



WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE 2030

“ Over generations we observed and experienced those conditions on This Land, recording in story and song what we had learned, how the times of day were important for certain duties, how the changes in the weather were rhythmic, recurring year after year, and how other, longer cycles either lengthened or shortened the pulse of the rhythms. We learned that the availability and sustainability of those resources upon which our life depended could be extended if we respected the Land rather than used it. ”

AUNTIE FRAN BODKIN
D'HARAWAL ELDER, 2017

“ ...to help the great and continuing work of building a more equal, open, tolerant and independent Australia. ”

HON GOUGH WHITLAM
AC QC, 2010

Western Sydney University acknowledges the peoples of the Darug, Tharawal, Eora and Wiradjuri nations. We acknowledge that the teaching, learning and research undertaken across our campuses continues the teaching, learning and research that has occurred on these lands for tens of thousands of years.

Authors: Juan Salazar and Jen Dollin
Working Group: Carol Simpson, Roger Attwater and Leanne Smith
Sponsors: Simon Barrie and Peter Pickering
Designers: Charlotte Farina and Brittany Hardiman

OUR DECADEAL STRATEGY

THINKING AHEAD

It is in our collective interest to challenge current unsustainable trajectories and be ambitious for a future on a planet that is not only habitable, but for a world that is inclusive and equitable.

Our Decadal Strategy, *Sustainability and Resilience 2030*, details the reasons why, as a leading anchor educational institution deeply embedded in Greater Western Sydney, we must envision a more resilient, sustainable and prosperous future.

Our Decadal Strategy emerged in 2020; a time of cascading global crises. One in ten people globally are now living in an area declared a climate emergency and no part of the world is untouched by the global coronavirus pandemic. The rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic has fuelled further 'slow' crises of inequality such as increased poverty and homelessness. Working with our communities and partners, it is clear we need to anticipate and prepare for a disrupted, indeterminate and uncertain future in a post COVID-19 world as well as adapt to the predicaments of global environmental change.

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 is a call to come together as a community around key aspirations that frame a vision for just transitions to sustainable ways of living that leave no one behind. We do not start from an empty space. There has been a long and rich tradition of sustainability and resilience research, teaching and learning at this University since its inception. Western Sydney University is recognised internationally for our commitment to providing access and opportunity to higher education; for undertaking research and teaching that makes a difference; for developing a multi-use, connected, innovative, place-making campus network; and for facilitating impactful partnerships across the region and the

world. We believe that we are well placed to provide a platform for acceleration of, and transitions towards, sustainable and resilient praxis at multiple levels – within our local communities, as well as nationally and globally.

Local particularities are not only the other side of the coin of global processes – they carry stories, a history. Our University is physically emplaced in the lands of the Darug Nation, the Bidjagal People of the Dharawal Nation, the Wiradjuri Nation and the Gadigal and Wangal People of the Eora Nation. We recognise that Greater Western Sydney has the second-largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and is one of the most diverse cultural communities in the world. This situates the University in a unique position, providing opportunities to explore and embed a rich cultural dimension across all aspects of the University's activity.

We are ambitious for how we as an institution engage respectfully and with impact with local communities and local places. *Sustainability and Resilience 2030* starts by embracing the diversity of peoples and places in Greater Western Sydney, leveraging the ethnicity and global perspectives of our community, our students and staff's global perspectives, from where a multiplicity of futures are made.



DELIVERING CHANGE

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 asks us to reimagine the transitions that are urgently needed to tackle the challenges of the 21st century that are so profoundly redefining human social life.

The hand prints in this image were provided by Indigenous students from Health Science studying on Bankstown Campus.

Our Decadal Strategy is purposely aspirational and ambitious – it is grounded in proactivity and hope, and focuses our commitment to areas where we will deliver real change.

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 has a broad aspiration to consider the symptoms of what is in effect a crisis of habitability on this planet.

Our Decadal Strategy asks us all to proactively recognise and reimagine the interdependence of life, starting within our region Greater Western Sydney, and also to recognise the contribution that we have in a wider global context. It asks us to reimagine the transitions that are urgently needed to tackle the challenges of the 21st century that are so profoundly redefining human social life.

To chart these possible paths forward, this strategy sets out our nine interconnected priority statements for sustainability and resilience that guide our overall decadal action planning and can be enacted across our Curriculum, Operations, Research and Engagement (C.O.R.E) portfolios of activity.

These open up an opportunity to work together on the urgency of adapting to the conditions of the 21st century, not only

by reducing our carbon footprint and consuming and wasting less, but also rethinking how we manage resources, positively respond to threats from natural and human-induced environmental change, and how to embrace the opportunities for reducing ongoing inequalities across our region. This has significant implications for how we focus on our emerging priorities and extend our research, transform our campuses into beacons of sustainable innovative communities, develop new curricula for the global citizens and leaders of the future, and create strong, impactful and resilient partnerships.

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 is purposely aspirational and ambitious – it is grounded in proactivity and hope, and focuses our commitment to areas where we will deliver real change. We believe that with dedication and commitment it will contribute to the resilience of our University, our staff and students, and the region we serve, and will provide a platform for demonstrating globally applicable initiatives for achieving sustainability and resilience.



WAYS FORWARD

The interconnected priority statements we have developed for this strategy are both a challenge and an opportunity for the University.

Our nine interconnected priority statements have been developed to focus our actions for the decade to 2030. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs) is a global agenda that has informed the development of these statements. One of the most innovative and far-reaching aspects of the SDGs is that it recognises the interlinkages between the goals, and the need for them to be addressed as an indivisible and integrated whole. Similarly, our statements are not a group of siloed priorities – progress and action on one of these themes must balance and support progress on the others.

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 complements our other decadal initiatives such as Flight Path, Western Health and Western Creative. It also builds on directions set in our strategic plan, Sustaining Success 2021–2026, which articulates sustainability as a key guiding principle. *Sustainability and Resilience 2030* also leverages our other institutional strategies – our Indigenous Strategy, our Education Strategy and our Research Strategy – as well as supporting our local operational plans such as the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.

Our statements are not a group of siloed priorities – progress and action on one of these themes must balance and support progress on the others. To demonstrate our holistic approach these statements are represented as Eucalyptus leaves connected by a living branch.



PRIORITY STATEMENTS

Our nine interconnected priority statements have been developed to focus our actions for the decade to 2030.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges

Embrace Indigenous knowledges for pathways to sustainability and Caring for Country.

Regenerative Systems

Value biodiversity linking human wellbeing to environmental health.

Resilient Cities

Enable urban resilience and adaptive capacity in our region.

Climate Action

Step up efforts to support climate action in our region.

Partnerships

Collaborate with regional, national and international organisations across all sectors to deliver impact across these priority statements.

Justice

Activate environmental justice and social inclusion to tackle inequality in our region.

Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Promote agroecological principles for just food systems.

Ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Harness the benefits of AI and automation in planing for sustainability.

Economic Transitions

Enact new visions for economic transitions through ethical economic and ecological relationships.

Species: Tasmanian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*)



A LIVING STRATEGY

Our Decadal Strategy is designed to be an ongoing discussion and initiative, to be open to interrogation and renewal over time and as a vehicle for genuine engagement with the community of Western and beyond .

Sustainability and Resilience 2030 is structured as a living strategy in four distinct yet connected parts that will generate responses and initiatives beyond what is currently envisaged.

It is designed to be an ongoing discussion and initiative, to be open to interrogation and renewal over time. An interactive digital platform based on ecological design thinking will support the implementation of the strategy. The platform has been designed to be a vehicle for genuine engagement and to enable renewal of the Decadal Strategy ensuring it is itself sustainable. We envisage each school, institute and division will identify their own activities to contribute to this strategy as well as their own five year milestones for delivery.

Western has instituted a distributed governance framework for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of strategic priority actions. This framework is known as C.O.R.E: Curriculum, Operations, Research, and Engagement. From this framework, four key priority actions emerge:

Curriculum

Deliver 21C Curriculum Challenges to embed and identify SDG capacity in our curriculum.

Operations

Achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

Research

Demonstrate SDG impact of our research profile and consolidate Western's position in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings.

Engagement

Develop an SDG 2030 schools' strategy for the leaders of tomorrow leveraging our CORE expertise to develop pathways to study sustainability at Western and work meaningfully with community partners.

Part I: *Sustainability and Resilience 2030* outlines our vision with nine interconnected priority statements.

Part II: *Our Challenges and Opportunities* explores the University's potential to leverage its C.O.R.E to chart a more sustainable future.

Part III: *Creating C.O.R.E Impact Together* includes a series of 53 suggested strategic actions on key thematics Planet, People, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships.

Part IV: *Building Collective Local Engagement* includes a set of resources to move this forward and our collective local engagement digital platform.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigenous knowledges, Planetary Health concepts, and the United Nations SDG 2030 Agenda informed the development of our Decadal Strategy and our nine interconnected priority statements.

Our Decadal Strategy recognises the need to position local Indigenous knowledge centrally as an integral part of the way that we respond to sustainability and resilience objectives. Planetary Health is an emerging academic discipline that is grounded in understanding of the interdependence of human and natural systems.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.



The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an urgent call for action to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. United Nations, 2016.

Western Sydney University is committed to supporting and promoting the principles of the SDGs through our teaching, research, campus operations and outreach.

Together we can focus staff and students and connect with the Greater Western Sydney community and our partners to learn, enable, adapt, transition and harness our collective knowledge to deliver meaningful impact.

OUR VALUES





[WESTERNSYDNEY.EDU.AU](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au)