



# The role of universities in supporting institutions to the target of net-zero emissions

COP27 – side event - Italy Pavilion

Sharm el-Sheikh - November 16, 2022

Stephen Davison

University of Cambridge

# UK Universities Climate Network (UUCN)



## Who we are

Founded in 2019 as the COP26 Universities Network, UUCN is a growing group of over 85 universities and research centres which aims to enable collaboration within the UK academic sector to advance climate action nationally and internationally.

## Key Messages

UUCN have published collaborative working papers and case studies focused on net zero universities which highlight the need for:

1. Universities to take climate action as an essential part of their core mission
2. Universities to act as local anchor institutions in the places they are based
3. All action across universities to be joined up and expand beyond the university itself

# 1. Universities take climate action as an essential part of their core mission

Universities act to reduce their emissions to net zero in line with national and international climate commitments by:

- Transforming their day-to-day operations to rapidly reduce emissions
- Taking actions to cut emissions at source as a priority
- Establishing robust principles on what emissions can and cannot be offset, as well as reassessing them regularly to prioritise emissions reductions



# 1. Universities take climate action as an essential part of their core mission

Build resilience across their operations and spaces to protect staff, students and property from damaging climate impacts by:

- Incorporating climate risk indicators into their risk registries and making comprehensive plans to address them
- Developing clear operational plans for implementing climate adaptation measures, developed in partnership with local organisations and communities.



Image Credit: Rene Spitz

## 2. Universities act as anchor institutions in the places they are based

Working with their local authorities, industries and community groups to scale up climate action and build a sustainable future by:

- Demonstrating solutions in action working with their city or the place they are based
- Developing area-wide partnerships bringing together people and organisations to work collaboratively to drive, guide, support and track climate action
- Incorporating local issues on climate action or projects working with local communities into the curriculum



### 3. All action across universities must be joined up and expand beyond the university itself

Climate actions should cut across departments, influence the research carried out and the curriculums taught, and be shared locally to internationally by:

- Connecting activities between academics, sustainability teams and students – and across disciplines
- Embedding climate change education across all learning and operational activities
- Collaborating with universities nationally and internationally to share learnings, building community and showcase leadership
- Embedding research and education opportunities into their delivery of resilient net-zero



Image Credit: Oxford Climate Society



Stephen Davison

University of Cambridge

[ukclimateuniversities@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ukclimateuniversities@imperial.ac.uk) | [@UKClimateUnis](https://twitter.com/UKClimateUnis) | [uucn.ac.uk](http://uucn.ac.uk)