

Sustainability Policies – as of December 2022

Contents

Association Ethical Clothing.....	1
More Ethical and Environmental Provision of Water in The Union and Across Campus.....	1
Divestment from Fossil Fuels.....	2
Sustainable Futures.....	3
Increasing Vegan Awareness	4
Climate Crisis – Strath Union’s Areas of Focus	6

Association Ethical Clothing

Policy maintained at Student Parliament, 28th of March 2017

Council Notes:

1. USSA source t-shirts and hoodies from several different companies
2. Currently, there is no requirement that the clothing is produced ethically

Council Believes:

1. USSA should source clothing from a fair-trade, ethically sound company
2. Threadme.co.uk is an example of a company which fits the ethical requirements as it is a UK-based workers’ co-operative, which produces organic, Fairtrade clothing, in a factory powered by renewable energy
3. Any company must cater for the needs of the Association members – Including a wide range of sizes
4. If USSA opt for ethical clothing, this will increase the chance of the University being certified as a Fairtrade University and the Union achieving a higher award in the Sound Environmental Impact Awards

Council Instructs:

1. Ensure all USSA (either wholly or partially) funded and branded clothing is sourced from Fairtrade ethical and local suppliers

Proposed: Lorna Murchison, Environmental and Ethical Convenor
Seconded: Charandeep Singh, Deputy Environmental and Ethical Convenor

More Ethical and Environmental Provision of Water in The Union and Across Campus

This policy was retained at Student Parliament on 11.4.2022. This policy will lapse in the

academic year 2024-25 and cannot be retained again.

Submitting Forum: Clubs & Societies General Meeting

Proposer: Liam McCabe, VPVD

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That a majority of plastic bottles end up never being recycled, and when incinerated produce toxic fumes.
2. That it takes a huge amount of fossil fuel powered energy to create plastic bottles in the first place, and produces over a million tons of waste a year and several million tons of carbon dioxide.
3. That there is a huge impact upon wildlife, particularly marine, with birds and sea life in particular often consuming lethal volumes of plastic waste or an item which they cannot process, leading to death.
4. That according to the UN Human Rights Council (Resolution A/HRC/RES/15/9), access to clean drinking water is a human right

Student Parliament Believes:

1. It is incumbent upon us to reduce our impact on the environment, as part of our guiding principle of environmentalism and in line with our Environmental Policy.
2. That it is necessary for us to provide clean, safe drinking water to our students and this should be as accessible as possible, with cost and location in mind.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To prohibit the sale of bottled water in The Union, and campaign for a similar ban across outlets on campus.
2. To replace bottled water with a combination of water fountains in The Union (with free, recyclable cups provided) and access to low cost water bottles for long-term use.
3. To continue to advocate for the proliferation of water fountains across campus, in line with legislation on workers' rights, and the provision of cups that said legislation entails for the use of students and staff alike.

1 <http://www.hydratelife.org/?p=767>

2 <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/whats-the-problem-with-plastic-bottles/>

3 http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/RES/15/9

Divestment from Fossil Fuels

Passed 22.1.2019

Proposed by: Sara Cowan Seconded by: Kyle Scott

Student parliament notes

1. Eradicating fossil fuels is necessary to control global warming.

2. That UK universities and unions are leading the global campaign to divest from fossil fuels.
3. That “Financial and Environmental sustainability” is an objective of the University of Strathclyde’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020 as well as a commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 25% by 2020.
4. These commitments are undermined by the fact that the University of Strathclyde significantly invests in the fossil fuel industry, as “investments in Carbon Underground 200 companies represents 9% of the University’s total investments of £42.4 million.”

Student Parliament Believes

1. That Strathclyde University should make an immediate pledge to divest its holdings in fossil fuel companies within five years
2. Immediately stop making new investments in the fossil fuel industry
3. Instruct its investment managers to reduce the university’s existing holdings in the fossil fuel industry with the end goal of no holdings in the fossil fuel industry over five years.

Student Parliament Resolves

1. That Strath Union supports officers and student groups in a campaign to lobby Strathclyde University to pledge to avoid investment in fossil fuel companies.
2. That Strath Union will continue to encourage the green team for this campaign.
3. That Strath Union will organise future divestment campaign training to support student activist development.

4 <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/fossil-fuels-divest-climate-change-globalwarming-emissions-campaign-a8681931.html>

5 <https://www.desmog.co.uk/2018/04/13/mapped-uk-universities-have-pledged-divest-fossil-fuels>

6

https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/documents/Download_the_Strategic_Plan_2015_-_2020.pdf.pagespeed.ce.A04dCi0eul.pdf

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/fossil_fuel_investment_and_fundi#incoming-1251185

Sustainable Futures

This policy was put forward through the Executive Committee for consideration at Student Parliament Student

Parliament Notes:

1. In 2018-19 Strath Union achieved “Excellent” in NUS’s Green Impact Award which involves meeting sustainable procurement criteria including Fairtrade standards.
2. Strath Union currently serve Fairtrade tea, coffee, and snacks in both Recharge and in meetings, and supply Fairtrade clothing for staff and campaigns.

3. The current policy 'Nestle Products in the USSA' calls for the stocking of Fairtrade products in the association.
4. The current policy 'Association Ethical Clothing' calls for 'USSA clothing to be sourced from Fairtrade ethical and local suppliers'.
5. Strath Union previously had a Fairtrade policy, Fairtrade Future, which has since lapsed.
6. As our awareness of our global impact has increased, so have the options for sustainable, ethical, and locally sourced products – meaning Fairtrade is no longer the only “good” option.
7. Locally sourced products can have a massive positive impact due to supporting local businesses and having a reduced carbon footprint.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. Fairtrade Programmes have successfully raised people out of poverty worldwide and have a genuine impact on the lives of people and their communities in the developing world.
2. In order to mitigate our impact on the planet we should be ensuring wherever possible that our purchases should be as ethical and sustainable as possible.
3. That with each purchase made by Strath Union, its environmental and social impact should be considered.
4. By Strath Union ensuring that they only purchase and supply ethical products they are also making it easier for students to do so and therefore encouraging this throughout society.

Student Parliament Resolves:

1. To ensure Fairtrade/ethical options are available in all cafes, bars, and for Union campaigns and activities and increase their availability.
2. To support clubs, societies and sports clubs that wish to use ethical products and encourage this where possible.
3. To continue to maintain the Fairtrade Status for the Union.
4. To continue to improve the sustainability of Strath Union by engaging with NUS initiatives such as the Green Impact Awards, but also by their own initiatives.
5. To lobby the University to increase their ethical and sustainable considerations regarding products they sell, but also the way in which they carry out university business.
6. To run at least one campaign each year to increase awareness, understanding and usage of sustainable, ethical, and Fairtrade options.
7. To embark on the journey of going net carbon zero in the most sustainable and ethical way possible in Strath Union.

Increasing Vegan Awareness

This policy was passed at Student Parliament on 25.2.2021

Student Parliament Notes:

1. That although Strath Union shared a post during Veganuary to raise awareness of veganism, there is more that can be done to provide students with more information about veganism, including the benefits to individuals and the environment.
2. That sustainability is a key issue for Strath Union; there have been campaigns for divestment from fossil fuels and lobbying the University to become carbon neutral.

However, there has been little information provided about the impact of animal agriculture on the environment.

3. That animal agriculture produces more emissions than the whole transport sector combined.
4. That scientific research states that a plant-based diet is “probably the biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth,” and that the UN has been pushing for a transition to a plant-based diet for over 10 years.
5. That moving to a plant-based diet is less resource intensive than diets which include animal products.
6. That factory farming is unjust and inherently cruel to animals.
7. That factory farming can be a breeding ground for infectious diseases due to unsanitary living conditions for animals. There are also significant negative impacts on workers in this sector, for example the impact on workers’ mental health.
8. That affordable plant-based alternatives (for example, plant-based milk) are widely available.
9. That several Universities and Students’ Unions, including Oxford, Cambridge, Goldsmiths and Edinburgh, have taken initiatives to spread vegan and animal awareness to try to combat climate change.

Student Parliament Believes:

1. That Strath Union works towards a better, fairer world with a stronger, healthier economy that relies on strong morals and an environmentally sustainable approach in all aspect of life, and that we take steps to achieve this goal through informative action.
2. This Union already recognises the issues of sustainability and encouraging environmentally friendly behaviour, and this attitude should be applied to all devastating problems that affect our planet, including animal farming.
3. The Union works towards combatting injustice and campaigning for positive change. As such, the issues raised through animal farming must also be addressed and campaigned on.

Student Parliament Instructs:

- 21 <https://www.strathunion.com/festivecalendar/day33/>
- 22 http://www.fao.org/3/a0701e/a0701e00.htm?fbclid=IwAR0inH4KvCJy_CTH4BdDYCKPbMFvh10FXVbHn4OiSCgufvlfboCZ8b0lqY
- 23 Dr Joseph Poore (Oxford Graduate, Dep. of Zoology),
<https://www.zoo.ox.ac.uk/people/joseph-poore>
- 24 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/02/un-report-meat-free-diet>
- 25 <https://greenstarsproject.org/2020/05/04/social-impact-meat-industry-slaughterhouseconditions-ptsd/>
- 26 <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/university-uk-vegan-ban-meat-climate-changeenvironment-a9347256.html>

1. That Strath Union will promote vegan/plant-based alternatives as a way of reducing carbon emissions, including by promoting articles and research which evidences this.
2. That Strath Union shall create a campaigns section on the website dedicated to ending the cruelty of factory farming of animals, which also recognises the impact of factory farming on workers’ rights and the climate.

3. That Strath Union should dedicate more resources to the promotion of Veganuary throughout January, including sharing information on veganism and the philosophy behind it, as well as sharing advice on plant-based recipes, health, and combatting factory farming.
4. That Strath Union will promote information about the injustice of factory farming, including information on the conditions factory farmed-animals are living in, how it impacts climate change and the spread of infectious diseases, throughout the year.
5. That Strath Union should provide more information about the health benefits of moving to a plant-based diet and support to people who are interested trying veganism, which includes supporting plant-based alternatives through food bank and food sharing initiatives.
6. The Strath Union will campaign the University to reduce the sale of animal products across campus and to provide healthy, affordable plant-based alternatives, including within the Students' Union.

Useful Links:

1. Comprehensive lists of all reasons to go vegan, including a TLDR section <https://katch4n.github.io/>
2. A Documentary about standard factory farm practices. NOTE: This video has graphic content <https://youtu.be/LQRAfJyEsko>
3. A concise TED talk about veganism - <https://youtu.be/byTxzzztRBU>
4. The inspirational vegan speech <https://youtu.be/a22XxXP3nU8>
5. The response to 'vegans are extreme' <https://youtu.be/OA55lVeY22Y>
6. Veganism related to COVID-19 and zoonotic diseases <https://youtu.be/alobAS6bLy8> <https://youtu.be/gnQL-brl-9l>
7. The quickest rundown of environmental disasters caused by animal products - [https://youtu.be/dSjE8xw -Dg](https://youtu.be/dSjE8xw-Dg)

Climate Crisis – Strath Union's Areas of Focus

This document was submitted on behalf of the Climate Emergency Action Group. These state Strath Union's positions on the climate crisis and the areas the Union will focus on to combat the climate crisis

1. An end to gestures of greenwashing throughout the university.

Strath Union believes that Strathclyde University must halt any further greenwashing actions that hinder the response to the climate crisis. This should apply to both policy and on campus actions. The response of the university must match the severity of the crisis according to climate science and the IPCC.

2. A formal student assembly to evaluate and participate in the University's response to the climate crisis while encouraging democracy in the University.

Addressing the climate crisis must be done through democracy and discussion. Nations of the world will come together in discussion at COP26. Strath Union must encourage democratic and participatory principals and work alongside the university to ensure collaboration in evaluating policies and provide discussion to strengthen our collective

response to the climate crisis at the university. We must ask for formal student participatory assemblies that take part in Strathclyde Universities sustainable development.

3. A commitment from the university to actively lead Scottish universities on an innovative and active response to the climate crisis.

Strathclyde University is an international, world known University of innovation. Its principal of useful learning is key its success. Strath Union believes that Strathclyde University is in a unique and key position to lead Scottish universities and inspire institutions around the world on its potential for a democratic and innovative response to the climate crisis and should adopt frameworks and take actions to do so.

4. An adoption of CEKO and further climate education programs into the curriculum

Strath Union will lobby the University to formally educate students on the climate crisis; this is vital not only for solving the crisis but also in preparing students with useful learning which will inform them of what the world will be like in the years after they graduate. This is long overdue and must be swiftly adopted into the curriculum as a mandatory part of every course.