



The University of Sydney

Environmental Policy

Approved By: Vice-Chancellor on 25 September 2002
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Contact: Assistant Director - Environment and Heritage

In this document, the term 'the environment' includes the natural, built and social environment of the University of Sydney.

1. Policy Statement

The University of Sydney is committed to environmental best practice, and to the continual improvement of its environmental performance, recognising its obligations both locally and globally, to the present and succeeding generations. The University aims to lead in defining best environmental practice, and will set its own demanding standards where none exist.

The University is committed to implementing the requirements of all applicable Commonwealth, State and local environmental legislation and regulations and, where possible, exceeding any relevant minimum requirements.

The University will manage the activities over which it has control and which impact upon the environment in accordance with the principles of ecological sustainability.

The University aims to raise the environmental awareness of the public, governments, industry, the University community and the general community by promoting the concept of ecological sustainability and by openly recognising the ongoing need to move toward an ecologically sustainable future.

The University will monitor its use of natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, and maximise the efficiency and effectiveness with which they are used, with a view to minimising environmental impacts.

The University, through its academic structures, will foster and promote research and teaching in environmental units of study, will promote environmental awareness and education within its communities, and provide opportunities for the study of environmental issues through award and non-award courses as well as by conferences, seminars and workshops. The University will provide appropriate environmental training for its staff and students, and will encourage them to apply sound environmental practices at work, at home, and within the wider community.

The University is committed to transparency in, and public access to, the formulation and implementation of its environmental policies and objectives. The University will formulate, publish, implement and monitor objectives set out in this Policy, and will periodically review their efficacy and promote their continued development. Interested individuals or parties are encouraged to comment on the Policy, goals and objectives, and their implementation.

The environmental policy of The University of Sydney will be applicable to all its activities, and at all its sites.

2. Policy Implementation

The University commits itself to establishing and maintaining a formal environmental management system in accordance with this Policy. This will involve the participation of all functional units in working towards the development of strategic goals at local levels.

There are five key areas which focus on the achievement of these goals.

2.1 Intellectual leadership

The University is committed to the promotion of awareness of environmental issues, and to the promotion of ecological sustainability, recognising its position as a major contributor to the opinions and ideas, cultures and lifestyles of the many communities it serves, locally, nationally, and internationally (University of Sydney Strategic Plan, 1999-2004, Goal 7).

The University is committed to providing integrated teaching on, and encouraging research into, environmental issues (University of Sydney Strategic Plan, 1999-2004, Goals 6 & 7).

The University is committed to acting in an environmentally responsible and ethical manner as a member of the Australian community (University of Sydney Strategic Plan, 1999-2004, Goal 7).

The University is committed to working in co-operation with government, industry and the community at large to address environmental issues in general, as well as to improve the environs of the University (University of Sydney Strategic Plan, 1999-2004, Goal 7).

2.2 Pollution and waste

The University is committed to waste avoidance, waste reduction, re-use and recycling.

The University aims to reduce its consumption of materials and energy and to implement environmentally sound waste management practices. This includes eliminating unnecessary energy use, pursuing a programme of energy conservation, and reviewing water usage. The University is committed to the long-range goal of maximum use of renewable energy sources.

The University is committed to re-use of materials wherever practicable.

The University will promote schemes for the collection of materials appropriate for recycling.

The University will seek ways of disposing of waste in environmentally acceptable ways, and will use any funds thereby generated to support environmental research.

The University will distribute information in the most environmentally-friendly manner possible.

2.3 Procurement

The University will regularly monitor, and review wherever practicable, its acquisition of materials and energy and its disposal of waste. When services, materials, equipment, food or energy are purchased, preference will be given to items produced in ways which cause least harm to the environment, and which generate fewest waste materials. Equipment designed for 'repairability' rather than planned obsolescence will be favoured. Other things being equal, preference will be given to local suppliers or sub-contractors so as to promote links with the community and to reduce transport needs.

2.4 The University Estate

The University will ensure that the stewardship of its estate maintains and enhances the high quality of its architecture and the landscape of which it is a part.

The University is committed to sustainable design principles in land-use, transportation, landscape and building planning and construction (University of Sydney Strategic Plan, 1999-2004, Goal 6).

The University aims to minimise adverse environmental impacts of University buildings, landscaping and developments over the whole of their lifespan.

The University is committed to landscaping and grounds maintenance practices which minimise water and energy use and promote integrated pest management. The use of fertilisers, soil conditioners and pesticides will be minimised.

The University is committed to the retention and enhancement of its heritage plantings, and to landscaping and grounds maintenance practices which use native vegetation wherever practicable, and create habitat niches for native fauna wherever practicable.

The University aims to ensure that all materials used in the University will be as harmless to the environment as is practicable.

2.5 Transport

The University aims to reduce the environmental impacts associated with transport to and from, and within, the University by encouraging staff, students and visitors to use environmentally-friendly means of transport, on and off campus.