

**University of New Brunswick  
Campus Sustainability Plan  
2020 – 2025**

## **Traditional Land Acknowledgement**

We respectfully acknowledge that UNB stands on the unsundered and unceded traditional Wolastoqey land.

The lands of Wabanaki people are recognized in a series of Peace and Friendship Treaties to establish an ongoing relationship of peace, friendship and mutual respect between equal nations.

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



## President's Message

The University of New Brunswick is committed to help address the world's environmental crisis through our teaching, research and operational practices. Collectively the University community has an important role to play by embracing the values of environmental sustainability, participating in sustainable initiatives and ultimately minimizing UNB's impact on the environment.

UNB is committed to tackling society's great challenges head-on and creating positive change. Our mission is to inspire and educate people to become problem solvers and leaders in the world, undertake research that addresses societal and scientific challenges, and engage with partners to build a more just, sustainable and inclusive world.

Sustainability transcends our strategic priorities and is critical to ensuring our future success, but it encompasses so much more than a concern for the environment. Our holistic approach to sustainability is deeply rooted in social justice and considers economic, cultural and social wellbeing.

Like our institutional Strategic Vision: UNB Toward 2030, the Campus Sustainability Plan was the work of many people. More than 1,000 faculty, staff, students and members of the university community participated in the development of this plan. Their input was critical to setting forth a new direction that reflects our shared hopes and ambitions for a more resilient university that will thrive well into the future.

The Campus Sustainability Plan identifies and expands upon four areas of focus – academics, engagement, operations and planning and administration. The plan identifies actions that will allow us to optimize our efforts in each of these areas of focus.

Great strides have been made in recent years to move UNB towards our goal of being a leading institution in sustainability and this plan will help lead us on the path to continuing this work.

With kind regards,

Dr. Paul J. Mazerolle  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
University of New Brunswick



## Table of Contents

About the Plan .....	1
Contributing Information .....	1
UNB Fredericton .....	1
UNB Saint John .....	2
Alignment with UNB's Strategic Plan .....	2
Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals .....	2
Areas of Focus .....	3
Academics .....	3
Engagement .....	5
Operations .....	6
Planning and Administration .....	7
Implementation and Reporting .....	9
Implementation .....	9
Reporting .....	10
Measuring Success .....	10
Measuring Sustainability .....	10
UNB STARS Rating .....	11
Sustainability Goals .....	11
Acknowledgements .....	12
References .....	12

## About the Plan



The development of the goals and strategies in this Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) required input and data from various sources.

### Contributing Information

- The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)'s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) program was used to measure the sustainability performance of UNB in 2017.
- A gap analysis was conducted to identify areas of strength and weakness for sustainability at UNB.
- A strategy review was conducted on methods of improvement. A review of sustainability initiatives of peer and local institutions provided inspiration for sustainability strategies to apply at UNB.
- UNB public consultation was conducted, and various engagement methods were used to gather feedback from the UNB community about what sustainability areas people value and want to be targeted in the CSP.

### UNB Fredericton

- Class consultation: In January and February of 2019, UNB Sustainability consulted with 11 classes from various faculties. During the class engagement sessions, students were led in discussion around sustainability action areas. In total, 445 students identified which areas of sustainability they think should be a priority for UNB over the next five years.
- Public consultation: UNB Sustainability set up consultation stations in common areas on campus. During this consultation, UNB Sustainability engaged with students, staff, and faculty about CSP strategies.



- Online survey: An online survey was open for responses from students, staff, and faculty on their opinions of what sustainability strategies should be prioritized at UNB over the next five years. The survey was posted on the UNB Sustainability website and social media accounts and was emailed to members of the UNB community.

## **UNB Saint John**

- Round table discussion: In June of 2021, an open discussion was held at the campus quad with faculty, students, and staff.
- Campus stakeholder group meetings: In the spring of 2021, stakeholder groups such as the Green Society, Students' Representative Council Executives, and Faculty Deans were invited to meetings to discuss CSP strategies.
- Online survey: To engage with a greater amount of the community, an online survey was developed. The survey contained areas identified as "weaknesses" in the gap analysis and it asked participants to rank which ones they felt should be prioritized in the CSP.

## **Alignment with UNB's Strategic Plan**

The CSP supports UNB's strategic vision for 2030 in a variety of areas.

Mission: UNB's mission is "To inspire and educate our people to become problem solvers and leaders in the world, undertake research that addresses societal challenges, and engage with our partners to build a more just, sustainable, and inclusive world." The goals and actions set out in the CSP are essential for UNB to accomplish the mission of building a more sustainable world.

Aspirations: Toward 2030, UNB will be a "Financially and environmentally sustainable university that is working toward a carbon neutral future and has improved infrastructure and integrated systems across our two campuses." The CSP provides the measurable goals and practical strategies required for UNB to meet the aspiration of being an environmentally sustainable university.

## **Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of goals and targets adopted by all UN member states in 2015. The goals are centered on creating a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable world by 2030. The SDGs "provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future" (UN Sustainable Development Platform).

Canada has committed to supporting the implementation of the SDGs nationally and globally. As a hub for education, research and growth, UNB has the opportunity to contribute to the Canadian fulfillment of the SDGs.

UNB's CSP is largely aligned with the SDGs, as it strives for a sustainable future. By accomplishing the CSP strategies, UNB will assist in the advancement of the SDGs.

In total there are 17 SDGs with 163 targets. The specific SDG that each CSP category aligns with are indicated throughout the plan.

## Areas of Focus



The sustainability goals and strategies identified in the CSP are divided into four overarching categories, consistent with the STARS categories.

### Academics

Vision: UNB is a leader in sustainable education and research. Faculty and educators are active and knowledgeable in sustainability, guiding students in sustainable learning and research. UNB fosters an academic community that demonstrates and advances sustainability.

Successes at UNB:

- Undergraduate and graduate environmental courses are offered that teach students to manage environmental and natural resources sustainably.
- Students utilize UNB as a living laboratory to learn about sustainability firsthand through the use of the campus.
- 66% of departments at UNB Fredericton offer sustainability courses to students.
- 100% of departments at UNB Saint John currently conduct research that is engaged in sustainability.
- SOCS4501 - A structured living lab course at UNB Saint John.

**Table 1.** The academic strategies that will aid in achieving the 2025 targets with campuses identified.

GOALS	STRATEGIES	CAMPUS
Increase opportunities for students to use UNB as a living laboratory	Identify programs, courses, and operations that could offer Campus as a Living Laboratory (CaLL) opportunities.	FR

	Develop an online inventory of CaLL projects that have been completed and are currently available to students.	FR & SJ
	Expand the SOCS4501 CaLL pilot to offer more projects opportunities.	SJ
	Develop a formalized CaLL program in collaboration with the Office of Experiential Education.	SJ
<b>Increase support for research on sustainability</b>	Determine the feasibility of incentivizing and supporting sustainable research by students and faculty.	FR
	Highlight and promote those conducting sustainability research.	FR
<b>Improve availability of sustainability focused courses</b>	Identify sustainability learning outcomes, and work with units to incorporate the outcomes into the curriculum.	FR
	Maintain a sustainability course list, outlining courses available in all faculties.	FR
	Create a sustainability course list inventory.	SJ
	Produce an educational package for faculty on the relevance, importance, and methods of incorporating sustainability into their courses.	FR
	Explore the feasibility of developing a 'minor' in sustainability or interdisciplinary courses to gain a 'sustainability certificate' option.	SJ
<b>Assess and improve students' knowledge of sustainability</b>	Develop and conduct a student sustainability literacy assessment.	FR
	Formalize the distribution of the Sustainability Literacy Assessment.	SJ
	Develop a Sustainability 101 Module to educate the campus community on basic sustainability concepts.	SJ

### **Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals**

Goal #4 (Quality Education): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



## Engagement

Vision: UNB fosters a community engaged in sustainability programs and activities and together make a sustainability minded community.

Successes at UNB:

- Residence Energy Challenge: An annual event that encourages students living on campus to reduce their energy consumption.
- Sustainability Month: Occurs annually in October and provides the campus community with sustainability activities, information, and inspiration.
- UNB Green Team: A platform for students designed to increase communication and exposure to sustainability-related initiatives and to promote more sustainable lifestyle and behaviour choices.
- Green Event Certification: UNB provides campus groups with guidance and recognition for making their events sustainable.
- Co-curricular Program: UNB provides students with the opportunity to extend their formal learning experience and be recognized for their community involvement.
- Green Living Guide: A guide offered to all students in residences for tips on sustainable living.

**Table 2.** The engagement strategies that will aid in achieving the 2025 targets with campuses identified.

GOALS	STRATEGIES	CAMPUS
<b>Encourage sustainable behaviours</b>	Create a Staff Sustainability Network.	FR
	Continue to work with students and groups to promote sustainable actions through programming.	FR
	Incorporate sustainability information into employee orientation packages.	FR
<b>Increase sustainable engagement opportunities for students</b>	Expand the Green Representatives Program / Green UNB Program.	FR
	Create a university-based program to allow the campus community to reuse and distribute unwanted items.	FR
	Maintain the Student Sustainability Fund to finance student sustainability projects.	FR
	Implement a formalized Green Ambassadors program that trains students to serve in peer-to-peer sustainability outreach.	SJ

<b>Pursue sustainability collaborations</b>	Engage in sustainability mentorship opportunities with other institutions.	FR
	Partner with College of Extended Learning to create courses focused on, and incorporating, sustainability themes.	FR
	Promote community service through the co-curricular program and improve methods of tracking service.	FR
<b>Sustainability training and professional development</b>	Determine the feasibility of hosting a sustainability-themed workshop, modules, or an education package annually to staff.	SJ

### Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Goal #4 (Quality Education): Ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.

### Operations

Vision: UNB operates a sustainable campus, with innovative processes that result in leading sustainable facilities.

Successes at UNB:

- Campus gardens: UNB hosts a variety of gardens on campus including wildlife friendly gardens, an Indigenous medicine wheel garden, and a community food garden on both UNB campuses.
- LED retrofits completed throughout many of UNB's buildings.
- Trayless dining was introduced in McConnell Hall and Baird Dining Hall.
- Sustainable meals are offered on campus including vegan and vegetarian options.
- A Universal Bus Pass for graduate students at UNB Fredericton.
- A naturalized stormwater detention basin was constructed at UNB Saint John to provide the storage needed to reduce peak flow for a discharge point.
- Recycling opportunities on both campuses for paper, refundables, metal, and e-waste.

**Table 3.** The operations strategies that will aid in achieving the 2025 targets with campuses identified.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>CAMPUS</b>
<b>Create a more sustainable food system</b>	Pursue a program that will allow UNB to commit 20% of its food dollars to be spent on food that is local or third party certified.	FR

	Increase opportunities, awareness, and education around sustainable food events.	FR
	Continue to support opportunities to access, grow, and purchase local food on campus.	FR & SJ
	Work to increase the number of foods that are sustainable, ethically produced, and plant based in the next food service contract.	SJ
	Engage with the community around campus food and dining and ensure their voice is heard in contract negotiations.	SJ
<b>Prioritize sustainable purchasing</b>	Engage with Financial Services to integrate sustainability into the Procurement Policy.	FR
	Create a reference list and guide for sustainable purchasing.	FR
<b>Reduce water usage</b>	Formalize and increase water reduction efforts.	FR & SJ
	Create initiatives and events to encourage water related behaviour change.	FR & SJ

### **Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals**

Goal #2 (Zero Hunger): End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

Goal #6 (Clean Water and Sanitation): Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Goal #11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

Goal #12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### **Planning and Administration**

Vision: UNB planning and administration is conducted sustainably. UNB considers sustainability in all levels of decision making. We are committed to supporting an inclusive healthy campus community and being responsible with investments and finances.

Successes at UNB:

- UNB has a publicly posted non-discrimination statement.
- Student Accessibility Centre: Provides access to a variety of on-campus services and support to students with documented visible and invisible disabilities.
- The Statement on Sustainable Investing and Responsible Investment section in the Board of Governors Investments Committee's Statement of Investment Objectives and Policy.
- The UNB Health Centre, where quality primary health care is provided on campus to students year-round.
- Internal and external scholarships.
- Student Employment and Career Centre: Helps provide students with employment opportunities such as the Work-Study Program.

**Table 4.** The planning and administration strategies that will aid in achieving the 2025 targets with campuses identified.

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>CAMPUS</b>
<b>Include sustainability in university planning</b>	Create an institutional sustainability policy.	FR & SJ
	Incorporate sustainability into other university policies.	FR & SJ
	Include sustainability in university decisions.	FR & SJ
	Provide the Student Union representatives with sustainability training.	FR & SJ
<b>Incorporate sustainability and transparency into UNB investments</b>	Provide an annual report on UNB investments to the public.	FR & SJ
	Develop a publicly available sustainable investment policy.	FR & SJ
	Incorporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles in the policy for hiring investment managers.	FR & SJ
	Require all investment managers to report on their ESG investment practices.	FR & SJ
<b>Engage students and local community in institutional decision making</b>	Provide student representatives who sit on UNB's highest governing body with sustainability training.	FR & SJ
	Develop a policy to identify and engage external stakeholders in institutional decisions that affect the community.	FR & SJ

## Alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Goal #8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth): Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all.

Goal #16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

## Implementation and Reporting



### Implementation

The implementation of the CSP will require the participation and cooperation of UNB students, staff, faculty, and community.

UNB Sustainability will develop an annual CSP action document for internal implementation. The document will determine, for that specific year, the who, what, when, where, and how of the CSP strategies.

UNB Sustainability will oversee the CSP strategies and keep UNB on track for meeting the sustainability goals. However, the success of the CSP will be largely dependent upon UNB community engagement. As the sustainability plan encompasses diverse action areas, various individuals and groups across campus will be involved in its implementation. Some key participating groups will be:

Employees:

- UNB Sustainability
- Senior Administration
- Capital Planning & Operations



- Facilities Management
- Office of Experiential Education
- Office of Human Rights and Positive Environment
- Sustainability Advisory Committee
- Student Services
- Sodexo
- Chartwells
- Faculties
- Financial Services
- The Procurement Department

Students:

- UNB Student Clubs and Societies
- UNB Student Union
- UNB Students' Representative Council

## Reporting

Throughout the implementation of the CSP, UNB Sustainability will report annually on the progress of the goals and strategies.

## Measuring Success

STARS will be used to assess the progress of sustainability once the CSP has been implemented. By utilizing STARS, the impact the CSP strategies are having on the advancement of sustainability at UNB will be measured.

The public response gathered from annual white board sessions will also indicate the impact the CSP actions are having on sustainability awareness of the UNB community.

## Measuring Sustainability



As UNB strives to become a more sustainable institution, it is necessary to assess our sustainability actions, successes, and shortcomings. Since sustainable outcomes are often qualitative, not quantitative, consistent measurement can prove difficult. To establish the existing level of sustainability at UNB, a third-party sustainability assessment was conducted.

### **UNB STARS Rating**

The AASHE STARS program was selected for measuring sustainability at UNB because it is:

- A transparent, self-reporting, sustainability assessment tool specifically designed for universities and colleges.
- The most widely recognized sustainability assessment for higher education, with over 900 institutions having obtained a STARS rating.

UNB completed a STARS submission in 2017 and 2020 on the Fredericton Campus and in 2020 on the Saint John Campus. This assessment will continue every three years to measure UNB's progress.

STARS has five possible ratings:

- Reporter
- Bronze
- Silver
- Gold
- Platinum

As of 2020, UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John both achieved silver ratings from STARS.

STARS provides UNB with information to guide our progress of sustainability. The rating that UNB receives gives public recognition to our sustainability efforts, representing - not replacing - the goal of becoming a sustainable institution.

## **Sustainability Goals**

In order to ensure that the CSP is successful, we have established both long- and short-term goals.

UNB's long-term sustainability goals are to:

- Become a leader in sustainable education and research.
- Foster a community engaged in sustainability.
- Operate a sustainable campus.
- Conduct planning and administration sustainably.

UNB's short-term sustainability goals (by 2025) are to:

- Fulfill the CSP strategies.
- Increase our STARS score by 10%.
- Develop a succeeding sustainability plan that will include initiatives on both the Fredericton and Saint John campuses.

## Acknowledgements

UNB Sustainability would like to thank the Fredericton and Saint John campus communities for providing feedback along the way that ultimately lead to the creation of the targets and strategies within this plan.

- Youth Employment Fund
- The Sustainability Advisory Committee
- Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management
- Capital Planning & Operations
- Facilities Management
- Other participating faculties and classes
- UNB Student Union and Students' Representative Council
- Green Society at UNB Saint John
- Dr. Tom Beckley, Professor, Forestry & Environmental Management at UNB Fredericton
- Dr. Robert Moir, Associate Professor, Faculty of Business at UNB Saint John

## References

- [The Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System \(STARS\)](#)
- [The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education \(AASHE\)](#)
- [The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(UN SDGs\)](#)