

International Alliance of Research Universities: Principles for Campus Sustainability

There is a growing international awareness that changes are necessary to ensure the long term sustainability of our global community. Universities have an important role in this change process, in particular through the development of the strategies and technologies that can help protect the environment, as well as promoting social justice and economic equity.

The International Alliance of Research Universities (IARU) acknowledges the important contributions its members make to sustainable development, but it also accepts that there is an obligation to lead the community by example. Therefore, the Alliance has agreed on the following principles related to the institutional performance of each University (consistent with the overall principles established for the IARU):

- 1) That Alliance members are committed to being world leaders in campus sustainability and to that end, will establish programs that promote best practice in institutional environmental performance, as well as developing synergies between education, research and the commitment to sustainability. While each University's program will be designed to meet its operational priorities, as well as its regional priorities and legal obligations, in general there will be an emphasis on the key issues of resource consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and biodiversity conservation.
- 2) That Alliance members are committed to developing environmental literacy among staff and students.
- 3) That programs will be developed that integrate, wherever practical, academic and operational activities to enhance campus environmental performance; as well as promoting practical research and teaching opportunities that improve the learning experience and foster environmental literacy.
- 4) That Alliance members will exchange relevant information and expertise on issues of campus sustainability and Education for Sustainability.
- 5) That Alliance members will establish appropriate indices for sustainability performance.

Objectives

The Alliance has agreed that the following objectives will be achieved over the period 2007-2008:

Target Date: 2007

1. The Alliance members will nominate an officer/s to act on their behalf in respect of campus sustainability matters involving Alliance partners. This group will establish an appropriate network for the exchange of relevant information, as well as identifying opportunities for collaboration on campus sustainability issues.

2. A review of campus sustainability programs will be completed, detailing current organisational structures, environmental priorities, key programs and initiatives that integrate academic and operational activities.
3. A campus sustainability exchange program open to students and staff will be established. This program will allow selected students and staff to work on campus sustainability projects at other member Universities as part of a practical learning/development experience. Though the focus will be on participation in campus sustainability programs, where practical the student exchanges could be part of a more formal education program with relevant credit provided.
4. Identify existing synergies between education, research and commitment to sustainability, with particular emphasis on exploiting opportunities for the exchange of information and expertise between Alliance members.
5. Identify the key environmental issues for each University, including major building programs and changes in the regulatory environment.

Target Date: 2008

6. Establish an index for measuring environmental performance across Alliance Universities. The measures to be agreed by the Presidents and annual reports to be presented to the annual Presidents' meeting.
7. Review sustainability education in the curriculum and provide to Presidents a report that details gaps and highlights good or best practice at Alliance Universities.
8. Complete case studies on best practice initiatives undertaken by Alliance members (including new technology and design), and identify opportunities for exchange of information or expertise.