



**LINCOLN**  
UNIVERSITY  
TE WHARE WĀNAKA O AORAKI

# He Māhere Toitūtanga: Lincoln University Sustainability Plan 2025–2028





## Message from Chair

# Lincoln University Sustainability Task Force

**The world is evolving rapidly, and the accelerating impacts of climate change highlight the need for Lincoln University to adapt and lead by example. Recognising this, we have made significant progress under our Sustainability Plan, which has guided our efforts since 2020.**

Over the past few years, we have successfully achieved several key initiatives. Notably, we decommissioned our coal boiler, a major step that will result in a 50% reduction in our carbon footprint. In addition, our Energy Farm is on track to become operational by the end of 2026, further supporting our transition to sustainable energy solutions.

We have also established a robust framework for carbon reporting across our campus (120.5ha) and farms (2,337ha of dairy, sheep, beef, arable and horticulture land). This framework underpins our ongoing efforts to reduce emissions, placing us firmly on the path to achieving our carbon reduction target of 2,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e for campus by 2030.

As we look to the future, Lincoln University remains committed to being a leader in sustainable practices within the land-based sector. We recognise the need to proactively adapt to the evolving challenges posed by climate change while continuing to minimise our environmental impact.



The updated Sustainability Plan sets out University-wide priorities and actions for the 2025-2028 period. It provides a clear roadmap towards achieving the two sustainability goals outlined in the plan, ensuring that we remain at the forefront of sustainability and environmental stewardship: kaitiakitanga. By 2028, we will be on track to reach carbon neutrality through emission reductions and renewable energy. Our research will expand with

Māori-led initiatives and global collaborations on climate resilience. Sustainability will be integrated into education with new programmes, enhanced coursework, and hands-on learning.

Ngā mihi

**Professor Grant Edwards**

Vice-Chancellor  
Chair of Sustainability Task Force  
Lincoln University





Lincoln University is committed to being an exemplar of sustainable practices for the land-based sector and the ecosystems within it.



Be sustainable leaders in education and research via a demonstration of sustainability impacting the sectors we support.

## GOAL 1

### To be leaders in sustainability education and research for the land-based sectors

Our education and research will respond to sustainability challenges and opportunities, while growing the capabilities of taura and staff, and strengthening our partnerships and impact.

Priorities	Actions		
	2025	2025-2026	2025-2028
Develop sustainability competent graduates. Provide academic programmes that address and anticipate sustainability challenges and opportunities. Enhance support for sustainability research in the land-based sectors. Grow partnerships for sustainability to strengthen our research and teaching impact.	Introduce the Master of Environment and Agriculture. Implement and operationalise Lincoln University Agrivoltaics Energy Farm. Develop stronger alliances with Euroleague for Life Sciences (ELLS), to facilitate joint programmes, reciprocal exchanges, and research collaboration. Reinstate Lincoln University State of the Nation's Environment address.	Initiate Lincoln University State of Land Project – a Synthesis Institute - aimed at working with international partners to accelerate discovery and share transdisciplinary knowledge about the land- based sectors. Implement the Lincoln University Kāika Institute of Climate Resilience that brings together Māori research excellence and oversees transformational research on kāika climate resilient futures including mana whenua research priorities. Plan and implement Carbon Zero Grassland Laboratory with China Agricultural University. Develop a staff professional development resource to build sustainability competency.	Implement the Lincoln University graduate profile to include a focus on sustainability as one of five attributes. Promote and market sustainability-focused student experience activities. Revise our portfolio of programmes for sustainability and introduce new programmes to meet demand. Extend Lincoln University Living Laboratory opportunities for applied sustainability experience. Showcase the impact of our sustainability research.

## GOAL 2

# To be leaders of sustainability practices on our campus and farms

We commit to managing our campus and farms with environmental, social and economic outcomes. We commit to creating and supporting a culture of sustainability and kaitiakitanga at Lincoln University.

Priorities	Actions		
	2025	2025-2026	2025-2028
<p>Achieve campus wide carbon neutrality by 2030 and net carbon zero by 2050*.</p> <p>Establish an effective waste and recycling framework.</p> <p>Support and nurture biodiversity on campus and farms.</p> <p>Ensure teaching and research practices are sustainable.</p> <p>Research and adopt practices on farms that promote environmental health and economic profitability.</p>	<p>Develop and publish reporting for emission reduction, energy, waste, recycling, and water for campus.</p> <p>Establish partnerships within the Lincoln community, and with Selwyn District Council to support sustainability actions.</p> <p>Enhance opportunities for taura and staff to engage with sustainability and kaitiakitanga initiatives on campus and farms.</p> <p>Develop and implement a Waste Reduction Plan.</p> <p>Provide ongoing advocacy and encouragement for taura and staff to use sustainable and active transport.</p> <p>Certify emission and set reduction targets for farms.</p>	<p>Develop and report on an offsetting/insetting strategy for the University.</p> <p>Develop a campus sustainability and biodiversity map.</p> <p>Assess a range of approaches to parking, including expanding dedicated carparking for EVs and plug-in hybrids and parking contributions.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to increase cycling to campus including staff and student discount scheme for bikes.</p> <p>Implement operating models for laboratories, teaching spaces and farms, records and collections certified by external bodies, which are directed towards improved sustainability.</p> <p>Implement EcoPond effluent pond technology on farms.</p>	<p>Define and implement a range of initiatives to reach our carbon reduction target.</p> <p>Investigate carbon budgets for all business units within the University.</p> <p>Initiate a series of projects on campus and farms focused on carbon reduction through the Sustainability Fund.</p> <p>Assess climate change impact on Lincoln University, identify risks and opportunities, and agree on a university response.</p> <p>Expand retention pond use and implement a water conservation programme with clear actions.</p> <p>Revitalise campus community garden and Arboretum to promote biodiversity to staff and taura.</p> <p>Continue to replace the University fleet to achieve 100% EV or plug-in hybrids where feasible.</p>

\* Refers to 120.5 ha of campus area from Springs Road to the farm boundary beyond Johnstone Memorial Lab (JML) (east to west) and Ellesmere Junction Road to Iverson Field (north to south).



# Our measures of success

We will measure our success by:

- Reduced university campus annual carbon footprint
- Reduced farm annual carbon footprint.
- Improved waste recycling ratio and reduced landfill
- Reduced electricity consumption per campus building floor area
- Reduced carbon emissions from air travel per student/staff
- Improved biodiversity metric on campus and farms
- Sustainability research measured through impact case studies
- Improved sustainability rankings (THE Impact Ranking, GreenMetric Ranking)
- Improved staff perception of university environmental responsibility

## Targets

		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Target				Data Source
Campus Carbon Emissions	Lincoln University - Campus (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	8,555	7,313	5,234	6,599	7,019	6,716	2,961	2,763	2,707	2,651	Toitu Carbon Audit
	Emissions per Staff (tCO <sub>2</sub> e/FTE)	12.8	12.2	9.8	12.1	12.2	10.8	4.4	3.9	3.7	3.6	Toitu Carbon Audit
	Emissions per Operating Revenue (tCO <sub>2</sub> e/\$M)	67.4	61.9	44.0	52.2	50.7	45.1	19.2	17.3	16.3	15.4	Toitu Carbon Audit
	Air Travel (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	1,746	582	32	383	1,017	1,216	1,062	1,027	944	920	Toitu Carbon Audit
Farm Emissions	Lincoln University Farm Portfolio (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	8,181					8,413	To be confirmed				Toitu Carbon Audit
Air Travel	Emissions per Staff (tCO <sub>2</sub> e/staff FTE)	2.62	0.97	0.06	0.70	1.77	1.96	1.57	1.46	1.30	1.25	Toitu Carbon Audit
	Emissions per Student (tCO <sub>2</sub> e/student EFTS)	0.53	0.18	0.01	0.11	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.19	0.17	0.17	Toitu Carbon Audit
Electricity	Usage per building floor area (kWh/m <sup>2</sup> )	120	113	125	130	152	112	186*	195*	197*	197*	Toitu Carbon Audit
Electric Vehicles	Proportion of EVs Fleet	N/A	N/A	N/A	15%	27%	33%	35%	40%	50%	60%	Sustainability Report
Sustainability Rankings	GreenMetric (rank/total Univ.)	148/619	51/912	51/956	52/1050	94/1183	85/1477	Top 5%	Top 5%	Top 5%	Top 5%	GreenMetric Ranking
		Top 23.9%	Top 5.6%	Top 5.3%	Top 4.9%	Top 7.9%	Top 5.7%					GreenMetric Ranking
	Impact Ranking	N/A	101-200	101-200	301-400	201-300	101-200	101-200	101-200	101-200	101-200	THE Impact Ranking
Waste	Landfill (% of total waste)	81	77	79	76	69	73	70	65	60	50	Sustainability Report
	Recycling (% of total waste)	19	23	21	24	31	27	30	35	40	50	Sustainability Report
Biodiversity	Campus Biodiversity Metric	To be confirmed										Sustainability Report
Sustainability Research	Case Studies							2-3 cases	2-3 cases	2-3 cases	2-3 cases	SDG Report
Environmental Responsibility	Staff Positive Perception	45%		63%			67%			70%		YourVoice Survey

\* target increased due to campus electrification