

UC Santa Cruz Draft Climate Action Plan, December 2008

[excerpt]

NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**1. Aggressively Implement Energy Efficiency Projects across Campus**

Not all campus units have experience selecting, implementing and funding energy efficiency projects, e.g., Housing has done so less than Physical Plant. Encouragement, staff support and clear authority would facilitate expansion of campus efficiency projects.

2. Establish a Task Force on the Cogeneration Plant

With participation and support from campus leadership, a task force should quickly address the status of the Fackler cogeneration plant. The Climate Council recommends that a new cogeneration plant be advanced to the front of the queue for new capital financing so that a new facility can come online as soon as possible.

3. Implement Solar Photovoltaic Projects on Campus

UCSC staff have worked diligently to prepare a request for proposals for a 100 kW photovoltaic system at the Westfield House. The RFP will request bids on a power purchase agreement. If successful, this first project could provide valuable lessons.

4. Fund A Climate Change Budget

The Council recommends establishing a minimum climate change budget in the near-term, thereby allowing the University to begin participating in Climate Action Compact collaborations and campus demonstration projects, and to respond quickly to new opportunities for GHG emissions reductions. A dedicated carbon fund of \$100,000 - \$200,000 per year represents a minimum for sustaining steady progress. Much of this sum could be raised by placing a modest fee on all air travel reimbursements, say, \$30-50 per ticket.

5. Adopt A Policy on Growth-Related GHG Emissions

New policy development should address campus growth and its related GHG emissions. One possibility is to immediately adopt a new policy on GHG emissions associated new construction projects that reads as follows in box 1 below.

6. Adopt a GHG Offsets Policy

Policy development on GHG offsets represents a third issue requiring clarity and direction from campus leaders as well as further analysis to determine the exact nature of permits and offsets available so that the campus can be confident that its payments result in true carbon reductions.

7. Implement a Carbon Tracking System

Difficulties in tracking air travel-related carbon emissions persuaded the Council that UC Santa Cruz should provide a web-based, interactive and easy to use carbon tracking systems. Doing so for mobile sources would require, at the very least, electronic tracking of post-travel reimbursements.

8. Support New Climate-Related Pedagogical Opportunities

Teaching- and research-oriented demonstration projects may provide excellent instruction and also proof-of-concept tests for new technologies and energy systems. Subsequent revisions to this Plan should include further opportunities for climate action-related teaching and research, and the Council recommends that campus leaders and academic units support these activities with as much participation from students as possible.

9. Enhance the Campus Sustainability Office and Campus-Wide Coordination

There is great opportunity for existing programs and initiatives to help implement the goals of the Climate Action Plan, but doing so will require a coherent strategy for institutionalizing efforts. In 2007, the Campus Sustainability Office was established as a two-year pilot program to coordinate campus-wide sustainability efforts, provide a central point of communication, and help ensure implementation of sustainability related policies and commitments. Campus leadership should follow this important first step by creating lasting structures to accomplish these goals.

10. Continue Supporting the Chancellor's Council on Climate Change

Maintain the Council's current composition and approximately the same level of resources for student research assistants and summer salary.