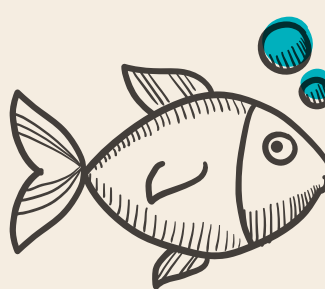
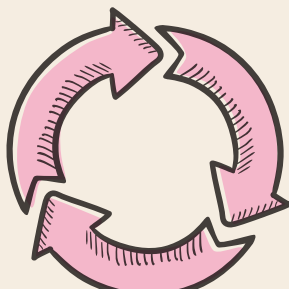
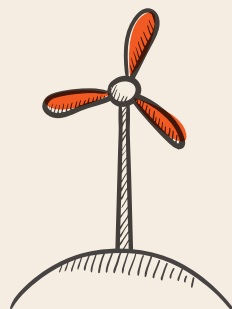
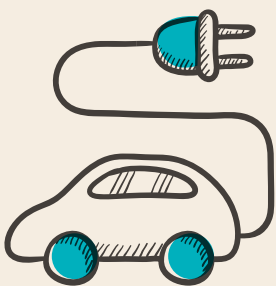
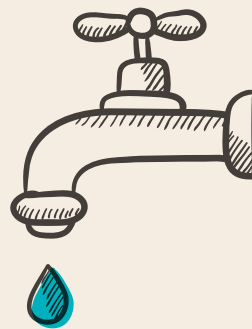
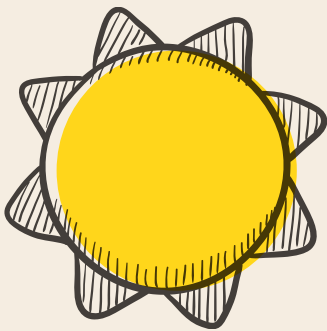


# 2030 Sustainability Strategy



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## Acknowledgement of country

Flinders University acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which its campuses are located. These are the Traditional Lands of the Arrernte, Dagoman, First Nations of the South East, First Peoples of the River Murray & Mallee region, Jawoyn, Kurna, Larrakia, Ngadjuri, Ngarrindjeri, Ramindjeri, Warumungu, Wardaman and Yolngu people.

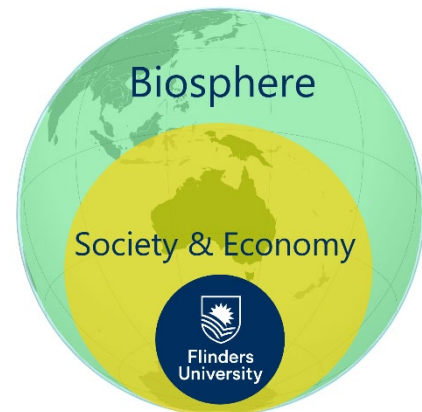
We honour their Elders past, present and emerging.

## Introduction and Vision

As we embark on our bold new 2030 Sustainability Strategy, and build on our previous efforts, we are commencing a sustainability journey that will propel us forward to the end of this decade and beyond.

Embracing a holistic understanding of sustainability, we will remain dedicated to solving environmental problems, and promoting economic and social justice, as a world in which poverty and inequity are endemic will always be prone to ecological and social crises. Against this backdrop, we recognise our societal role as we sit within a larger societal context and biosphere. Our commitment to sustainability is part of supporting positive change to build a brighter tomorrow and our mission to ‘changing lives and changing the world’.

In our pursuit of sustainability, we recognise the wisdom and knowledge embedded within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ practices, which long preceded the modern concept of sustainability. First Nations and local knowledge, shaped by centuries of harmonious co-existence with nature, holds invaluable insights that can guide us in addressing the challenges of sustainability.



*Figure 1 - Flinders in Context*

### **Flinders University Vision:**

To be internationally recognised as a world leader in research, an innovator in contemporary education, and the source of Australia’s most enterprising graduates.

### **Our Sustainability Vision:**

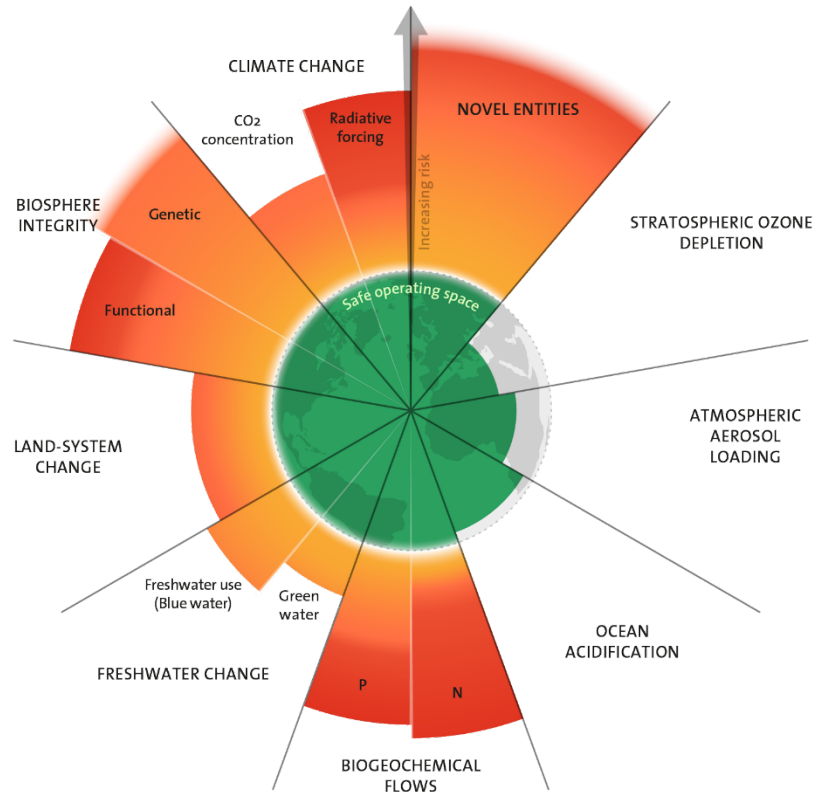
Flinders University is committed to sustainability, inclusivity, and global responsibility, we will confront challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequalities and lead society towards a brighter future. By integrating these pressing issues into our strategic agenda, conducting research, offering sustainability-focused and inclusive educational programs, implementing sustainable practices across all functions, and engaging with external networks, we will actively contribute to addressing societal needs and advancing sustainability on a local, national, and global scale.

## Approach

We are in the critical decade to respond and adapt to climate change, it is more important than ever for innovative universities like Flinders to lead the way, as articulated by the Brundtland Commission in their influential report, *Our Common Future* (1987), “...to ensure that humanity meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The current reality is daunting, with mankind pushing beyond the ecological limits, whether it's dealing with environmental pollution, freshwater scarcity, climate change, the integrity of the biosphere, land-use changes, or grappling with the consequences of "novel entities" such as plastics.

We have implemented numerous projects to reduce our environmental impact over the years and there is much more to do.

Some of our highlights so far:



### Our Past

- 2019: Sustainability Plan to 2025
- 2019: 2.2 MW solar car park and rooftop solar on campus
- 2019: Campus-wide composting program
- 2020: Flinders rail extension & train station (DIT)
- 2020: Electric Vehicle (EV) fleet transition and chargers (44 installed by end of 2023)
- 2021: 100% renewable electricity for SA operations (wind and solar)
- 2022: Vehicle-to-grid electric vehicle and fleet project (10 installed to date)
- 2023: Agreement signed with the City of Marion for recycled water pipeline extension
- 2024: Health and Research Medical Building (built to Gold WELL and LEED certifications)
- 2024: 2030 Sustainability Strategy

*Figure 2 - Planetary boundaries framework. Licenced under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 (Credit: Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University. Based on Richardson et al. 2023, Steffen et al. 2015, and Rockström et al. 2009)*

### Our Future (see appendix for associated objectives, initiatives and measures)

- 2024: Phase out natural gas in all new projects
- 2024: Reduce mains water usage by 20% via recycled stormwater pipeline
- 2025: Implement 100% compostable food packaging and ban single-use plastics
- 2025: Inclusion of sustainability at the highest-level Flinders University Strategic Agenda

- 2030: Formally designate sustainability courses across Colleges & embed graduate outcomes
- 2030: Electrify small vehicle fleet and campus loop buses
- 2030: Embed sustainability in the graduate outcomes, courses and programs
- 2030: Energy efficiency improved by 20% and replacement of 80% HFCs refrigerants
- 2030: Offset GHG emissions via credible offset scheme
- 2030: Employee vehicle commute reduced by 15%
- 2030: Climate positive (e.g. net negative 25% GHG emissions profile)

We will scrutinise every opportunity to reduce resource consumption, address greenhouse gas emissions, and pave the way for a climate positive future. Our day-to-day campus operations form a large part of our impact on the environment. How we invest in sustainable initiatives for the ongoing management of waste, energy, transport, physical spaces, natural assets and water will be critical to our future.

We will continue to discover new opportunities to partner and collaborate with business, industry, government, and communities to find solutions to sustainability challenges on local and global scales.

## Implementation

The 2030 Sustainability Strategy is a living document, designed to be updated as required and brought to life by all functional areas to inspire, guide and articulate our ambitions.

With a timeline extending to 2030, this strategy outlines our priorities and objectives to be achieved. Some objectives include specific targets where data is readily available, while others highlight the need for developing frameworks and business processes. This will require continuous monitoring of achievements and benchmarking as an integral part of our regular business processes.

To effectively measure our sustainability progress and challenges, we will employ The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS®), an international best-practice framework tool designed for the tertiary sector. Additionally, we actively participate in ranking schemes to assess and demonstrate our performance, enabling us to benchmark ourselves within the local and international higher education sector.

To support and operationalise our objectives, initiatives will be refined, reviewed, and developed on an annual basis for incorporation into business plans. These plans will outline the individual tasks and projects that contribute to our sustainability goals. The ideas and visions collected during the engagement process will inform and shape these detailed plans.

To ensure transparency and accountability, we will optimise our reporting processes to ensure alignment and integration with other institutional requirements. An annual review process will track our progress and provide an opportunity to adapt to changing needs and opportunities.



*Figure 3 – STARS rating*

## Principle 1 – Contributing to a sustainable society

Flinders University's definition of sustainability is defined and highlighted by its acknowledgement and alignment with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2015, the United Nations published Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a “plan of action for people, planet and prosperity”. The publication outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals and seeks to build on an agenda that balances, “the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental”.



Figure 4 – UN Sustainable Development Goals

Flinders University proudly embraces the holistic approach of these goals, which adeptly weave together environmental, economic, and sociocultural dimensions into a unified vision for sustainable development.

With an understanding that society and the economy are embedded and reliant on the biosphere, we will integrate the SDGs into the University curriculum and research themes.

## Principle 2 – Taking Climate Action

Despite having already transitioned to 100% renewable electricity, we continue to prioritise reducing our greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Our decarbonisation roadmap sets forth an ambitious plan to further lower our direct GHG emissions by at least 42% by the year 2030. We'll measure this reduction using our 2022 emission levels as a baseline\*. Our roadmap is aligned to the Paris Agreement's target of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, as outlined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Our commitment not only represents a decrease in our own emissions but contributes to national and global objectives.

As such, Flinders University's greenhouse gas emissions targets are to:

- Identify, develop and implement ambitious and achievable opportunities towards emissions reductions for scope 1 and 2 emissions aligned with 1.5°C Paris target
- Engage our operations and supply chain to address indirect emissions
- Achieve a net-negative 25% emissions profile for scope 1-3 emissions by 2030.

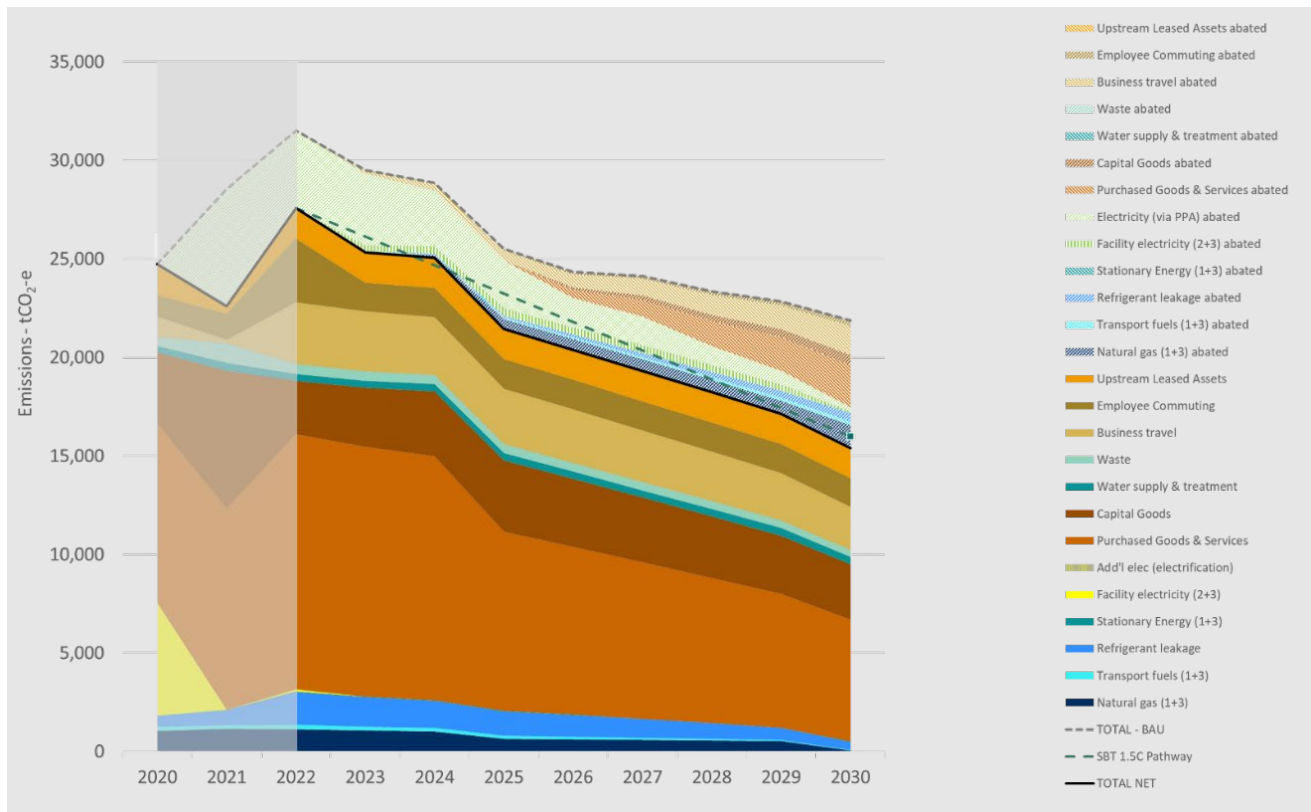


Figure 5- Flinders University 1.5°C Emissions Pathway to 2030

Our decarbonisation roadmap to 2030 is informed by a variety of opportunities, including:

**Scope 1** direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. This would include addressing emissions from fleet vehicles, refrigerants, and gas boilers.

- Improving energy efficiency by 20% and reducing stationary energy by 30%.
- Phasing out the use of new gas by 2024 and prioritising transition towards electrification.
- Replacing 80% of hydrofluorocarbon refrigerants with low-global warming alternatives.
- Electrification of 90% of the Flinders vehicle fleet by 2030 and electrify campus buses.

**Scope 2** indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.

- Maintaining a 100% renewable electricity supply.

**Scope 3** indirect emissions that occur in the value chain, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

- Through the procurement of goods and services, with a focus on Tier 1 suppliers, ensure our supply chain decarbonises in line with our overall emissions reductions
- Reduce business air travel emissions\* and offset via credible offset scheme.
- Support reduction in employee vehicle commuting emissions by 15%.
- Reducing the emissions intensity of capital works (including construction) by 25%.
- Reducing total waste by 30% and recovering high-value deposit recycling materials.
- Reducing mains water usage by 20% by connecting to an integrated water recycling.

*\*Decarbonisation targets will be updated against a 2023 baseline to represent the normalisation of business travel following the COVID-19 pandemic.*

## Principle 3 – Whole-of-Flinders Approach

The 2030 Sustainability Strategy harnesses the collective efforts from across the University community. It documents a renewed and enhanced focus on sustainability, with University-wide objectives that include defined initiatives and measurable targets. The strategy will focus on the key strategic pillars of:

- Learning and Teaching, and Research
- Facilities and Operations
- Partnerships and Engagement
- Leadership and Governance.

It will apply to all Flinders University campuses and business units. Co-location partners, on-site vendors and key suppliers will be encouraged to partner with us to achieve these goals.

**Learning and Teaching:** graduates are sustainability literate and prepared to lead transformational change.

**Research:** helping society solve complex sustainability challenges.

**Operations:** Flinders campuses are low carbon, efficient and healthy environments.

**Partnerships and Engagement:** engagement with our communities is central to improve lives and address the needs of society.

**Leadership:** guide, resource and embed sustainability across the university.

The scope of sustainability intersects across Flinders’ strategies, action plans, policies and guidelines, and while we address the provision of quality education and facilities for various types of students, knowledge dissemination and scholarship, the 2030 Sustainability Strategy further aligns Flinders University academic, research and operational focus areas, rankings and reporting frameworks such as the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS®). We will regularly report on our progress, achievements, and priorities.



Figure 6 –Flinders 2030 Sustainability Strategy snapshot



# Strategic Pillar 1 – Learning, Teaching and Research

At its core, Flinders University is a leading education and research institution that brings knowledge and research into the world in impactful ways.

## 1.1 Learning and Teaching

**Objective: Flinders graduates are sustainability literate and prepared to lead transformational change within their organisations and communities**

Through our topics and courses, we address sustainability and offer courses that help equip students to lead society to a sustainable future. We will continually review our curriculum with an aim to embed sustainability teaching across Flinders and explore the further development of cross-disciplinary postgraduate sustainability courses.

Initiatives and actions:

- Review sustainability in the graduate outcomes, topics and courses across the University (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students and Learning and Teaching Innovation Committee), date TBD.
- Assess and offer sustainability-focused and inclusive undergraduate and graduate-level degree courses (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students), 2025
- Develop a sustainability teaching grant from existing funds that targets interdisciplinary approaches to achieve campus sustainability outcomes, (owned by Sustainability Advisory Group), 2025 .
- Assess and track the sustainability literacy of students during orientation and graduation, and by tracking the societal contributions of Alumni (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students)
- Formally designate sustainability topics across Colleges in the form of an identifying symbol or code (to help students distinguish sustainability courses from other courses (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students), 2025 (e.g. a sustainability filter).
- Leverage existing teaching and research outputs to create interdisciplinary sustainability educational opportunities (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students), from 2026.

Measuring impact:

- Number of graduates in sustainability-focused undergraduate and graduate-level degree courses.
- Number of topics and degree courses offering sustainability focused and inclusive content.
- Number of student-completions for sustainability-focused and inclusive topics
- Increased levels of sustainability knowledge, literacy and involvement amongst students.

## 1.2 Research and Innovation

**Objective: Flinders' research activities are helping society solve complex sustainability challenges**

Through research, we are looking to understand sustainable approaches, develop new technologies and approaches to address local and global challenges. We have mapped research

outputs against SDGs to assess our own strengths as we grow our research outcomes and seek to align and highlight the impact of sustainability-oriented research.

Initiatives and actions:

- Map college and institute research strengths, grants, impacts and partnerships aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals through the Research Now portal (Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research), date TBD.
- Promote, publicly communicate and support sustainability-related research (Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research), date TBD.
- Explore and consider opportunities to use the campus life, infrastructure and operations as a living laboratory for applied student learning and research for sustainability (Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research), by 2030.

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Quantity of sustainability-related research projects and publications aligned to SDGs.
- Increased levels of funding secured by research units in the areas of environmental and social impact research.
- Number of demonstration research projects applied on campus.

## Strategic Pillar 2 – Facilities and Operations

Operating a university requires a wide array of supporting functions that have significant environmental impacts to manage and mitigate. These range from building and maintaining healthy and efficient buildings, developing a climate-resilient campus to electrifying our fleet and infrastructure.

### 2.1 Energy, Buildings, and Construction

**Objective: Develop low carbon, efficient and healthy campus infrastructure**

Flinders will make ongoing investments over the coming decade, including embarking on a major targeted refurbishment of its existing building stock. This presents an opportunity to develop infrastructure that uses less fossil fuel-based energy and natural resources, and to improve wellbeing and comfort levels for students and staff. Through operations and capital development, we will take direct action on climate change addressing our own GHG emissions reductions. We will maintain, verify and publicly report GHG emissions. We will also work across Flinders to scale up and embed sustainability into design guidelines and certification, prohibit new natural gas infrastructure, implement energy efficiency improvements, and maintain 100% renewable electricity.

Initiatives and actions:

- Maintain 100% renewable electricity supply for South Australia via onsite and power purchase agreements, offset Northern Territory operations via renewable energy certificates (owned by PFD through 2030).
- Major projects minimum rating of 5 Star Green Star and/or Gold WELL Certification (owned by PFD by 2024), reducing the emissions intensity of capital works (including construction) by 25%.

- Embed and refine sustainability considerations through Design Guidelines and Standards (owned by PFD by 2024).
- No new natural gas (from 2024) and electrification transition as part of all renewals (owned by PFD by 2030)
- Replacement of 80% Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) refrigerants with low-global warming potential (GWP) alternatives through maintenance and replacement cycles, primarily via chillers and heat pumps (owned by PFD by 2030)
- Energy efficiency improved by 20% and reduction of stationary diesel fuel (generator) emissions by 30% (owned by PFD by 2030).
- Ensure the effective and efficient use, planning, and allocation of University space, buildings and infrastructure (owned by PFD by 2024).
- Develop energy storage to support electrification within demand constraints (owned by PFD by 2030).
- Develop, and implement energy rating system focused on the operations, building tuning and maintenance of existing buildings (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Explore more efficient allocation of classrooms, timetabling and delivery to minimise travel, develop formal targets on the efficient and timely use of spaces (owned by Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Students by 2026).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Minimum 5-Star Green Star and/or Gold WELL rating achieved and life-cycle-assessment for new major builds.
- Organisational GHG emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e) and emissions per full-time student.
- Renewable energy generation and consumption (as % of demand).

## 2.2 Procurement and Supply

**Objective: Develop a low environmental impact responsible supply chain**

Universities have significant purchasing power and can influence supply chains by choosing environmentally and socially preferable products, as such we will procure low and carbon-neutral products and services.

Initiatives and actions:

- Review sustainability criteria in supplier tenders and selection evaluation of goods and services, with a focus on Tier 1 suppliers, with an aim to decarbonise our supply chain in line with our overall emissions reduction targets (owned by Finance and Procurement Services, by 2030).
- Prioritise the purchase of environmentally and socially preferable products and from businesses that demonstrate ESG principles (owned by Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).
- Monitor information technology and cloud-related GHG emissions, to identify and prioritise the most effective opportunities to reduce the carbon intensity of campus-based and cloud services (owned by IDS and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).
- Spend analysis to assess major supply chain categories and prioritise opportunities for improvement based on GHG emissions (owned by PFD and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2030).

- Develop and deliver training to staff on sustainable procurement practices and evaluation criteria (owned by Finance and Procurement Services, by 2026).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Sustainability principles are embedded in the University's tendering and procurement processes.
- Number of partnerships with suppliers that demonstrate sustainable and ethical practices (e.g. carbon-neutral, repurposed, reused, recycled, take back scheme, local, socially ethical, indigenous, and slave-free suppliers).
- GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions of supply chain (goods and services).

## 2.3 Transport

### **Objective: Move towards sustainable transport**

Transport is another a major source of emissions and is crucial to integrating and connecting Flinders to the local community. We can reap benefits from developing sustainable transportation systems to activate our campuses and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. We recognise the critical role of in-person collaboration in learning, innovation, career growth, and supporting overseas work. However, the challenge posed by aviation's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions represents one of the most formidable issues for higher education. This issue has become even more pressing as the sector has seen a significant rebound in post-COVID times. Specific actions include an integrated transport plan, fully electrifying our fleet and loop buses, reducing commuting emissions and addressing business travel.

Initiatives and actions:

- Electrify the small vehicle fleet (by 2026) and 90% of the entire fleet, and campus loop bus services (owned by PFD by 2030).
- Enhance public transport hubs and bus stops (owned by PFD through 2030).
- Enhance and integrate cycling and walking infrastructure to ensure safety and accessibility from various entryways to both Bedford Park and Sturt campuses. Additionally, amplify the amenities across locations to further promote and facilitate active transportation methods (owned by PFD through 2030).
- Adopt a unified EV support strategy and support the ongoing adoption of low emissions vehicles by our staff, students and visitors by providing adequate charging infrastructure at university and rural and remote sites, where appropriate, to include fast charging and bi-directional charging infrastructure (owned by PFD through 2030).
- Develop progressive business models that make charging for staff and students who pay for parking either "free with parking fee" or "at university cost" for the energy consumed (owned by PFD by 2026).
- Where possible through University planning and policy, support cost-effective and convenient access to public transportation that allows staff and students to access our campus locations. Explore incentives, partly subsidised and/or bulk purchased transportation approaches for high-use routes infrastructure (owned by PFD through 2030).
- Through collective interventions, support the reduction in employee vehicle commuting emissions by 15% (owned by PFD, International, Colleges and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).

- Participate in Climate Action Barometer for International Education™, a tool to help international offices track, measure, and report on their climate action (owned by International by 2025).
- Reduce business air travel emissions, by increasing visibility of emissions, updating travel policy, developing onboarding materials, demonstrating cost-savings, targeted approach to address equity considerations, research and conference partnerships to facilitate hybrid options (owned by PFD, International, Colleges and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).
- Develop an offsetting approach to address business travel emissions and organisational emissions with reputable nature-based Australian projects (owned by International, Colleges and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).
- Conduct a survey every 3 years to gather and track Flinders commuting behaviour (owned by PFD by 2025).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Increase in the use of public transport, the loop bus, walking and cycling (from baseline).
- Reduction in transport related GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions.
- Decrease in air travel emissions per FTE staff.
- EV vehicles as % of fleet.

## 2.4 Water

### **Objective: Cultivate water-wise campuses**

With South Australia being one of the driest parts of the globe, water conservation and reuse are crucial in maintaining and protecting finite water supplies. Innovation opportunities exist to utilise stormwater in new ways at Bedford Park, incorporating productive elements into the landscape. Specific actions are to reduce mains water usage by connecting to an integrated water recycling system and design all new buildings to integrate dual reticulation.

Initiatives and actions:

- Reduce mains water usage by 20% connecting to an integrated water recycling system (owned by PFD from 2024).
- All new buildings to have dual recycled water reticulation and water efficiency (owned by PFD from 2024).
- Use green infrastructure and low impact development (LID) practices to help mitigate stormwater run-off impacts and treat rainwater as a resource rather than as a waste product (owned by PFD from 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Reduce water use on campus and increase in % recycled water.
- Improved water efficiency in landscape maintenance and increased utilisation of stormwater (from baseline).

## 2.5 Resource Recovery

### **Objective: Maximise resource efficiency and recovery**

Like small-scale cities university precincts produce significant waste streams. Resource recovery campaigns can engage the entire campus community to contribute to tangible sustainability goals.

We will address resource recovery, including high-value deposit materials (like deposit containers) and 100% compostable food packaging. We will scale up this ambition into our building materials, where waste minimisation represents a significant emissions reduction in areas such as recycled and reused materials, with an understanding that the optimal level of waste is no waste.

Initiatives and actions:

- Reduction in waste by 30% with a focus on audits, education, infrastructure and signage (owned by PFD by 2030).
- Recovery of high-value deposit recycling materials (e.g. deposit containers), electronics and reduction of hazardous and medical waste (owned by PFD by 2024).
- Implement 100% commercially compostable food packaging (PFD by 2025).
- Single-use disposable plastic eliminated across food services and retailers (owned by PFD from 2024).
- Divert construction and demolition waste from landfill and/or incinerator to reuse (owned by PFD from 2025).
- Leverage contractual arrangement to enforce better waste management practices among campus retailers (owned by PFD by 2024).
- Identify and pursue opportunities to apply circular economy principles on campus with Flinders' research (owned by PFD by 2026).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Waste to landfill (including to energy), reuse, recycling and organics (volume and %)
- Contamination rate in recycling streams and recyclables in waste streams (%)
- Retailers reuse or use 100% compostable serving ware (# of compliant retailers).

## 2.6 Food and Dining

**Objective: Nourish people and planet**

Flinders University is committed to promoting a broad range of culturally diverse, locally available, affordably priced healthy and environmentally sustainable food options. We will limit the availability and promotion of unhealthy foods and supporting individuals in adopting healthy diets by providing information in retail food outlets (e.g. through product and shelf-labelling) (by 2025).

Initiatives and actions:

- Ensure that retailers make available food and beverage products that are grown organically, locally produced and maintain animal welfare and/or plant based (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Develop initiatives to support sustainable food systems and minimise food waste (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Maintain and promote healthy, local food security and wellness by hosting a weekly community market and community garden for student use (owned by PFD by 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Food choice availability including organic, vegan, vegetarian, unprocessed, locally sourced (# of participant retailers).

## 2.7 Climate Risk

### **Objective: Adapt to a changing climate**

We all need to be climate ready. Extreme weather events (such as heavy rainfall, heatwaves, bushfires, drought, stronger storms) are likely to influence all aspects of life. Here are just some areas in which Flinders University will see the effects:

- academic life in the delivery of teaching
- research and examinations
- student recruitment
- profitability of investments
- viability of campus assets
- wellbeing and safety of students, academics, and support staff.

We are focused on understanding and adapting to the multifaceted impacts of climate change. Our efforts will centre on addressing risks and adapting to changing conditions, while preserving and regenerating campus landscapes and biodiversity.

Initiatives and actions:

- Conduct climate risk assessment (owned by PFD by 2025)
- Ensure sustainability and climate adaptation principles (including bushfire, extreme heat and weather, and flooding prevention) are integrated into the master planning process (owned by PFD by 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Reduction, or at least mitigation, of climate risks assessed as high or extreme.

## 2.8 Landscapes and Biodiversity

### **Objective: Preserve and increase biodiverse, ecologically appropriate, and productive campus landscapes**

In the face of the changing climate, we have a renewed focus on landscapes and biodiversity. Our Bedford Park campus offers 122 hectares of beautiful natural environment, and we have an opportunity and responsibility to caretake, re-introduce native flora and manage invasive species. Flinders will demonstrate environmental stewardship of the campus natural environment, preserving and enhancing biodiversity assets. We recognise the unique and specialist knowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can offer in this area. In consultation with the University community, campus landscapes will be designed and maintained as usable, functional spaces, but ones which require low inputs of non-renewable resources and potable water.

Initiatives and actions:

- Conduct a biodiversity assessment baseline, to identify biodiversity metrics, such as plant able area, trees and species, tree canopy and understory, number of endangered and vulnerable species and/or areas, and areas of significance on land owned or managed

by the institution and re-introduce native flora and fauna currently absent in key biodiversity areas (owned by PFD by 2025).

- Through an integrated pest management plan, actively manage, monitor invasive species as well as the use of herbicide, pesticide and fertilisers (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Adopt 'no net loss' development (with 'net gain' outcomes incorporated in all projects) adhered to across all campuses (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Involvement of indigenous knowledges in land management (owned by PFD and Office of Indigenous Strategy and Engagement from 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Upward trends in campus biodiversity indicators (flora species by type, number, endemic, non-endemic).
- Reduction in herbicide, pesticide and fertiliser use on campus.
- Number of significant trees registered.

## **Strategic Pillar 3 – Partnerships and Engagement**

Flinders University's engagement with business, industry, government, wider society and our own Flinders community is central to improve lives and address the needs of society.

### **3.1 Student, Alumni and Staff Campus Engagement**

**Objective: Sustainable behaviours are embedded into the culture of Flinders University**

We will integrate sustainability into the campus culture, with learning experiences outside the formal workflows and curriculum through outreach that sets a positive tone for our University. Through employee engagement, training and development programs we can model behaviour and share knowledge with and for students to expand the sustainability influence. We will equip employees with the tools, knowledge, and motivation to adopt behaviour changes that promote sustainability through staff development and inductions.

Initiatives and actions:

- Include sustainability in student orientation, alumni engagement, Flinders' events, curricular and extracurricular and outreach campaigns (owned by DVC Students and PFD, 2025).
- Coordinate an ongoing peer-to-peer sustainability outreach and education program for students (owned by FUSA and Student Council).
- Include sustainability in staff professional development and inductions (owned by People and Culture, date TBD).
- Identify and align relevant sustainability initiatives and activities with the Flinders University Wellbeing Plan and the Indigenous Workforce Strategy (owned by People and Culture, Deans of People and Resources, Academic and Student leaders from each college, Health Counselling and Disability Services (HCD), OISE, Flinders University Student Association (FUSA), from 2025).
- Champion diversity, equal opportunity and respect for people from all nations, cultures and backgrounds (owned by People and Culture).



- Identify and align relevant sustainability initiatives and activities with Flinders' Reconciliation Action Plan, and the inclusion of indigenous knowledges and input into sustainability initiatives (owned by PFD by 2025).
- Assess campus sustainability culture with focus on sustainability values, behaviours and beliefs (owned by PFD from 2025).
- Map and showcase sustainability initiatives on campus (owned by PFD by 2025).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Increased levels of knowledge, responsibility and engagement amongst staff and students as measured in a survey every 3 years.
- Increase in the number of student-led sustainability projects and initiatives.

## 3.2 Community and Public Engagement

**Objective: Grow community engagement for sustainable impact**

In addition to our on-campus efforts, we will contribute toward sustainability broadly through engagement with local communities.

Initiatives and actions:

- Advocate for public policies that support campus sustainability or advance sustainability (through 2030)
- Support improvement the sustainability performance of affiliated hospitals (owned by PFD, from 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Increased collaborative local and regional sustainability project and formal network involvement.

## 3.3 Business and Industry Partnerships

**Objective: Strengthen collaboration with business, government and industry**

Through partnerships and engagements with community in the governmental, not-for-profit and business, we harness political, financial, social, and technological resources to address societal needs and begin offsetting difficult-to-abate emissions such as aviation. We will engage with the community, government, industry and other universities to advance sustainability and advocate for public policies where gaps are identified.

Initiatives and actions:

- Maintain at least one (of each) governmental, industry, and inter-campus partnership to advance sustainability research and collaboration (owned by Corporate Services, through 2030).
- Work with partners to investigate the development of an innovative carbon offset project or project that follows an existing carbon reduction protocol.

Measuring sustainability impact:

- At least one partnership in each sector – community, industry, inter-university.

## Strategic Pillar 4 – Leadership and Governance

We acknowledge that we must urgently confront significant challenges, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and social inequalities. Consequently, we intend to integrate these pressing issues into our strategic agenda. We are steadfast in our commitment to aligning our activities with the decarbonisation roadmap, responsible investment and sustainable procurement, and believe in a participatory approach to decision-making, involving all relevant stakeholders in our processes. Alongside this, we pledge to uphold the highest standards in our external reporting practices.

### 4.1 Participatory Governance and Strategic Integration

#### **Objective: Lead sustainability across Flinders**

We are committed to taking practical action, and we recognise that our leadership, decision making and governance must embody fundamental commitments to sustainability. Our leadership and governance, reflects our commitment to excellence and our dedication to sustainability, inclusivity, and global responsibility.

Initiatives and actions:

- Inclusion of sustainability vision, decision making and values at the highest level for Flinders University Strategic Agenda (owned by Council and SET, from 2025).
- Climate Positive – 1.5C Science-Based Targets (scope 1 and 2), -25% by 2030 from reputable nature-based Australian offsets, engage our operations and supply chain to address indirect emissions (owned by Council and SET, by 2030).
- Maintain Sustainability Committee with senior-level executive, student and staff membership and representation from all Colleges, with open and ongoing invitation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation (owned by Corporate Services, through 2030).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Inclusion of Sustainability Principles in University Strategic Plan
- Maintenance of Sustainability Committee or Advisory Group.

### 4.2 Driving Responsible Investment

#### **Objective: Realise and demonstrate responsible Investment**

Sustainable finance is an increasingly influential force in business and is defined as investment decisions that consider the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors of an economic activity or project. Flinders University is committed to responsible investment and understands the importance of accountability, disclosure and transparency. We are also committed to maintaining ongoing funding to realise the 2030 Sustainability Strategy and corresponding initiatives.

Initiatives and actions:

- Maintain an investment portfolio that considers broader ESG factors and aims to screen out, disclose and divest from potential and existing investments based on responsible investment factors, such as fossil fuel companies (owned by Finance and Investment Committee, 2024)
- Maintain dedicated funding for campus sustainability projects (owned by PDF, through 2030).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Operation of a revolving sustainability fund.

## 4.3 Reporting

### **Objective: Advance sustainability reporting and recognition**

As a trusted public organisation, reporting is of paramount importance. Sustainability reporting through comprehensive data quality and assurance enhances stakeholder confidence, minimises reputational risks, and increases the overall value of sustainability activities. By prioritising accurate and reliable reporting, we will strengthen our commitment to sustainability and drive positive change within our campus communities and beyond.

Initiatives and actions:

- Maintain verifiable greenhouse gas inventory, track progress, identify and develop opportunities (owned by PFD to 2030).
- Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS®) Reporting (owned by PFD, from 2024).
- Sustainability Ranking Submissions (owned by Strategy and Performance & PFD, from 2024).

Measuring sustainability impact:

- Annual GHG reporting, STARS® (3-yearly)
- Improved sustainability rankings.

\*All initiatives will be developed as discrete projects, and be considered, approved and delivered under existing University processes.

# Appendix: 2030 Sustainability Strategy – Summary Objectives, Actions and Measuring Impact

Flinders University's Sustainability Vision	
Principle 1 – Empowering a Sustainable Society	
Principle 2 – Taking Climate Action	
Principle 3 – Whole-of-Flinders Approach	
Strategic Pillar 1 – Learning, Teaching, and Research	
Objective 1.1 Learning and Teaching	
Flinders graduates are sustainability literate and prepared to lead transformational change within their organisations and communities	
Proposed Initiatives and Actions	Measuring Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review sustainability in the graduate outcomes, topics and courses across the University</li> <li>• Assess and offer sustainability-focused and inclusive undergraduate and graduate-level degree courses</li> <li>• Develop a sustainability teaching grant from existing funds that targets interdisciplinary approaches to achieve campus sustainability outcomes</li> <li>• Assess and track the sustainability literacy of students during orientation and graduation, and by tracking the societal contributions of Alumni</li> <li>• Formally designate sustainability courses across college in the form of an identifying symbol (e.g., a sustainability filter)</li> <li>• Leverage existing teaching and research outputs to create interdisciplinary sustainability educational opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of graduates in sustainability-focused undergraduate and graduate-level degree courses.</li> <li>• Number of student-completions for sustainability-focused and inclusive topics.</li> <li>• Number of topics and degree courses offering sustainability-focused and inclusive content.</li> <li>• Increased levels of knowledge, literacy and involvement amongst students.</li> </ul>
Objective 1.2 Research and Innovation	
Flinders research activities are helping society solve complex sustainability challenges	
Proposed Initiatives and Actions	Measuring Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map college and Institute research strengths, grants, impacts and partnerships aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals through the Research Now portal</li> <li>• Promote, publicly communicate and support sustainability-related research</li> <li>• Explore and consider opportunities to use the campus, infrastructure and operations as a living laboratory for applied student learning and research for sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantity of sustainability-related research projects and publications aligned to SDGs</li> <li>• Increased levels of funding secured by research units in the areas of environmental and social impact research</li> <li>• Number of demonstration research projects applied on campus</li> </ul>
Strategic Pillar 2 – Facilities and Operations	
Objective 2.1 Energy, Buildings, and Construction	
Develop low carbon, efficient and healthy campus infrastructure	
Proposed Initiatives and Actions	Measuring Impact

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain 100% renewable electricity supply for South Australian and Northern Territory Operations</li> <li>• Major projects minimum rating of 5 Star Green Star and/or Gold WELL Certification (by 2024), reducing the emissions intensity of capital works (including construction) by 25%</li> <li>• Embed and refine sustainability considerations through Design Guidelines and Standards (by 2024)</li> <li>• No new natural gas (from 2024) and electrification transition as part of all renewals (2030)</li> <li>• Replacement of 80% Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) refrigerants with low-global warming potential (GWP) alternatives through maintenance and replacement cycles, primarily via chillers and heat pumps</li> <li>• Energy efficiency improved by 20%, reduction of stationary diesel fuel (generator) emissions by 30% (by 2030)</li> <li>• Ensure the effective and efficient use, planning, and allocation of University space, buildings and infrastructure</li> <li>• Develop energy storage to support electrification within demand constraints (by 2030)</li> <li>• Develop, and implement energy rating system focused on the operations, building tuning and maintenance of existing buildings</li> <li>• Explore more efficient allocation of classrooms, timetabling and delivery to minimise travel, develop formal targets on the efficient and timely use of spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum 5-Star Green Star rating and/or Gold WELL Certification achieved and lifecycle-assessment for new major builds</li> <li>• Organisational GHG emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>e) and per full-time student</li> <li>• Renewable energy generation and consumption (as % of demand)</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.2 Procurement and Supply</b> Develop a low environmental impact responsible supply chain	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review sustainability criteria in supplier tenders and selection evaluation of goods and services, with a focus on Tier 1 suppliers, ensure our supply chain decarbonises in line with our overall emissions reductions</li> <li>• Prioritise the purchase of environmentally and socially preferable goods and services with take-back schemes, environmentally friendly certifications, and post-consumer recycled materials</li> <li>• Monitor information technology and cloud-related GHG emissions, to identify and prioritise the most effective opportunities to reduce the carbon intensity of campus-based and cloud services (owned by IDS and Finance and Procurement Services, from 2025).</li> <li>• Spend analysis to assess major supply chain categories and prioritise opportunities for improvement based on GHG emissions</li> <li>• Develop and deliver training to staff on sustainable procurement practices and evaluation criteria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability principles are embedded in the University's tendering and procurement processes</li> <li>• Number of contracts with suppliers that demonstrate sustainable and ethical practices</li> <li>• Supply chain (goods and services) GHG (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emissions</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.3 Transport</b> Transition towards sustainable transport	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electrify the small vehicle fleet (by 2026) and 90% of the entire fleet, and campus loop bus services.</li> <li>• Enhance public transport hubs and bus stops.</li> <li>• Enhance and integrate cycling and walking infrastructure to ensure safety and accessibility from various entryways to both Bedford Park and Sturt campuses. Additionally, amplify the amenities across locations to further promote and facilitate active transportation methods.</li> <li>• Adopt a unified EV support strategy and support the ongoing adoption of low emissions vehicles by our staff, students, and visitors by providing adequate charging infrastructure at university and rural and remote sites, where appropriate, to include fast charging and bi-directional charging infrastructure.</li> <li>• Develop progressive business models that make charging for staff and students who pay for parking either “free with parking fee” or “at university cost” for the energy consumed.</li> <li>• Where possible through university planning and policy, support cost-effective and convenient access to public transportation that allows staff and students to access our campus locations. Explore incentives, partly subsidised and/or bulk purchased transportation approaches for high-use routes infrastructure.</li> <li>• Through collective interventions, support the reduction in employee vehicle commuting emissions by 15%.</li> <li>• Participate in Climate Action Barometer for International Education™, a tool to help international offices track, measure, and report on their climate action.</li> <li>• Reduce business air travel emissions, by increasing visibility of emissions, updating travel policy, developing onboarding materials, demonstrating cost-savings, targeted approach to address equity considerations, research, and conference partnerships to facilitate hybrid options.</li> <li>• Develop an offsetting approach to address business travel emissions and organisational emissions with reputable nature-based Australian projects.</li> <li>• Conduct a survey every 3 years to gather and track Flinders commuting behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the use of public transport, the loop bus, walking and cycling (from baseline)</li> <li>• Transport related GHG (CO2e) emissions</li> <li>• Decrease in air travel kilometres per FTE staff</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.4 Water</b> Cultivating water-wise campuses	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce mains water usage by 20% connecting to an integrated water recycling system</li> <li>• All new buildings to have dual recycled water reticulation and water efficiency</li> <li>• Use green infrastructure and low impact development (LID) practices to help mitigate stormwater run-off impacts and treat rainwater as a resource rather than as a waste product</li> </ul>	<b>Measuring Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced water-use on campus and increased % recycled</li> <li>• Improved water efficiency in landscape and increased utilisation of stormwater (from baseline)</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.5 Resource Recovery</b> Maximising resource efficiency and recovery	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in waste by 30% with a focus on audits, education, infrastructure and signage</li> <li>• Recovery of high-value deposit recycling materials (like deposit containers) and electronics and reduction of hazardous and medical waste</li> <li>• Implement 100% commercially compostable food packaging</li> <li>• Single-use disposable plastic eliminated across food services and retailers</li> <li>• Divert construction and demolition waste from the landfill and/or incinerator to reuse</li> <li>• Leverage contractual arrangement to enforce better waste management practices among campus retailers</li> <li>• Identify and pursue opportunities to apply circular economy principles on campus with Flinders' research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste to landfill (including to energy), reuse, recycling and organics (volume and %)</li> <li>• Contamination rate in recycling streams and recyclables in waste streams (%)</li> <li>• Retailers reuse or use 100% compostable serving ware (# of compliant retailers)</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective 2.6 Food and Dining</b> Nourish people and planet	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that catering and retailers make available food and beverage products that are grown organically, locally produced and maintain animal welfare and/or plant based</li> <li>• Develop initiatives to support sustainable food systems and minimise food waste</li> <li>• Maintain and promote healthy, local food security and wellness by hosting a weekly community market and community garden for use by Flinders University Students Environmental Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food choice availability including organic, vegan, vegetarian, unprocessed, locally sourced (# of participant retailers)</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.7 Climate Risk</b> Adapting to climate change	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct climate risk assessment</li> <li>• Ensure sustainability and climate adaptation principles (including bushfire, extreme heat and weather, and flooding prevention) are integrated into the master planning process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate risks (assessed as high or extreme) are reduced or mitigated</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2.8 Landscapes and Biodiversity</b> Preserve and increase biodiverse landscapes	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a biodiversity assessment baseline, to identify biodiversity metrics, such as plantable area, trees and species, tree canopy and understory, number of endangered and vulnerable species and/or areas, and areas of significance on land owned or managed by the institution and re-introduce native flora and fauna currently absent in key biodiversity areas</li> <li>• Through an integrated pest management plan, actively manage, monitor invasive species as well as the use of herbicide, pesticide and fertilisers</li> <li>• Adopt 'no net loss' development (with 'net gain' outcomes incorporated in all projects) adhered to across all campuses</li> <li>• Involvement of indigenous knowledges in land management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upward trends in campus biodiversity indicators (plant species by type, endemic, non-endemic)</li> <li>• Reduction in herbicide, pesticide and fertiliser use on campus</li> <li>• Significant trees registered</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Pillar 3 – Partnerships and Engagement</b>	

<b>Objective 3.1 Student, Alumni and Staff Campus Engagement</b> Sustainable behaviours are embedded into the culture of Flinders University	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include sustainability in student orientation, alumni engagement, Flinders' events, curricular and extracurricular and outreach campaigns</li> <li>• Coordinate an ongoing peer-to-peer sustainability outreach and education program for students</li> <li>• Identify and align relevant sustainability initiatives and activities with Flinders University Wellbeing Plan and the Indigenous Workforce Strategy</li> <li>• Champion diversity and equal opportunity and respect people from all nations, cultures and backgrounds</li> <li>• Assess campus sustainability culture with focus on sustainability values, behaviours and beliefs</li> <li>• Identify and align relevant sustainability initiatives and activities with Flinders' Reconciliation Action Plan, and the inclusion of indigenous knowledges and input into sustainability initiatives.</li> <li>• Include sustainability in staff professional development and inductions</li> <li>• Map and showcase sustainability initiatives on campus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased levels of knowledge, responsibility and engagement amongst staff and students as measured in a survey every 3 years</li> <li>• Increase in the number of student-led sustainability projects and initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3.2 Community and Public Engagement</b> Grow community engagement for sustainable impact	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for public policies that support campus sustainability or advance sustainability</li> <li>• Support improvement of the sustainability performance of affiliated hospitals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased collaborative local and regional sustainability project and formal network involvement</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 3.3 Business and Industry Partnerships</b> Strengthening collaboration with business and industry	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain at least one (of each) partnerships across community, governmental, industry and between universities to advance sustainability research and collaboration</li> <li>• Work with partners to investigate development of an innovative carbon offset project or project that follows an existing carbon reduction protocol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one partnership in each sector – community, industry, inter-university</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Pillar 4 – Leadership and Governance</b>	
<b>Objective 4.1 Participatory Governance and Strategic Integration</b> Leading sustainability across Flinders	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of sustainability vision, decision making and values at the highest level for Flinders University Strategic Agenda</li> <li>• Climate Positive – 1.5C Science-Based Targets (scope 1 and 2), -25% by 2030 from reputable nature-based Australian offsets, engage our operations and supply change chain to address indirect emissions</li> <li>• Maintain a Sustainability Committee with senior-level executive, student and staff membership and representation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of Sustainability Principles in University Strategic Agenda</li> <li>• Maintenance of Sustainability Committee or Advisory Group</li> </ul>



from all colleges, and an open and ongoing invitation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation	
<b>Objective 4.2 Driving Responsible Investment</b> Realise and demonstrate responsible investment	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an investment portfolio that considers broader ESG factors and aims to screen out, disclose and divest from potential and existing investments based on responsible investment factors, such as fossil fuel companies</li> <li>• Maintain dedicated funding for campus sustainability projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operation of a revolving sustainability fund</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 4.3 Reporting</b> Advancing sustainability reporting and recognition	
<b>Proposed Initiatives and Actions</b>	<b>Measuring Impact</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain verifiable greenhouse gas inventory, track progress, identify and develop opportunities</li> <li>• Sustainability Tracking, Assessment &amp; Rating System Reporting</li> <li>• Sustainability Ranking Submissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual GHG reporting, STARS® (3-yearly) and rankings submission</li> <li>• Increased sustainability rankings</li> </ul>

*\*All new initiatives and activities will be developed as discrete proposals, projects or business cases, and be considered, approved and delivered according to existing University processes and relevant governance.*



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**Grow, Eat, Learn**

[facebook.com/groweatlearn](https://facebook.com/groweatlearn)