VinUniversity Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Policy

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1. Policy Statement

VinUniversity (The University) is committed to environmental sustainability and climate action as an integral part of its institutional mission. The University seeks to minimize environmental impacts, address climate change, and foster environmental stewardship across its campus and community.

VinUniversity aspires to become carbon neutral by 2040 and achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, contributing to Vietnam's national climate objectives and global sustainability efforts.

Through responsible resource management, sustainable campus development, education, research, and engagement, VinUniversity aims to serve as a leading model of environmental sustainability within Vietnam's higher education sector.

This Policy applies to all VinUniversity operations, activities, and members of the University community.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Policy is to:

- Establish an institutional framework guiding VinUniversity's approach to environmental sustainability and climate action.
- Articulate commitments to carbon neutrality and net zero, resource efficiency, ecosystem protection, and responsible operations.
- Integrate sustainability considerations into university planning, governance, and decision-making.
- Support sustainability-related education, research, innovation, and community engagement.
- Demonstrate institutional leadership contributing to national and global sustainability goals.

3. Definitions

Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms from all sources, including diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems.

Carbon Neutrality refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset.

Net zero means cutting carbon emissions to a small amount of residual emissions that can be absorbed and durably stored by nature and other carbon dioxide removal measures, leaving zero in the atmosphere.

Climate Change means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere, and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.

Circular Economy: An economic system aimed at eliminating waste and promoting the continual use of resources through reuse, repair, refurbishment, and recycling.

Greenhouse gases mean those gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation.

The Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHG Protocol) is a globally recognised standard for measuring and managing greenhouse gas emissions. It defines three scopes:

- **Scope 1:** Direct emissions from owned or controlled sources
- **Scope 2:** Indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy

- **Scope 3:** All indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.

Hazardous Waste is waste that has physical, chemical, or biological characteristics such that it requires special handling and disposal procedures to avoid negative health effects, adverse environmental effects or both.

Invasive species, also known as 'alien invasive species', are species whose introduction, establishment and spread into new areas threaten ecosystems, habitats or other species and cause social, economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health

Renewable Energy is energy derived from natural sources that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed.

Single-Use Plastics are plastic products that are used once and then discarded.

4. Policy Principles

VinUniversity commits to achieving carbon neutrality by 2040 and net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, in alignment with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and Vietnam's national climate objectives.

As an interim milestone, the University aims to reduce its overall greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2030, using the year 2025 as the baseline, through institution-wide actions and continuous improvement.

The University adopts a science-based and measurable approach to emissions management across Scopes 1, 2, and 3, prioritizing direct emissions reductions through energy efficiency and climate-positive infrastructure, sustainable transportation, waste and water management, biodiversity & ecosystem protection, sustainable procurement and investment, and sustainable food systems, civic engagement, and research activities.

VinUniversity recognizes that indirect emissions across its value chain form an important component of its overall climate impact. The University will progressively address such emissions through sustainable planning, responsible procurement, low-carbon mobility choices, and engagement with partners and suppliers, while supporting institutional growth, academic expansion, and research development.

Progress toward carbon neutrality, net zero, and interim emissions reduction targets will be monitored and reported transparently through regular assessments and annual sustainability reports.

4.1. Energy & Climate Action

VinUniversity commits to systematic energy reduction and climate-positive infrastructure development through progressive improvements in building performance, renewable energy integration, and operational excellence.

Energy-Efficient Buildings

VinUniversity is committed to ensuring that all new constructions and major renovations meet or exceed recognized green building and energy efficiency standards.

New buildings shall optimize envelope design for daylighting and thermal performance, incorporate sustainable materials, and install high-efficiency systems including LED lighting, efficient Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) equipment, and water-conserving fixtures. All new facilities must maximize opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation, deploy comprehensive energy metering infrastructure, and integrate building automation systems for optimized operations.

Building Upgrades and Retrofit Programs

VinUniversity maintains a phased plan to retrofit existing buildings with energy-efficient technologies, scheduled based on energy audits, technical feasibility, and return on investment analysis. Upgrades will

focus on renewable energy integration, building envelope optimization, high-efficiency equipment replacement, indoor environmental quality improvements, building automation systems, and ongoing commissioning and performance verification.

Energy Reduction Plan

VinUniversity commits to progressively reducing energy consumption across campus facilities while maintaining high-quality learning, research, and working environments.

The University shall implement ongoing and annual energy reduction initiatives focused on improving energy efficiency, optimizing operational practices, and reducing energy intensity across campus operations. Energy performance will be monitored using appropriate indicators, including energy use intensity and per capita measures, while accounting for institutional growth and evolving operational needs.

Energy reduction priorities, programs, and actions for operational activities shall be developed, reviewed, and updated annually through established institutional processes to support continuous improvement and alignment with the University's sustainability and climate objectives.

Climate Resilience and Risk Management

VinUniversity recognizes the growing risks associated with climate change, including extreme weather events and long-term environmental stresses. The University commits to integrating climate resilience into campus planning and infrastructure development to address climate-related risks including extreme weather, flooding, and temperature extremes, ensuring long-term institutional safety and continuity.

4.2. Sustainable Transportation

VinUniversity is committed to reducing transportation-related emissions by promoting sustainable commuting practices and low-carbon mobility options.

The University establishes targets to progressively increase the proportion of the community using sustainable transportation modes including walking, cycling, public transportation, shuttle services, carpooling, and electric vehicles:

Sustainable Transportation Targets: 100% of full-time employees using sustainable transport

The University shall prioritize pedestrian-friendly campus design, provide appropriate bicycle parking infrastructure, operate efficient shuttle services, and maintain electric vehicle charging stations. Parking policies will support low-carbon transportation choices.

VinUniversity supports flexible work arrangements where operationally feasible to reduce commuting frequency and associated emissions. All flexible work arrangements require appropriate approval based on operational needs and position requirements.

Progress toward these targets will be measured through regular transportation surveys and reported in annual sustainability reports.

4.3. Waste Management

VinUniversity is committed to minimizing waste generation, maximizing recycling and reuse, and promoting circular economy principles across all campus operations.

Waste Classification and Segregation

All members of the university community shall segregate waste at source into designated categories: recyclable materials, organic waste, hazardous waste, and general waste. Dedicated waste collection infrastructure shall be provided throughout campus facilities to enable proper segregation.

Hazardous Materials Management

VinUniversity implements comprehensive procedures for the safe collection, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials in compliance with Vietnamese environmental regulations. Hazardous waste must be managed according to established safety protocols and transferred to licensed partners for proper treatment and disposal, following Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment guidelines.

Single-Use Items Elimination

From Academic Year 2027 -2028, VinUniversity gradually reduces single-use plastics including plastic cups, bowls, plates, and straws. and minimizes disposable items across all campus operations, subject to periodic review and institutional approval to address exceptional operational or safety requirements. The University partners with vendors to eliminate single-use items in catering operations, provides reusable alternatives, and works with the community to reduce unnecessary single-use materials in laboratories and research activities.

Target: prohibit all single-use plastics from 2030.

Waste Reduction and Landfill Diversion

The University establishes systems to measure waste streams and track waste diversion rates, setting progressive targets to reduce landfill waste through improved segregation, increased recycling, and waste minimization initiatives.

VinUniversity implements a comprehensive approach including awareness campaigns, proper infrastructure, certified waste management partnerships, construction waste management, supplier engagement to reduce packaging, and promotion of equipment repair and reuse. Progress will be monitored and reported in annual sustainability reports.

4.4. Water Stewardship

VinUniversity is committed to responsible water management through conservation, reuse, and protection of water quality to safeguard aquatic ecosystems and public health.

Water Reuse and Conservation

The University shall maximize rainwater reuse across campus through sustainable practices, including rainwater collection reuse for appropriate non-potable purposes where feasible. VinUniversity prioritizes water-efficient fixtures and equipment in all facilities and promotes climate-appropriate landscaping to reduce irrigation demand.

Free water refill stations are provided in all facilities across campus to encourage reusable water bottles, reduce single-use plastic consumption, and promote healthy hydration practices among the university community.

Water Quality Standards and Environmental Protection

VinUniversity establishes and enforces water quality standards for all discharges to protect ecosystems, wildlife, and human health. All wastewater is treated to meet Vietnam National Technical Regulation QCVN 14:2008/BTNMT Column A or applicable updated regulations prior to discharge.

The University prevents water pollution through effective wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and responsible discharge practices, ensuring compliance with national environmental regulations and minimizing downstream ecological impacts.

Regular monitoring and maintenance of water systems are conducted to ensure water safety, prevent contamination, and optimize water use efficiency.

Water Performance Monitoring

VinUniversity implements water metering and monitoring systems for key buildings and infrastructure to track water use, establish reduction targets, and support continuous improvement in water management performance.

4.5. Biodiversity & Ecosystem Protection

VinUniversity is committed to protecting biodiversity and maintaining the integrity of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems associated with the University. Biodiversity considerations are integrated into campus operations, planning, and academic activities in alignment with national regulations and global sustainability frameworks.

Aquatic Ecosystem Protection: The University maintains a plan to minimize physical, chemical, and biological alterations of aquatic ecosystems connected to campus operations through responsible water management, pollution prevention, stormwater controls, and compliance with applicable environmental regulations. This plan addresses potential impacts from wastewater discharge, construction activities, and landscape management to preserve aquatic ecosystem health and function.

Sustainable Land Use and Ecosystem Conservation: VinUniversity ensures the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems within and around the campus, including forests, green spaces, and campus landscapes. Land management practices prioritize ecosystem integrity, native vegetation protection, soil health, and long-term ecological resilience. The University seeks opportunities to restore degraded areas and enhance ecosystem services where feasible.

Biodiversity Monitoring and Species Conservation: As Vietnam's first UNESCO Chair in Environmental Leadership, Cultural Heritage, and Biodiversity, VinUniversity supports biodiversity monitoring, research, and conservation initiatives. The University monitors species of conservation concern, including those listed on the IUCN Red List and nationally protected species lists, within and around campus areas. Where relevant, the University collaborates with conservation organizations and research institutions to support species protection and habitat management.

Biodiversity in Planning and Development: Biodiversity considerations are systematically incorporated into all campus planning, construction, and renovation activities. Environmental assessments are conducted for projects that may affect green spaces or natural habitats to avoid or minimize disturbance, protect existing vegetation and wildlife, and identify opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Design and construction practices prioritize preservation of native ecosystems and integration of green infrastructure.

Invasive and Alien Species Management: The University implements policies and practices to prevent the introduction and reduce the impacts of invasive or alien species that threaten native biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. Landscaping and ground management prioritize native plant species, source plants from reputable suppliers to prevent contamination, monitor campus grounds for invasive species, and implement removal or control measures when necessary.

4.6. Procurement and Responsible Investment

VinUniversity commits responsible and sustainable procurement and investment practices that support environmental protection, ethical standards, and long-term societal value.

Sustainable Procurement

Procurement activities shall prioritize local suppliers and sustainable products, reduce environmental impacts across supply chains, and alignment with responsible procurement principles as defined in the University's Procurement Policy.

Divestment and Responsible Investment

VinUniversity is committed to aligning its investment practices with sustainability and social responsibility principles. The University shall avoid investments in industries that pose significant harm to society and the environment, including but not limited to carbon-intensive fossil fuel extraction, coal, and tobacco production.

The University prioritizes investments in renewable energy, sustainable industries, and sectors supporting environmental protection and the transition to a low-carbon economy. Investment decisions shall be guided by Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, ensuring alignment with VinUniversity's sustainability goals.

4.7. Sustainable Food Systems

VinUniversity promotes healthy, sustainable, and ethically sourced food across campus dining facilities, supporting both student wellbeing and environmental stewardship.

Sustainable and Ethical Food Sourcing

VinUniversity is committed to ethical sourcing of all food served on campus, prioritizing fair labor practices, environmental sustainability, and supply chain transparency.

Campus food partners prioritize:

- Locally-sourced, seasonal ingredients from sustainable suppliers
- Fair trade and organically certified products where available
- Sustainable seafood and responsibly raised animal products
- Support for Vietnamese farmers and local food systems

The University encourages diverse plant-based, vegetarian, and vegan options alongside nutritious meals that prioritize affordability and student health.

Sustainable Food Service Practices

Campus vendors implement sustainable practices including elimination of single-use plastics, styrofoam containers, and disposable cutlery; provision of free water refill stations to encourage reusable habits; staff training on sustainable food preparation and service operations; and use of reusable or compostable food service items

The University promotes conscious food choices through menu labeling, awareness initiatives, and provision of fresh, healthy options.

Food Waste Reduction

VinUniversity works with food service partners to minimize food waste through responsible purchasing, portion management, and food donation programs where feasible. The University fosters a campus culture where food choices contribute to both personal health and planetary wellbeing.

4.8. Sustainability Engagement and Behavioral Change

The University shall foster a shared culture of environmental responsibility by enabling students, faculty, staff, and partners to actively participate in sustainability and climate action across learning, research, operations, and community engagement.

VinUniversity commits to establishing institutional mechanisms that support sustainability engagement and behavioral change, including:

a) Engagement Governance and Coordination

The University shall maintain coordinated governance arrangements, led by the Sustainability Committee or designated unit, to guide campus-wide engagement initiatives, facilitate cross-unit collaboration, and support the integration of sustainable practices into daily activities.

b) Sustainability Champions Network

The University shall establish and support a Sustainability Champions or Ambassadors Network comprising students and staff across academic units, administrative functions, and key facilities. This network shall promote peer-to-peer engagement, knowledge sharing, and feedback to strengthen campus-wide adoption of sustainable practices.

c) Education, Training, and Capacity Building

The University shall provide sustainability education and training resources appropriate to different stakeholder groups, including students, faculty, staff, and service partners, to support informed decision-making and responsible behaviors.

d) Awareness Campaigns and Community Programmes

The University may implement thematic campaigns and community-based programmes to encourage sustainable choices related to energy use, waste reduction, transportation, water conservation, and responsible consumption, including student-led initiatives where appropriate.

e) Recognition and Enabling Support

The University shall recognize and support contributions that advance sustainability outcomes through appropriate recognition mechanisms and enabling support, in accordance with institutional governance processes.

f) Partner and Vendor Engagement

The University shall communicate sustainability expectations to contractors, vendors, and partners, and may collaborate with external stakeholders to support sustainability engagement and shared environmental objectives.

4.9. Research, Innovation, and Knowledge Contribution

The University shall support and promote research, innovation, and knowledge exchange that contribute to environmental sustainability and climate action, with an emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration, real-world impact, and societal relevance.

VinUniversity commits to enabling sustainability- and climate-related research and innovation through the following institutional approaches:

a) Interdisciplinary Coordination

The University shall encourage cross-college and cross-disciplinary collaboration to address sustainability and climate challenges, including through thematic initiatives, research clusters, centres, or joint programmes, as appropriate.

b) Research Support and Catalytic Mechanisms

The University may establish and strengthen internal support mechanisms and enabling conditions to facilitate sustainability-related research and the development of external funding proposals, subject to institutional priorities and governance.

c) Campus as a Living Laboratory

Where feasible, the University shall utilize campus operations and infrastructure as a living laboratory to pilot, test, and demonstrate sustainability solutions, enabling collaboration among researchers, students, operational units, and external partners under appropriate governance arrangements.

d) Translation from Research to Practice

The University shall encourage pathways that translate research outcomes into practical applications, including pilots, prototypes, operational improvements, policy contributions, and partnerships with industry and government, with due consideration of feasibility, risk, and scalability.

e) Knowledge Sharing and Public Engagement

The University shall promote the dissemination of sustainability knowledge through education, public events, policy dialogues, community engagement, and publications, and may contribute applied outputs such as policy briefs, practitioner guidance, or knowledge resources where relevant.

f) Student Learning and Research Integration

The University shall encourage student participation in sustainability- and climate-related research and innovation through academic projects, capstones, internships, and living laboratory opportunities, supported by relevant academic units.

g) Responsible Conduct of Sustainability Research

The University shall promote responsible and ethical research practices in sustainability- and climate-related activities, including laboratories, fieldwork, and pilots, in alignment with institutional risk management, safety, and compliance frameworks.

5. Implementation

VinUniversity shall implement this Policy through coordinated institutional planning, integration into academic, research, and operational activities, and alignment with institutional governance and decision-making processes.

The University shall develop and maintain supporting strategies, action plans, guidelines, and performance indicators to operationalize the commitments set out in this Policy, with responsibilities assigned to relevant units as appropriate.

Implementation shall be monitored through periodic assessment and sustainability reporting and shall remain adaptive to regulatory requirements, institutional priorities, and evolving best practices to support continuous improvement.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
University Council and Senior Leadership	Provide strategic oversight and leadership for environmental sustainability and climate action; endorse this Policy; allocate resources; integrate sustainability into institutional strategy and governance; and review overall progress.
Sustainability Committee	Lead and monitor the implementation of this Policy; coordinate capacity building and training; collect and review sustainability data; publish reports; and advise senior leadership on sustainability priorities and performance.
Campus Service and Development Office (CSD)	Lead and coordinate the implementation of operational sustainability initiatives, including energy, water, waste, infrastructure, and campus services, in accordance with this Policy; support environmental performance monitoring and reporting.

Deans / Vice Deans	Integrate environmental sustainability and climate considerations into academic programs, faculty activities, and unit-level planning; align education and research priorities with institutional sustainability goals.
Vice Provost of Research & Innovation	Provide strategic oversight for sustainability- and climate-related research and innovation; promote interdisciplinary research aligned with national and global sustainability priorities; and foster partnerships that enhance societal impact.
Chief Scientific Officers	Guide the integration of sustainability and climate considerations into research agendas, methodologies, and projects; support flagship and pilot initiatives that contribute to environmental and climate solutions.
Research Management Office (RMO)	Support and coordinate sustainability- and climate-related research through policies, funding mechanisms, data support, and performance tracking; facilitate reporting and benchmarking aligned with institutional and external frameworks.
Faculty Members / Researchers	Incorporate sustainability and climate perspectives into teaching, research, and professional practice; contribute knowledge, innovation, and real-world impact that support the University's sustainability objectives.
Other Units	Support the implementation of this Policy within their respective functions, including finance, quality assurance, student engagement, and community outreach; contribute to data collection, awareness, and capacity building for sustainability initiatives.
Faculty, Staff, and Students	Contribute to environmental sustainability through responsible practices, participation in sustainability initiatives, and integration of sustainability principles into learning, teaching, research, and daily campus life.

7. Governance and Review

The Sustainability Committee, in coordination with relevant academic, research, and operational units, is responsible for the implementation and periodic review of this Policy. Feedback from the University community may be incorporated through appropriate consultation processes.