

# A vision for sustainable development at Vrije Universiteit Brussel



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## Sustainable development at VUB

### Rector Paul De Knop

- Policy of strategic planning
- SD is core value of General Strategic Plan
- 15 March 2011: VUB council accepted vision and strategy for sustainable development
- 2011 – 2012: year of sustainability



## Process for developing a SD policy



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## Vision and strategic SD goals

- Vision: 1 page text which gives a broad idea on VUB sustainable development
- Strategic goals: more detailed listing of **23 sustainability goals**



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# Main strategic SD goals

## General principles



- Humanistic values
- Holistic and interdisciplinary approach
- Precautionary- and reversibility principle
- International perspective
- Transparency en active participation

# Main strategic SD goals

## Education and research

- Sustainable development in all educational programmes
- Promotion of sustainable development in research

-> SD included in university vision on education



-> brochure "Pretty sustainable"

## Main strategic SD goals

### Ecological integrity

- Taking care of nature and ecosystems
- Restoration of ecological cycles
- Reduction of CO2 emission
- Rational use of natural resources
- Limiting pollution
- Sustainable transportation
- Sustainable food systems



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## Main strategic SD goals

### Strengthening the social fabric and well-being

- Diversity and human rights
- Dialogue and reduction of social polarisation
- Health and well-being
- Dialogue with the local community



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## Main strategic SD goals

### Financial health and ethical corporate responsibility

- Ethical corporate responsibility
- Participation in the strengthening of the local economy
- Financial health

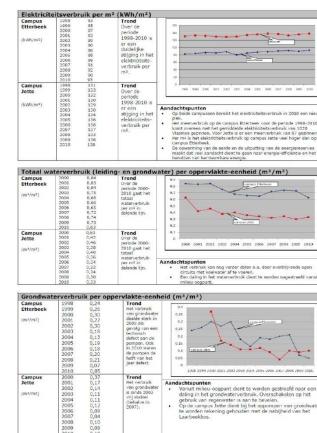


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## Environmental performance indicators

### Annual report and indicators

- Energy use
- Water consumption
- Paper consumption
- Waste production
- Use of public transport
- Number of cyclists



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# Action plan 2012

- New position: energy co-ordinator
- Energy audits, projects to reduce energy consumption
- Planning a new sustainable (low energy) building with 650 student rooms, offices, labs, auditoria



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# Action plan 2012

- Improving the separate collection of waste
- Constant monitoring of asbestos in buildings



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# Action plan 2012

- Integration of SD in curricula of all bachelor and master programmes ->



- Improving contact with neighbours
- Campaign against situations of harrasment at work and new team of confidants

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## Sustainable student restaurant



- Project sustainable mass catering
- Reduction of waste
- CHARTER!

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## Sustainable student restaurant



Thursday  
Veggie Day

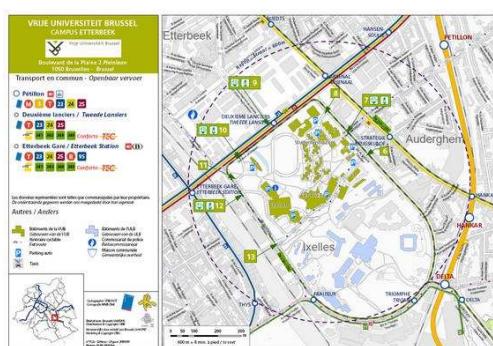
-> + 30-40 %  
vegetarian dishes sold



Daily hot and cold  
vegetable bar and  
vegetarian hot dish

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## Sustainable mobility (transportation)



- Free public transportation for staff members and special rates for students
- Bicycle fee for staff members
- Campaigns to reduce car use



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## Sustainable mobility (transportation)



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## Project NatureWorks



- biologically valuable orchard
- Sustainability in practice

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## Project NatureWorks



- Youth nature groups
- Local schools
- Patients from the psychiatric children's hospital
- Group of asylum seekers may join the project???

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## Project NatureWorks

- Special fruit varieties
- Wildlife
  - E.g. Grass snake  
(*Natrix natrix*)



- Herbs -> medicinal value
  - E.g. St John's wort  
(*Hypericum perforatum*)

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## Student and staff initiatives

Action: use stairs  
and not the elevator



Separate collection  
of empty pens and  
cork

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## More information

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