

**Report on submissions on draft Climate Action Plan  
24 October 2019**

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**Building Massey's Climate Action capability**

In May the SLT committed the university to being net zero carbon by 2030. This means that we will make significant reductions in our GHG emissions from energy, transport, farms, buildings, and waste, and any remaining emissions will be off-set through tree planting or using other carbon off-set schemes.

The draft Climate Action Plan provides a broad framework for how the university will tackle its own GHG emissions as well as develop a robust teaching, research and engagement agenda around the climate crisis.

Around 150 staff and students have provided feedback on the draft Climate Action Plan either through providing a written submission or by attending one of nine meetings held across the campuses. Written submissions will be used to inform work streams around energy, buildings, transport, the farms and waste as we develop a more action-oriented Carbon Management Plan for consideration by SLT in April 2020.

There was very strong agreement that the university should target 2030 to be carbon neutral, with some staff and students asking the university to go faster and to declare a Climate Emergency.

**10 issues that staff and students want to see action on**

- **Leadership:**
  - Massey should be demonstrating more leadership, both in how we manage our campuses and in our academic research and teaching. There is support for development of an inclusive and collaborative model of engagement with staff and students
  - Make more visible what the university is doing operationally and in the academic space. Someone asked "why aren't our sustainability initiatives on the front page of the Massey website?"
- **Te Tiriti**
  - Develop stronger partnerships between Massey and mana whenua focusing on the concerns of mana whenua, and linking with Massey's local action around a just transition to a low carbon future
  - Demonstrate meaningful expression of kotahitanga and kaitiakitanga in environmental stewardship of our campuses
- **Decarbonised energy and buildings**
  - No new fossil fuel energy introduced to campus and a programme of replacement of all current natural gas boilers with non-fossil fuel energy over the next ten years
  - Retrofitting of buildings should include focus on low energy use through high levels of insulation, high performance glazing, thermal mass, LEDs etc
  - Explore use of renewable energy sources on campus e.g. solar, wind, biomass
  - Target high level of environmentally sustainable design for new builds
- **Low carbon mobility**
  - Staff and students want more joined up sustainable transport options including lobbying regional and national government for better low carbon transport infrastructure; support

- for car-pooling and shared transport for both commuting and business travel; support for e-vehicle charging on campus; infrastructure to support active transport
  - Support for reducing the impact of air travel – reduce unnecessary air travel wherever possible, and only after that off-set all flights. Investigate the use of a levy on all flights to fund offsets and to fund further sustainable transport options as VUW have introduced. There is some support for introducing a carbon budget for each staff member to act as a disincentive to unnecessary air travel.
  - Academic international air travel is acknowledged as a challenge but there is support for looking in more depth into how we can reduce this at an institutional level (for example through leave policies that allow for longer periods of off-shore travel, more research leave in New Zealand, development of a ‘slow research culture’).
  - Better videoconferencing facilities to reduce travel to other campuses for meetings and teaching, as well as connecting to international conferences and meetings
- **Zero Waste Campuses**
  - There is strong support for Massey developing Zero Waste Campuses, although there is a lack of clarity around what this would look like exactly
  - Use research/enterprise funds to upgrade Massey’s recycling and waste streams through use of living labs on each campus (e.g. connect Massey student research on black soldier flies/mealworms to deal with organic waste on campus)
  - Examine how we can use on-campus organic waste compost systems
- **Climate smart farms**
  - There were a variety of views expressed about how Massey should manage the GHG emissions associated with its farms. These include: a support for regenerative farming systems; planting all of the farms in trees; diversifying farming systems to reduce GHG emissions from livestock; using carbon farming (e.g. tree planting, biochar, biomass energy sources) as part of farm systems; keeping the focus on current technologies and management of stock/nutrients/pasture in line with conventional agricultural practice
  - It is recognised that the connection between the farms and the research and teaching needs of the Schools of Agriculture and Environment and Veterinary Sciences provides an added level of complexity that Massey’s other sources of GHG emission do not face.
- **Research and Teaching**
  - The Research SIF fund: ‘Solving Contemporary Societal Challenges’ was recognised as a useful support for the development of transdisciplinary platforms around climate change research. However academic staff asked for more focused support around acquisition of transdisciplinary skills and culture (e.g. through support for a community of practice) as well as recognition that the development of collaborative projects is extremely time consuming.
  - New courses on climate change were suggested in a range of subject areas. Many of these courses would benefit from cross-disciplinary and cross-College collaboration. There is a perception that it is difficult to develop these sorts of initiatives and that this needs to be addressed if new and innovative education opportunities are to be developed.
- **Low Carbon Living Labs**
  - Our Massey community are interested in developing both campus and externally focused living labs (in particular around cities and agriculture). However there is currently

extremely limited funding to develop these opportunities beyond relatively small scale labs. Develop a funding platform to enable campus and city-specific responses to regionally-specific climate crisis issues.

- ***Internal carbon pricing and budgeting as a mechanism to decarbonise the university***
  - Develop a transparent and accessible mechanism to allow the university to fully understand the carbon costs of its teaching, research, operational and engagement activities in order to develop responses that reward decarbonisation and penalise practices that produce GHG emissions. An internal carbon pricing mechanism could be developed to fund the transition to a low carbon university.
  
- ***Divestment***
  - Although not addressed in the draft Climate Action Plan there was support to include divestment from fossil fuels as part of our overall strategy

### **Next steps**

Staff and students are still welcome to provide their feedback on the draft Climate Action Plan and on this summary report of submissions by emailing [sustainability@massey.ac.nz](mailto:sustainability@massey.ac.nz)

An operationally focused Carbon Management Plan is currently being developed through work streams around energy, buildings, transport, waste and the farms. This plan will set targets for GHG emission reductions and identify policies and practices that will help us meet those targets. It will also explore how best to address any carbon off-setting that the university will undertake in order to be net zero carbon by 2030. A report recommending the steps the university needs to take meet our target to be net zero carbon by 2030 will be with the SLT in April 2020.