



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

Sustainability Hub

*Catalyzing change for a just
and sustainable world.*



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

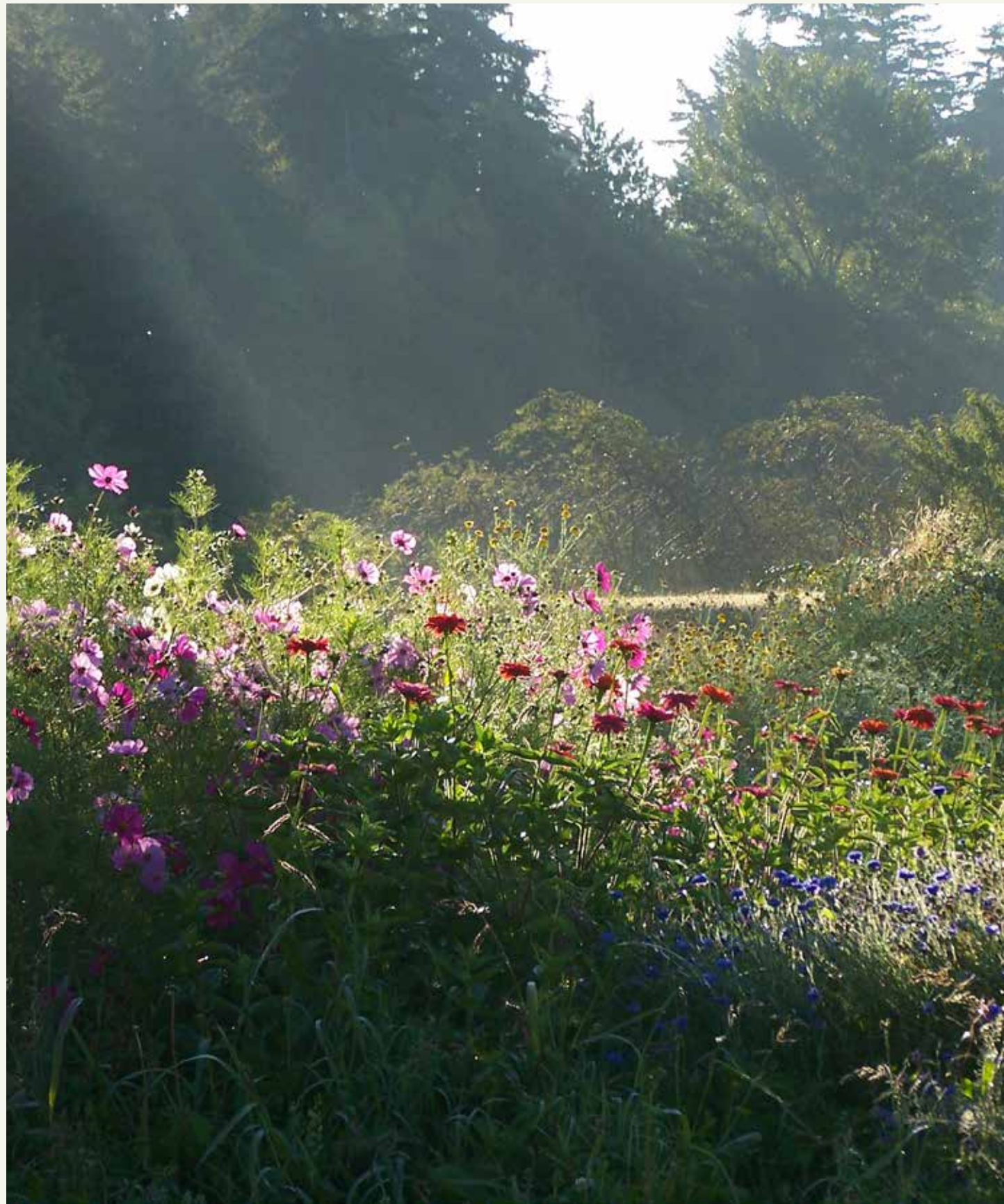


Image courtesy of [UBC Farm](#)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Sustainability Hub office is located at the UBC Point Grey campus situated within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the $x^w m \theta k^w \dot{y} \dot{a} m$ (Musqueam). As part of the larger UBC community, we are guests and settlers on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the $x^w m \theta k^w \dot{y} \dot{a} m$ (Musqueam), $S k \dot{w} x w \dot{u} 7 m e s h$ (Squamish), $S e l \dot{i} l^w i t u l h$ (Tsleil-Waututh) and $S y i l x$ (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 environmental protection and 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. We will continue building on existing partnerships with our host Nations through mutual respect and reciprocity.

Image courtesy of [UBC Brand and Marketing](#)

Introduction

This plan signals the next phase for the UBC Sustainability Initiative: meeting the escalating urgency of a planet at risk through new leadership and new responsibilities. The need for even more action from all sectors is clear from the events of this past year.

In 2021 British Columbia experienced a deadly heat dome, devastating forest fires, and destructive floods. Numerous residents were seriously impacted and, for many, these events made climate change frighteningly real for the first time. The most vulnerable were Indigenous peoples, elderly people, people with disabilities, immigrants, precariously housed and low-income people, a searing illustration of climate injustice. Nature suffered too. More than a billion sea creatures perished due to the heat. The need to prepare for unstoppable climate impacts and mobilize to limit global warming became even clearer.

Exacerbated by the escalating biodiversity crisis and mounting wasteful production and consumption, community resilience is tested by more and more extreme weather events that are the harbinger of climate change. Compounding the crisis of a deteriorating planet are the troubling and persistent inequities in society. The most impacted people did the least to cause many of the problems – in general, their emissions and

ecological footprints are fractions of those of the average British Columbian.

As a public university, UBC is working to respond to these urgent and inter-linked challenges. The 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration as well as the many sustainability plans adopted by UBC over the past several decades shows this resolve. Our unit is ready to continue the hard work required to propel transformative change.

With our new plan comes a new name. The UBC Sustainability Initiative was created in 2009. Today we are no longer an initiative, we are an integral member of the university community as reflected by our new name – **Sustainability Hub**.

The Sustainability Hub is a hub of action. We build collaborative communities, attract diverse individuals with heterogeneous knowledge, and facilitate creativity and collaboration in physical and digital spaces.¹

By inspiring students, faculty, staff and community members to be agents of change, and by experimenting with collaborative solutions, we will continue

the best practices that made UBC a sustainability leader.

Education is paramount. We support and enable the integration of sustainability into courses and credentials to ensure that all students at UBC have access to sustainability education.

Experiential sustainability education is at the forefront of our programs such as Sustainability Ambassadors and the Student Sustainability Council for undergraduates, the Sustainability Scholars Program for graduate students, and the dozens of work-learn opportunities we provide throughout the year.

Our programs are built on an evidence base. Effective climate change education builds students' skills and agency to take action, is locally relevant, tied to justice, builds empathy with the environment and involves multiple domains of knowledge, including Indigenous, place-based, and intergenerational knowledge.² Experts recommend student-centred education to develop graduates as change agents for the ecological crisis, and pedagogical approaches such as experiential learning

¹ Toivonen, Tuukka, and Nicolas Friederici. "Time to define what a "hub" really is." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (2015).

² Kwauk, Christina, and Rebecca Winthrop. "Unleashing the Creativity of Teachers and Students to Combat Climate Change: An Opportunity for Global Leadership." *Brookings Institution* 26 (2021).

so students can respond to climate change as a “real-world” problem.³

As the academic support partner for campus operational sustainability, we strive to advance UBC’s academic mission, serve as a bridge between the academy and campus operations, and amplify and disseminate the sustainability achievements of faculty, students and staff to increase their impact.

We work closely with UBC Campus + Community Planning and Infrastructure Development to transform our campuses into greener, healthier places. Using the campus as a living lab is an integral concept that permeates UBC. One of our key roles is to connect faculty to operational staff through the Campus as a Living Lab program. With peer units such as UBC Wellbeing, the Equity and Inclusion Office, the Indigenous Research Support Initiative, the Centre for Community Engaged Learning, the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology and many others, we collaborate on the connected priorities laid out in UBC’s overall strategic plan. Working together, we achieve much more than any single unit.

With this new strategic plan, the Sustainability Hub will focus on four key themes — climate, biodiversity, resilient communities, and the circular economy — and pursue the following new directions:

- Significantly increase student, faculty, staff, and community participation in our programs.

- Make sustainability education resources more easily available.
- Elevate the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) as a magnet and hub for sustainability events and community-building.
- Convene and coordinate work to advance the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Task Force and embed climate justice throughout the university.
- Manage the Campus as a Living Lab program.
- Organize new public education and engagement events like our Climate Justice series.
- Amplify UBC’s sustainability achievements with online dashboards and more storytelling, in addition to publishing the Annual Sustainability Report.
- Increase transparency with additional reporting that holds the university accountable for its sustainability and climate action commitments.
- Contribute to the implementation of UBC’s Indigenous Strategic Plan, through our work on sustainability and climate change, and in collaboration with other units.
- Support work on the Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP 2030) emission reduction targets.
- Engage with a broader and more diverse set of on and off campus partners, including governments, NGOs, Indigenous groups, and university networks.

Ambitious? Yes.

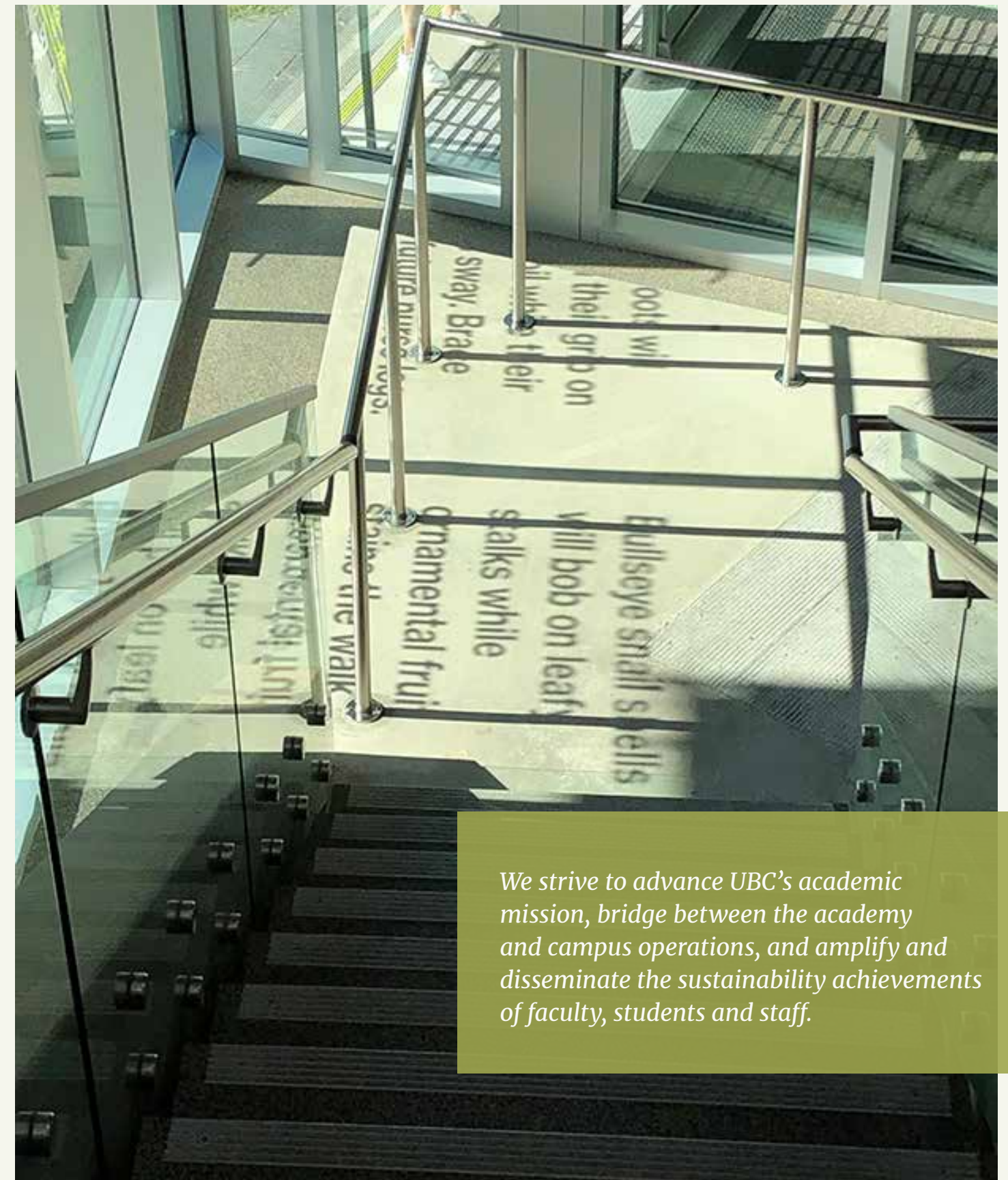
The scale of the challenge ahead is immense. The Sustainability Hub is ready to tackle environmental problems as well as their intersection with inequality and injustice. UBC’s response to the climate emergency, its 20 Year Sustainability Strategy and many related plans will steer our work. The UN Sustainable Development Goals provide a road map for us and for the world. We will keep the principle of intergenerational equity front and centre as we work with students, the next generation of leaders.

As the first Senior Director and Academic Director of the Sustainability Hub, we started our roles in 2020 with a mandate to reframe the purpose of the unit and develop this strategic plan. We are motivated to produce tangible societal benefits and enthusiastic to work for a fairer and more sustainable future that leaves no-one behind.



Linda Nowlan (Senior Director) and Tara Ivanochko (Academic Director)

³ Thew, H, Graves, C, Reay, D, Smith, S, Petersen, K, Bomberg, E, Boxley, S, Causley, J, Congreve, A, Cross, I, Dunk, R, Dunlop, L, Facer, K, Gamage, KAA, Greenhalgh, C, Greig, AQ, Kiamba, L, Kinakh, V, Kioupi, V, Klapper, R, Kurul, E, Lee, M, Marshall-Cook, J, McGivern, A, Mork, J, Nijman, V, O'Brien, J, Preist, C, Price, E, Samangoeei, M, Schrod, F, Sharmina, M, Toney, J, Walsh, C, Walsh, T, Wood, R, Wood, P & Worsfold, N 2021 'Mainstreaming Climate Change Education in UK Higher Education Institutions' COP26 Universities Network. <https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/Media_814664_smxx.pdf>



We strive to advance UBC’s academic mission, bridge between the academy and campus operations, and amplify and disseminate the sustainability achievements of faculty, students and staff.

Image: Forecast (part of Outdoor Art program at UBC, by artist Holly Schmidt) courtesy of Tim Herron

Image courtesy of [Sustainability Hub](#)

Developing the Plan

Our five-year strategic plan aligns the Sustainability Hub with the core areas outlined in UBC's overall strategic plan: Shaping UBC's Next Century.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

RESEARCH EXCELLENCE

LOCAL AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Our plan is designed to complement the overall UBC strategic plan, and integrate with the 20 Year Sustainability Strategy, Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP), Inclusion Action Plan (IAP), Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP 2030) and others.

We started strategic planning in the fall of 2020. First, we looked at peer institutions across North America, sought input from partners on and off campus, and reviewed the literature on university departments and sustainability. We did in-depth reviews of all program areas. We drew on the many dimensions of staff expertise, and found synergies between our specialists in transformational pedagogy, adult learning, communications, architecture, engineering, economics, resource management, urban planning, environmental law, atmospheric science, landscape architecture, and literature.

Inspiration and guidance came from different corners of UBC. We are closely involved in CAP 2030 and will weave select implementation priorities into our plan as they develop. A vital part of developing the plan was completing the ISP Self-Assessment which offered us a hopeful, actionable way to intertwine ideas about Indigenous justice with the climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis. We wove selected ISP actions directly into our plan's goals and actions.

We held information sessions with close partners on campus through a series of one-on-one meetings. We also invited a wide range of faculty and staff to provide input via two open 'road show' sessions. We were gratified by the positive response, and the revised plan was significantly improved by

the input. We validated key milestones with an Advisory Group of four professors, two senior executives, and two students:

- SARA HARRIS, Associate Dean, Academic Faculty of Science
- KATHRYN HARRISON, Professor of Political Science
- MAGGIE LOW, Assistant Professor, Indigenous Community Planning at the School of Community and Regional Planning
- TEMITOPE ONIFADE, graduate student, Peter A. Allard School of Law
- MOURA QUAYLE, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Academic Affairs
- NAVIN RAMANKUTTY, Professor of Global Food Security and Sustainability
- DAVID SHORTHOUSE, Executive Director Academic Initiatives, Office of the Provost and Vice-President Academic
- GEORGIA YEE, undergraduate student, Faculty of Science

We are very grateful for the time they devoted to assisting us.

We also deeply value and appreciate the time and guidance received from our UBC Strategy and Decision Support facilitators, Jennifer Barrow, Margarita Fullerton and Lesley Charter-Smith.

A just and sustainable world.

Inspiring people to act upon the planet’s most urgent challenges through UBC’s academic and operational sustainability leadership.

LEAD AND ADVOCATE • SERVE AND SUPPORT





Image courtesy of [Sustainability Hub](#)

VISION

A just and sustainable world.

MISSION

Inspiring people to act on the planet's most urgent challenges through UBC's academic and operational sustainability leadership.

MANDATE

Lead and Advocate

- Implement key initiatives to advance UBC as a leader in sustainability and climate action.
- Hold UBC accountable for the continued advancement of its climate and sustainability commitments.
- Challenge the status quo by using the power of academic leadership, collective action, science, and dialogue to address the most urgent sustainability problems.

Serve and Support

- Build strong reciprocal relationships to answer sustainability needs and interests at UBC and beyond.
- Equip agents of change with the knowledge, resources, and connections they need to achieve greater impact.
- Ensure our local and global communities have access to curated knowledge, resources, partnerships, and activities.
- Convene and build strong networks to accelerate action in sustainability at all levels.



Image courtesy of [UBC Brand and Marketing](#)

Values

Justice is at the top of the list of our values, followed by the shared values of UBC's overall strategic plan.

We believe that sustainability and justice go hand in hand. These universal values are at the heart of the UN 2030 *Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be implemented in accordance with international human rights law and meant to eliminate gender inequalities and all forms of discrimination and leave no one behind.

We seek climate justice. Addressing the climate emergency requires placing people and communities disproportionately impacted by climate change at the heart of solutions: Indigenous peoples, immigrants, youth, elderly people, people with disabilities, and people living in poverty. To be equitable and just, these voices need to be at the forefront of developing climate solutions. Through our work we aim to advance climate justice, environmental justice and social justice.

JUSTICE ▪ We acknowledge the inequities that exist in the world and the role that our actions can contribute to reframing the dominant narrative within climate action. We are guided by global and national agreements on climate, biodiversity, sustainable development and human rights.

EXCELLENCE ▪ We demonstrate excellence by setting high standards for ourselves while always striving for continuous improvement, ensuring high quality sustainability-related services, programming, and collaborations.

INTEGRITY ▪ Our decisions and actions are grounded in transparency, honesty, and integrity. Our services, programming, and opportunities are offered equitably and in a manner that aligns with the best interests of the UBC community.

RESPECT ▪ We respect each other and all elements of the natural world that sustain us. We value different perspectives, experiences, traditions, and ideas and we thoughtfully incorporate them in our work.

ACCOUNTABILITY ▪ As a part of an institution with great power, influence and privilege, we recognize that our obligations extend beyond the campus community. We hold ourselves accountable to our commitments to create more just and sustainable systems, and to social and environmental responsibility.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM ▪ The freedom to express ideas without the risk of censure is central to academic life at UBC. We believe it is our responsibility to hold difficult conversations about core issues to make progress towards a just and sustainable future.

Themes

These four urgent challenges are the main issues the Sustainability Hub will work to address during the next five years, together with the UBC community.

As set out in this plan's goals and actions, our ultimate aim is to reduce climate change, reverse biodiversity loss, transform to a circular economy and create more resilient communities.

CLIMATE ▪ Climate change is having devastating impacts on people and all life on earth. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres called the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) “a code red for humanity”, and the most vulnerable are most impacted.⁴ The Sustainability Hub has the responsibility to convene and coordinate work on the recommendations of UBC's Climate Emergency Task Force Report. We also support the implementation of UBC's Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP 2030), by assisting with the academic interface for operations.

BIODIVERSITY ▪ Unprecedented numbers of species are going extinct annually as a result of the combined pressures of habitat destruction, overharvesting, climate change, pollution, and invasive species. The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) report highlights that climate change and biodiversity loss are mutually reinforcing processes that must be considered and tackled simultaneously.⁵ We will coordinate interdisciplinary engagement to address regional biodiversity loss, and work with faculty, staff and students on biodiversity protection on and off campus.

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES ▪ As the last few years have demonstrated, our communities, both urban and rural, are facing challenges from multiple fronts, including climate change, economic shifts, and social inequities. Natural disasters like forest fires and floods, health emergencies like the global pandemic and opioid crises, economic problems such as housing affordability, are compounded by social inequality and racial and ethnic discrimination. The Sustainability Hub works with UBC groups and local partners to build skills and knowledge, share learning and experiences, and ultimately improve the resiliency of our communities.

CIRCULAR ECONOMIES ▪ The world is drowning in waste caused by a consumer society, overconsumption and products destined for disposal, not repair or reuse. The goal of the circular economy is to design products to last and eliminate waste, with tremendous benefits for local economies, resilient communities, biodiversity and climate. Creating a circular economy for five key sectors — cement, aluminum, steel, plastics and food — could cut CO₂ emissions by 3.7 billion tons in 2050, equivalent to eliminating current emissions from all forms of transport.⁶ The Sustainability Hub is assisting with the implementation of UBC's Zero Waste Action Plan, Climate Action Plan 2030 (CAP 2030), and Green Building Action Plan to realize a whole lifecycle approach to our campus buildings.

⁴ Secretary-General's Statement on the IPCC Working Group 1 Report on the Physical Science Basis of the Sixth Assessment, (UN: New York) Aug. 9, 2021 <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/secretary-generals-statement-the-ipcc-working-group-1-report-the-physical-science-basis-of-the-sixth-assessment>

⁵ IPBES (2019): Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany.

⁶ World Resources Institute, How to Build a Circular Economy August 6, 2020, David McGinty WRI.

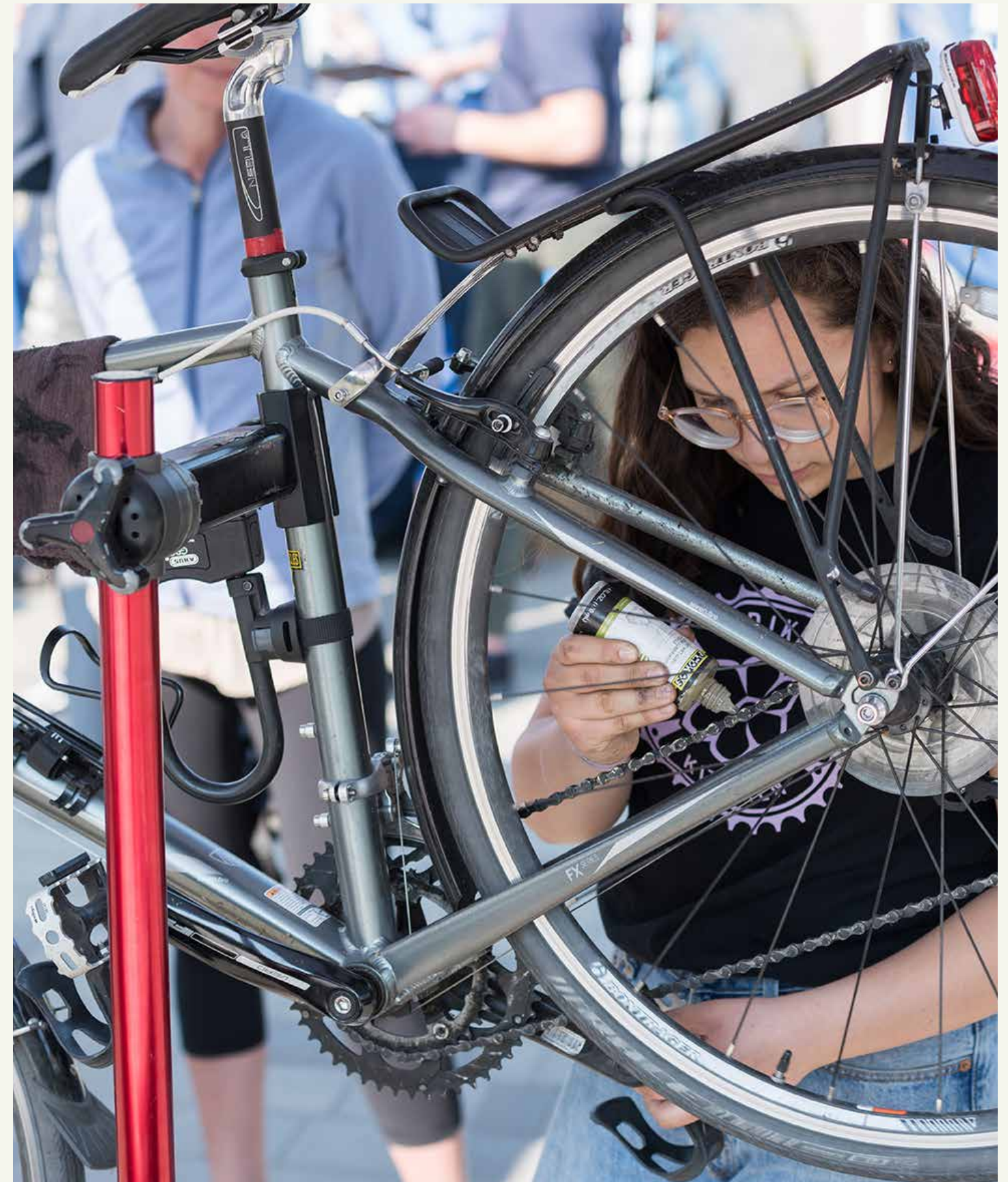


Image courtesy of [UBC Brand and Marketing](#)

People and Places

Making sustainability a core part of the UBC identity

We are a university and regional hub for sustainability, catalyzing connections and serving communities on and off campus. Our equitable, inclusive, and diverse team is committed to transformative change, protecting the environment, climate justice and to enriching the UBC campus landscape with a stronger Indigenous presence. In our home – the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability – we create an inspiring and welcoming space for climate action/climate emergency response and sustainability.

GOAL (1) Promote CIRS as a welcoming, diverse, and accessible centre which fosters academic, artistic, and social engagement on sustainability and wellbeing.

ACTIONS

- Re-establish the CIRS engagement committee to promote community among tenants and realize the vision of CIRS becoming a sustainability hub on campus.
- Develop and offer public programming at CIRS with a wide variety of partners.
- Organize events such as tours, conferences, roundtables, lectures, workshops and webinars to promote UBC’s sustainability achievements and share experiences.

GOAL (2) Catalyze and support the development of sustainability-focused policy and practice at UBC, related to campus operations and institutional commitments.

ACTIONS

- Assist UBC operational units to achieve greater sustainability impacts by facilitating collaborations with faculty, students and off campus partners.

- Facilitate the execution of sustainability-focused ‘living lab’ projects on campus that address operational needs while also advancing opportunities for academic learning and research excellence.
- Provide strategic input, communications and engagement support to guide UBC institutional policies, plans and practices on sustainability.
- Promote sustainability at new UBC campus locations.
- Develop and disseminate resources and knowledge that supports sustainable action by campus stakeholders.

GOAL (3) As part of UBC’s Indigenous Strategic Plan commitment, transform CIRS into a place that makes the generational connections of Indigenous peoples to UBC visible and creates space and opportunities for Indigenous cultural experts and knowledge holders to work, teach and promote their expertise and enhance the presence of Indigenous peoples, culture and history.

- Develop an Indigenous Artist in Residence plan, including the option of community art workshops.
- Prioritize Indigenous representation in our events and develop collaborative events with Indigenous students, faculty and staff on campus.

- Identify opportunities to collaborate with other UBC units to incorporate Indigenous Strategic Plan goals into our work on climate change, biodiversity, resilient communities and the circular economy.
- Develop an Indigenous procurement policy for the Sustainability Hub.

GOAL (4) Build understanding and capacity to implement principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) in the Sustainability Hub’s culture, policies, and work.

ACTIONS

- Task the JEDI committee to develop policy and program recommendations, and lead the coordination of the implementation of the Inclusion Action Plan within our unit.
- Build JEDI goals and activities into all our programs and workplans, and include them in evaluation and metrics to measure success.
- Invite student staff into collective JEDI learning and unlearning opportunities.

GOAL (5) Regularly review and improve our organizational structure, governance and administrative

systems to ensure effective implementation.

ACTIONS

- Develop an outcomes-focused evaluation plan to inform improvements in structure, governance and administration, and flexible processes to implement them.
- Develop a funding strategy for the Sustainability Hub that supports the core needs of the unit and responds to changing university priorities and needs.



SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK

What’s fashion got to do with saving the planet?



THE GLOBAL FASHION AND TEXTILE INDUSTRY IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE CARBON EMISSIONS BY MORE THAN 60% BY 2030⁷. Communities that produce these goods continue to experience disastrous human rights and equity issues.⁸ Washing often releases microplastics from these clothes into waterways, adversely affecting biodiversity in the ocean.⁹ Then most garments enter the waste stream — also set to increase by 62% by 2030 — with only 1% entering the circular economy via closed-loop fibre-to-fibre recycling.¹⁰

The Sustainability Hub launched UBC’s very first ‘Sustainable Fashion Week’ for students, staff, faculty, and the public to learn more about “fast fashion”, and to explore alternatives including sustainable buying, clothing repair and reuse, and

textile recycling. The Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) hosted four days of events including a student-run clothing swap, a repair café with local non-profit Frameworq, a film screening, plus panel events with representatives from the North Face and Gear Works.

The events attracted strong media interest, and were covered by 12 outlets across television, radio, and online including Global News, CBC, and *The Tyee*. In the future, the Sustainability Hub will use Sustainable Fashion Week to explore new collaborations with planning and operational staff that oversee UBC’s waste policy and practices, and faculty and students that specialize in materials engineering and oceanography.

⁷ Boston Consulting Group and Global Fashion Agenda, “Pulse of the Fashion Industry,” 2017.

⁸ Vicki Crinis (2019) Corporate Social Responsibility, Human Rights and Clothing Workers in Bangladesh and Malaysia, *Asian Studies Review*, 43:2, 295-312, DOI: 10.1080/10357823.2019.1588850

⁹ Duis and Coors *Environ Sci Eur* (2016) 28:2 DOI 10.1186/s12302-015-0069-y

¹⁰ Ellen McArthur Foundation and Circular Fibres Initiative, “A New Textiles Economy: Redesigning Fashion’s Future,” 2017.

Image courtesy of Fashion Revolution

#UBC2030

Students imagine a sustainable future at UBC



TO CELEBRATE A DECADE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN 2020, WE HELD A CONTEST ASKING STUDENTS TO IMAGINE: “WHAT WILL SUSTAINABILITY AT UBC LOOK LIKE IN 2030?” We sought ideas on the future of teaching, learning, research, operations, infrastructure, and community engagement on sustainability at UBC.

Here are the questions we posed to start the ball rolling and spark creative responses:

- Which of UBC’s efforts on climate action do you think are working, and what new things do you want to see in the next 10 years?
- How could UBC rethink using our physical campus spaces to promote human wellbeing and biodiversity?
- How can UBC be more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable at the same time?

Our judges selected five winners from over 40 amazing entries including comic books, videos, mock newspapers, and future issues of UBC News. Ideas focused on tackling climate change, ending environmental injustice, transforming food systems, protecting nature, enhancing the campus with green buildings, building retrofits, and zero waste. For example, Climate Justice UBC produced a short video with their vision for #UBC2030 - through a myriad of styles, they conveyed that there is no one approach to dreaming the future. Another example was Marc Massicote’s rendering of The Water Loop, in which Main Mall was transformed into a treatment wetland to filter chemical waste and break down pollutants, absorbing rainwater runoff from green roofs.

The UBC students who envisioned a more sustainable UBC in 2030 showed creativity and passion. If we can realize the visions of students who entered the contest, there is hope for a more sustainable world.

Image: Aurora Borealis in High Latitudes from *William MacKenzie’s National Encyclopedia* (1891)



CLIMATE JUSTICE @UBC

A new series of public events

CLIMATE CHANGE CAUSES DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS ON PEOPLE. Youth, in particular, see the climate crisis as one of the defining challenges of their age, noting that continued fossil fuel expansion will lock in decades of greenhouse gas emissions, jeopardizing their human rights and future prospects. In response to the focus on climate justice in UBC's Declaration of a Climate Emergency and the Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) Report in 2021, we launched a new Climate Justice Series of free online webinars to expand public education opportunities.

The series has been wildly popular, collectively reaching thousands of students, faculty, staff and community members. The Climate Justice series showcases UBC's incredible depth of expertise in many climate change fields, ranging from Indigenous knowledge to law and science. Speakers to date have included students, professors, alumni, elected politicians, writers and activists. Topics have ranged from "Live from COP26" to "From Grassroots to Government" to "Just Is" ≠ Justice". Notable authors who have participated in the series through UBC Reads Sustainability include Amitav Ghosh on *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, Sheila Watt-Cloutier on *The Right to be Cold*, and Dallas Hunt on *Creeland*.

The overall goal of increasing awareness is illustrated by demand for the recordings and the notes of appreciation we gratefully received such as this:

"Thanks for putting on such a great event, I learnt so much ... unfortunately this is a topic that isn't going to be going away anytime soon, so your work is crucial."

Other benefits include an increase in partnerships by co-sponsoring events with well known local NGO partners such as West Coast Environmental Law and the Sierra Club of BC, and more visibility with government by featuring municipal, provincial and federal leaders who shared their experiences.

Image: System change, not climate change courtesy of [Chris Yakimov](#)

Transformative Learning

Making transformative climate and sustainability learning opportunities available for all UBC students and sharing educational resources with the broader community

All students at UBC have access to curricular and co-curricular sustainability learning experiences. Our programs and resources ensure a diversity of students, faculty, staff and community members are engaged in impactful, transformative learning experiences in sustainability, including interdisciplinary and experiential learning. Our support has increased the breadth of the UBC educational tools and experiences that inspire and enable learners to contribute to just, systemic change at UBC and beyond.

GOAL (6) Evaluate and streamline our educational programs, activities and resources to enhance impact.

ACTIONS

- Identify our niche in UBC’s sustainability curricular and co-curricular educational opportunities.
- Align climate and sustainability education programming at UBC to meet the needs of society, industry and government.
- Evaluate the thematic approach to course listings.
- Develop a systematic approach to program evaluation that includes impact analysis.

GOAL (7) Cultivate the use of transformative pedagogies, including a variety of enriched, experiential and applied learning approaches, for sustainability education across UBC and beyond.

ACTIONS

- Build and nurture extensive, robust and reciprocal relationships with campus, community and Indigenous partners who champion strategies for systemic change in order to identify shared sustainability learning goals.
- Co-develop and collaborate with other UBC units on a campus-

wide strategy for transformative sustainability learning.

- Collaborate with peer universities to develop shared sustainability related teaching resources.

GOAL (8) Increase the number of students and other learners from diverse communities on and off campus who participate in UBC-wide co-curricular and curricular sustainability experiences every year.

ACTIONS

- Develop and expand storytelling through a range of media and channels to attract additional, and more diverse learners.
- Offer resources and logistical support for sustainability courses, guest lectures, specializations and programs.
- Redesign the Sustainability Fellows program to expand UBC’s network of sustainability educators.
- Build on our success with the Sustainability Scholars program to provide experiential/applied learning opportunities that serve a greater number and diversity of graduate students and partner organizations, with a special focus on underrepresented communities, including Indigenous-led organizations or governments.
- Reimagine and expand the number of students participating in the

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS

From research to action in the community

THE SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM PLACES UBC GRADUATE STUDENTS IN APPLIED RESEARCH INTERNSHIPS.

Sustainability Scholar Sarah Kamal worked with the Climate Displacement Planning Initiative on a project that has become even more critical in the wake of the recent catastrophic floods in BC.

Her report ‘Out of harm’s way: A scan of emerging global practices in climate change displacement for Canadian policymakers and practitioners’ found that while the Government of Canada does not yet have any policies around climate displacement, there are international climate displacement-related policy frameworks and Indigenous climate displacement resolutions to learn from.

Through Sarah’s experience conducting this research, she realized the enormous amount of time, effort, coordination, and resolve that will be necessary to prepare for the unpredictable climate-related displacement disasters ahead. Sarah’s report explains climate migration policies in plain language and highlights emerging practices that could help policy-makers and communities tackle this issue. Sarah is now a director for the Indigenous led Fraser Canyon Emergency Services Society, which hopes to build temporary medium-term shelter for people displaced by the devastating Lytton wildfire. An op-ed in the Vancouver Sun, co-written with her project mentor, “The fires were just the beginning, welcome to the age of climate displacement” has proved prescient with its call to give disaster response teams the planning, co-operation, funding, recruitment, overflow capacity, and fortification they require to protect us from greater and more frequent climate change impacts.

“Drawing an analogy to the pandemic, we must collectively bolster our emergency management professionals, recognizing their sacrifices and how our societal wellbeing depends on them. Leaving them under-resourced is like expecting healthcare workers to do their jobs without PPE.” – Sarah Kamal.

FACULTY CURRICULUM INNOVATION

New certificate in climate studies and action

WE CATALYZE FACULTY LEADERSHIP. Our Interdisciplinary Education Grants have supported the development of a new UBC Certificate in Climate Studies and Action, co-led by faculty members from Geography (Faculty of Arts) and Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences (Faculty of Science).

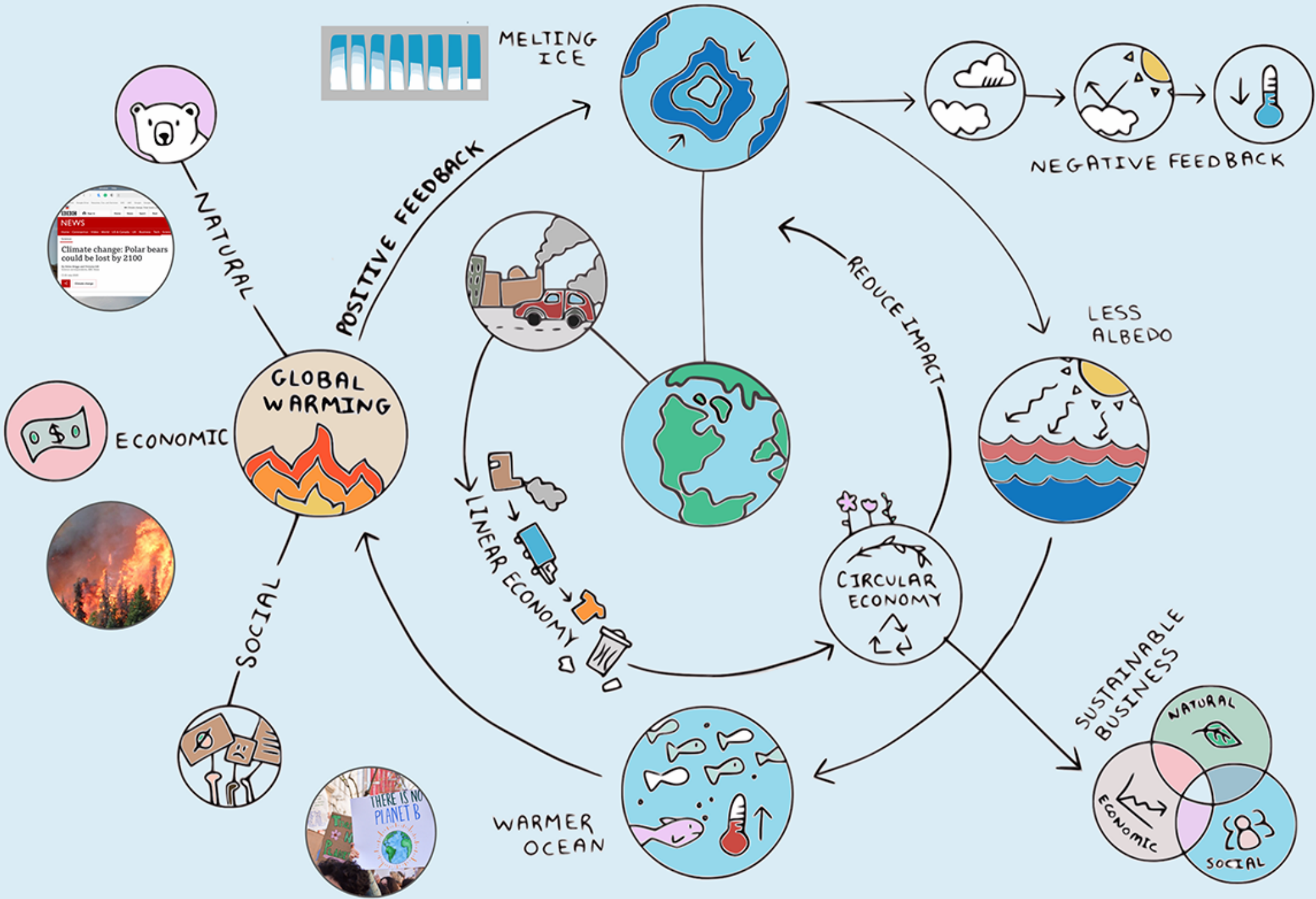
Designed to engage students from all disciplines at UBC, the learning goals for this 18-credit certificate will cover:

- Climate Science and Impacts
- Human Dimensions of Climate Change and Climate Justice
- Climate Futures: Decarbonization, Transitions, Mitigation and Adaptation

New courses with a dedicated focus on climate change will integrate climate science, justice, policy and action.

Climate Action Labs will form a backbone for the certificate, creating an engaged learning community while community projects in the Climate Studies and Action Capstone course will empower students to become agents of change. As an action-oriented offering, this certificate aims to support and build future generations of students, researchers and community leaders able to tackle the social, economic, political and cultural processes that underlie climate change.

Climate Action Labs will form a backbone for the certificate, creating an engaged learning community while community projects in the Climate Studies and Action Capstone course will empower students to become agents of change.



Research Excellence

Amplifying UBC’s sustainability research results and supporting researchers and partners to accelerate action on urgent climate and sustainability challenges

We catalyze and disseminate exemplary applied research that advances policy and action towards a more sustainable and just world by enabling multidisciplinary sustainability and climate action collaborations between UBC faculty researchers, students, university staff and external partners. We are recognized for advancing scholarship and innovation pathways, influencing changes in practices and policies that respond to major global challenges.

GOAL (9) Support the development of actionable research with on and off campus partners that advances a climate-responsive and socially inclusive agenda.

ACTIONS

- Work with academic researchers and partners on applied knowledge and research opportunities in our areas of impact to inform policy, practice and action.
- Convene researchers, partners and community members to identify critical knowledge gaps and advance research to respond to specific challenges.
- Leverage existing research support activities, such as Campus as a Living Lab, and other applied research projects to target our new themes.
- Identify opportunities and collaborate with other UBC units to catalyze sustainability and climate action research that is co-developed with and led by underrepresented groups, including Indigenous communities.

GOAL (10) Advance scholarship and disseminate knowledge on climate emergency/action, biodiversity, resilient communities and the circular economy.

ACTIONS

- Support the PICS program manager to coordinate, promote and mobilize collaborative climate change adaptation and mitigation research solutions at UBC, throughout the region and province by amplifying the work of PICS and working together on shared programming.
- Participate in planning and operational committees to connect academic research opportunities with UBC development, planning and operations.
- Manage the Campus as a Living Lab (CLL) program under the direction of the CLL Committee to incubate new and innovative approaches to sustainability challenges utilizing campus resources and infrastructure.
- Work with community partners and faculty to match students with research opportunities to become leaders in the advancement of Indigenous knowledge systems in sustainability research and practice.
- Provide resources, communications and other assistance to faculty-led research at UBC on high-impact projects in our areas of impact.
- Develop tools to connect researchers, students and community partners, including local municipalities and Indigenous Nations, to share resources

TALLWOOD HOUSE

Mass timber residence living lab project

A FLAGSHIP CAMPUS AS A LIVING LAB PROJECT, BROCK COMMONS TALLWOOD HOUSE IS AN 18 STOREY, LEED GOLD CERTIFIED, 404-BED UBC STUDENT RESIDENCE that proved the feasibility of using mass timber structure in a high-rise building. At the time of construction Tallwood House was the tallest contemporary mass timber building in the world, and the successful completion of the project raised UBC’s profile as a leader in innovation and climate action. The project demonstrated multiple benefits of mass timber, including reduction of embodied carbon emissions, expedited construction timelines, and the use of prefabricated components to improve building quality, site safety and reduced waste.

The influence and impact of the project spread far beyond campus. The Tallwood House was used as a precedent for changes to the Vancouver Building By-law and B.C. Building Code allowing mass timber in more buildings, and in taller buildings. The expansion of mass timber buildings is both a climate change and economic recovery strategy, benefiting building, manufacturing and forestry industries in B.C. and across Canada. The B.C. government pledged to use mass timber for government-funded buildings where possible, and has followed through with projects such as the new Royal B.C. Museum facility in Colwood and BCIT and Okanagan College student residences.

Our role in the Tallwood House project was to coordinate academic research opportunities with the design, construction and commissioning of the building, and to capture the experiences and learning from this innovative project. In addition to several academic theses and publications, we produced an extensive library of case studies and documentation to disseminate knowledge and learning to policy-makers and building industry practitioners, as well as to students and educators at other institutions. Interest in Tallwood House remains high, with many requests for information and tours, and it is often included in other publications and educational materials, such as the Timber City case study series by the global Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat.

and information on regional sustainability and climate issues and research.

GOAL (11) Amplify climate change and sustainability research, learning and outcomes through a variety of knowledge translation and dissemination strategies.

ACTIONS

- Publish the Annual Sustainability Report and expand sustainability dashboards with many partners.
- Finalize and implement our communication strategy about UBC’s sustainability research on internal and external platforms to amplify results and increase impact.
- Convene and/or participate in events that facilitate the dissemination of research to targeted audiences, including policymakers at UBC, and within all orders of government.
- Participate in groups, committees and other organizations that influence policy and action beyond the university, at local, regional and global levels, and facilitate faculty and student participation in these types of groups.
- Showcase real-world examples of applied research outcomes and learnings by publishing factual reports and other documents, and exploring the use of interactive media and innovative technologies as knowledge exchange and dissemination tools.

CLIMATE SYMPOSIUM AND CLIMATE SLAMPOSIUM

When climate research meets creative expression



TWO RECENT EVENTS SHOW HOW CLIMATE RESEARCH IS GAINING PROMINENCE AT UBC, building on the Climate Emergency Task Force report’s strategic priority, “Expanding, strengthening and coordinating climate research at UBC.”

In October 2021, faculty researchers held a fascinating two-day Climate Change Research Symposium on topics ranging from ‘Breaking the Energy/Climate Change Logjam’ to ‘How Can Society Achieve a Fair and Responsible Transition?’.

Brainstorming about how to include student researchers and use a wider range of techniques to talk about research, the Sustainability Hub and the Climate Hub huddled. We talked about creative expression, the role of art in reaching peoples’ emotions as a complement to traditional scholarly research,

and the sheer fun of poetry slams. Bam! That was the flash of inspiration we needed.

The Climate Slamposium was born, quickly organized and held the day following the faculty event. With student presenters sharing podcasts, haiku, Indigenous inspired art, and many more creative expressions, the Slamposium generated exhilaration, a welcome antidote to the climate anxiety that haunt so many students today. The event was captured by a graphic facilitator, and will be repeated.

Image: Slide featured in Slamposium presentation by Fiona Beaty (left) courtesy of Kieran Brownie, (right) *Fragment*, courtesy of Di / artbydi.ca

PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS RESEARCH FUNDING AND SUPPORT

Collaborations to protect and enhance our planet



THE PACIFIC INSTITUTE FOR CLIMATE SOLUTIONS (PICS) LAUNCHED IN 2008 through a \$94 million endowment from the Government of British Columbia. It is hosted and led out of the University of Victoria, in collaboration with UBC, Simon Fraser University, and the University of Northern British Columbia. PICS operates on the interest earned from the endowment. Approximately half of total expenditures by PICS are dedicated to climate solutions research, and UBC has received about half of those research funds recently.

For example, forestry scientists from UBC collaborate with others from the University of Washington, US Forest Service, Natural Resources Canada, the BC Wildfire Service, and Parks Canada on the PICS Wildfire and Carbon project which develops strategies to reduce emissions from wild-fires, enhance forest carbon sinks, and assess bioeconomy

opportunities for forest fibre. Climate change is causing increased frequency and severity of wildfires with significant consequences for the forest carbon balance. Direct emissions from wildfires in British Columbia in each of 2017 and 2018 were more than three times those of all sectors in B.C. combined, making wildfire risk management a critical priority for forest management.

A PICS program manager at UBC manages PICS major research programs and competitions, assists in the delivery of the PICS internship program, and participates in events and projects with a wide range of students, faculty and staff including the Climate Hub and the UBC Climate Emergency Response team.

Image: *Canadian Logging Lumber Industry Timber Logs Canada* courtesy of Nalidsa Sukprasert

Local and Global Engagement

Cultivating respectful, compassionate, reciprocal relationships with community to accelerate impact

We cultivate deep and meaningful relationships with local and global communities to foster courageous dialogue that motivates urgent and intentional action to address sustainability, climate action and social justice. Our success is predicated on reciprocity, respect, compassion, humility, creating physical and virtual spaces for rich knowledge exchange, a willingness to have candid conversations, and an ethic of profound care for others and the planet. As a public university and a global sustainability thought leader, we foster collaborations and support others in accelerating their sustainability and climate justice impact.

- GOAL (12) Advance the Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) report recommendations, including embedding climate justice in UBC-wide policies and plans.**

ACTIONS

 - Work with academic researchers and partners on applied knowledge and research opportunities in our areas of impact to inform policy, practice and action.
 - Track CETF progress by developing indicators and a reporting framework for internal accountability and use in public reports to the UBC community.
 - Initiate an annual event focused on raising awareness about the climate crisis and climate justice.
 - Engage campus and regional community partners including departmental climate action committees to share practices and increase commitment, and encourage formation of additional cross-community initiatives, such as a Climate Justice network.
 - Manage the Climate Emergency Fund and convene grantees to explore synergies and facilitate connections between student-facing climate emergency programs.

- Advance Indigenous Strategic Plan, Inclusion Action Plan, Wellbeing Strategic Framework, and CAP 2030 goals through the implementation of CETF recommendations.
 - Develop resources and training to engage with decision-makers and contribute to policy development and increase inputs to policy processes related to the climate emergency.
- GOAL (13) Build strong diverse supportive and reciprocal relationships with local and regional communities to mobilize for climate action and sustainability.**

ACTIONS

 - Develop a Climate Emergency Community Council.
 - Increase community work on local and regional ecosystems in partnership with UBC’s host Nations and regional organizations.
 - Expand our programs and partnerships to assist a greater number of community groups and governments to increase their ability to respond to the challenges of climate change, biodiversity, resilient communities, and the circular economy.
 - Track community engagement to deepen and diversify strategic

- partnerships with other institutions, organizations, governments and community groups.
- GOAL (14) Leverage UBC’s role as a public university and global sustainability thought leader to support people, governments and other universities to accelerate their impact on sustainability and climate justice.**

ACTIONS

 - Engage in reciprocal learning with international university networks and universities to accelerate sustainability and climate action.
 - Amplify UBC’s presence at global sustainability and climate action events to showcase UBC’s leadership and experience.
- GOAL (15) Foster engagement that invites courageous dialogue and motivates urgent and intentional action to address pressing sustainability challenges.**

ACTIONS

 - Support the UBC Climate Hub’s academic, engagement and outreach programming and initiatives.
 - Develop strategic relationships and projects with global student/youth-

- led initiatives and groups at UBC and beyond to accelerate sustainability and climate impact.
- Identify, augment, and publicize opportunities for students to assist and learn from sustainability policymakers, and form connections with one another, with policy-engaged faculty, and with a range of UBC partners.
 - Work with BC professional associations, UBC professional programs and students to ensure climate emergency actions are included in UBC education.
 - Host and convene dialogues on difficult conversations, making ties between climate change, biodiversity, resilient communities and the circular economy, as well as other issues such as climate anxiety, consumption and materials use, colonialism and extractivism and others.
 - Partner with the Centre for Climate Justice on a range of activities.
 - Support UBC faculty and staff to participate in government initiatives and public consultations on climate and sustainability issues.
- GOAL (16) Through research, learning and engagement, work in service with equity seeking individuals, communities and groups to reduce risk and accelerate climate and**

- sustainability solutions for collective local and global wellbeing.**
- ACTIONS
- Explore areas of shared interest and programming with the Learning Exchange and the communities it works with in the Downtown Eastside.
 - Work with the UBC International Office and with international partners to develop new sustainability and climate education opportunities for the most vulnerable.
 - Foster local and regional partnerships formed from trust over time, through intentional and reflexive relationship building and through learnings of our internal assessments and engagement activities to advance shared climate and sustainability priorities.

COLLABORATION AND LEADERSHIP

Convening the University Climate Change Coalition (UC3)



AS POWERFUL AND INFLUENTIAL CIVIC ACTORS, HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS ARE ESPECIALLY WELL POSITIONED TO ACT AS AGENTS OF CHANGE in their communities to accelerate cross-sector climate action. This is particularly true of large research institutions, which not only possess the ability to serve as important knowledge generators and neutral conveners in their communities, but also serve millions of students who will not only become the next generation of leaders but are also likely to be disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.

The University Climate Change Coalition (UC3) is a group of over 20 distinguished research universities throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico, who are committed to leveraging their research and resources to help communities accelerate local climate action. The Coalition was spearheaded in February 2018 by former University of California President Janet Napolitano and supported by UBC.

In July 2019, a UC3 Summit was hosted by the Sustainability Hub in partnership with Second Nature, a U.S. based non-profit committed to accelerating climate action in, and through,

higher education. The Summit focused on how universities are acting as change agents in their communities, and how that behavior can be scaled for accelerated climate action and leveraging the strength and influence of universities to advocate on behalf of just and equitable climate policy.

In June 2020, UBC President & Vice-Chancellor Santa J. Ono assumed the role of UC3 lead. In this role, President Ono has coordinated the participation of university presidents and chancellors in the Coalition, guided the development and execution of strategic projects, and continued to build the Coalition's robust network of external partnerships with government, business and community leaders.

UBC is leading the formation of the UC3 Fellows Pilot Program to advance meaningful collective actions at UC3 member institutions and contribute to Coalition-wide collaborative activities. The Pilot Program, launched in December 2021, invites UC3 member universities to award full and part-time fellowships that will advance member-led, collaborative climate action projects or contribute to other university-specific climate work.

Image courtesy of [Sustainability Hub](#)

FRASER ESTUARY RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE

Social and ecological restoration on UBC's doorstep



CANADA'S MOST DIVERSE AND HEAVILY URBANIZED COASTAL REGION, THE FRASER ESTUARY, where one of the world's foremost wild salmon rivers meets the sea, is essential fish habitat and an internationally renowned migratory bird haven. But it is at risk from human activities threatening not only its ecological integrity, but also the health and wellbeing of the local communities, notably the Coast Salish peoples that have relied on the lands and waters here since time immemorial. The *xwməθkwəyəm* (Musqueam) people rely on salmon and the health of the Fraser River and estuary, and together with other governments, have a keen interest in further research on topics such as Indigenous governance, community-based solutions, climate adaptation, sea level rise, and pollution reduction.

The Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative is a new local engagement initiative through the Sustainability Scholars Program, conceived through discussions with networks of local and national NGOs. Funding for the student researchers in the Initiative has been generously provided by the Sitka Foundation.

As part of UBC's on-going commitment to advance Indigenous rights, increase UBC's community engagement and work with

local impact, the Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative will place Scholars in applied research projects with NGOs and willing partners from the Coast Salish peoples and/or other Indigenous Nations, and will focus on the most significant threats to the estuary, building on recent research on salmon habitat loss and species at risk in the estuary. The looming impacts of climate change and flood management threats will be key parts of the 3-year Collaborative.

Drawing from multiple ways of knowing and being, the Fraser Estuary Research Collaborative will bring together the Coast Salish peoples' territorial and cultural interests and knowledge of the area, the energy and passion of graduate students, UBC research and faculty expertise, and the active energy of the ENGO sector.

A goal is to translate the different research strands into a reinvigorated action plan for the socio-cultural and ecological protection and restoration of the Fraser Estuary to inform government decision-makers. The long-term vision is to create additional dedicated institutional capacity at UBC to braid Indigenous ways of knowing and being with Western scientific approaches.

Image: shorebirds at Brunswick Point courtesy of David Bradley



UBC CLIMATE HUB

Student engagement to nurture power and hope

THE UBC CLIMATE HUB, A STUDENT-DRIVEN INITIATIVE FUNDED BY UBC, SUPPORTS STUDENT WORK ON CLIMATE JUSTICE by recognizing that youth have a powerful role in moving society towards a more just and sustainable future.

The Climate Hub runs many programs. The Youth Climate Ambassadors Project trains university student facilitators to mentor and support high school youth to realize their collective power and the importance of hopeful climate storytelling. The Climate Solutions Showcase puts on events with different climate justice themes each year, most recently on the theme of “Climate Justice, War & Emissions.” The Climate Creatives Series nurtures student engagement in creative work to explore and advance climate justice through filmmaking, creative fiction, poetry and comic-making. The Climate Wellbeing Engagement Network connects the UBC community to resources and opportunities that support students, staff and faculty with navigating the mental health and wellbeing impacts of climate change. They also run Community Chats that empower participants to make connections outside of their immediate job or discipline, build networks, share stories from their own lives, and see themselves as part of an interconnected climate action community. Students in the Climate Justice Research Collaborative (CJRC) collaborate on for-credit interdisciplinary climate research projects with community partners under the supervision of faculty and the mentorship of graduate students.

Image: *Wading and Weighted While Waiting* courtesy of Meghan Wise / meghanwise.com

Evaluation

Tracking our progress on implementing this plan is a key priority. We are developing an evaluation framework, including short, medium and long-term desired outcomes for each of the core areas of our work.

As part of our commitment to holding ourselves accountable to our values, we are sharing the preliminary list of cross-cutting outcomes which apply across our core areas of work. Each year, we will be guided by an internal one-year action plan with prioritized actions drawn from this 5-year plan.

We have developed preliminary metrics for each of these outcomes to pilot in year one. We will incorporate feedback from our partners in sustainability on campus, and adapt our metrics as we learn.

SHARED OUTCOMES

Sustainability Education

UBC graduates are more equipped to directly influence sustainability policies, plans and practices on and off campus.

Sustainability Engagement

A growing network of Sustainability Hub collaborations and partnerships involving a range of students, faculty, and staff on and off campus, result in an increased level of community resilience with people taking action for a just and sustainable world.

Sustainability Communication

UBC students, faculty, staff and residents are more aware of and better informed about sustainability challenges and actions at multiple scales — from the UBC campus to the planet.

Communities beyond campus, including decision makers, are more aware of and better-informed about the actions UBC is taking to achieve its strategic goals on sustainability.

Sustainability Implementation

UBC's strategic goals on climate action and sustainability are advanced with measurable assistance from the tools

and resources the Sustainability Hub creates to inform, track progress, and strengthen accountability.

Sustainability Inspiration

UBC students, faculty, staff, residents and visitors are more connected to and inspired by our natural environment, and have greater awareness of multiple domains of knowledge, including Indigenous, place-based, and intergenerational knowledge.



Image courtesy of [Sustainability Hub](#)

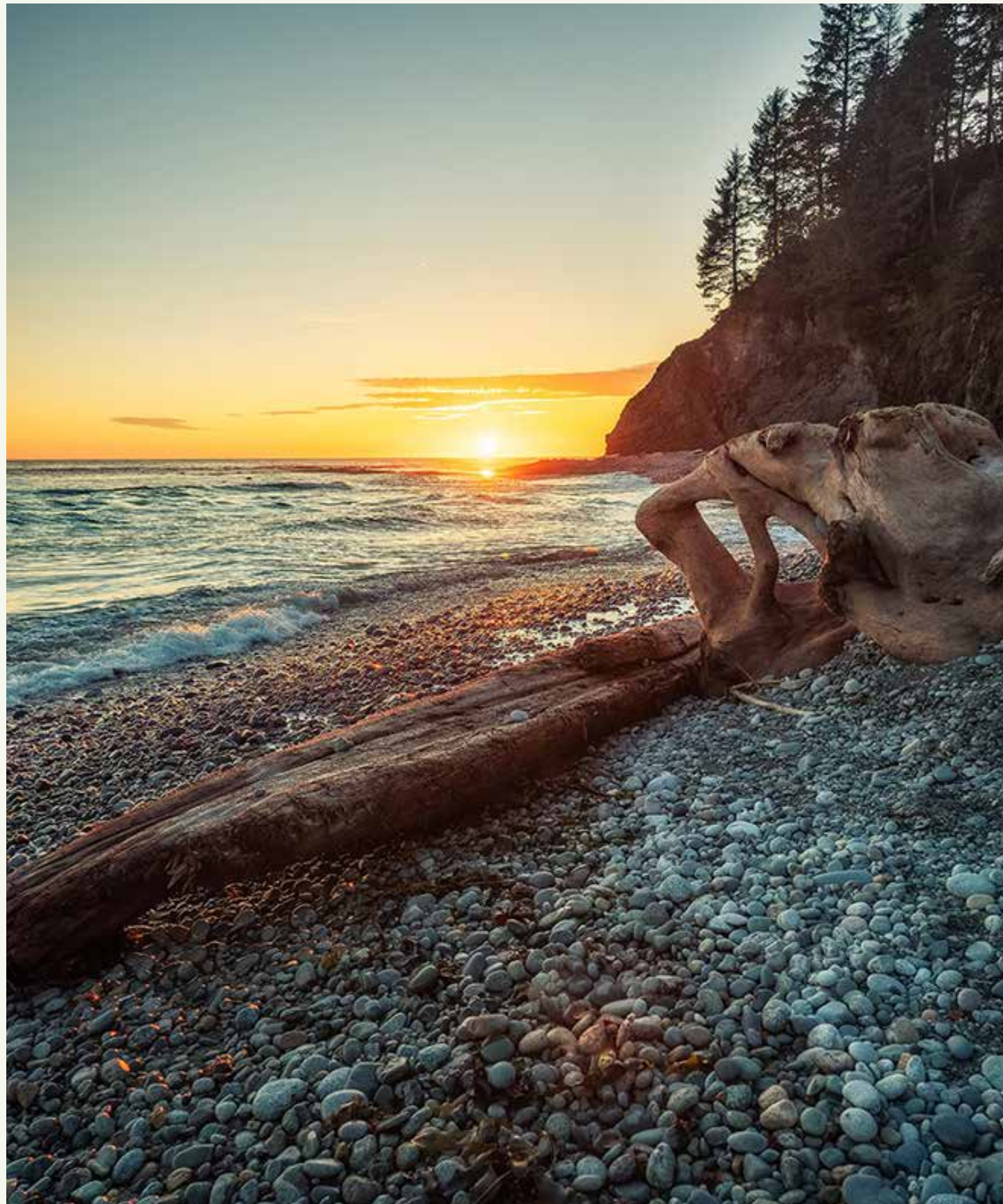


Image: Driftwood on Seashore During Sunset courtesy of James Wheeler

CONCLUSION

This plan, ‘Catalyzing change for a just and sustainable world’ is designed to contribute to UBC’s reputation as a ground-breaking 21st century institution, a leader on all aspects of sustainability and the climate emergency.

The science is undeniable: the planet faces serious threats from our current ways of life. Public institutions such as universities have a duty to act. In the interconnected world we live in, UBC’s commitment to sustainability combined with its emphases on attaining equity, fostering global citizenship and finding solutions to complex issues has never been more important.

SUSTAINABILITY HUB

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*Cover image: UBC Students leveraging
the Campus as a Living Lab through
SEEDS research in the cascading water
feature outside the UBC Bookstore
courtesy of Matthew Taylor*



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Sustainability Hub