

# DRAFT Policy: Sustainability

## Purpose

This policy outlines the University's commitment to sustainability through an integrated Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework across all university operations, decision making and statutory compliance. It aims to foster a culture of sustainability, minimise environmental impact, promote social responsibility and uphold transparency and accountability.

## Overview

ANU recognises that sustainability is crucial for the well-being of present and future generations. As such, ANU is committed to operating in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, integrating sustainability principles and practices into decision-making processes, operations, research, teaching, and engagement.

As a Commonwealth Corporate entity ANU must comply with various regulatory and reporting requirements including:

- [\*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999\*](#) (s516A)
- [\*National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007\*](#) (NGER Act)
- [\*Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act\*](#) 2013 (Commonwealth Climate Disclosure)
- [\*Modern Slavery Act\*](#) 2018 (Section 15)

To ensure compliance, the University submits [annual reports](#) and [statements](#) addressing the above regulations and requirements.

## Scope

This policy applies to all activities and individuals associated with the ANU, including all staff, students, contractors, and visitors. It encompasses all sites, facilities, and operations under the control of ANU.

## Definitions

**Sustainability:** Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations, balancing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles.

**Ecologically sustainable development (ESD):** An approach to development that promotes conserving natural resources and using them sustainably. See Commonwealth

[Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) for full legislative definition.

**Social Responsibility:** Commitment to ethical conduct, social justice, human rights and community well-being in University decision-making.

**Governance and Transparency:** Accountability and transparency in sustainability performance reporting, and ethical decision-making that aligns with sustainability goals.

**Environmental Impact:** The effect of the University's activities, operations, and decisions on the natural environment, including ecosystems, and biodiversity, built environment, and resources such as energy and water, and emissions, including greenhouse gases and waste, and their interactions.

## Policy statement

The University demonstrates its commitment to sustainability through:

### 1. **Planning strategically for University-wide sustainability**, by:

- Integrating sustainability principles into the University strategic planning process in line with the [ANU Environmental Sustainability Plan](#)
- Identifying and mitigating sustainability related risks
- Setting and communicating sustainability measures and targets
- Establishing accountability and responsibility to achieve sustainability outcomes.

### 2. **Actively minimising environmental impact and enhance sustainability**, by:

- Disclosing and managing climate risks (physical and transition), reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate impacts. Conserving and efficiently managing resources including water and energy.
- Implementing circular economy principles, including reducing consumption wherever possible, waste reduction, maintaining and refurbishing materials, upcycling, recycling, and responsible waste disposal strategies.
- Protecting, restoring and enhancing biodiversity on campus
- Ensuring our site management engages respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and acknowledging and reflecting their continuing connection and ongoing customary and cultural obligation to care for their Country.
- Embedding ecologically sustainable design (ESD) principles into all maintenance, refurbishing and construction work.

### 3. **Committing to social responsibility** by:

- Ensuring diversity, equity, equality and inclusivity principles are integrated into University practices as per [Equal Opportunity](#) and [Disability](#) policies
- Connecting sustainability actions with staff and student [health and wellbeing](#) as per the [Work health and safety policy](#).
- Ensuring sustainability actions are consistent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in research, teaching, and engagement, and promoting reconciliation, cultural protocols and inclusion as per the [Reconciliation Action Plan](#).
- Engaging actively with Australian and international communities to support social equity, cultural exchange, and capacity-building in response to local and global needs.

**4. Incorporating sustainability principles in teaching and research by:**

- Encouraging and enabling integration of sustainability principles and practices across all ANU research activities.
- Supporting the integration of sustainability concepts and practices into teaching programs and courses across disciplines.
- Using the ANU campus and community as a living lab
- Offering staff education and training programs that foster sustainability knowledge such as inductions and LinkedIn Learning.

**5. Committing to good governance, accountability and transparency by:**

- Establishing and maintaining appropriate governance structures, [policies](#) and procedures to ensure accountability and effective implementation of this sustainability policy.
- Regularly monitoring, [reporting](#), publishing and evaluating sustainability performance.
- Allocating resources and providing training and support to enable the implementation of sustainable practices.
- Regularly reviewing and updating policies and procedures to incorporate emerging best practices, technological advancements, and changing sustainability challenges.

**6. Actively engaging with stakeholders and collaborating with external partners to promote sustainability by:**

- Seeking partnerships and alliances with private and public organisations, institutions and First Nation communities committed to sustainability.
- Sharing knowledge and best practices with the broader community.

- Participating in sustainability initiatives and contributing to policy development at regional, national, and international levels.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The University requires all members of its community to actively participate in the implementation of this policy and contribute to a sustainable future. The following areas have implementation responsibilities (noting this is not an exhaustive list):

- The Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) oversees the development of the University's environmental goals and targets and the implementation of strategies to achieve them via the [ANU Environmental Sustainability Plan](#) (ESP).
- The Environmental Management Group leads implementation of environmental strategies.
- The [First Nations Portfolio](#) advises on national policy engagement, ensuring ANU is an employer and educator of choice for Indigenous Australians, and integrating Indigenous knowledge.
- The [People & Culture Division](#) provides a range of operational, advisory and strategic services which enable ANU to attract, develop and retain outstanding staff who are committed to the achievement of excellence and to the values of The Australian National University.
- The [Legal, Governance and Risk Division](#) (LGR) is responsible for coordinating the governance, risk and assurance functions of the University.
- The [Student Safety and Wellbeing](#) team provides support to students.