

Imperial College Union

ICU ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Proposed by Adele Peel, Hannah Theodorou, Joao Serra, Samantha Perera, Alex Guite, Ben Harris and John Collins

Imperial College Union Notes:

1. The Stern Report on the Economics of Climate Change, amongst other things states
“The scientific evidence is now overwhelming: climate change is a serious global threat, and it demands an urgent global response.”
2. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) Working Group I Fourth Assessment Report states
*“The understanding of anthropogenic warming and cooling influences on climate has improved since the Third Assessment Report (TAR), leading to **very high confidence** (report emphasis not mine) that the globally averaged net effect of human activities since 1750 has been one of warming, with a radiative forcing of +1.6 Wm⁻²”*
3. That the current Ethical and Environmental Policy of the Union will expire at the end of this academic year.
4. Over 1000 students signed the Greening the Union petition during Green Week 2007 demanding that the Union renew its Environmental Policy (see Appendix A).
5. Today it costs £36 per ton to dump waste in landfill sites. By 2015 this will at least treble.
6. Part L of Building and Approved Inspectors (Amendment) Regulations 2006 require that all building work is carried out such that *“Reasonable provision shall be made for the conservation of fuel and power in buildings...”* and that *“...the building can be operated in such a manner as to use no more fuel and power than is reasonable in the circumstances”*.

Imperial College Union Believes:

1. Many of the Union’s activities contribute to climate change and consume unsustainable quantities of natural resources.
2. We should mitigate our contribution to Climate Change.
3. Water is a semi-scarce resource, the use of which needs to be minimised.
4. Unseasonable weather and climate change will affect student activities such as ice-climbing, skiing, canoeing etc. Employing methods to reduce our impact on climate change will be to the benefit of both our current and future members by educating current members on methods of reducing environmental impact and by preserving our environment for future members.
5. Small financial investments result in potentially huge savings over the long term.

Imperial College Union Resolves:

WASTE REDUCTION:

1. The Union shall establish what quantity of waste ICU produces annually and estimate what proportion is disposed in landfill sites.
2. The Union shall reduce waste sent to landfill to 50% of 2007 levels by 2010 by following the “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” philosophy.
3. The methods employed by the Union to reduce its waste should include but not be limited to:
 - a. Reducing waste by using reusable crockery and cutlery instead of disposable crockery and cutlery in our catering outlets. For the purpose of maintaining the take-away option, biodegradable disposable alternatives may be used.
 - b. Reusing waste by using reusable glasses, for example made from hard plastic, instead of using single-use skiffs.
 - c. Recycling waste by providing segregated recycling bins wherever there is currently an all-purpose bin in all Union buildings.
 - d. Introducing a composting scheme for food waste produced through The Union’s catering services.
 - e. Educating and encouraging all students to recycle their waste.
4. Where the equivalent product exists with a higher recycled and/or manufactured content, this should be procured preferentially where practicable.

WATER USE:

1. The Union will cut consumption through installing simple devices in existing appliances that use water. This should include but not be limited to: (see Appendix B for glossary of terms).
 - a. Dams in cisterns.
 - b. Low flow, aerated showerheads (flow level <9litres/minute)
 - c. Percussion taps
 - d. Tap Inserts
 - e. Low flow or waterless urinals.
2. When replacing appliances, The Union will choose water efficient models. The “DEFRA and HM Revenue & Customs Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme for Water Technologies” shall be used to set a minimum benchmark for water efficiency in appliances (www.eca-water.gov.uk).

CARBON EMISSIONS:

1. The Union shall estimate the level of carbon emissions generated by all Union activities and premises.
2. The Union shall seek to reduce its carbon emissions to 40% of current levels by 2009 (Phase I target), much of which can be achieved

through energy efficiency measures. Further, to reach carbon-neutral status by 2012 (Phase II target) by following the “Low Carbon Hierarchy” approach (See Appendix C).

3. Specific methods to be employed by the Union to reduce its carbon emissions shall include but not be limited to:

Energy:

- a. Measuring our energy use through installing local metering or gaining access to meters if they already exist.
- b. Reducing energy use through maximising building energy performance. Both through building design and efficient end use. The Union masterplan shall incorporate energy efficiency initiatives including secondary glazing, low-energy lighting (including motion-sensor controls), draft reduction and services insulation.
- c. Substitute carbon-emitting energy for renewable energy by lobbying the College to use energy supplies from a low-carbon source.
- d. Support and where feasible, pursue proposals for installation of onsite renewable energy/low and zero-carbon technology on Union buildings and/or IC campuses generally.
- e. Avoid use of patio heaters and similar appliances.

Transport:

- f. Reduce the Union’s dependency on air travel to destinations listed in Appendix D by not subsidizing air travel to these destinations. Excluding activities such as launches for gliding and parachuting societies where flying forms a core element of their activity. This policy shall be incorporated into the Union’s Tours and Club and Societies Policy with effect from Winter Tour’s 2007.
4. That the experience of ‘Phase I’ may be used to determine the best mechanism for meeting the ‘Phase II’ target, and that this may include different targets for different carbon-intensive Union sectors (i.e. in the case that it is shown to be significantly ‘easier’ to achieve carbon reduction in any given sector).

IMPLEMENTATION:

1. It is the responsibility of the ICU Environmental Portfolio Officer and ultimately the ICU President to ensure that these policies are upheld.
2. The entire organisation will support the implementation of this policy.
3. The Union shall lobby college to mitigate its contribution to climate change through the implementation of similar policies.