



Vaasan yliopisto  
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

# Campus Environmental Policies

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# 1 Environmental Management and Sustainability

This document outlines the University of Vaasa's current environmental policies and practices related to campus operations, resource management, and sustainability governance. It brings together existing approaches applied across energy use, waste management, climate-related activities, and environmental responsibility, reflecting how sustainability considerations are embedded within institutional governance, facilities management, research, education, and societal engagement. The document is intended to provide a clear, transparent overview of current practices and frameworks, based on applicable legislation, recognised good practice, and established university processes.

**“The University of Vaasa is strongly committed to sustainable development and promoting innovations that create value for both industry and society at large... Responsibility and sustainable development are central principles in all our activities, and we strive to ensure that every member of our university community makes responsible choices.”**

# 2 Affordable and Clean Energy

## University Measures Towards Affordable and Clean Energy

The University of Vaasa supports the use of affordable and clean energy through responsible energy management and governance practices across campus operations. Electricity used by the University is sourced from renewable energy, and electricity and heating consumption are monitored through an established institutional energy reporting system to support operational oversight, trend identification, and opportunities for efficiency improvements where feasible. Energy efficiency considerations are integrated into building operation, maintenance, renovation, and development activities in line with Finnish legislation and recognised good construction practice, with planned investments guided by a long-term property plan. Energy use and associated carbon emissions are monitored as part of the University's environmental and sustainability management framework, supporting informed management of overall energy demand. Campus property management is carried out in cooperation with Merikampus, a third-party partner, with energy performance supported through contractual arrangements, institutional monitoring processes, and compliance with applicable legal and governance requirements (see sustainability governance and reporting: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/university/strategy-and-values-0/sustainability-and-responsibility>).



## Energy Use Density

The University systematically monitors total energy consumption and floor area in order to assess energy use density. Energy use patterns reflect the University's location in Vaasa, Finland, where cold climatic conditions and long heating seasons increase heating demand. Campus buildings are operated year-round to support teaching, research, and student services, including specialist facilities with continuous operational requirements. Within this context, the University sources its electricity from renewable energy and uses energy monitoring data to support efficient and reliable energy management

## Energy and the Community

The University of Vaasa contributes to affordable and clean energy beyond its own operations through community engagement, education, research, and collaboration. Knowledge related to energy efficiency and clean energy is shared with local and regional communities through educational activities and cooperation with external partners, with relevant activities communicated via the University's public events calendar (see public events and outreach: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/newshub/events>).

The University collaborates with industry through research partnerships, advisory activities, and applied studies that address energy efficiency and the development of clean energy solutions (see research and business collaboration: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/research>; <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/business>).

Research-based expertise from the University contributes to local and regional discussions on clean energy and energy-efficient technologies through cooperation with public sector and regional stakeholders. In addition, the University supports low-carbon innovation by engaging in research and innovation activities and by contributing to regional innovation ecosystems that support early-stage initiatives and applied solutions

## Low-Carbon Energy Use

The University monitors energy consumption and the share of energy sourced from low-carbon and renewable sources as part of its approach to supporting affordable and clean energy. Energy use and sourcing are systematically monitored and reported through institutional sustainability and energy management processes, supporting transparency, responsible energy governance, and continuous oversight in line with SDG 7 objectives (see sustainability reporting: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/university/strategy-and-values-0/sustainability-and-responsibility>).



## 3 Responsible Consumption and Production

### Waste Disposal of Hazardous Materials

The University of Vaasa manages hazardous waste arising from research, teaching, laboratory activities and campus operations in accordance with the Finnish Waste Act (646/2011) and other applicable national regulations, with the aim of protecting human health and the environment.

Within existing operational practices, the University seeks to limit the generation of hazardous waste through efficient material use and, where appropriate, consideration of less hazardous alternatives.

Hazardous waste is handled using established procedures that support identification, separation, safe storage and transfer to authorised waste management service providers, in line with regulatory requirements.

Information related to hazardous waste types and disposal arrangements is maintained as part of routine operational and regulatory processes to support compliance and oversight.

Guidance on hazardous waste handling is made available to staff, students and contractors through existing instructions, training practices and safety procedures relevant to their activities

### Landfill Waste Measurement, Reporting & Reduction

The University of Vaasa manages campus waste in accordance with the Finnish Waste Act (646/2011), local waste regulations, and circular economy principles. Waste is sorted at source, handled by authorised service providers, and monitored through internal environmental management and sustainability reporting processes.

The University complies with Finnish regulations implementing the EU Landfill Directive, which aim to limit landfill disposal and promote recycling and recovery in line with the national waste hierarchy.

Waste data relating to landfill disposal and recycling is handled through existing waste management arrangements and service providers, supporting regulatory compliance and oversight where reporting is required.

Within current operational frameworks, the University seeks to support waste prevention, reuse and recycling practices that may contribute to reducing the volume of waste sent to landfill, consistent with its sustainability objectives.

Members of the university community involved in waste handling are expected to follow applicable instructions and procedures to support lawful and responsible waste management.

### Minimisation of Plastic Use

The University of Vaasa manages the use and disposal of plastics in accordance with the Finnish Waste Act (646/2011) and applicable national regulations on packaging and packaging



waste, as part of its overall approach to responsible consumption and production.

The University acknowledges the objectives of the EU Single-Use Plastics (SUP) framework as implemented in Finland, which aims to reduce the environmental impacts of certain plastic products and promote more sustainable alternatives.

Where practicable and within existing operational frameworks, the University seeks to consider opportunities to reduce unnecessary single-use plastics in areas such as procurement, events, catering and campus activities.

The University relies on guidance and information provided by competent Finnish authorities, including the Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (Tukes), and national waste management systems such as Rinki, to support legal compliance and informed waste handling practices. Awareness of sustainable material use, including plastic reduction, is supported through existing communication, education and sustainability initiatives.

### **Minimisation of Disposable Items**

The University of Vaasa manages the use and disposal of disposable items in accordance with the Finnish Waste Act (646/2011) and applicable national packaging and producer responsibility regulations. The University follows the waste prevention principle and waste hierarchy set out in Finnish and EU legislation, which prioritise waste prevention and reuse over disposal. Within existing operational practices, consideration may be given to reducing unnecessary disposable items where practicable. Compliance with legal requirements is supported through established procurement, waste management and service arrangements. This approach forms part of the University's broader commitment to responsible consumption and production.

### **Extension of Disposable Practices to Outsourced Services and Supply Chain**

The University of Vaasa addresses the use of disposable items in outsourced services and supply chain activities in accordance with the Act on Public Contracts and Concession Contracts (1397/2016) and the Act on the Contractor's Obligations and Liability when Work is Contracted Out (1233/2006). Through its procurement and contracting practices, the University applies applicable legal requirements to external service providers and contractors. Environmental and waste-related considerations may be included in procurement and service agreements where relevant and permitted by law. The University relies on statutory oversight mechanisms and contractor compliance obligations to support responsible practices in outsourced services. This approach forms part of the University's overall framework for responsible consumption and production.

### **Minimisation of Disposable Items Extended to Suppliers**

The University of Vaasa addresses the minimisation of disposable items in its supplier relationships in accordance with Finnish public procurement, contractor responsibility and waste legislation. Procurement processes are conducted in line with the Act on Public



Contracts and Concession Contracts (1397/2016), which permits the consideration of sustainability-related criteria where appropriate. The University applies statutory obligations under the Contractor's Liability Act (1233/2006) when engaging suppliers and subcontractors. Responsibilities related to packaging waste and producer responsibility are addressed in line with the Finnish Waste Act and applicable producer responsibility regulations. This approach supports responsible consumption within the University's existing procurement framework.

## 4 Climate Action

### Low-carbon energy tracking

The University of Vaasa monitors campus energy consumption, including low-carbon energy use, through an external property and energy management service provider, Vaasan Merikampus Oy. Energy data are collected at campus level and compiled into periodic internal reports used for operational oversight and internal sustainability monitoring. While the reporting system is not publicly accessible, energy monitoring is applied consistently across campus operations and supported by institutional governance and facilities management structures that ensure compliance with applicable legal and operational requirement)

### Low-carbon energy use

Total energy consumption and the proportion of energy sourced from low-carbon sources are recorded through the same campus-level reporting processes managed by Vaasan Merikampus Oy. These data are used internally to track energy use and carbon intensity trends over time rather than to establish binding public targets, and oversight is provided through existing governance arrangements for campus operations.

### Local education programmes on climate

The University of Vaasa addresses climate change and sustainability through degree programmes, research-informed teaching, and public engagement activities. Climate-related knowledge is shared with local and regional audiences through lectures, seminars, and events focusing on climate change, sustainability, and energy systems. These activities are advertised via the University's public events calendar and are open to external participants (see public events listings: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/newshub/events?type=All&category=All&actor=All>).

In addition, the University organises a biannual sustainability fair that brings together the University and selected third-party service providers to share information on sustainable practices with students and the campus community. The fair covers topics such as environmentally responsible cleaning methods and materials, the use of reusable service products, sustainable procurement, and environmental considerations related to food services



and logistics. The event supports sustainability awareness and knowledge-sharing as part of the University's ongoing campus engagement activities.

### **Climate Action Plan**

The University does not currently maintain a standalone Climate Action Plan formally adopted and shared with local government or community groups. Climate-related objectives are instead integrated across institutional strategy, sustainability reporting, research activity, and operational planning, and communicated through established governance and collaboration channels.

### **Co-operative planning for climate change disasters**

The University contributes to climate resilience and adaptation primarily through research, expert engagement, and academic collaboration that may inform local or regional planning processes. The University does not hold an operational role in disaster response or displacement planning but contributes knowledge through research and societal interaction activities (see research collaboration: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/research>).

### **Inform and support government**

Research-based expertise from the University supports public sector decision-making related to climate, energy, and sustainability through expert participation, applied research, and knowledge exchange when requested by public authorities. This support is provided through academic collaboration rather than through a formal institutional mandate for monitoring or early warning systems.

### **Environmental education collaboration with NGOs**

The University collaborates with non-governmental organisations on climate- and sustainability-related education and research through project-based partnerships and joint activities. These collaborations form part of broader cooperation and societal engagement practices rather than a single centralised NGO programme (see cooperation and partnerships: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/cooperation>).

### **Commitment to carbon-neutral university**

The University of Vaasa has not adopted a binding, institution-wide carbon-neutrality target covering all Greenhouse Gas Protocol scopes. Emissions related to campus energy use are monitored through facilities management and energy reporting systems, while broader emissions are considered where data are available, without a formal neutrality commitment.(see campus sustainability and responsibility: <https://www.uwasa.fi/en/university/strategy-and-values-0/sustainability-and-responsibility>





As no formal carbon-neutrality target has been set, the University has not defined a specific achievement date under the Greenhouse Gas Protocol framework. Any future target-setting would be subject to institutional governance processes and data availability.

## **Appendix: Sustainability Targets, Tracking & Reporting Alignment (2026–2030)**

The appendix is to provide a clear framework for setting, monitoring, and communicating sustainability aims across key policy areas. It supports alignment between institutional sustainability documents, enables year-on-year tracking of progress, and enhances transparency and accountability in the University's sustainability performance.

This appendix aligns with relevant UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined in the University's Sustainability Report.

Through this approach, the University reinforces its commitment to transparency, accountability, and the continuous improvement of sustainability performance.

### **Environmental Management and Sustainability**

#### **Aims / Targets**

- Maintain an annual review of key sustainability indicators, including energy, waste, and emissions
- Strengthen alignment between the Campus Environmental Policies, Sustainability Report, and the development of the University's carbon roadmap by 2027

#### **Tracking & Reporting**

- Progress is reviewed annually through established governance structures
- Key developments are integrated into the Sustainability Report
- High-level progress is communicated publicly on a yearly basis

### **Affordable and Clean Energy**

#### **Aims / Targets**

- Maintain 100% renewable electricity sourcing across campus operations
- Support continuous improvement in energy efficiency over time

#### **Tracking & Reporting**

- Energy consumption and trends are monitored through established systems



- Energy performance is reported annually within the Sustainability Report

## **Responsible Consumption and Production**

### **Aims / Targets**

- Promote the ongoing reduction of landfill waste through continuous improvement
- Encourage sustainable practices in procurement and material use

### **Tracking & Reporting**

- Waste data and recycling trends are monitored in collaboration with service providers
- Key insights on resource use are included in annual sustainability reporting
- Progress is supported through existing compliance and operational processes

## **Climate Action**

### **Aims / Targets**

- Enhance transparency in energy use and emissions-related data over time
- Support climate-focused education, research, and community engagement

### **Tracking & Reporting**

- Energy data is used to inform emissions awareness and monitoring
- Activities and progress are communicated through the Sustainability Report and university channels

## **Sustainability Performance and Reporting Approach**

- Progress against these aims is reviewed annually using available and reliable data
- Where quantitative targets are not defined, continuous improvement is monitored through trends
- All relevant updates are consolidated within the University's Sustainability Report
- This ensures a clear, consistent, and accessible source of information for stakeholders