

Sustainability Monitor 2018 - ENG

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Highlights 2018

The Earth Simulation Lab and the renovation of a concrete colossus



The brand-new **Earth Simulation Lab** (ESL) is located in a wooded corner of the Utrecht Science Park. The building was completed at the end of 2018. Not a new building, but the thorough renovation of a laboratory specially built in 1958 for a particle accelerator. The sixties building was in a dilapidated state, but the sturdy concrete structure was perfect for the needs of the Faculty of Geosciences.

The building is home to several labs where scientists investigate the activity of tectonic plates, currents and tides and the influence of high pressure and temperatures. In the basement there is a freezer (reaching temperatures as low as -80 degrees!) for storing samples of ice from the polar region.

With its Excellent BREEAM status (a method for measuring the sustainability of new and existing buildings), it is one of the most sustainable buildings at the Utrecht Science Park. "It's actually a sneak preview," says **Alex Ziegler**, sustainability advisor for the Corporate Real Estate & Campus department, "at the beginning of 2019, Utrecht University decided that all new university buildings and renovations would be [circular, healthy and energy-generating](#) , just like the ESL is now."

This is a crucial step in the transition to a sustainable university. There are currently still many university buildings that use too much, and inefficient, energy. This puts pressure

on the carbon footprint. Making the real estate stock more sustainable is one of the key strategies for achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.



A climate façade

“In addition to LED lighting, the 125 solar panels on the roof and the connection to the thermal energy storage network, the climate façade is a major sustainable component of this building,” says **Hetty Eikelboom**, the University’s coordinator for the entire project. “The building has a double façade. An ordinary wall with windows and an extra wall of glass, with 40 centimetres in between the two. The air in the shaft between the two façades acts as a layer of protection and regulates the temperature in the building without consuming extra energy. In the summer, the space in between absorbs the warm sunlight, and the heat in the shaft automatically rises. In winter, the space acts as a layer of insulation between the cold outside and the heat inside.

Nudging

“The building is a box. By adding internal windows and skylights, we have ensured that the rooms in the middle also get a good amount of daylight. This is good for both the researchers and sustainability. More daylight means fewer light bulbs,” says Hetty.

Not all sustainability measures are equally visible. “For the BREEAM certification, you can also score points for making it more attractive to leave your car at home,” says Alex. “That’s why we didn’t put any parking spaces around the building and why there’s a screen in the hall showing the departure times at the nearest public transport stops.”



Birds and bats

Anyone walking around the building would be forgiven for thinking that the builders had forgotten to complete a section of tiling in three places. But in fact, these are nesting boxes for bats. On the roof there are nesting boxes for wagtails and next to the building there is an insect hotel. These may seem trivial measures, but they are an integral part of improving and protecting the natural value of the surroundings.

Sustainability & Research



At the University, research into subjects with a sustainability component is carried out in many different ways. Below you will find a selection of highlights from 2018.

Two million euros for research into achieving Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs)

Professor and member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Arts and Sciences, Detlef van Vuuren, is a climate researcher at the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency and Professor by Special Appointment of Integrated Assessment of Global

Environmental Change at Utrecht University. In 2018 he was granted [€2 million](#) from the European Research Council (an ERC grant) to investigate what specific action we need to take to actually achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. In many cases, specific plans for achieving those goals are yet to be drawn up.

First winner of the Agnites Vrolijk Award

In 2018, the [Agnites Vrolijk Award](#) (€25,000) was awarded for the very first time. The prize is presented to a talented scientist from Utrecht University who contributes to tackling current social issues. This year, Daphina Misiedjan won the award with her research on the importance of legal research in the sustainable management of water.



Atlas of nature solutions in the city

Green roofs that combat heat stress and urban lagoons which store water. Despite the fact that these kinds of nature-based solutions can contribute towards tackling sustainability challenges in the city, they are seldom used.

In 2016, Harriet Bulkeley, Professor of Climate Governance, in collaboration with an international team of universities and cities, launched a [European research project](#) to map nature-based solutions, identify which approaches work and use them to inform policy and practice. In 2018 she launched the Urban Nature Atlas: 'A database of nature-based solutions

across 100 European cities.'

Trans-disciplinary approach to natural disasters

The Utrecht Centre for Global Challenges highlights global challenges based on the relationship between human rights, conflict & security, sustainability and equality. In 2018, it supported three specific sustainability projects at Utrecht University: (1) Planetary Justice Task Force of the Earth Systems Governance (2) Sustainability and equity for marine global commons and (3) Institutions, Natural Hazards and the Local Economy (INHale).

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in industry

If Europe wants to meet its long-term climate targets, heavy industries will have to reduce their CO₂ emissions. While a lot of research is being done in the field of mobility and in the energy sector, industries such as meat, dairy, paper, plastic and steel have so far often been left out of the equation.

As part of the Reinvent project launched in 2018, Professor of Energy, Raw Materials and Technological Change Ernst Worrell is investigating value chains in these sectors to see

exactly where CO₂ is released and where there are opportunities to transition to alternatives.

Nieboer thesis award for anthropological research

Michelle Geraerts received the Nieboer thesis award for best Master's thesis in 2018. The Nieboer Award is presented annually by the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Utrecht University. The title of her thesis is: 'Speculative new ecologies: An exploration of artistic approaches to ecology-technology entanglements in the Anthropocene.'

Professors appointed in 2018

Merel Soons – Professor of Plant Dispersal Ecology & Conservation

Merel Soons is one of a select group of academics globally who specialise in research into how plant seeds are dispersed.

Seline Trevisanut – Professor of International Law and Sustainability

The chair in International Law and Sustainability focuses on those areas of international law that promote sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

Joost de Laat – Professor of Global Economic Challenges

Professor De Laat's research into Payment for Environmental Services received the Sustainability Science Award in 2018.

Johan Schot – Professor of Global Comparative History

Johan Schot has studied the history of technology and sustainability transitions. He has now joined the Utrecht University Centre for Global Challenges, from where he will be using this expertise to further the cause of sustainability.

Places of Hope & Urban Futures Studio



Demonstration during Places of Hope

Places of Hope & Urban Futures Studio

“With Places of Hope, we wanted to counteract the negative, apocalyptic images that dominate the discussion about the future and climate change. The exhibition, demonstration, research workshops and series of debates took place over a period of 8 months as part of the ‘Leeuwarden Cultural Capital 2018’ event and were organised at the request of the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment. The activities attracted a total of 12,646 visitors. We wanted to use experiential futuring to give people a glimpse of a possible and desirable future without fossil fuels,” says Jesse Hoffman of the [Urban Futures Studio \(UFS\)](#) at Utrecht University.

If we want to preserve our country for future generations, we must say goodbye to fossil fuels, to intensive agriculture and polluting industries, to traffic jams and overcrowded trains, flooding and heat stress.

From the publication ‘Places of Hope’ 2018



Demonstration during Places of Hope

Breaking the deadlock

Jesse is a political anthropologist and one of the members of the young UFS team, located on Heidelberglaan at the Utrecht Science Park. Jesse researches how to visualise a future without fossil fuels. He explains: “In the Northern Netherlands, the energy transition and climate change have long been political themes that have led to many concerns, conflicts and standstills. In this tense situation, utopian initiatives offer the prospect of a sustainable future that is possible and desirable, whereby people re-evaluate simple values such as nature, landscape and the community. For example, some groups are trying to combat light pollution in the Wadden Sea area, some are

working on the 'Holwerd aan Ze' project, and others are setting up energy cooperatives to regenerate the villages and thus counteract population decline.

We also used the exhibition as a 'soft space' for contentious themes such as the shrinking peatland meadows. By shaping the debate away from political arenas, in an unconventional setting, we created space to break through the deadlock and bring farmers, politicians, NGOs, homeowners and scientists together again.

A fun fact: In the old chancellery in Leeuwarden, where Places of Hope took place, the public debates were so good that debates are still being organised about the future of Leeuwarden.

More Urban Futures Studio?

Want a more positive future? [Here](#) you will find the Urban Futures Studio publications.

Green Office Living Lab



The Green Office [Living Lab](#) matches students to facility employees who are looking for solutions to their sustainability issues. This gives students the chance to put their academic knowledge about sustainability into practice.

One of the 22 Living Lab projects in 2018 was research into tableware. On behalf of the University Facilities Service Centre, students researched whether using biodegradable disposable tableware such as plates, cutlery and glasses made of sugar cane, corn and

palm leaves was more sustainable than rinsing ordinary tableware. The students concluded that rinsing is in fact the more sustainable option.

Based on these results, the University decided not to replace the ceramic tableware used in its restaurants with a biodegradable variant.

Ilse van der Voorn, Living Lab Coordinator at the Green Office Utrecht:

"The Living Lab collaboration gives students the opportunity to put their knowledge into practice in a complex organisation such as a university and encourages employees to conduct research into the issues they may be facing, but it also stimulates discussion between students, researchers and employees about exactly what kind of university we want to be."

More than ecological sustainability

Sustainability at Utrecht University is about more than just reducing our carbon footprint and improving biodiversity. Since 2016, more than 300 refugees have been educated at Utrecht University.

While waiting for their residence permit in an asylum seekers' centre, refugees are often excluded from the rest of society. Research shows that this particular type of exclusion is one of the reasons why so few refugees participate in the labour market. Exclusion also causes loneliness, depression and other psychological disorders among refugees.

The premise of the [InclUUsion](#) programme is therefore to offer refugees a chance to study as soon as possible after their arrival in the Netherlands.



Yves Faustin Nahimana

From summer school to Master's degree

InclUUsion started life as a small-scale summer school on the initiative of Marij Swinkels, Hilke Grootelaar and Elena Valbusa, but soon expanded to English-language Bachelor's courses. The initiative has since been introduced at other universities, such as Wageningen University & Research and Eindhoven University of Technology. Participants now move on to take part in regular academic programmes, and some have even already completed their Master's degrees.

For example, in 2018 Yves Faustin Nahimana from Burundi started a regular Master's degree in Conflict Studies and Human Rights at the Faculty of Humanities.

"The InclUUsion programme really helped me to find my feet in the Netherlands. By taking courses I got a new identity as a 'student' instead of just as a refugee. Being a refugee and

living in an asylum seekers' centre is hard. Many people say or think negative things about us. Thanks to the programme, I felt part of society and expanded my network."- Yves Faustin Nahimana

Pathways to Sustainability Conference 2018



Pathways to Sustainability is one of Utrecht University's four strategic research themes. This sustainability theme combines the expertise of more than 1,200 Utrecht academics from various faculties at the University. They work together in cross-disciplinary teams, researching complex subjects and facilitating sustainable transitions.

In order to demonstrate how this collaboration can work in practice, Canadian professor John Robinson (University of Toronto) spoke during the first [Pathways to Sustainability](#) annual conference in February 2018. The renowned scientist in the field of problem-driven interdisciplinary research talked about the role that a university can play in sustainable transitions and advised Utrecht University to transform the campus into a large living laboratory.

Living Lab

He shared his [vision](#) of a campus where employees, researchers and students, together with companies and non-profits, maximise their cooperation in the field of sustainability. The physical space of the university will become a large Living Lab for testing, studying and applying new technologies and policies.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbGYHX9hskQ&feature=emb_title

Expansion! The Green Office opens a new branch



In 2018, [Green Office Utrecht](#) opened an additional branch. The platform for the sustainable ideas of students and employees at the Utrecht Science Park now also has a Green Office branch at the Drift, next to the University Library.

“To our faculties, the activities of the Green Office often seemed quite remote,” says Martien Camphuis, General and Technical Services Account Manager at the **Faculty of Humanities**. “We wanted to do something about it by launching a pilot in the city centre.”

“This way, employees and students can literally pop in with their ideas and initiatives. I’ve already noticed that projects are starting to emerge and take shape, and that’s fantastic,” adds demand manager at the **Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance**, Elisa van Oostrum.

Daria Vaccari and Yana Mechielsen of the Green Office run the branch in the city centre: “Study Associations in the city centre told us that they wanted to do something about sustainability, but they didn’t know where to start. Now the Green Office also has a branch in the city centre to help them,” says Daria.

Employees create deer corridor



The Utrecht Science Park is surrounded by grasslands and forests, inhabited by deer and many other animals.

In 2018, as a result of an initiative by Utrecht University employees, a deer corridor was created on the grounds of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. The corridor connects the Amelisweerd estate and Oostbroek park so that the deer populations living in these areas can interact. A larger grazing area and interaction with other groups of deer is vital for the health of the animals.

With **De Groene Machine** – a campaign to raise awareness among University Facilities Service employees that came to an end in 2018 – they worked in teams to launch many other projects to improve the sustainability of campus management

A sustainable transition in Overvecht, Utrecht



With the Utrecht Science Park as its home base, knowledge and innovation agent [Utrecht Sustainability Institute \(USI\)](#) is carrying out research and innovation projects aimed at the sustainable use of energy, water and raw materials in the city and the region.

Inside out

Making buildings more sustainable is not only a crucial component of Utrecht University's sustainable strategy, but also of the Dutch climate agreement. As part of the [Inside Out](#) project, the USI is investigating how energyguzzling, high-rise flats built in the 1960s can actually generate energy. To do this, the USI is collaborating with the Utrecht housing corporation Bo-Ex, residents, energy system analysts and behavioural researchers from Utrecht University and Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, architects and technical companies. The goal: to increase comfort, reduce energy costs and minimise disruption caused by work activities for the residents. The second phase of the project was completed in 2018. In this phase, a prototype flat was built on the top floor of a Bo-Ex building on Henriëttedreef. During this test phase, the resident herself was in control of the new features.

"It's great to be involved in an innovative project. I'm the first in Europe, in an occupied flat. And it's been tested in an existing building, not a new one. I think that's fantastic!" Tineke van den Haselkamp, occupant of the pilot flat

“Residents are quite curious, especially about the fact that energy will be saved. That gets people interested. The less they have to pay, the more enthusiastic they become.” Wim Kleijssen, resident

Modular

In the test flat in the Utrecht neighbourhood of Overvecht, heating, ventilation, insulation, solar panels, blinds, piping and cables will be integrated into new multifunctional, prefabricated façade sections. The technology that is currently inside the flat will be on the outside: so, inside out. This means that a lot of sustainable technologies can be added to the building without inconveniencing the residents. The development of this Inside Out renovation system may prove to be a breakthrough for sustainable renovation and the implementation of the climate agreement.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvYphMAYkMg&feature=emb_title

More sustainable driving



In 2018, the first *electric* car in university colours drove across the campus. This was the first step towards making Utrecht University's vehicle fleet more sustainable. In total, the Corporate Office and faculties have 39 cars for research, security, first aid and transport.

The [University Facilities Service Centre](#) started exchanging petrol cars for electric ones in 2018. This project will be completed in 2019 and 2020. For larger vehicles such as vans, a sustainable alternative has yet to be found.

"It's a great drive!" says Marcel Boer of the Security & Fire Safety department about the new Volkswagen Up. He uses the car to reach the scene of an emergency as quickly as possible. "We would have preferred a Tesla," he says with a grin, "but in the end we got an Up. And because you don't have to switch gears at all, it feels as though you're going faster than in an automatic. It is a pity that the car has a shorter range than Volkswagen had promised us."

Let's Talk Sustainability

Listen here to Utrecht University's podcast about electric cars and sustainable transport at the University with **Jipke Detrie**, Head of the Logistics department.

[LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)

Sustainability for a wider audience



At Utrecht University, Studium Generale offers a platform for a wider audience to deepen and broaden their knowledge. In the 'Green Intentions' lecture series which took place in 2018, Studium Generale investigated the impact of the green choices that we can make as consumers.

[In 8 lectures,](#) scientists from various Dutch universities talked about subjects as diverse as the eco-elite, sustainable fashion, the decluttering trend, tourism as a way to protect nature and culture, and the truths and myths of separating waste.

The series was held in the University Hall auditorium and was attended by 2500 visitors. The lectures have had around 9,000 views online.

Working in Nature Day

"I never thought people would enjoy walking through the woods with a pick-up stick, picking up rubbish." Hans de Jong, area development advisor at Utrecht University's Corporate Real Estate & Campus department, beams when he talks about the Working in Nature Day that he and his colleague Leunie van Zwieten organised in October 2018.



Hans de Jong, area development advisor

In addition to picking up plastic, some 10,000 snowdrops were planted, a bee hotel and a wooded embankment built, brambles cleared and rubbish picked up.

The [afternoon](#) , in which around 60 Utrecht University employees participated, focused on the Nightingale Grove. This is a small, publicly accessible wood next to the Botanical Gardens at the Utrecht Science Park. This special place, which takes its name from the nightingale that used to live there, has been a forest for hundreds of years in an area that was originally marshland.

In addition to conserving nature and the surroundings, the Working in Nature Day is a fun way for Utrecht University staff to participate in the University's efforts to make the campus greener.

Introduction of vegetarian lunches for meetings

De Volkskrant wrote an article about the vegetarian lunches at Utrecht University

Since March 2018, lunches provided for meetings at Utrecht University have been vegetarian as standard. If you order a lunch for a meeting via Sodexo's website (the caterer), you will automatically get a vegetarian lunch. Only those who specifically ask for meat will get meat sandwiches. The University Corporate Office (UBD) has decided that it will no longer use this option and now always orders vegetarian lunches. A number of faculties have since followed suit. Sodexo has been working on a new menu for vegetarian lunches.

Read the article that [De Volkskrant](#) wrote about the introduction of vegetarian lunches at the University.

Cooperation in the region? Build a whale



Photographer: Robert Oosterbroek

How do you get a region interested in sustainability? Work together to install a whale in the centre of Utrecht! Since January 2019, the enormous whale 'skyscraper' – made of five tonnes of plastic from the Pacific Ocean – can be seen jumping out of the canal on Catharijnesingel in front of TivoliVredenburg. The animal is a statement against the gigantic amount of plastic waste that pollutes rivers, seas and oceans all over the world.

On the initiative of the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance at Utrecht University, 2018 was devoted to bringing the work of art to the Netherlands. The whale was designed for the Bruges Triennial by the New York design agency STUDIOKCA and will remain in Utrecht until September 2019, after which it will travel on to Asia.

Raising awareness of research

By using the whale to grab people's attention and organising a comprehensive series of lectures, Utrecht University is able to share knowledge about rivers, oceans and water with a wider audience. "It fits nicely within our research into the sustainable management of rivers and the sea," says Professor of European and Dutch Water Law Marleen van Rijswijk.

Regional cooperation

However, the whale also generated another unexpected sustainable result. Installing and securing funding for the whale required close cooperation between a large number of parties in the region: the Municipality of Utrecht, the province and the Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management (Rijkswaterstaat), but also organisations such as the De Stichtse Rijnlanden water board, RIWA-Rhine Association of River Water Companies, law firm De Brauw Blackstone Westbroek, engineering firm Sweco and waste processing company Renewi.

Programme leader Rebecca van Musscher explains:

“Everyone worked their socks off to make this happen. The skyscraper brings people together. If people and organisations feel so involved and enthusiastic, it opens up so many doors! The whale has raised our profile among the public and has shown that together we are strong. And with so many committed and good people working together, ideas for a great sequel are already bubbling!”

CO2 footprint 2018

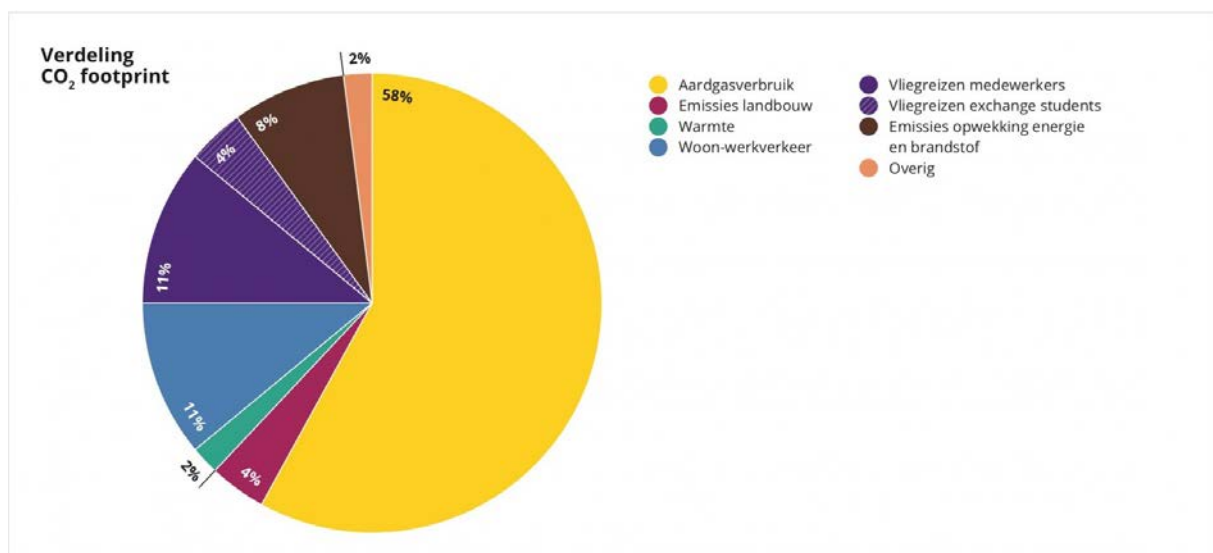
Utrecht University has set itself the goal of being carbon neutral by 2030 and achieving a 33% reduction by 2020 compared to the base year (2014).

In 2018, the footprint was the same as in 2017. Carbon emissions* as a result of the activities of Utrecht University were 23% lower in 2018 than in 2014. This 23% reduction was primarily a result of purchasing more green energy in the years previous.

Carbon emissions on which Utrecht University has a direct influence actually increased in the period between 2014 and 2018. This is largely due to better use of the combined heat and power plant and therefore an increase in natural gas consumption. The heat and electricity produced by the plant are mainly needed to heat and cool the aging property portfolio.

Recently, the University has taken a number of important decisions that will lead to a drop in emissions in the coming years, and it has also published its 'Future-proof buildings' document. It is quite clear that the University's efforts in recent years have not yet led to the desired results and that additional measures will be needed if it is to achieve its own carbon targets. These measures concern emissions resulting both from various activities (such as air travel, commuting, agriculture) and from energy consumption; many organisational units have a part to play in achieving the necessary reductions.

The figure below illustrates the main causes behind the University's carbon emissions:



CO2 footprint 2018

**Carbon emissions relate to the following greenhouse gases: CO2, CH4, N2O, HFCs, PFCs, SF6 and NF3.*

Plans for 2019

Sustainability in education & research



Photographer: Ivar Pel

Utrecht University wants all students to come into contact with sustainability issues, regardless of their field of study. Adapting curricula so that they are in line with this ambition will be a gradual process.

One example is the Environmental Law specialisation. In 2019, the content will be revised and the specialisation itself will be given a new title: **'Law for a sustainable living environment'**. The revamped specialisation will address questions such as: 'which legal instruments can be used to make the Netherlands more climate proof'. The University is also developing new sustainability-related courses outside the regular degree programmes. In 2019, Utrecht University will organise a course on **the law and the circular economy** for the first time.

During the 2019 introduction week, the Copernicus Institute will be launching **the Utrecht University Sustainability Game**. The concept for this computer game was developed by senior lecturer Karin Rebel. Using the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) as building blocks, students from all faculties can learn about the major sustainability challenges of the 21st century in an accessible way.

Connecting education, research and business operations



Photographer: Steven Snoep

The University wants to maximise the use of its own knowledge when making its business operations more sustainable. After all, the University's sustainability challenges are an opportunity for scientists and students to conduct research and put their knowledge into practice.

Much of the greenery on campus is grassland with a low ecological value. As such, in 2019 an interdisciplinary team at Utrecht University, including Professor Merel Soons, the Real Estate & Campus department and the Sustainability Programme Team, will draw up a plan to improve biodiversity on the campus.

The aim of the plan is to show how improving biodiversity can go hand in hand with education, business activity, arable farming and livestock farming. As part of this project, the University is collaborating with the regional partners Staatsbosbeheer (the forest management agency) and Landscape Heritage Utrecht. The plan may even become one of the selected regional Living Labs for the [National Delta Plan for Biodiversity Recovery](#). This plan is a special initiative of Louise Vet (WUR), No. 1 on the 2018 Sustainable 100 list.

Future-proof buildings



Earth Simulation Lab. Source: Arnaud Mooij

At the beginning of 2019, the University presented its vision on 'future-proof buildings', which included a new approach to new builds and renovation. At the heart of this approach is the need for buildings to be functional, healthy, energy-generating and circular throughout their life cycle.

With the **Vening Meinesz building**, completed in 2018, and the **Earth Simulation Lab** as examples, this approach will become increasingly visible in all planned new build and renovation projects in the coming years.

In 2019, the University will also be issuing a [materials passport external link](#) for all buildings in need of either demolition or renovation. The passport indicates which materials were used in the construction and which of these can be reused for new construction projects.

Energy and emissions



Photographer: Ivar Pel

In order to become a carbon-neutral university by 2030, huge efforts will be required in 2019 and the years thereafter to generate all the university's energy sustainably. As such, the University is installing more solar panels and all buildings at the Utrecht Science Park will be connected to a thermal storage facility in the coming years. The University will also be pushing forward with measures such as insulation and energy-efficient ventilation in order to reduce its own energy consumption.

Green campus



A key component of a green campus is not only the amount of green space, but also its ecological value. To this end, €110,000 worth of fruit and other trees will be planted in 2019. A **Tiny Forest** – a forest covering a small area with dense vegetation and a large variety of native tree species – will also be created at the Utrecht Science Park. This is good for biodiversity at the Utrecht Science Park.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuu-ohBk1M0&feature=emb_title

Mobility



Photographer: Kees Rutten

The University is working on reducing car use on campus and encouraging sustainable travel.

In 2019, the tram will run from Utrecht Central Station to the Utrecht Science Park. Visitors to the Science Park can also make use of **Donkey Republic's** bike-sharing scheme. In addition, the University is working with the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and UMC Utrecht on a carpool app that will make it easier for employees and students to travel together.

But the University is not only focusing on commuting; in 2019, it will also be devoting considerable attention to flying for work purposes. International events and meetings are an important part of science, but that should not stand in the way of conscious travel behaviour. Priorities here include existing IT facilities and travelling by train to destinations where this does not lead to a serious loss of time.

Catering



Photographer: Ivar Pel

In 2019, Utrecht University will stop selling [single-use plastic water bottles external link](#). In previous years around 25,500 single-use bottles were sold. Now, in addition to sparkling water and soft drinks, the University will also be selling reusable bottles in the same vending machines.

Awareness of sustainability



The Future Food Lab counter

Several initiatives will be launched in 2019 to increase students' and employees' awareness of sustainability. One such initiative is the Future Food Lab. [An experimental food counter external link](#) has been set up in the Educatorium canteen at the Utrecht Science Park in collaboration with the caterer Sodexo. This counter is the central place for innovative sustainable solutions in food and 'live' research carried out by the researchers of the [Future Food Hub external link](#).

After 2019



In the coming years, Utrecht University will be pursuing the following ambitions:

- In order to meet the global climate targets, Utrecht University has set itself the ambition of becoming a **carbon-neutral organisation** by 2030.
- To achieve this within 11 years, the University will be installing more **solar panels** and all buildings will be **connected to thermal storage or geothermal energy**.
- The University will also be **reducing its own energy consumption**, both in building management and use and by encouraging sustainable travel behaviour.
- The University is also investing heavily in **future-proof renovations for its real estate stock**.

