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Letter From the Director

UConn has long been a higher education leader in sustainability and has made transparency a priority in reporting about our efforts. This report not only outlines UConn’s most recent performance as we work towards our 2020 Campus Sustainability goals, but it also uses graphics to clearly show progress made, or ground lost, over the past two years.

In order to track these trends, we’ve continued to highlight certain metrics from the University’s current responses to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) survey. STARS sets uniform standards for our sector that are developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), and survey responses are audited for accuracy.

Beyond the numbers in this report, UConn has had noteworthy accomplishments these past two years:

- **January 2017** – In a message to the University community, President Herbst reiterated UConn’s commitment to sustainability as a core value and endorsed the *2020 Vision Plan for Campus Sustainability and Climate Leadership*.

- **February 2017** – President Herbst became a member of Second Nature’s Climate Leadership Steering Committee, joining 17 other presidents and chancellors of colleges and universities.

- **June 2017** – UConn became a charter member of the “We Are Still In” coalition, now consisting of more than 3,600 U.S. businesses, cities, states and universities pledging to uphold the commitments of the Paris Climate Agreement.

- **Spring 2018** – UConn held its first-ever Metanoia on the Environment, which featured 44 events held throughout the 2018 spring semester.

- **July 2018** – UConn joined the University Climate Change Coalition (UC3,) a consortium of 18 prestigious North American research universities working together to apply research and share knowledge to advance multi-sector climate action and resilience.

- **August 2018** – UConn is #3 in the Sierra Club’s annual “Cool Schools” rankings. This continues our consistent top 10 standing among the nation’s greenest colleges.

- **October 2018** – The University Senate passed a three-credit environmental literacy general education requirement that becomes effective for all UConn graduates next fall.

- **Fall 2018** – A letter from the USG Executive Committee, and EcoHusky and ECOalition student groups (later endorsed by the Senate), urges the Presidential Search Committee to consider only candidates with a demonstrated commitment to sustainability in their previous positions.

UConn is making real progress toward achieving ambitious goals that inspire and institutionalize best practices, innovative programs, and tangible projects creating “living laboratories” across our campus. Many of these activities have been at the intersection of sustainability’s three tenets: environmental, social, and economic responsibility.

We will continue to make this growth a priority and challenge ourselves to push beyond our 2020 goals. In fact, during 2019, we’ll begin the collaborative process of meeting with multiple University departments and stakeholders in order to set strategic targets for 2025, the next interim Climate Action Plan milestone.

To quote from the UConn student-written and Senate-endorsed letter mentioned above, “academic institutions—as centers of learning and innovation for the next generation of leaders—must help lead the charge.” UConn accepts this mission. We must, and will, do our part to ensure a clean, healthy, prosperous, and more sustainable world for future generations.

Best Regards,

Rich Miller

Office of Environmental Policy
In December 2016, President Susan Herbst endorsed UConn's 2020 Vision for Campus Sustainability & Climate Leadership.

To read the entire plan, visit:

Legend

- Goal Achieved
- Progress Made From 2016
- Regression From 2016
Green Building & Energy

23 LEED® certified or registered buildings

LEED Gold® standard for all projects over $5M

LEED® Silver-certified Innovation Partnership Building

314,161 ft²
land disconnected from storm drainage, protecting surface water quality & natural hydrology through low impact development

100% renewable energy purchased to power regional campuses

85,000 kWh

Goal >2MW

Goal: Complete Campus-wide Retrofit
greenhouse gas emissions reduced from campus wide LED re-lamping projects since 2015
equivalent to ~1.8% of Storrs campus annual greenhouse gas emissions

Office of Environmental Policy
“The decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement does not mean that we as a university should abdicate our own responsibility to do what we believe is best for our state, the nation, and the world with respect to our environment.”

- UConn President Susan Herbst

Total campus greenhouse gas emissions continue to decline despite an increase in campus building square footage & student enrollment.

Goal 20% reduction from 2007 baseline

- 1.8% since 2016

16.7%

UConn’s annual greenhouse gas reduction, compared to a 2007 baseline

22%

electric or hybrid vehicles in UConn’s light duty fleet

Goal 25%

1.4M

annual passenger trips on University buses

Goal 1.5M
Sustainable Dining & Waste Diversion

8 Green Restaurant Certified Dining Halls on campus

75% food waste from 6 of 8 dining halls is converted to renewable biofuel energy & compost via anaerobic digestion by Quantum Biopower

49% Local & community-based, or 3rd party verified food purchases

Newly-renovated Putnam Dining Hall

campus-wide recycling & trash bin standardization efforts underway

7,000 Reusable recycling bags issued to resident students for easy transport of recyclables to central waste collection areas

Office of Environmental Policy
Water Conservation

475,000 gallons per day saved by the Reclaimed Water Facility during peak demand periods

51% reduction in avg. daily potable water use per campus user since 2005

65 water bottle refill stations installed to encourage reusable water bottles

Purchasing

40% of UConn’s electronics purchases are EPEAT Gold rated
On February 5th, 2018, the University Senate agreed to integrate environmental literacy into UConn’s general education requirements. Approximately 41% of faculty & staff researchers involved in sustainability research at UConn offer sustainability related courses. Sustainability course offerings in UConn’s course catalog, approximately ~17% of all courses.

Campus & Public Engagement

81 Certified Green Offices

Goal 100 offices

1,159 OEP social media followers

Annual sustainability events reach thousands of people each year!
Open Space & Farmland Preservation

Hillside Environmental Education Park (HEEP)
- 165-acre preservation area located on UConn’s North Campus
- 31 acres of wetlands restored on remediated landfill site
- Red, yellow, & blue marked trails added in 2018
- New trailhead & interpretive signage
- Removal of invasive species ongoing

Spring Manor Farm
- 35-acre farmland mitigation project
- Maintained UConn’s total acreage dedicated to farmland following the extension of Discovery Drive

New trail maps located at trailheads of the HEEP
Top Performer Recognition

UConn is nationally and internationally recognized for its efforts in sustainability by the following organizations and publications.

- Ranked #3 nationally in 2018
- Ranked #4 nationally in 2018
- Ranked #7 most sustainable campus in the world in 2018

#5 Overall Top Performer, Rated STARS Gold in 2018

2018 AASHE Sustainable Campus Index

- #2 Top Performer in Campus Engagement
- #2 Top Performer in Food & Dining
- #2 Top Performer Water
- #3 Top Performer in Research
- #4 Top Performer in Public Engagement
- #8 Top Performer in Coordination & Planning
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