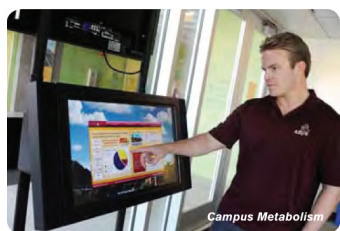


Why Public Reporting Matters

Viewpoints on Sustainability from Second Nature

What gets measured,
gets managed - what
gets reported, gets done



Campus Metabolism™ is an interactive web tool, initiated as a student project at Arizona State University to influence behavioral change, that shows real-time energy and water use on campus

Photo courtesy of Sustainability at ASU
Prospectus (2010)

Setting goals, tracking progress and reporting results are standard business practices for any organization, business or initiative — and sustainability efforts in higher education are no exception.

Public reporting on progress towards sustainability is a key driver for long-term success, and provides the following benefits:

Accountability: Public reporting provides a way for institutions to hold themselves accountable to all of their stakeholders – students, alumni, faculty, staff, funders, the public, and other colleges and universities.

Communication: Public reporting is an effective way of communicating progress and results to your campus community and beyond, demonstrating to prospective students, foundations, and potential private sector partners that your institution is serious and transparent about its commitment to climate change and sustainability. In the 2011 Princeton Review survey 65% of college applicants said that an institution's commitment to environmental issues would impact their decision on where to attend.

Follow-through: Public reporting ensures that commitments do indeed lead to action, and that there is follow through in tracking progress toward your identified goals.

Deadlines: Having a public deadline for reporting is a powerful driver for ensuring that this important work does not get pushed down the list of priorities. Goals without deadlines will too often be lost in the day-to-day grind.

For collective initiatives like the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), public reporting also ensures that institutions are fulfilling their shared commitment to one another.

There are a number of climate and sustainability reporting frameworks and disclosure trends that are driving a transformation in how business and governance are conducted:

Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Climate Disclosure Requirement:

In 2010, through the leadership of Ceres and its Investor Network on Climate Risk (INCR), the SEC issued ground-breaking interpretive guidance requiring corporate disclosure of material climate change risks and opportunities. This legally-binding guidance outlines the types of climate-related disclosure publicly-traded companies must provide to investors in financial filings.

“Reporting is the first step in public accountability, in understanding the scope and complexity of the GHG abatement problem, and in launching a realistic abatement plan.”

- Wendell Brase, Vice Chancellor, University of California, Irvine and Chair, University of California Climate Solutions Steering Group

Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP): Through CDP, over 3,000 organizations in some 60 countries around the world now disclose their GHG emissions, water management and climate change strategies. CDP acts on behalf of 551 institutional investors, holding US\$71 trillion in assets under



the lead supporting organization of the



Why Sustainability Reporting Is Revolutionary

By Hannah Jones, the VP of Sustainable Business and Innovation at Nike - concludes that sustainability reporting provides two powerful accelerators of change and innovation: transparency and positioning sustainability as a core strategic imperative.

The Consequences of Mandatory Corporate Sustainability Reporting

By Ioannis Ioannou of the London Business School and George Serafeim of the Harvard Business School - concludes "that sustainability reporting not only increases transparency but can also change corporate behavior."

Why Report on Sustainability? It's Not Mandatory

By Kathleen Gilligan & Karen Janowski of EcoStrategy Group - concludes that "the era of 'voluntary' sustainability communications is waning. For companies who want their brands to compete effectively in today's business environment, sustainability reporting is a market requirement."

management, who recognize that without such disclosure they cannot evaluate the potential climate risks faced by companies.

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI): The GRI is a sustainability reporting framework, widely-used by business with over 1,300 organizations reporting in 2010. Reports can be used to demonstrate organizational commitment to sustainable development, track organizational performance over time, and measure performance with regard to laws, standards and voluntary initiatives.



The ACUPCC uses the planning concept of "backcasting" – signatories agree to achieve climate neutrality at some point in the future, and with that end in mind, look back to the present and answer the question: "what are the steps we can take today to successfully fulfill our commitments?" To put this concept into action, ACUPCC institutions agree to:

1. Develop a plan with the goal of eliminating or neutralizing operational greenhouse gas emissions;
2. Provide the educational, research and community engagement to help the rest of society transform to a zero-carbon future and;
3. Publicly report progress via the on-line ACUPCC reporting System.

To support signatories in tracking their progress through this process and to report the individual and collective results to the public, the ACUPCC provides three important mechanisms:

1. Through the ACUPCC Reporting Framework, signatories agree to submit the following reports within given deadlines:
 - The Implementation Profile: a short report that includes a description of the institutional structure to implement the commitment and selected tangible actions to begin working on immediately.
 - The first Greenhouse Gas Inventory: this sets a baseline and identifies the areas to achieve significant reductions.
 - The Climate Action Plan: outlines the plan to eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions, including the target date for climate neutrality and the strategies and actions devised to reach this goal, as well as produce sustainability-literate graduates.

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS):

STARS is a self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance, enable comparisons over time and across institutions, create incentives for continual improvement, and facilitate information sharing and learning. As of June 2011, there were 260 participating institutions.

- Updated Greenhouse Gas Inventories: due at least every other year following the submission of the first inventory, these allow signatories to measure progress on emissions reductions.
 - Progress Reports: due at least every other year following the submission of the CAP, these reports facilitate assessment and adjustments to the CAP, and report on progress made in implementing actions laid out in the plan.
2. The ACUPCC Public On-line Reporting System:
 - Demonstrates transparency and integrity for each institution's commitment;
 - Contributes to the collective learning of the network and general public; and
 - Supports fellow signatories and strengthens the integrity of the network as a whole.
 3. The ACUPCC Annual Report
 - Provides an annual snapshot of the progress the network has made as a whole;
 - Highlights a subset of tangible actions taken on individual campuses to fulfill the various aspects of the Commitment; and
 - Demonstrates to other sectors and the public at large the collaborative leadership that the higher education sector is providing.

Each school's participation in the ACUPCC is instrumental to the success of the collective effort. As a network the ACUPCC is leveraging individual efforts to serve far broader national, international, and cross-sector cooperative efforts.



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