in the areas of commuting, food, business air travel, waste and materials, and embodied carbon.

In addition, UBC Vancouver's Campus Vision 2050, the Housing Action Plan and draft amended Land Use Plan are evolving guides for how the campus will grow and evolve over the next 30 years. These plans are designed to support the academic mission and community, campus residents and Musqueam needs, while reducing carbon emissions, protecting and enriching campus ecology and biodiversity, and creating a resilient and inspiring place for the community to thrive.

For more detailed information on campus emissions reductions, see the UBC Vancouver [Climate Action Plan 2030 website](#), the UBC Okanagan [Climate Action Plan 2030 website](#), the [Climate Change Accountability Report \(CCAR\)](#), and [Campus Vision 2050](#).



CAP2030 TARGETS



[Climate Action Plan](#)

YEAR 2 PROGRESS

1. Climate Action Plan 2030 efforts at both campuses aim to achieve the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit on global temperature increases

UBC has approved CAP2030 plans for both campuses, set ambitious emissions targets, and is charting a path to achieve them. The plans also target significant emissions reductions for extended impact areas — aligning with, and in some cases surpassing, the reductions required to achieve the UNFCCC's Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts severe differences between a

1.5°C and a 2°C warmer world including more extreme heat events, more wildfires, less Arctic sea ice, more sea level rise, more species loss and more declines in coral reefs and fisheries.

2. Expansion of BRDF, progress towards goal that UBC Vancouver District Energy System (DES) should be 100% low carbon energy by 2030

This year UBC Vancouver significantly expanded the Bioenergy Research and Demonstration Facility (BRDF). As a result, UBC's Vancouver campus now produces 40% fewer GHG emissions than it did in 2007, while our institutional floorspace increased by 27% during the same period.



Image: courtesy of UBC Brand and Marketing

The expansion features a new boiler, which once fully commissioned will triple the capacity of the biomass facility, using chipped, clean wood waste from construction, furniture manufacturing and municipal trimmings and clearing operations to provide two-thirds of the campus thermal power through the Academic District Energy System.


3. Development of Zero Emission Fleet policy underway

A Zero Emission Fleet policy is in development as part of CAP2030 implementation. UBC procures new vehicles and equipment that are zero emissions where feasible. Currently, 7% of UBC fleet are electric vehicles. The UBC Parking unit, whose traffic compliance vehicles annually have the greatest mileage on campus, have already transitioned their fleet to 100% zero emission vehicles (ZEVs).



4. Plans underway to significantly reduce Scope 3 emissions (including emissions from air travel, food, commuting, and embodied emissions associated with buildings) by 45-50% by 2030

UBC has committed to explicit targets in CAP2030 for both campuses to reduce extended impact emissions by 45% below 2010 levels by 2030. Some of the current actions in progress to achieve these reductions are highlighted as follows.

AIR TRAVEL

- A new [Sustainable Business Air Travel Program](#)  was launched with the aim to reduce discretionary business air travel emissions. Actions so far include outreach and engagement activities, and new IT and accounting systems to more accurately track air travel related GHG emissions.

FOOD

- The [Climate-Friendly Food Label initiative](#)  is providing an opportunity for the campus community to make informed purchasing decisions that can promote a climate-friendly food system.
- Developing a [Food System Resilience & Climate Action strategy](#)  to advance climate-friendly foods and introduce updated Climate Friendly Food System Procurement Guidelines for campus food providers. These guidelines will prioritize GHG emissions reduction, promote biodiverse and resilient food systems, and foster support for just, sovereign and resilient communities. This is the first time any Canadian university has taken on a project of this scale, positioning UBC as a model of how other universities can mobilize to address climate action through food systems.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY IX

COMMUTING

- Planning for the proposed [Millennium Line UBC SkyTrain Extension](#) [↗](#), with continued regional and senior government support, could significantly reducing transit related GHG emissions from commuting to campus.
- A new sustainable transportation program — “Commute Smart UBC” — is aimed at encouraging the university community to try carpooling, E-bikes, and cycling, including Go by Bike Week events at both campuses.
- Mode-shift, a UBC Okanagan commuting event, increased awareness of electric bike and scooter programs, a bike rental and service program, and faculty and student programs that offer substantial discounts on transit.

WASTE

- At UBC Vancouver, an updated [Zero Waste Action Plan](#) [↗](#) was completed with quick start actions already underway. The plan applies a circular economy lens to reduce waste and lifecycle GHG emissions associated with waste and materials.
- The “reuse-it” online platform for exchanging and reusing goods and equipment such as furniture and monitors was revamped with a new, more powerful interface.
- The Amber Glass Recycling Program was expanded to the Life Sciences Centre, the Chemistry complex, Chemical and Biological Engineering, and Aquatic Ecosystems Research Lab.
- Glove recycling was promoted to 17 new labs, diverting 48,700 gloves and the equivalent of 146.1 kilograms of waste from landfills in 2022.
- At UBC Okanagan, [additional waste reduction](#) [↗](#) events promoted reuse and recycling behaviours to hundreds of participants.

EMBODIED CARBON

- In 2023, UBC will complete a policy pathway to [reduce embodied carbon in new buildings by 50%](#) [↗](#) by 2030.

- Construction for the UBC Gateway building project targets both Zero Carbon Building Standard and LEED gold certification, including a 20% reduction in embodied carbon.
- At UBC Okanagan, a Whole Building Lifecycle Analysis was completed including a 10% embodied carbon reduction target for the new [xəl sic snpəxnwixʷtn](#) building.

5. Implement an internal carbon price in decision-making for energy supply projects, energy conservation projects, building renewals, and infrastructure planning

UBC is now one of the first universities in Canada to implement an [internal carbon price](#) [↗](#) (\$250/tCO₂e) to help guide investment decisions to reach our ambitious carbon reduction targets. This provides a mechanism to assess the total financial life-cycle costs and the risks of climate change associated with carbon emissions.

6. The UBC Okanagan campus is rapidly advancing a strategy to identify decarbonization pathways and targets for its low carbon district energy supply system, alongside a strategic energy management plan for existing buildings

UBC Okanagan’s Low Carbon Energy Strategy guides future low carbon district energy system development and investments, and the [Strategic Energy Management Plan \(SEMP\)](#) [↗](#) provides a suite of demand-side management approaches. Projects implemented through the SEMP in 2022 are projected to reduce energy and emissions by 942,000 kWh, 4,000 GJ, and 210 tCO₂e per year.

Based on current performance at UBC’s Okanagan campus, these and other measures have so far achieved a 15% reduction in absolute GHG emissions vs. 2013, simultaneous with a 23% rise in floorspace.

7. Neighbourhood Climate Action Plan (NCAP)

Last spring, UBC launched a Neighbourhood Climate Action Plan process to update the existing Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP). NCAP will provide policy directions, targets and actions in key climate areas including buildings, transportation and mobility, waste and materials, neighbourhood infrastructure, ecology, and climate emergency prepared-ness, with specific considerations to meet the unique conditions and needs of the university neighbourhoods.

CONCLUSION

UBC is faced with a stark reality as it grapples with the impacts of climate change in British Columbia. We are living with the consequences: warmer winters leading to reduced snowfall, increased frequency of extreme droughts, a growing pest problem, flooding along the Fraser River due to heavy rain and snowmelt and a rise in extreme heat events, disproportionately impacting all vulnerable people. Evacuation of the Okanagan campus due to wildfire this summer was truly frightening, compounded by the knowledge that wildfires are set to increase in the coming years

As public institutions, universities like UBC bear a significant responsibility. They are entrusted by the public to lead by example and drive solutions to complex issues like climate change.

UBC's commitment to implementing the Climate Emergency Task Force recommendations, and make net-zero operational emissions by 2035 a reality, serves as a critical response to the challenge of the era of 'global boiling'. It's not just about ethics; it's about fulfilling a duty to the community by setting a standard for sustainability and resilience.

UBC's commitment to climate justice creates a ripple effect beyond the campus. The commitment translates into educating and raising awareness about climate issues, leading to a better-informed and engaged community and inspiring student activism and leadership. By supporting research and innovation in climate justice, the University contributes to equitable solutions and influences policies at local and global levels.

The university's dedication to climate justice is an example of what it means to be a leader. By prioritizing social and environmental justice, not only on campus but in society at large, UBC can fully realize its purpose: to advance a sustainable and just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world.

COVER IMAGE

Protest at COP27, Oliver Kornblihtt / Mídia NINJA



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