



## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

*Approved by the Board of Governors: 14 February, 2020*

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### **1- PREAMBLE**

Bishop's University affirms that sustainable development is one of its core values and that it is committed to creating an institutional culture of sustainability in its academic programs and across its community.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that sustainability is considered in all strategic decisions and activities by creating a proper framework for planning, implementing and measuring actions, and by assigning an individual to be charged with for overseeing these actions.

### **2- SCOPE**

The Sustainable Development Policy applies to all on and off campus activities of Bishop's University and to all members of the Bishop's community, including but not limited to students, faculty, staff and management.

### **3- GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Bishop's University will be guided by the following sustainability principles:

#### **3.1 Access to knowledge**

Stimulate innovation, raise awareness and ensure effective participation of the University's community in the implementation of sustainable development by using interdisciplinary education, teaching, access to information and research;

#### **3.2 Environmental protection**

Protect species and biodiversity and preserve or enhance the quality of the natural environment as an integral part of all activities by considering and respecting the support capacity and vulnerability of ecosystems;

#### **3.3 Financial responsibility**

Encourage financial decisions that are conducive to social progress and respectful of the environment;

#### **3.4 Equity and diversity**

Embrace diversity as a force and seek social justice through intra and intergenerational solidarity;

### **3.5 Health and quality of life**

Promote a healthy, safe and productive work and learning environment and embrace its symbiotic relationship with a healthy natural environment;

### **3.6 Participation and transparency**

Engage all members of the community to work towards sustainability and maintain transparency throughout the process;

### **3.7 Prevention and precaution**

Take preventive, mitigating and corrective actions to diminish risks or threats of serious or irreversible damage, while giving priority to actions to eliminate the source of the risk;

### **3.8 Protection of cultural heritage**

Protect and promote the cultural and natural heritage of Bishop's University, including properties, buildings, landscapes, documentation and Indigenous tradition and knowledge;

### **3.9 Responsible consumption**

Promote socially and environmentally responsible consumption, by applying lifecycle thinking – therefore considering upstream and downstream impacts from activities – and placing emphasis on limiting waste (zero waste mindset), optimizing the use of resources and limiting impact on climate change (carbon neutrality mindset).

## **4- POLICY OBJECTIVES**

This Policy has been developed to:

- Affirm Bishop's University's long-term commitment to be a leader in sustainable development in its community and to playing a key role in educating its students to become responsible global eco-citizens;
- Increase awareness and common understanding of sustainable development within the institution;
- Involve all stakeholders in the University in collaboratively finding and implementing solutions to minimize its negative social and environmental impacts and find economically sound strategies to do so.

## **5- DEFINITION**

Sustainable Development is defined as a form of development « that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs ». For Bishop's University, this translates into making long-term decisions while trying to minimize the University's negative social and environmental impacts and generating positive social and environmental impacts while maintaining economic viability.

## **6- GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The Bishop's Sustainable Development Policy will be implemented through a Sustainable Development Action Plan.

The Action Plan will focus on actions in relation to the following categories identified in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), a framework used by colleges and universities across North America to measure their sustainability performance, and will provide for coordination and planning to support the plan implementation:

- Academic and Research: includes Curriculum and Research;
- Engagement: includes on and off campus engagement;
- Operations: includes Air & Climate, Buildings, Energy, Food & Dining, Grounds, Purchasing, Transportation, Investments & Finance, Waste, Water, and Environmental Certifications;
- Wellbeing: includes Diversity & Affordability, and Wellbeing & Work.

The Action Plan will be guided by input from workgroups pertaining to each category and chaired by subject specialists, as well as from the Sustainable Development Committee. The Action Plan will be achieved with the participation of Bishop's University's community.

The Action Plan will include concrete actions linked to actors accountable for their implementation as well as timeframes and measurable targets.

The actions undertaken will be reported to the Board of Governors annually through the report on the Sustainable Development Action Plan. This report will be accessible on Bishop's University's web site.

## **7- PUBLIC COMMITMENTS AND RECOGNITION OF INTERNATIONAL GOALS**

Bishop's University will respect its engagements taken in the fall of 2019, when it signed an open letter organized by the Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education (EAUC), Second Nature and the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) Youth and Education Alliance. Declaring a "climate emergency", the University's engagements are part of a three-point plan:

- Committing to being carbon neutral by 2050 at the very latest;
- Mobilising more resources for action-oriented climate change research and skills creation;
- Increasing teaching and learning about environmental and sustainability education across curricula, campus and community outreach programmes.

Bishop's University also signed the Talloires Declaration in 2010, with notable emphasis on *"establishing institutional ecology policies and practices of resource conservation, recycling, waste reduction, and environmentally sound operations."*

The Talloires Declaration recognizes the 17 sustainable development goals set by the United Nations and is used as a reference for teaching or promoting research focussed on or including sustainability.

#### **8- RESPONSIBILITY**

Sustainable development, as defined earlier in this Policy, is an individual and collective responsibility of all members of the University.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Policy falls under the Vice-President Finance and Administration's Office.

#### **9- REVIEW**

This Policy will be reviewed by those responsible for its administration on the same schedule as the review of the University's Strategic Framework.