



Wesleyan University

**Sustainability
Strategic
Plan
2022**

Executive Summary

This Sustainability Strategic Plan (SSP) is Wesleyan's roadmap toward a sustainable future. This plan establishes broad goals and objectives over the next decade and is intended to function as an overarching guiding document. This high-level focus enables this plan to be flexible and inclusive. In the implementation of this plan Wesleyan will establish specific strategies to achieve each objective. Each of the SSP's sections is summarized below.

CARBON

Goal 1: Wesleyan shall achieve carbon neutrality for all greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

Objective 1.1: Dramatically reduce fossil fuel usage in campus buildings by 2035.

Objective 1.2: Offset emissions from all Wesleyan employee business and study abroad air travel by 2023.

Objective 1.3: Convert 50% of light-duty vehicles in the campus fleet to electric vehicles by 2025.

Objective 1.4: Encourage decrease in personal use of single-occupancy and fossil-fuel-powered vehicles by employees and students.

Objective 1.5: Offset most remaining greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

Objective 1.6: Divest from fossil fuels by 2035 and increase investments in renewable energy and climate change solutions.

CURRICULUM

Goal 2: Wesleyan's curricular and co-curricular activities equip students with the necessary education and skills to become environmental and social leaders. By 2030 approximately 80% of the student body will have taken at least one course, workshop, or research experience that incorporates sustainability and environmental justice.

Objective 2.1: Increase support for faculty who incorporate sustainability and/or environmental justice into their courses.

Objective 2.2: Introduce annual environmental justice courses by 2023 taught by faculty members who are noted scholars in the field.

Objective 2.3: Expand opportunities for student professional development in sustainability and environmental justice.

COMMUNITY

Goal 3: Sustainability is an integral part of Wesleyan's community consciousness, expressed through University practices as well as the individual and collective actions of students, faculty, and staff.

Objective 3.1: Publicize, educate, and advocate for sustainable, equitable, and just practices.

Objective 3.2: Partner with the Middletown community on sustainability issues and city-wide projects.

Objective 3.3: Institute and expand practices in the areas of waste, dining, grounds, and procurement consistent with our shared value of sustainability.

Preface

Wesleyan University sits on the lands of the Wangunk people. The Wangunk stewarded the land and water in Mattabesett —what is now Middletown — over generations, and we honor and respect the historic and enduring relationship between the Wangunk and this land. The inherent connection between humans and nature was and is known and embodied by the Wangunk and Indigenous cultures worldwide. In Western societies, this balanced human-nature relationship has been replaced by the damaging concept that humans can and should “master” nature. This harmful framework has led to environmental degradation and environmental injustice. While lofty, the central goal of this Sustainability Strategic Plan is to develop new ways for the Wesleyan community to live, work, and play in such a way that honors humans’ dependence on the natural world and the need for justice for all people.

The climate crisis and broader environmental and social crises together pose a global emergency. All have complex roots in industrialization, colonialism, and capitalism, and impact people and the planet unevenly. Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, as well as low-income communities, have borne and continue to bear the brunt of racial and economic injustice, fossil fuel extraction, climate change impacts, and environmental hazards, including air, water, and land pollution.

The global Paris Climate Agreement calls for “limiting the global average temperature rise in this century to well below 2 degrees Celsius, while pursuing efforts to limit the temperature rise to 1.5 degrees.” In 2018, the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (“IPCC”) released a special report, projecting that limiting warming to the 1.5°C target this century will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy, including a 50 percent decrease in global emissions by 2030.

As part of a country that has contributed disproportionately to the climate crisis and recognizing that sustainability is not possible without justice and equity, Wesleyan has a moral imperative to do everything in its power to combat climate change and environmental degradation AND promote environmental and racial justice. Responding with appropriate and substantial action can help to make it possible for all humans and living beings to enjoy long, healthy, satisfying, and productive lives, free of conflict, fear, and shortages. In the face of the climate crisis, there is hope in taking action. We seek to be an institution on the forefront of sustainable change, one that promotes environmental and social sustainability in everything we do. Sustainability will always be an ongoing process, and this strategic plan envisions the most urgent steps in that process.

Now is the time to develop systemic long-term solutions - our lives depend on a healthy planet with fully functioning social, political, and economic systems. COVID-19 has increased existing racial and income inequalities, which in turn have exacerbated the pandemic’s effects. COVID-19 and climate change operate on different time scales, but both have global reach and disproportionately impact marginalized communities. It is essential that Wesleyan’s COVID-19 recovery addresses our planet’s climate change trajectory and promotes environmentally and socially just outcomes. We have an unprecedented opportunity to rethink nearly every aspect of how Wesleyan does business - resource use, building ventilation, course offerings, purchases, fossil fuel use, and community partnerships, just to name a few - and every action we take should demonstrate that we intend to build back better in an environmentally sustainable, equitable, and just way. Sustainability-minded actions and policies going forward can build a more resilient future for Wesleyan and the planet. If we do this work

together, we can maintain a livable planet, reduce our environmental impact, and protect human health, all while building a just world.

Wesleyan recognized the climate crisis in 2007 when it [committed to carbon neutrality](#) by 2050. A decade later, in 2016, Wesleyan launched its first [Sustainability Action Plan](#), which addressed climate change impacts and holistic sustainability. Wesleyan reaffirmed its commitment to addressing climate change a year later with [America is All In \(formerly We Are Still In\)](#), joining colleges, universities, states, local governments, and companies in pledging to uphold the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement via institutional actions. In 2018, Wesleyan introduced a [sustainability addendum to the Beyond 2020](#) University strategic plan.

The Wesleyan 2016-2021 [Sustainability Action Plan](#) included broad goals and objectives, as well as specific strategies, timelines, metrics, and identifying responsible parties. This structure was ambitious and served Wesleyan well over the first two years of the plan but proved limiting over time. Implementation was constrained in years three through five, as strategies became obsolete or unable to be completed. Wesleyan's new Sustainability Strategic Plan builds a roadmap toward a sustainable future by establishing broad goals and objectives over the coming decades. The work of establishing and implementing specific strategies to reach these goals and objectives will be developed not in the static plan but via teams of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who will develop action targets, metrics, and timelines to monitor progress and will report regularly through the sustainability website.

This strategic plan connects to the internal university benchmarks of [Beyond 2020 Sustainability Addendum](#), and supports [Wesleyan's Bicentennial Plan](#). Wesleyan's antiracism commitment, and the [Sustainability Office's Antiracism & Intersectionality Commitment](#), all of which have been explicitly committed to. Wesleyan has also explicitly committed to two external commitments relating to climate action, the [Second Nature Carbon Commitment](#) and [America Is All In](#). The plan also references two external measurement targets, the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) and [STARS \(Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System\)](#). Wesleyan has not committed to achieving the targets of either of these systems but is including both to measure Wesleyan's progress against other higher education institutions and put our efforts in a global context. All benchmarks are referenced in [Appendix A](#).

CARBON

Goal 1: Wesleyan shall achieve carbon neutrality for all greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

Wesleyan committed to a 2050 carbon neutrality date in 2007 and is now accelerating this timeline in response to the global climate emergency; a 2018 United Nations report found that global carbon dioxide emissions need to fall 45 percent by 2030 to limit global warming to 1.5°C;¹ a 2021 update acknowledged that "global warming of 1.5°C and 2°C will be exceeded during the 21st century unless

¹www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2018/10/special-climate-report-1-5oc-is-possible-but-requires-unprecedented-and-urgent-action/

deep reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gas emissions occur in the coming decades.”² By moving towards carbon neutrality as rapidly as possible through limiting and eliminating fossil fuel emissions, as well as purchasing limited offsets and divesting from fossil fuels, Wesleyan will do its part to mitigate the impact of climate disasters on its campus, its students, and its community. To date, Wesleyan has made multiple strides in this area, including:

- Achieving a 36% greenhouse gas reduction from a 2008 baseline in 2020,
- Commissioning a carbon neutrality plan for campus buildings in 2019,
- Beginning the conversion of heat transfer system from steam to hot water (Phase 1 of 9 completed Summer 2020, Phase 2 Summer 2021),
- Installing a 750-kilowatt solar array in 2016 to provide energy for about 5% of the campus by generating about 1.2 million kilowatts of power each year,
- Committing to meet or exceed the [U.S. Green Building Council's](#) LEED Gold standard or equivalent for new construction and major renovations,
- Launching the first phase of an air travel offsets program for the President’s Office (2019-2020),
- Divesting the Wesleyan Student Assembly endowment from fossil fuels (approving a resolution to divest in 2013, establishing a divestment and reinvestment strategy in 2016, and enacting the strategy in 2019),

The following objectives move Wesleyan in the direction of a campus that emits zero carbon.

Objective 1.1: Dramatically reduce fossil fuel usage in campus buildings by 2035.

By dramatically reducing fossil fuel usage from campus buildings, we will continue to lower Wesleyan’s carbon footprint by 75-80 percent. To achieve this, Wesleyan must convert its underground energy delivery system from steam to low-temperature hot water. This conversion will reduce the University’s carbon footprint by 30-35 percent and allow access to current and future renewable heating technologies for all buildings connected to the central power plant as outlined in the [Energy Master Plan](#).

New and existing buildings’ heating systems must be converted to renewable energy, connecting buildings to the central hot water loop, installing renewable energy systems on individual buildings, and replacing inefficient aging buildings. The most likely solution will involve all of the above strategies, as well as expanding energy efficiency and conservation efforts across campus, including in wood frame houses and offices, adding insulation and window replacements, and reevaluating space usage.

Objective 1.2: Offset emissions from all Wesleyan employee business and study abroad air travel by 2023.

Transportation, including air travel, commuter, and ground travel, was Wesleyan’s second largest emissions source in 2019, with air travel accounting for the largest percentage. Purchasing offsets for all faculty and staff business and study abroad air travel emissions is an effective way to ensure that carbon emitted into the atmosphere will be offset by a carbon sink. Through a fee added to all employee business air travel purchases, Wesleyan shall purchase offsets with maximum rates of carbon sequestration, ideally procuring locally generated carbon offsets generated primarily from

² https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_Headline_Statements.pdf

preserving forested land and planting trees. We will simultaneously explore opportunities to reduce non-research business air travel in favor of virtual and ground transportation alternatives.

Objective 1.3: Convert 50% of light-duty vehicles in the campus fleet to electric vehicles by 2025.

While campus fleet emissions account for less than five percent of Wesleyan's carbon footprint, transportation emissions as a whole account for nearly 40 percent of Connecticut emissions. Rapid transitions in the automobile industry are expected to make suitable electric vehicles for Wesleyan's diverse needs available in the near future with anticipated cost decreases and continued technological innovation.

Objective 1.4: Encourage decrease in personal use of single-occupancy and fossil-fuel-powered vehicles by employees and students.

Most Wesleyan employee and student travel is currently done in fossil-fuel-powered, single-occupancy automobiles. Over 80 percent of employees drive alone to work each day. Many students have cars on campus, which are not only used to travel home and to nearby locations, but also to travel within campus instead of walking and biking. These emissions must be reduced drastically by institutionalizing alternative work schedules, popularizing improvements in public transportation, facilitating alternative commuting strategies, strengthening infrastructure and education to encourage walking and biking, discouraging intra-campus car travel, and expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Objective 1.5: Offset most remaining greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

This greenhouse gas emissions target is in line with the United Nations' goal of 50% global reduction by 2030. Wesleyan shall eliminate as much of its greenhouse gas emissions as possible through physical means. To address emissions from ground travel, commuting, and other unavoidable sources, Wesleyan will need to purchase offsets annually concurrent with reduction initiatives and will focus on purchasing and supporting the generation of offsets with the highest sequestration potential, focusing on local offsets when possible. Wesleyan will aim to purchase as few carbon offsets as possible, especially over the long term, instead investing funds in reducing its carbon footprint.

Objective 1.6: Divest from fossil fuels by 2035 and increase investments in renewable energy and climate change solutions.

At the end of fiscal year 2021, investments held by Wesleyan in fossil fuel industries and businesses comprise less than three percent of Wesleyan's portfolio. The Wesleyan community, including the Board of Trustees, recognizes the disastrous effects of fossil fuels on the planet. In March 2020, the Board of Trustees approved a [resolution](#) to cease new investments in fossil fuels (coal, oil, natural gas, and fracking byproducts). Given the terms of existing contracts, Wesleyan expects to divest from all investments in fossil fuels by 2035. However, Wesleyan's portfolio may still contain investments in companies that do business with clients, including fossil fuel-related companies (ex: Apple, Alphabet). While maintaining its high bar for investment returns, Wesleyan also will continue to explore investments in renewable energy and in businesses that work to mitigate the effects of climate change and promote sustainability in all sectors of the economy. Wesleyan will continue to report annually on its fossil fuel exposure through [Investments Office year-end letters](#).

CURRICULUM

Goal 2: Wesleyan’s curricular and co-curricular activities equip students with the necessary education and skills to become environmental and social leaders. By 2030 approximately 80% of the student body will have taken at least one course, workshop, or research experience that incorporates sustainability and environmental justice.

Wesleyan has the potential to graduate environmental and social leaders. Wesleyan will provide a holistic approach to sustainability literacy in two important ways. The first way will be to have a variety of academic courses integrate intersectional and interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability and environmental justice into their courses. These courses will span Wesleyan’s three academic divisions: arts and humanities; social and behavioral sciences; and natural sciences and mathematics. The second way will be to provide professional development support for students wishing to pursue careers in environmental justice and sustainability. We will continue to center the analyses of sociopolitical, ecological, and cultural systems that explain patterns of environmental injustice, social exclusion, and possibilities for social change. The perspectives of marginalized groups, including those of students of color, first-generation and low-income students, and students who belong to Indigenous groups, are critical for our educational mission to succeed. Wesleyan will achieve success in developing and executing courses about environmental justice and sustainability by centering the perspectives of marginalized groups in ways that create learning atmospheres that celebrate inclusivity and diversity.

To date, Wesleyan has made multiple strides in this area, including:

- Offering paid fellowships annually since 2004 through the College of the Environment to undergraduates in all disciplines undertaking research on environmental topics,
- Recognizing the growth of faculty research into sustainability, comprising nine percent of faculty from 59 percent of departments,
- Including sustainability in five percent of courses in the past three years,
- Offering at least one course that includes sustainability in 77 percent of departments,
- Including sustainability and environmental justice content in 35 new courses since 2016 through the Sustainability & Environmental Justice Pedagogical Initiative funded by the College of the Environment,
- Committing to introduce three new first year seminars including sustainability by Fall 2022.

The following objectives move Wesleyan in the direction of a campus that educates environmental and social leaders.

Objective 2.1: Increase support for faculty who incorporate sustainability and/or environmental justice into their courses.

Sustainability and environmental justice should and can be discussed in every discipline that is taught at Wesleyan. For this to be feasible, faculty must have support including training on sustainability and environmental justice and meetings within and between departments to discuss best practices in course integration. Sustainability and environmental justice should be integrated holistically in the

way that makes the most sense for each course and that makes sustainability accessible to students in all class years and of all knowledge levels.

Objective 2.2: Introduce annual environmental justice courses by 2023 taught by faculty members who are noted scholars in the field.

While multiple courses have included environmental justice themes, and students have taught a forum repeatedly on this topic, there is no consistently offered environmental justice course. Expanding and deepening consistent course offerings in this area would introduce more students to the historical and present justice contexts of environmental issues such as climate change. Ideally, Wesleyan will hire a full-time, permanent faculty member so that environmental justice can be consistently taught. In the interim, Wesleyan can promote environmental justice education through a combination of student forum support, per-course visitors, visiting professors, post-doctoral scholars, and Jewett Center for Community Partnership Mentors-in-Residence.

Objective 2.3: Expand opportunities for student professional development in sustainability and environmental justice.

Students can receive training in sustainability and environmental justice through research projects, work experiences and specialized workshops. Those students looking to pursue summer or post-graduate work in sustainability and environmental justice fields need support. Wesleyan has many opportunities to provide this support, including career advising, related job and internship postings, financial support for internships, and opportunities for students to connect with employers and alumni. Wesleyan must ensure that access to these opportunities is equitably available to BIPOC and FGLI students. The Sustainability Office, the College of the Environment, Allbritton Center, and Academic Affairs will organize at least one workshop for students per academic year on Sustainability and Environmental Justice with a recognized authority beginning in 2023. The College of the Environment will work to increase the number of student-research fellowships and experiences in the areas of sustainability and environmental justice beginning in summer 2023. The Gordon Career Center will also continue to collaborate with the Sustainability Office and other campus entities to hold regular career panels and career learning opportunities for students who wish to pursue careers in sustainability and environmental justice.

COMMUNITY

Goal 3: Sustainability is an integral part of Wesleyan's community consciousness, expressed through University practices as well as the individual and collective actions of students, faculty, and staff.

A sustainable institution must change more than its carbon footprint and classroom education. Wesleyan's impact includes its students' and employees' daily actions and interactions with the wider community. By intentionally pursuing individual, collective, and institutional choices that have positive environmental and social impacts, Wesleyan shall create a community consciousness that values sustainability and social justice. This raising of community consciousness presents an opportunity to not only promote environmentally sustainable actions but to educate the Wesleyan community about

the interdependence of environmental and racial justice. Throughout, these efforts must acknowledge, uplift, prioritize, listen to, and collaborate with Black, Indigenous, people of color, first-generation, and low-income communities on and off campus, recognizing and taking steps to remediate past harms done by Wesleyan's actions or inactions.

To date, Wesleyan has made multiple strides in this area, including:

- Developing and sustaining partnerships in the Middletown community led by students, departments, and faculty and staff, including Long Lane Farm community outreach, intern support for the Sustainable Middletown initiative, food donations to Eddy Shelter, science outreach to local schools, service-learning courses, and volunteering with G.R.O. Dreamville community gardens,
- Launching a Success@Wes sustainability education program for faculty and staff in 2019,
- Establishing the Eco Facilitators program in 2014, which educates up to 16 students annually to serve as sustainability-focused peer advisors across Wesleyan's campus,
- Developing a Sustainability Office Antiracism and Intersectionality Commitment in 2020, and
- Beginning in 2020, the [Jewett Center for Community Partnerships](#) launched new areas of focus, which now include sustainability and environmental justice.
- Diverting nearly 66 percent of waste from the incinerator in 2019 through recycling, composting, and reuse, compared to 42 percent in 2013,
- Purchasing 25 percent of food served in campus dining from sustainable sources and 26 percent from plant-based sources (categories overlap), and
- Planting at least one tree for every campus tree removed since 2014.

The following objectives move Wesleyan in the direction of a sustainability-centered campus community consciousness.

Objective 3.1: Publicize, educate, and advocate for sustainable, equitable, and just practices.

Wesleyan's faculty, staff, and students are a community with differing education and experience regarding sustainability. The Wesleyan community needs to be aware of sustainability issues, efforts, and opportunities for involvement. Outreach should acknowledge, listen to, collaborate with, and empower marginalized individuals and groups. Providing the tools to change the behaviors and mindsets of students, faculty, and staff allows the impact of sustainability to go beyond the individual level to collective action. By instilling sustainability as a lifelong value, Wesleyan will thus expand its sustainable impact globally.

Racism and income inequality are strongly integrated with traditional access (or lack thereof) to mainstream sustainability knowledge and practices. It is therefore essential that Wesleyan acknowledges the systemic promotion of white sustainability and erasure of BIPOC sustainability practices and ideologies in its facilitation of an even playing field of sustainability knowledge. This will require continual education and outreach that acknowledges, listens to, and collaborates with marginalized members of our community. We must also create space for international, Black, Indigenous, people of color, low-income, and first-generation marginalized members of our Wesleyan community to lead in these efforts and be included in decision-making. Increasing the presence of sustainability and environmental justice in extracurricular activities and programming will increase opportunities to gain important knowledge, reach a wider audience, and increase access for those historically marginalized from sustainability. Collaborative efforts between student groups and offices will be essential in achieving this objective.

Advocacy involves promoting the interests and causes of sustainability and racial justice and must include and amplify the experiences and voices of marginalized groups. Wesleyan must encourage civic engagement on sustainability in the context of equity.

Objective 3.2: Partner with the Middletown community on sustainability issues and city-wide projects.

The Wesleyan and Middletown communities should expand on existing collaborations to reach collective sustainability and environmental justice goals, building a resilient community and continuing to strengthen town-gown relations. Wesleyan must listen to the needs of the diverse communities in Middletown and expand this support to provide physical, financial, and intellectual resources to support sustainability and environmental justice at the local level. Recognizing the challenges of student turnover, efforts must be made to institutionalize partnerships for continuity, including explicit integration into specific Wesleyan offices, centers, and departmental missions and job descriptions. There is much work to be done, and many as-yet-untapped opportunities for Wesleyan and Middletown to collaborate in a partnership that is mutually beneficial, genuine, and long-lasting.

Objective 3.3: Institute and expand practices in the areas of waste, dining, grounds, and procurement consistent with our shared value of sustainability.

Through making changes in the four areas listed below, Wesleyan aims to have its consumption and other physical impacts reflect the values of prioritizing sustainability and justice and fostering the community we hope to create amongst students, faculty, and staff.

3.3.1 Waste

Wesleyan shall continue past efforts to reduce waste and increase waste diversion. Working groups shall find ways to functionally improve access to waste diversion and address waste generation across the entire campus. Improvements made thus far include removing trash cans from many individual offices and promoting recycling and composting within student residences. Single-use items should be reduced by 50% by 2030. Wesleyan will move toward a zero-waste model such that all waste will either be recycled or composted. Continued education regarding waste sorting and composting is critical to success.

3.3.2 Dining & Food

In 2012, Wesleyan committed to the Real Food Challenge for Usdan Marketplace and agreed to purchase at least 20% of food annually that meets or exceeds the standards for sustainable food, including fair, organic, local, and humane food. Efforts should be made to increase sustainable food purchases to 30% of Wesleyan Dining's total by 2025. In 2016, Wesleyan launched Veg Out Tuesdays, serving plant-based meals for lunch in Usdan Marketplace to reduce the carbon and methane footprints associated with meat consumption. Wesleyan Dining shall scale back purchasing from the animal agriculture industry by continuing to offer robust vegetarian options daily, sustaining the local food co-op, and collaborating with Long Lane Farm. These actions will reduce a leading contributor of global greenhouse gas emissions.

3.3.3 Grounds

Wesleyan maintains extensive monoculture with lawns. The increase of perennial, low-mow, and no-mow plantings shall reduce the resource inputs needed to maintain lawns, as well as enhance biodiversity in the campus ecosystem. Introducing organic and fossil-fuel free grounds management practices will further reduce emissions and promote ecological health. Currently, Wesleyan plants at least one tree for every tree removed; Wesleyan should increase this commitment to plant at least two trees for each removed to protect air quality and reduce runoff.

3.3.4 Procurement

Wesleyan shall increase the transparency and sustainability of product sourcing (merchandise, office supplies, etc.) and the preference for zero waste items (compostable or recyclable). Working groups shall establish sustainable purchasing guidelines, baselines, and goals that will include environmental and social components, which will be incorporated into university purchasing procedures.

Appendix A: Benchmarks

Updated June 2023 to reflect 2023 STARS report

This strategic plan connects to the internal university benchmarks of [Beyond 2020 Sustainability Addendum](#), Wesleyan's antiracism commitment, and the [Sustainability Office's Antiracism & Intersectionality Commitment](#), all of which have been explicitly committed to. Wesleyan has also explicitly committed to two external commitments relating to climate action, the [Second Nature Carbon Commitment](#) and [America Is All In](#). The plan also references two external measurement targets, the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) and [STARS \(Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System\)](#). Wesleyan has not committed to achieving the targets of either of these systems, but is including both to measure Wesleyan's progress against other higher education institutions and put our efforts in a global context.

Explicit Commitments

- **Beyond 2020:** Wesleyan 2020 was adopted in 2010 as Wesleyan's strategic plan over a five to ten year period. This framework was extended in 2017 in *Beyond 2020* and further developed in a [2019 Sustainability Addendum](#).
- **Antiracism Commitments:** Amidst national and global outrage over racial injustice in 2020, Wesleyan released several statements on antiracism, including a commitment addressing ways to rectify past and current injustices in an antiracism commitment. Wesleyan's Sustainability Office separately released its own [Antiracism and Intersectionality Commitment](#) to commit to ways the Office employees will integrate environmental work with the essential work of racial and social justice.
- **Second Nature Carbon Commitment:** In 2007, Wesleyan was one of the first colleges and universities to sign onto what was then the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) and is now the [Second Nature Carbon Commitment](#). In signing on, Wesleyan committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2050, developing a climate action plan to achieve this commitment, and evaluating progress annually.
- **America Is All In:** In 2017, Wesleyan joined an inaugural group of college and university presidents, local governments, business leaders, medical and health organizations, and faith communities in commitment to uphold the goals of the [2015 United Nations Paris Climate Accord](#). Since the United States' rejoining of this accord, [America Is All In](#) (previously We Are Still In) continues to support ambitious national climate targets.

External Measurement Targets (no explicit commitment)

- **UN Sustainable Development Goals:** The SDGs, a voluntary set of objectives adopted by all UN member countries in 2015, have been adopted by many colleges and universities as a systemic framework for addressing sustainability locally with global impacts. Using the SDGs as a benchmark underscores the intersectionality of environmental and social issues and puts Wesleyan's goals and objectives in a global context.
- **STARS:** The [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System \(STARS\)](#) is a self-reporting global sustainability standard created by the higher education community to evaluate college and university sustainability performance. Wesleyan has completed STARS evaluations every three years since 2013 and has informed many of its sustainability efforts based on STARS metrics.

CARBON

The following are targets that Wesleyan has explicitly committed to:

- [Second Nature Carbon Commitment](#): 100% carbon neutrality by 2050 (2019: 20% reduction)
- [America Is All In](#): Commitment to Paris Climate Agreement Targets (2019: 20% reduction)
- [Beyond 2020](#): Get as close as feasible to [net zero energy certification](#), incorporating additional principles of the [Living Building Challenge](#) (2019: exploring ways to reduce energy use significantly in planned new science building)

The following are external targets that Wesleyan is measured against but has not explicitly committed to:

- SDGs
 - [SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy](#):
 - 7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
 - 7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency
 - [SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities](#):
 - 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport
 - [SDG 13 Climate Action](#):
 - 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
- STARS
 - [Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#): Net zero carbon emissions (2022: 43% reduction)
 - [Building Design and Construction](#): 100% of new construction is LEED Platinum and/or Certified Living Building (2022: 100% of buildings in past 5 years have achieved certification or met certification criteria)
 - [Building Operations and Maintenance](#): 100% of existing buildings are LEED Platinum or similar certified (2022: no building certifications, partial points for [building sustainability policy](#))
 - [Building Energy Efficiency](#): Reduce energy consumption 90% below minimum performance threshold, reduce energy consumption 50% from baseline (2022: 30% below threshold and 18.5% below baseline)
 - [Clean and Renewable Energy](#): 100% renewable energy (2022: 4%)
 - [Campus Fleet](#): 100% of campus fleet alternatively fueled (2022: 18%)
 - [Commute Modal Split](#): 100% of employees and students use sustainable transportation as primary mode of transportation (2022: 27% and 96%, respectively)
 - [Support for Sustainable Transportation](#): Offer 5+ sustainable transportation programs (2022: 5 programs)
 - [Sustainable Investment](#): Invest 60% or more in companies practicing environmental and social governance (2022: not reporting data)
 - [Committee on Investor Responsibility](#): Committee that includes students, faculty, and staff (2022: CIR includes students and staff)

CURRICULUM

The following are targets that Wesleyan has explicitly committed to:

- [Beyond 2020:](#)
 - At least five courses every year with integrated sustainability content through the launch of an annual process to solicit new courses, including at least three annual First-Year Seminars by 2022 (In academic year 2020-21, 17 courses are planned, none are currently First-Year Seminars)
 - Develop a strategy for assessing Wesleyan students' sustainability literacy, both to document what students are learning about sustainability and to determine how much their learning is shaped by their engagement with Wesleyan's sustainability-related coursework, programming, and activities (2022: not started)
- Campus Antiracism Commitment (July 2020):
 - Deepen the mentorship offered to faculty of color. This includes establishing mentoring relationships with alumni; support for professional coaches; support for faculty to work with distinguished colleagues at other institutions; and membership in external mentorship programs geared towards (but not limited to) faculty of color.
 - Coordinate, support, and highlight existing courses and pedagogical projects that interrogate race, equity, and justice issues. This can include special funding opportunities and course or teaching assistants.
 - Solicit proposals from faculty for curricular initiatives that focus on the experiences of people of color and those historically marginalized on Wesleyan's campus.
- [Sustainability Office Antiracism & Intersectionality Commitment](#)
 - Advocating for the hiring of environmental justice-focused professors, the creation of environmental justice-focused courses, and the continued expansion of the Sustainability & Environmental Justice Course Cluster.

The following are external targets that Wesleyan is measured against but has not explicitly committed to:

- [SDG 4: Quality Education:](#)
 - 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development
- STARS:
 - [Academic Courses](#): 20% of classes in 90% of departments include sustainability. (2022: 10% of classes in 89% of departments)
 - [Immersive Experience](#): Offer sustainability-focused programs that give students the opportunity to learn in-depth about sustainability challenges and solutions and may help students define a career path or make connections to a profession or industry (2022: full points for courses; College of the Environment offers summer fellowships to all majors).
 - [Sustainability Literacy Assessment](#): 100% of student knowledge assessed (2022: none)
 - [Incentives for Developing Courses](#): Offer faculty incentives to increase student sustainability learning (2022: Sustainability & Environmental Justice Program)
 - [Research and Scholarship](#): 15%+ faculty do sustainability research in 75%+ of departments (2022: 11% of faculty in 64% of departments)
 - [Support for Sustainability Research](#): Offer programs to encourage student and faculty research, recognize interdisciplinary research, and library support (2022: all but interdisciplinary research supported)

COMMUNITY

The following are targets that Wesleyan has explicitly committed to:

- [Beyond 2020](#): Integrate sustainability education into the Residential Life curriculum (2022: Sustainability Office Interns and Residential Life student staff have some communication, which is continually being improved)
- Campus Antiracism Commitment (July 2020): Wesleyan will provide funding to departments, programs, and colleges for talks, performances, and other co-curricular activities that feature Black, Indigenous and other scholars and artists of color.
- [Sustainability Office Antiracism & Intersectionality Commitment](#)
 - Organizing, supporting, publicizing, and attending intersectional events and conversations run by BIPOC and FGLI members of our community, such as student groups, the Resource Center, and Middletown residents.
 - Integrating a land acknowledgement into all office-sponsored campus events.
 - Hosting and supporting events which examine the ties between environmentalism and white supremacy.
 - Including BIPOC and FGLI students and speakers in programming.
 - Taking responsibility for instances of past or present harm from our actions by pursuing restorative action appropriate to the circumstance.
 - Soliciting anonymous feedback from Office staff and partners to better support equity, outreach, and intersectionality.
 - Ensuring that all Office staff application materials, recruitment and hiring processes integrate antiracist language and address internalized barriers that prevent BIPOC individuals from applying to work in the Office.
 - Integrating environmental and racial justice into Wesleyan's sustainability plans.

The following are external targets that Wesleyan is measured against but has not explicitly committed to:

- SDGs
 - [SDG 4: Quality Education](#):
 - 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development
 - [SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth](#)
 - 8.8 Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers
 - [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#):
 - 10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 percent of the population at a rate higher than the national average
 - 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
 - 10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

- [SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities:](#)
 - 11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all
 - 11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management
 - 11.B By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and holistic disaster risk management at all levels
- [SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production:](#)
 - 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment;
 - 12.5 By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse
 - 12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities
 - 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature
- [SDG 13 Climate Action:](#)
 - 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters;
 - 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
- [SDG 15: Life on Land](#)
 - 15.5 Take action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats [and] halt the loss of biodiversity
 - 15.8 Introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive species...and control or eradicate the priority species
 - 15.9 Integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning
 - 15.A Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems
 - 15.B Mobilize significant resources to finance sustainable forest management
- [SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:](#)
 - 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- [SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals:](#)
 - 17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships
- STARS
 - [Student Educators Program:](#) 100% of undergrad and grad students have access to peer sustainability outreach programs (2022: undergrad only in dorms and program houses)
 - [Student Orientation:](#) 100% of students have access to sustainability in Orientation (2022: 100%)
 - [Student Life:](#) Have sustainability programs in 8+ extracurricular areas (2022: 8)

- [Employee Orientation](#): Sustainability topics are covered in orientation and/or outreach and guidance materials that are made available to all new employees (2022: required for staff, not required for faculty)
- [Employee Educators Program](#): Peer educator program in sustainability available to all employees (2022: no program exists)
- [Community Partnerships](#): Provide multi-year, sustainability-focused financial or material support to community organizations (2022: Reimagining Justice Pathways to Agriculture and Sustainable Middletown)
- [Community Service](#): 100% of students engage in 20 hours or more of community service each year (2022: 11% of students engaged, hours not tracked, no employee volunteering program)
- [Participation in Public Policy](#): Wesleyan advocates for public policies at local, state, national, and international levels (2022: have engaged in all 4 areas)
- [Inclusive and Participatory Governance](#): Wesleyan hosts or supports one or more formal bodies through which external stakeholders have a regular voice in institutional decisions that affect them (2022: WSA, faculty governance, no staff governance body)
- [Employee Compensation](#): Have a living wage (benefits excluded) for all direct employees and employees of contractors and have total compensation (benefits included) at or exceeding the local living wage (2022: 93.5% of Wesleyan employees, including 61% of contracted employees, receive a living wage, benefits excluded; the lowest paid contracted workers earn less than the living wage: \$26.14 in 2019; see [MIT Living Wage Calculator for Middlesex County](#) for updated value - wage for 2 adults/2 children is benchmark)
- [Waste Minimization and Diversion](#): Reduce waste by 50% from baseline, divert 100% of waste (2022: waste increased from baseline, 36% diversion)
- [Construction and Demolition Waste Diversion](#): Divert 100% of construction waste (2022: 32% diversion)
- [Food and Beverage Purchasing](#): 100% purchased from ethical/sustainable and/or plant-based sources (2022: 11% sustainable, 28% plant-based with overlap)
- [Sustainable Dining](#): 5+ sustainable dining initiatives and 8+ programs to reduce food waste (2022: 5 initiatives and 9 programs, respectively)
- [Landscape Management](#): 100% organic grounds management (2022: 6% organic management)
- [Biodiversity](#): Biodiversity importance analysis (2022: no analysis)
- [Rainwater Management](#): Comprehensive rainwater management policy mandating low-impact development and using stormwater as resource (2022: employs rainwater management practices but no policy)
- [Sustainable Procurement](#): Have institution-wide, written policies, guidelines, or directives that use Life Cycle Cost Analysis (LCCA) for all purchases and seek to support sustainable purchasing across 8 categories (2022: [proprietary specifications](#), use LCCA for some purchases, have criteria for 7 categories)
- [Electronics Purchasing](#): Purchase only EPEAT Gold electronics (2022: mix of uncertified and EPEAT Gold purchases)
- [Cleaning and Janitorial Purchasing](#): Use 100% green cleaning products (2022: 72%)
- [Office Paper Purchasing](#): Use paper that is 100% post-consumer recycled and/or FSC highest rating (2022: <50% spend on these papers)