



SUBJECT	Sustainability and Climate Action Update on Actions Underway on the Climate Emergency Task Force Report
SUBMITTED TO	Sustainability & Climate Action Committee
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SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	For input only - No action requested
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PRIOR SUBMISSIONS

The subject matter of this submission was considered by the Sustainability & Climate Action Committee most recently in [April 2021](#).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context and Background

This briefing is an update on actions underway related to the UBC [Climate Emergency Task Force \(CETF\) Report](#), which was unanimously endorsed in principle by UBC's Board of Governors on [February 16 2021](#).

Acting on the climate emergency is a shared responsibility across both campuses. The UBC Sustainability Initiative (USI) has the responsibility for convening and coordinating action on the recommendations of the CETF and is undertaking a variety of activities as reported in April, focused on outreach, engagement, and communication. Action on the climate emergency takes place in the context of UBC's many actions on reconciliation, anti-racism, inclusion, equity and diversity, and an overarching priority is to integrate and coordinate these commitments and reporting duties.

This report discusses progress on developing the new climate emergency program; building relationships needed to operationalize climate justice; bringing together faculty and student climate researchers; and expansion of climate education opportunities.

Developing the New Climate Emergency program

The new program is underway with hiring of two new staff as co-managers, and development of their work plans. The Climate Emergency website, hosted by USI, <https://climateemergency.ubc.ca/>, has been updated and expanded with and is under review by multiple stakeholders. Students are working on projects on indicators for CETF reporting, and amplification of IBPOC voices on the climate emergency

through podcasts. USI has consulted members of the CETF and ETF Working Groups on implementation progress. Close collaboration with the student led UBC Climate Hub and initial connections with the new Center for Climate Justice adds to the momentum for CETF report implementation. The Climate Emergency Fund of \$1.5 million was allocated to 7 groups for student focused climate actions with input from a Climate Emergency Fund Advisory Committee comprised of students, faculty, and staff.

Building relationships needed to operationalize climate justice

Responding effectively to the Climate Emergency requires an all-hands-on-deck approach as there is no one person, unit, institution, or Nation that can resolve this crisis working in isolation. Building community and global partnerships and strengthening active climate networks and connections is a priority for UBC as the climate emergency continues. Relationship building has been reflected in the five-year USI strategic plan. More specifically, advancing climate justice means continuous and meaningful engagement with racialized and marginalized communities as well as connecting with communities that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as set out in the CETF priority “Establish mechanisms and processes that ensure Indigenous perspectives, communities and worldviews shape the development and implementation of climate-related initiatives and policies” put forward by the Indigenous Engagement Working Group. USI’s experience with the Indigenous Strategic Plan (ISP) self-assessment has led to the alignment of climate emergency and other program work with ISP goals. A sample of these include:

- Providing free and publicly accessible tools, events, resources that promote Indigenous rights and centre Indigenous voices
- Developing programming to catalyze research co-developed and led by Indigenous communities. (i.e., Fraser Research Estuary Collaborative)
- Supporting research opportunities for students to become global leaders in advancement of Indigenous knowledge systems as in select Sustainability Scholar projects
- Promoting the Centre for Interactive Research on Sustainability (CIRS) building as a welcoming, diverse, and accessible centre and establishing a cultural expert program that brings Musqueam, Okanagan Nations and other interested Indigenous nations’ cultural experts and Indigenous knowledge holders to the UBC campuses to work, teach and promote their expertise

Bringing together faculty and student climate researchers

A successful two-day research online symposium led by VPRI and co-chaired by two faculty promoted sharing between diverse climate researchers among UBC faculty and was held on Oct 13 and 14. A student-led climate slamposium October 15th complemented this event with students from multiple faculties sharing their research, activism, and actions.

Climate justice events are being planned by a variety of groups, such as the Centre for Community Engaged Learning’s [Social Impact Lab Climate Justice series](#). USI continues its “Climate Justice” series with “What’s at stake at COP26” on October 27th and is hosting a UBC Reads Sustainability Reads event November 18th with Professor Dallas Hunt to showcase his new book of poetry “Creeland” about life in northern Alberta.

Expansion of climate education

The USI is supporting the expansion and awareness of climate education offerings in various ways:

- The 2020-2021 Climate Education Grant holders are now including new climate related resources and activities in seven Term 1 courses. The 2022-2023 Climate Education Grants have been advertised (deadline Dec 17th).
- Supported by an Interdisciplinary Education Grant, the curriculum documents for the proposed 18-credit Climate Studies and Action Certificate have been submitted to the Faculty of Arts curriculum committee with anticipated first offerings in Sept 2022. This certificate, accessible to all UBC-V students, will feature two new introductory courses (Climate Emergency and Climate Justice), a series of three one-credit Climate Action Labs and a capstone community engaged learning project.
- The Climate Teaching Connector (CTC), coordinated by the Climate Hub is running for a second year with 16 graduate student climate experts. A new teaching and learning workshop was developed to prepare the graduate students.
- A new webpage has been launched to showcase the climate course listings.

Partnerships

Partnership work continues with the University Climate Coalition (UC3) under President Ono’s leadership, a transparent delegate selection process and coordinated UBC presence at the upcoming climate treaty Conference of the Parties (COP), and hosting a UBC Community Roundtable developed with partners Metro Vancouver, the Vancouver Economic Commission and the Pembina Institute as part of a McConnell Foundation cross Canada series of events on the theme of “Building Back Better in the Climate Emergency.”

Emissions reduction is integral to UBC’s climate emergency work, and CAP2030 is being considered separately in this Committee meeting.

Attached as Appendix A is a table of examples to illustrate the breadth of actions underway in the past two months related to each of the CETF’s nine priorities, all of which are collated and reported in the expanded climate emergency website.

Next Steps

- Coordinate and convene campus partners, faculty, and students on CETF priority areas and report on all activities led independently by Faculties, students, and staff units.
- Convene Climate Emergency Fund grantees of \$1.5 million fund to explore synergies.
- Develop work plans with two new staff to map and report on CETF work underway across UBC.
- Launch expanded climateemergency.ubc.ca website.
- Continue work on nine priorities of CETF, including USI initiatives on climate education, research, and partnerships.
- Continue to report back to UBC community on CETF progress.

APPENDICES

1. Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) report – Examples of Actions Underway

Appendix A - Climate Emergency Task Force (CETF) report – Examples of Actions Underway

UBC CETF REPORT - NINE PRIORITY AREAS OF RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>A. Operationalize UBC’s commitments to climate justice: Support climate leadership and initiatives led by Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour</p>	<p>Relationship building is an essential precondition for this work, and work is underway between many groups across both campuses</p> <p>USI is supporting a graduate student’s podcast “Anthropause” which tells climate change stories from southeast Asia and the global south. A workshop for students on developing podcasts will be held later this fall.</p> <p>The Sustainability Ambassadors program is expanding with a focus on IBPOC engagement, and several Ambassadors projects focus on IBPOC led climate justice.</p>
<p>B. Demonstrate Institutional Leadership on Climate Justice</p>	<p>UBC demonstrates leadership through its continued divestment efforts, prioritizing the climate emergency in new hiring, leading the University Climate Coalition UC3 with other universities in the network, highlighting UBC participation in global treaty talks such as COP26.</p> <p>UBC is collaborating with the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) who is convening the 4 partner higher education institutions to discuss shared experiences in pathways to net zero emissions.</p> <p>USI is continuing the <i>Climate Justice Series</i> examining climate justice from local and global perspectives, presented in partnership with PICS.. Two events this fall are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COP26 What’s at Stake Oct 27th - UBC Reads Sustainability November 18, Professor Dallas Hunt will read from his poetry book Creeland <p>The new Center for Climate Justice in the Department of Geography is in development. UBC’s Professor of Climate Justice, Naomi Klein , gave one of the keynotes at the recent climate research symposium.</p> <p>Expanded the ClimateEmergency.ubc.ca website</p>
<p>C. Establish mechanisms and processes that ensure Indigenous perspectives, communities and</p>	<p>Many Sustainability Scholar projects aim to embed Indigenous perspectives into climate policies: Three fall 2021 projects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research to understand Indigenous housing governance practices, principles, and policies

<p>worldviews shape the development and implementation of climate-related initiatives and policies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research to understand innovations in Indigenous housing finance and insurance - Research on Project Ownership Models for Renewable Electricity Generation in Remote, Indigenous Communities <p>Information on other events and initiatives is being gathered.</p>
<p>D. Expand, Strengthen and Centre Climate Research at UBC</p>	<p>A climate symposium brought together, virtually, climate researchers from multiple faculties to address limited connectivity between clusters of relevant research activity, make connections, and enhance the potential of UBC researchers to significantly impact climate change through research and innovation. Oct 13, 14 2021</p> <p>Drawing from the creativity and community building tradition of slam poetry, a climate research "slamposium" profiled UBC students from diverse faculties to creatively communicate their research on Oct 15th</p> <p>The Faculty of Arts' hiring cluster on the Climate Emergency through the President's Academic Excellence Initiative is proceeding.</p> <p>Many units and faculties are working on climate research and several faculties have developed climate action plans and committees.</p> <p>PICS continues to fund many research initiatives at UBC with 'solution seekers' in the community.</p> <p>Awarded funding from the Climate Emergency Fund, a pilot <i>Transdisciplinary Collaborative PhD on the Climate Emergency</i> is under development. In this program, students working with different supervisors, from different disciplines, aim to understand and address climate emergency with the intent to create a collaborative dissertation core.</p> <p>The UBC Climate Hub's Climate Justice Research Collaborative will continue work this fall on interdisciplinary, community-engaged research projects, mentored by graduate students.</p>
<p>E. Foster a Culture of Engagement & Advocacy on Climate Action</p>	<p>Advocacy by members of the student-led UBC Climate Hub, working closely with elected AMS and GSS student leaders, led to the creation of a \$1.5 million Climate Emergency Fund (CEF) made up of incremental funding from tuition fees. The Fund was open over winter 2020-21 to proposals from programs and projects at UBC Vancouver that advanced priorities selected by students. An Advisory</p>

	<p>Committee co-chaired by a student and a staff person and composed of equal numbers of students and faculty/staff recommended distribution of the Fund to the final decision-makers: the VPs Academic, and Students. The 12-member Committee recommended all seven proposals received for full or partial funding , as the total amount requested exceeded the amount available. Funds were awarded to: Climate Hub; the Collaborative Research PHD pilot on the climate emergency; UBC Sustainability Initiative’s student climate programs; Centre for Community Engaged Learning Social Impact Lab; Campus + Community Planning SEEDS applied research and engagement and outreach programs; Climate Emergency Group in Public Scholars Initiative; and Climate Justice UBC student group.</p> <p>UBC submitted a brief in response to the Government of BC's consultation on its draft Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy; highlighted UBC's research programs and faculty and operational staff expertise, and recommended greater collaboration on climate issues – particularly devastating heat domes and wildfires.</p> <p>Academic Briefing on City of Vancouver Climate Emergency Action Plan: UBC community members participated in a City of Vancouver briefing to provide feedback on three climate emergency strategies going to City Council for approval. Oct 20</p>
<p>F. Support Community Wellbeing in the Face of the Climate Crisis</p>	<p>Climate Wellbeing Engagement Network: A student-led initiative via the UBC Climate Hub that developed climate wellbeing resources, several climate wellbeing toolkits, and hosted ten climate wellbeing workshops. May 2020</p> <p>Climate Creatives Workshop Series: Six two-hour UBC Climate Hub workshops to encourage students and community organizers to dream just and resilient futures beyond fossil fuels, mass extinction, policing, segregation, and exclusion. Mediums included filmmaking, creative fiction, poetry, and comic-making. Sep 2020</p> <p>Nature Prescriptions: A series of hosted group walks through campus green spaces, gardens, and parks with a specific focus on learning about nature (trees, plants, creature relations), and the mental health and wellbeing impacts of climate. Sep 2021</p> <p>Thrive Month: The UBC Climate Hub is running a climate mental health and resilience workshop during Thrive month in partnership with UBC Wellbeing. November 2021.</p> <p>Climate Mental Health and Wellbeing Toolkit: An online wellbeing resource kit including reports, resources, articles, podcasts, books,</p>

	<p>and websites on climate wellbeing information, coping strategies, and hopeful narratives. Oct 2021</p>
<p>G. Expand Climate Education Opportunities and Resources for the UBC Community and Broader Public</p>	<p>Climate Studies and Action Certificate: A new 18-credit interdisciplinary climate themed certificate for UBC students is under development by Associate Professor Tara Ivanochko and Associate Professor Jessica Dempsey. The certificate will feature 2 new introductory courses (Climate Emergency and Climate Justice), a series of 3, 1-credit Climate Action Labs and a capstone course. Anticipated first offerings in Sept 2022.</p> <p>Seven, term 1 courses are including content and activities developed with support of the 2020/21 Climate Education Grants. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A full revamp of Module 11 Modern Climate, have been created for EOSC 112 (150 students) - New reading and discussions in The Literatures of Environmental Protest ENGL 244 (75 students) <p>USI’s climate course listing was launched and profiles an initial list of approximately forty courses</p>
<p>H. Develop New and Strengthen Existing Partnerships to Tackle the Climate Emergency</p>	<p>An open competition for all students, faculty, and staff, was held to select UBC’s delegation of eight to the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow this November. following a recommendation from the Climate Emergency Task Force report. Applicants were asked to outline how they will use this opportunity to advance a sustainable and just society, how they might accelerate climate actions, and how their unique expertise and perspective can benefit COP26. From 72 very high-quality applications, a selection committee agreed on eight delegates. The successful applicants include three students, one staff, and four faculty members.</p> <p>Two partnership projects in USI’s Urban Innovation Research program relate to the climate emergency and demonstrate the potential of Living Lab work off campus: through the Embodied Carbon Pilot secured funding from BC Forestry Innovation Investment (FII) and the Vienna House project, a social-housing building project with ambitious goals on sustainability, resilience and technological applications as reported in April. After the City of Vancouver/BC Housing announces the project architect, there will be two more Integrated Design Process workshops in March.</p>

<p>I. Accelerate Emissions Reductions at UBCV and UBCO in Response to the Climate Emergency: Climate Action Plan 2030</p>	<p>CAP2030 led by Campus and Community Planning aims to cut fossil fuel use across campus operations, and significantly cut emissions associated with commuting, food, waste, and business air travel to align with the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C.</p>
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