



## **AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy**

March 2008

## About the Alma Mater Society

The Alma Mater Society of UBC is the student society of UBC. Our mission statement is “to improve the quality of the educational, social, and personal lives of the students of UBC.”

The Alma Mater Society will promote high-quality student learning. It will advocate student interests, as well as those of the University of British Columbia and post-secondary education as a whole. The Society will provide its members with diverse opportunities to become exceptional leaders. It will be flexible enough to accommodate the changing world. The AMS’ priorities will be determined by its members. The Society will foster communication, both internally and externally, in order to be democratic, fair, accountable to, and accessible to its members. It will provide services students want and can use. It will cultivate unity and goodwill among its members, but will also encourage free and open debate, as well as respect for differing views. It will solve problems constructively.

The AMS represents the more than 44,000 UBC-Vancouver students and operates student services, student owned businesses, resource groups and clubs.

This document was prepared by the AMS Impacts Committee 2007-2008, Blake Frederick (Associate VP University Affairs), Miriam Stein (Sustainability Strategy Coordinator), and Brendon Goodmurphy (VP Academic). The AMS would like to extend a special thank you to Eric Doherty, who contributed extensively to the development of the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* through his role as Associate VP University Affairs, 2006-2007, and through his professional project in the School of Community and Regional Planning, MA Program.

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# Executive Summary

## WHY A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY?

The AMS recognizes the ecological crisis that humanity faces and the special responsibility universities and university students have in finding and implementing solutions. For this reason, AMS Council passed an Environmental Sustainability Policy in January 2007 that called for the creation of a sustainability strategy for the AMS.

We want to be a leader in reducing the university campus's ecological footprint to sustainable levels by fostering environmental justice in our own operations and lobbying for sustainability practices through our relationships with the university community and broader society. The creation of the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* is a significant step in that direction and provides a framework for action.

## SCOPE

The AMS represents over 44,000 UBC-Vancouver students, operates a variety of student services and businesses, and supports over 300 clubs. The AMS also oversees the management of the Student Union Building (SUB) and leases space to non-AMS businesses throughout the building. In addition to offering services to students, the AMS advocates for student issues to the University administration, the Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments, and other organizations such as TransLink.

We undertook an initial audit (Appendix B) of the AMS in order to more clearly define our environmental impact. The audit divided the impacts that the AMS has influence over into two broad categories, *internal* and *interactive*:

- *Internal impacts* are those that the AMS can act on without the cooperation of external parties, such as changing AMS purchasing practices.
- *Interactive impacts* are those that require interaction with groups such as the UBC administration, TransLink, the City of Vancouver, or student organizations at other universities and colleges.

## METHODOLOGY

This strategy is a little bit unconventional – many strategic processes begin with a comprehensive assessment of all environmental impacts and then targets are chosen based on collected quantitative data. Unfortunately, undertaking such extensive research would have been impractical and would have delayed the development of a strategy for too long.

Instead, we decided to use the concept of ecological footprint analysis as the basis of our strategy. Ecological footprint analysis is a technique developed by UBC's Dr. William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel that measures how much productive land and marine area a group of people require to produce the resources they consume and absorb the waste they produce. Ecological footprint analysis allows the AMS to use both a quantitative and qualitative approach by defining the ecological impact of each target as low, moderate, high or very high. This distinction allows the AMS to focus its energy on the areas that will have the greatest impact.

## TARGETS

The targets in this strategy are ambitious, but attainable. Unlike many other strategies that set dozens of targets, we decided to limit the number of targets in the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy for a couple of reasons. First, this strategy is entirely new and contains general targets that aim to set more specific, quantitative targets once additional information is collected. Second, the high turnover and lack of institutional capacity in the AMS inhibits our ability to undertake too many projects at once.

Each target is categorized as either an *internal target* or an *interactive target*. This distinction is made because the audit we conducted divided the impacts that the AMS has influence over into these two broad areas. The targets are further divided into nine categories, which although are not mutually exclusive, help to organize and prioritize the targets.

In the strategy, the targets are also listed with a set of actions that are designed to either directly address the target or aim towards setting quantitative, informed targets once more data is available. Each action is specified as either short-term (1-2 years) or long-term (3-5 years). Due to their length, the actions for each target do not appear in the Executive Summary but are instead included in the Target section of this document.

### **1. Food & Beverage (Internal)**

- a) Encourage UBC Food Services to significantly reduce the ecological footprint at all of their food outlets, including franchises.

### **2. Materials (Internal)**

- a) Track and reduce the quantities of disposable materials used in AMS operations and significantly reduce the ecological footprint per unit of these materials.
- b) Decrease use of toxic materials and ensure proper disposal of toxic materials, including E-waste, in compliance with all applicable legislation.
- c) Significantly reduce the ecological footprint of SUB renovations conducted by the AMS.

### **3. Communications (Internal)**

- a) Increase overall student awareness of the AMS' environmental initiatives through communications strategies.
- b) Incorporate sustainability into the AMS' communications with staff, clubs, and constituencies.

### **4. Food & Beverage (Interactive)**

- a) Encourage UBC Food Services to significantly reduce the ecological footprint at all of their food outlets, including franchises.
- b) Work with student groups, the UBC Farm, and the UBC Sustainability Office to improve food security by increasing the amount of local food produced on campus and in the Vancouver community.

### **5. Building Materials (Interactive)**

- a) Work with UBC and leaseholders to reduce the quantities of key materials used in the SUB and significantly reduce the ecological footprint of these materials.
- b) Work with UBC and lease holders to reduce the amount of water used in the SUB.
- c) Lobby UBC to decrease the campus' ecological footprint in terms of construction, renovations and waste management.

## **6. Building Energy (Interactive)**

- a) Work with UBC Land and Building Services and the UBC Sustainability Office to reduce SUB energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33% from 2007 levels by 2020.
- b) Continue to work with UBC to create a framework for the University to go beyond climate neutral and work with UBC to ensure its implementation.

## **7. Transportation (Interactive)**

- a) Reduce Single-Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips and increase transit ridership to campus by 33% from 2007 levels.

## **8. Campus Development & Policies (Interactive)**

- a) Lobby UBC to adopt more environmentally sustainable development practices and policies.

## **9. Curriculum & Learning Spaces**

- a) Work with faculty, the UBC Sustainability Office, and other groups to develop a more problem-based learning curriculum aimed at reducing our ecological footprint and creating a stronger ecological learning community.

## **MEASURING PROGRESS**

Indicators are the metrics that will be used to assess our progress and measured each year as part of an annual progress report. The indicators used in the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy have been adapted from two sources: the Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework (CSAF) and the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). The indicators can be found in a supplemental document, *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy: Action Plans and Indicators*.

An annual report will be produced by Impacts to provide accountability and continuity for the following year's committee and Sustainability Coordinator. Every 5 years, the AMS must undertake a major revision and review of the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* in order to keep it up to date and modify targets accordingly.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Council's involvement in the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* takes place primarily through the Impacts Committee. Impacts is responsible for setting yearly priorities, overseeing the strategy's implementation, and reporting progress to Council each year. Impacts must set a manageable number of targets (in consultation with staff and other interested parties) and create action plans for achieving them.

The *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* primarily falls under the portfolio of the VP Finance. The VP Finance chairs the Impacts Committee and directly oversees the Sustainability Coordinator. Every member of the AMS Executive Committee, however, has specific responsibilities. Successful implementation of the strategy will necessarily involve building partnerships with the University, lobbying external organizations, and modifying the operations of our businesses. The Sustainability Coordinator is the primary point person for the strategy. They will sit on relevant committees, work closely with Impacts, hire and manage interns and volunteers, oversee the strategy's projects and fulfill other responsibilities outlined in the strategy.

# Background

## INTRODUCTION

The AMS recognizes its responsibility to reduce and eliminate any negative social and ecological impacts of our operations and activities. Furthermore, the AMS recognizes its responsibility to actively improve the social and ecological environments in which we work. For this reason, AMS Council passed an Environmental Sustainability Policy in January 2007 that called for the creation of a sustainability strategy for the AMS.

The AMS recognizes that there are three important pillars to sustainability: ecological, social and economic. We believe that these three pillars should be considered together because attempts to minimize the current environmental crisis must include a consideration of how we can create a more just and equitable society and how we can use our economic resources responsibly and ethically to support those objectives.

Due to limited resources and high turnover, we decided to divide the task of creating a comprehensive sustainability strategy into manageable parts. This document focuses specifically on ecological sustainability and attempts to achieve a comprehensive strategy for how the AMS can become a more environmentally sustainable organization. It is our hope that future leaders in the AMS will pursue a social sustainability strategy with serious consideration given to how it will interact and being incorporated into the environmental targets set out in this strategy.

This document outlines the environmental impact of the AMS and opportunities where we have the greatest sphere of influence to change it. It also defines a set of targets that will guide the AMS in reducing its ecological impact and recommends actions that can be taken to meet those targets. Lastly, this document is a resource for future AMS leaders to implement the initiatives that will make the AMS a more environmentally sustainable organization and build on the progress made each year.

## WHY A SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY?

Even without a formal environmental strategy, the AMS has been a leader in implementing environmentally-sound practices, such as:

- Providing discounts for students who bring reusable mugs to AMS food outlets.
- Reducing paper usage by switching to electronic documents.
- Creating the Student Environment Center as one of six Resource Groups.
- Selling only organic, fair trade coffee at AMS Businesses.
- Adopting an ethical purchasing policy.

However, some of the AMS' most important environmental achievements have involved working in cooperation with other organizations. For example, the U-Pass program, which offers transit passes at reduced prices to all AMS members, is a cooperative effort between the AMS, TransLink, UBC and Vancity Credit Union. This program has reduced emissions by 16 000 tonnes per year, and has reduced the number of single occupancy vehicles traveling to UBC each day by 20%.

Other AMS achievements reached by interacting with other groups include:

- Working with the UBC Farm and the UBC Food Systems Project to purchase organically grown food from within two kilometers of the SUB.
- Establishing the AMS Bike Kitchen and Co-op.
- Composting 100% of pre-consumer food waste, and some post consumer food and compostable paper waste, in cooperation with UBC Waste Management.
- Purchasing 30% recycled paper in cooperation with UBC Supply Management.
- Reducing SUB electricity consumption by over 1 million kWh per year in cooperation with UBC Land and Building Services.
- Establishing Sprouts, UBC's food cooperative and natural food store.

Despite these many successes, the AMS still faces challenges in making long-term, coordinated commitments to reducing our environmental impact and being a leader in sustainability. Due to high organizational turn-over each year and limited resources, our ability to build on previous initiatives and assess our progress towards our goals is seriously inhibited. Thus, strategic planning is essential for an organization like the AMS to overcome these barriers and ensure continued long-term reductions in the organization's environmental impact. This strategy hopes to influence the higher level, long-term goals, priorities and strategic planning of the AMS by providing a detailed framework that can be used by student leaders to set, implement and measure goals in sustainability for many years to come.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The process of developing this strategy began with an initial audit of the AMS' environmental impact (Appendix B). That assessment was very high-level and looked at the various departments, operations and activities of the AMS. This audit produced some effective data and benchmarks from which the AMS could develop targets. Some initial consultation sessions were held with AMS permanent staff, senior management and the Executive Committee. This information was used to produce the first draft of the strategy, which was subsequently taken to AMS Council and students-at-large for consultation. The feedback received from these consultations was used to develop the final draft of this strategy.

Many frameworks already exist to help guide organizations through the process of creating a sustainability strategy. For example, we looked at both the Sierra Youth Coalition's "Sustainable Campuses Assessment Framework" (CSAF), and the UBC Sustainability Office's sustainability strategy. However, our strategy is quite unique from many of these frameworks in that ours focuses on the AMS, and is not intended to be a strategy for the entire university campus. For this reason, we used these other frameworks to help guide our strategy, but ended up developing a unique approach that best suited the needs and circumstances of the AMS.

This strategy is a little bit unconventional – many strategic processes begin with a comprehensive assessment of all environmental impacts and then targets are chosen based on collected quantitative data. Unfortunately, because of the high-turnover of the AMS and lack of institutional capacity, undertaking such extensive research would have been impractical and would have delayed the development of a strategy for too long.



Instead, we decided to use the concept of ecological footprint analysis as the basis of our strategy. Ecological footprint analysis is a technique developed by UBC's Dr. William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel that measures how much productive land and marine area a group of people require to produce the resources they consume and absorb the waste they produce. This framework allows the AMS to use both a quantitative and qualitative approach to setting targets. For those areas where it is not yet possible to set quantitative targets, ecological footprint allows us to make decisions about what initiatives should be taken and the general impact reduction that will be made.

Using an ecological footprint analysis, the AMS can define each target in terms of a low, moderate, high and very high ecological footprint. This distinction allows the AMS to focus its energy on the areas that will have the greatest impact. For a more detailed background on ecological footprint, see Appendix A.

## SCOPE

The AMS represents over 44,000 UBC-Vancouver students, operates a variety of student services and businesses, and supports over 300 clubs. The AMS also oversees the management of the Student Union Building (SUB) and leases space to non-AMS businesses throughout the building. In addition to offering services to students, the AMS advocates for student issues to the University administration, the Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments, and other organizations such as TransLink. Considering the many facets of the organization, it is difficult to clearly define the scope of the AMS' environmental impact.

We undertook an initial audit (Appendix B) of the AMS in order to define our environmental impact, and thus define the scope of this strategy. In this audit, several areas were identified that could be considered when defining the AMS' impact:

- AMS operations and businesses
- AMS clubs and constituencies
- Partnerships with other organizations
- Ecological behaviour of AMS members
- Environmental impact of UBC's operations

Due to the difficulty of accurately defining how far the AMS' environmental impact extends, it is hard to precisely quantify our impact. The initial audit identified that it would be more helpful to think in terms of the AMS' *sphere of influence* rather than impact. This sphere of influence helped to identify and define the targets that are used in this strategy to measure how far we've come in meeting our objectives.

Thus, the audit divided the impacts that the AMS has influence over into two broad categories, *internal* and *interactive*:

- *Internal impacts* are those that the AMS can act on without the cooperation of external parties, such as changing AMS purchasing practices.
- *Interactive impacts* are those that require interaction with groups such as the UBC administration, TransLink, the City of Vancouver, or student organizations at other universities and colleges. Interaction with other bodies should strive to build cooperative relationships, but does not exclude active lobbying and campaigning when this is judged to be the most effective strategy.

# The Strategy

## VISION

*The Vision defines the principles and values of this strategy.*

The AMS recognizes the ecological crisis humanity faces and the special responsibility universities and university students have in finding and implementing solutions. We acknowledge our obligations as global citizens and strive to create a sustainable and equitable future for all.

The AMS will be a leader in reducing the university campus's ecological footprint to sustainable levels and in fostering environmental justice in our own operations and through our relationships with the university community and broader society. The AMS will be an engine for new ideas and innovation and a model for the University and other student organizations to follow.

## PURPOSE

*The Purpose defines the broad, abstract goals of this strategy.*

- To work towards environmental sustainability independently and in cooperation with organizations such as UBC, other student organizations, and relevant governmental bodies.
- To maintain and enhance the AMS' leadership role in promoting environmental sustainability on and off campus.
- To showcase the AMS' leadership in order to distinguish the AMS and our businesses from the University as a whole and other businesses on campus.
- To guide the AMS' work to areas where we can have the greatest effect, directly through AMS operations and through interaction with other organizations.
- To establish the Impacts Committee as the body responsible for overseeing the Sustainability Strategy and presenting an annual progress report, including new or updated targets, to Council.
- To set a manageable number of goals and timelines (in consultation with staff and other interested parties), and assign responsibilities to pertinent persons and departments for achieving them.
- To establish procedures for monitoring and reporting on progress. Procedures for updating and adjusting targets will also be part of the strategy.

## TARGETS

*The targets define the specific objectives that will help us achieve our Purpose.*

### **Estimated Ecological Footprint (EF)**

It is important to distinguish between quantitative and qualitative targets. Some targets are quantitative, where good data or provincial legislation exists. An example of this is the Energy (Interactive) goal to reduce SUB GHG emissions by 33% by 2020. However, for most targets where we do not have adequate data to determine a baseline, the targets provide a general direction to reduce our ecological footprint. Over time as better data is collected, general targets will become quantitative.

In the *AMS Environmental Impact Audit* (Appendix B), the AMS' environmental impact was not precisely defined because it may have taken years before we had adequate data to assess our impact. Thus, it would have been arbitrary to set uninformed estimates of footprint reduction. For example, the data on material and energy consumed at UBC and in the SUB is still incomplete and data on food consumed at every outlet on campus has not been collected. Therefore this audit does not attempt to quantify EF precisely and instead ranks impact on a scale using *Low, Moderate, High and Very High*. This scale is useful for prioritizing targets that will have the highest impact without having to first quantify each and every impact of the AMS.

### **Internal vs. Interactive targets**

We have divided all of our targets into one of two categories. Internal targets are those that the AMS has full jurisdiction over and can implement without much resistance from outside organizations. Interactive targets are those that require building partnerships or working with other organizations to achieve. This distinction is important when considering the feasibility of each target.

### **Categories**

The targets are further divided into categories. These categories are not mutually exclusive since some projects undertaken will address multiple target areas. However, these categories are mostly helpful for organizing targets and prioritizing actions.

#### Internal:

1. Food & Beverage
2. Materials
3. Communications

#### Interactive:

4. Food & Beverage
5. Building Materials
6. Building Energy
7. Transportation
8. Campus Development & Policies
9. Curriculum & Learning Spaces

### **Actions**

In order to meet our objectives, it is important to outline a list of specific actions for each target. In the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy*, each target is followed by a list of actions in bullet points. These actions include data gathering to set informed targets as well as direct actions to reduce our environmental impact. Each year, the Impacts Committee and the Sustainability Coordinator will be responsible for deciding which proposed actions are to be completed during that year.

### ***Timeframe***

Each action is given a timeframe in which it should be completed. It is important to remain flexible on the timeframe because there is high institutional turnover at the AMS, some projects may not be feasible in a year, or there may not be enough information to proceed on an action, etc. We have demarcated each action as short-term (ST) and long-term (LT). Short term should be interpreted as 1-2 years, and long-term should be interpreted as 3-5 years. Some actions may not be completed within that timeframe, but they should be started. As we begin implementing the strategy and certain actions, we will be able to better determine a more rigid timeframe for each action.

### **INDICATORS:**

The indicators are the metrics that will be used to assess our progress. The indicators will be measured each year for the annual progress report. Some indicators are easier to measure than others, therefore it is possible that not all of the indicators will be assessed every year. The indicators used in the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy have been adapted from two sources: the Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework<sup>1</sup> (CSAF) and the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). We chose not to use all indicators from either system because both sets of indicators were developed to be applied for the entire university. However, tying ourselves to an external framework will allow the AMS to be accountable for our actions and enable us to compare our progress to other post-secondary institution in Canada and the United States.

The Indicators can be found in a supplemental document, *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy: Action Plans and Indicators*.

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<sup>1</sup> Sierra Youth Coalitions' Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework  
<http://syc-cjs.org/sustainable/CSAF+indicators+research&bl>

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS)  
[http://www.aashe.net/stars/STARS\\_Pilot\\_Phase\\_One\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.aashe.net/stars/STARS_Pilot_Phase_One_Guide.pdf)

# Internal Targets

Internal targets are those that the AMS has complete jurisdiction over.

## 1. Food & Beverage

**a) Significantly reduce the average per-serving ecological footprint of food and beverages sold at the AMS food outlets.**

**Estimated EF: High**

- Set informed targets for increasing the purchase of local food ingredients as a percentage of total food purchases ST
- Increase proportion of items procured from UBC Farm and strengthen relationships with other local producers ST
- Set informed targets for reducing high impact ingredients like meat and dairy in the AMS food outlets as a percentage of total food purchases. This includes reducing the proportion of meat to vegetables in recipes, as well as increasing vegetarian, vegan and raw food menu options. ST
- Significantly increase the number of certified organic, fair trade and GMO-free ingredients used by the AMS food outlets LT

## 2. Materials

**a) Track and reduce the quantities of disposable materials used in AMS operations and significantly reduce the ecological footprint per unit of these materials.**

**Estimated EF: Moderate**

- Set informed targets for reducing materials used: focus on paper, disposable containers, and general waste in AMS businesses and events ST
- Continue to provide incentives for customers to bring their own mugs and reusable containers in order to reduce the amount of disposables by an additional 15-20% LT
- Conduct research to determine the most environmentally-friendly and cost effective disposable takeout containers in order to eliminate the use of non-biodegradable products ST
- Set informed targets for reducing paper consumption in all AMS operations ST
- Reduce the footprint of paper products by switching to 80-100% post-consumer recycled content, chlorine-free, FSC certified paper products. ST
- Investigate ways to re-use communication materials within the AMS LT

**b) Decrease use of toxic materials and ensure proper disposal of toxic materials, including E-waste, in compliance with all applicable legislation.**

**Estimated EF: N/A**

- Create an AMS policy and procedure manual for disposing of electronic waste that is in compliance with established best-practices ST
- Use life-cycle accounting when purchasing new electronics, appliances and furniture in all AMS operations ST
- Ensure that all cleaning supplies used by AMS are non-toxic and biodegradable ST

**c) Significantly reduce the ecological footprint of SUB renovations conducted by the AMS.**

**Estimated EF: Low to Moderate**

- Create a best-practices procedure manual for the Renovations Planning Group for SUB renovations that includes research on sustainable materials, sustainable furniture, and how to reduce waste by re-using materials ST
- Investigate ways to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades in all new renovation projects ST

### 3. Communications

**a) Increase overall student awareness of the AMS' environmental initiatives through communications strategies.**

**Estimated EF: High (indirect)**

- Produce an annual report on the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* that includes updates on initiatives undertaken and progress on targets LT
- Maintain a comprehensive, accessible, up-to-date, and user-friendly website LT
- Investigate ways to incorporate sustainability into the AMS 'brand' and all AMS communications each year ST
- Actively promote incentives for customers to choose environmentally friendly options at AMS businesses. This includes both lighter footprint menu options as well as increasing use of reusable takeout containers, mugs and cutlery ST
- Create a tracking system to monitor the number of customers who choose lighter footprint menu options ST

**b) Incorporate sustainability into the AMS' communications with staff, clubs, and constituencies.**

**Estimated EF: High (indirect)**

- Update all training manuals for staff, executives, councilors, commissions, and clubs to include sustainability training and best practices ST
- Focus on AMS events as a means to reduce our ecological footprint and to act as a model for other UBC community groups ST

## Interactive Targets

Interactive targets are those that require working with other organizations to achieve.

### 4. Food & Beverage

**a) Encourage UBC Food Services to significantly reduce the ecological footprint at all of their food outlets, including franchises.**

**Estimated EF: Very High**

- Actively support and work with professors and students on food systems projects LT
- Encourage a significant reduction in the average per-serving EF of food menu items ST
- Encourage the use of food containers and materials with a low EF ST
- Lobby UBC Food Services to reduce the number of franchise outlets on campus LT

**b) Work with student groups, the UBC Farm, and the UBC Sustainability Office to improve food security by increasing the amount of local food produced on campus and in the Vancouver community.**

**Estimated EF: Very High**

- Create a feasibility assessment of potential sites for roof-top garden projects on buildings around campus ST
- Assess the landscaping practices of UBC Plant Operations and research the feasibility for increasing sustainable practices and converting ornamental landscaping to edible landscaping. ST
- Investigate ways for the AMS to support the UBC Farm in its food production initiatives ST

## 5. Building Materials

**a) Work with UBC and leaseholders to reduce the quantities of key materials used in the SUB and significantly reduce the ecological footprint of these materials.**

**Estimated EF: Moderate**

- Eliminate bottled water from the SUB ST
- Eliminate plastic bags from the SUB LT
- Conduct an annual waste audit of the SUB LT

**b) Work with UBC and lease holders to reduce the amount of water used in the SUB.**

**Estimated EF: Low to Moderate**

- Work with UBC to install water saving taps and toilets ST
- Research the feasibility of collecting stormwater and installing a greywater recycling system in the SUB ST

**c) Lobby UBC to decrease the campus' ecological footprint in terms of construction, renovations and waste management.**

**Estimated EF: Very High**

- Ensure that any additions to or major renovations of the SUB meet at least a LEED Gold standard ST
- Lobby UBC Waste Management to significantly increase the effectiveness of the composting program by adding more receptacles and improving signage ST
- Lobby UBC Housing and Conferences to adopt a unified waste management strategy for all residences ST

## 6. Building Energy

**a) Work with UBC Land and Building Services and the UBC Sustainability Office to reduce SUB energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by at least 33% from 2007 levels by 2020.**

**Estimated EF: High**

- Create a system to monitor and display SUB energy consumption LT
- Work with UBC to implement the recommendations outlined in the SUB energy audit (July 2007) LT
- Undertake a major energy efficiency upgrade as part of the SUB renovation process LT
- Investigate ground-source heating through a district hot water heating system and the potential of incorporating renewable energy sources. LT



**b) Continue to work with UBC to create a framework for the University to go beyond climate neutral and work with UBC to ensure its implementation.**

**Estimated EF: Very High**

- Ensure that the Sustainability Coordinator and the VP Academic regularly liaise with the Sustainability Office ST
- Encourage and promote student participation in the beyond carbon neutral process ST

## 7. Transportation

**a) Reduce Single-Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) trips and increase transit ridership to campus by 33% from 2007 levels.**

**Estimated EF: Very High**

- Enhance the AMS' transit lobbying campaign aimed at improving transit service ST
- Track transportation-related GHG emissions in co-operation with UBC Trek and other groups ST
- Continue to lobby UBC Housing and Conferences and the UBC administration to increase the amount of affordable on-campus student housing LT
- Lobby UBC Trek, Campus and Community Planning, and the AMS Bike Co-op to improve cycling routes and increase the number of secure bike facilities on campus LT
- Lobby UBC Trek and UBC Parking to create incentives for commuters to carpool ST
- Lobby UBC Trek, TransLink, and Campus and Community Planning to improve intra-campus transit circulation LT
- Lobby UBC and TransLink to institute a U-Pass designed for UBC staff, faculty, and residents LT
- Lobby TransLink and work with other student unions to expand to the U-Pass to more post-secondary institutions LT
- Reduce number of flights taken by AMS Staff and Executives for work-related travel LT

## 8. Campus Development & Policies

**a) Lobby UBC to adopt more environmentally sustainable development practices and policies.**

**Estimated EF: No Direct Impact**

- Lobby UBC to adopt a policy that guarantees all new buildings on LT

- campus follow a minimum standard of LEED Gold
- Lobby UBC to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem integrity by minimizing conversion of forested land, agriculturally productive areas and greenspace to paved areas LT
- Encourage UBC to increase the amount of low impact green space (low maintenance and native species) LT
- Continue to pressure UBC to preserve, promote, and support the UBC Farm LT
- Continue to lobby UBC Housing and Conferences and the UBC administration to increase the amount of affordable on-campus student housing LT
- Lobby UBC to increase financial transparency, increase socially responsible investments and engage in shareholder responsibility LT

## 9. Curriculum & Learning Spaces

**a) Work with faculty, the UBC Sustainability Office, and other groups to develop a more problem-based learning curriculum aimed at reducing our ecological footprint and creating a stronger ecological learning community.**

**Estimated EF: Very High (Indirect)**

- Expand the number of SEEDS and similar research and outreach projects ST
- Investigate ways to integrate ecological learning into campus spaces (ex. displaying energy consumption or waste production) ST
- Work with interested students and faculty to support and promote ecological learning in all UBC faculties LT
- Advocate for a greater selection of environmentally focused courses open to all students LT
- Encourage UBC to increase funding for environmentally focused faculty research LT

## Implementation

A sustainability strategy is only as effective as its implementation. In order for the AMS to reach the targets outlined in this strategy, it will be important that there is strong awareness of, and support for this strategy. Implementation must occur at all levels of the AMS – from strategic planning at the Council and Executive level, to management of the businesses, to the daily work of part-time employees, volunteers and researchers.

This section is intended to clarify the roles and responsibilities of people and positions responsible for implementing this strategy and to provide more detailed information on how to take the appropriate steps to implement this strategy. This section is by no means exhaustive; relying solely on this information will not be enough to implement this strategy. The successful implementation of this strategy will require great leadership, inspiring vision and strong commitment from all levels of the AMS.

### IMPACTS COMMITTEE

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Setting priorities for the year – choosing targets, creating action plans and implementing projects.
2. Working with the Sustainability Coordinator, the Executive and other AMS staff to oversee the implementation of the annual projects and action plans.
3. Updating Council no later than October 30 each year with a progress report.
4. Working with the Communications Manager and the AMS Executive to produce an annual sustainability report.
5. Administer the Sustainability Fund each year

Council's involvement in the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* takes place primarily through the Impacts Committee. Impacts is ultimately responsible for setting the priorities each year and overseeing the implementation of the strategy. Impacts must set a manageable number of targets (in consultation with staff and other interested parties), and create action plans for achieving them.

### ANNUAL TIMELINE

This is the annual cycle for setting priorities, implementing projects and monitoring progress. The timing was designed to fit with both the academic year and Council turnover. SEEDS projects are primarily research-based, while other projects are more about direct implementation. Although there are fixed dates for reports to Council, project implementation will be continuous throughout any given year and may even extend into subsequent years.

This timeline is meant to guide the Impacts Committee, the Vice-President Finance and the Sustainability Coordinator as they plan for the year.

<b>May 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Sustainability Coordinator starts
<b>Late June</b>	Impacts sets priorities and selects actions and projects for upcoming year
<b>July-August</b>	Coordinator and VP Finance plan for the year ahead, write project proposals for SEEDS and professors, start projects
<b>September</b>	First round of SEEDS projects
<b>Late October</b>	Update to Council from Impacts on annual priorities and status of projects
<b>November</b>	Sustainability Coordinator prepares term 2 project proposals for SEEDS and professors
<b>January</b>	Second round of SEEDS projects begins; Sustainability Coordinator collects indicator data
<b>February</b>	Executive turnover, Sustainability Coordinator and Impacts prepare progress report
<b>Late March</b>	Annual Progress report to council from Impacts
<b>Late April</b>	Transition new Sustainability Coordinator

## SETTING ANNUAL PRIORITIES

The most important part of Impacts' job is setting the high-level priorities for the year. This requires focusing on specific targets, choosing a number of actions or projects, and creating action plans for how they will be implemented and who will be responsible. The following are actions that should be taken to set priorities and plan for the year:

- Read through past annual reports and identify accomplishments to date.
- Identify targets that have yet to be met and actions that have yet to be implemented.
- Consult with the AMS Executive, AMS Council, the Sustainability Coordinator, the Sustainability Office and other stakeholders.
- Undergo preliminary research to estimate the feasibility of each action plan or project (looking at funding, staff or institutional support, capacity, etc).
- Use the action plan worksheets (see *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy: Action Plans and Indicators*), and identify who is responsible for each action plan, and create an estimated timeline.
- Define the terms of success – how will we know that this project or action is successful in meeting our target? Can it be measured quantifiably or do we have to consider other measures of success?
- Report on progress to Council no later than October 30.

Factors to consider in choosing annual actions and projects:

- If there is a significant potential to reduce ecological footprint (EF), even if baseline data doesn't exist or EF is very difficult to calculate precisely.
- Actions will either result in visible cost savings or benefits for the AMS or AMS members (to maintain and build support for the strategy)
- There is support from the staff or others who will have to implement the action plan to reach the targets
- Where the possibility of failure to meet targets might be mitigated by lobbying or securing cooperation of other parties (e.g. failure of TransLink to improve bus service to reduce greenhouse gas emissions)
- If the target involves data collection or research, will this research advance the goals set out in the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy*?

## ACTION PLANS

Action plans are how we're going to reach our targets – what actions will be taken, who is responsible, what are the costs and resources required to implement them, feasibility of each action and an estimated timeline. There is an action plan for each target. These action plans are located in a separate document *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy: Action Plans and Indicators*. The action plans will be updated by Impacts each year. Impacts will assess completed actions and add new proposed action items. They will also prioritize actions for the upcoming year. Progress will also be tracked and assessed using the indicators outlined in the same document.

## PROJECTS

Projects are more specific than actions. One project might help us reach multiple goals and one action may be separated into numerous projects. Some ongoing projects include working with students in the Faculty of Land and Food Systems to develop vegan recipes for AMS businesses, developing a best-practices handbook for the Renovations Planning Group, and conducting an annual waste audit. The list of ongoing and potential projects is documented. The Sustainability Coordinator is responsible for both overseeing these projects and keeping the list up to date.

## ANNUAL REPORTING

The annual report is intended to provide continuity and accountability without being overly time consuming to produce. The basic steps are:

- Review each target and action plan from the previous year and report on the actions completed from the action plan and progress made. Also note any actions taken that were not anticipated in the action plan. Quantitative data should be included where appropriate.
- For significant projects that fall under more than one target category it may be best to produce a project report and refer to the key conclusions of the report in the relevant action plans.
- Assess the indicators. Reporting responsibility and tracking location have been determined in the indicator tables. It is up to the Sustainability Coordinator to compile the relevant data for Impacts committee prior to the annual report. Note that it may not be feasible to report on all of the indicators every year, however they will be extremely useful for setting benchmarks and assessing progress.
- Considering the research done and experience gained in the previous year, review the targets and action plans and update as appropriate. When information becomes available, consideration should be given to creating quantitative targets. New targets and actions should only be added with careful consideration to the resources available and the policy's direction to keep targets to a manageable number (considering that every target needs to be reported on every year). Forward revised or new targets for approval by the Executive and Council.
- Produce a brief summary of the year's activities including significant successes, failures and changes in direction.
- Review the potential LFS projects list and update as necessary (delete projects that have been completed and add new potential projects that have been identified). This

may be a good time to make firm decisions on what projects the AMS should proceed with, but project decisions can be made at any time.

- Update the AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy webpage with the annual report and any relevant documents. Verify that all links are still current.

Don't get bogged down in endless detail, the report just needs to provide the essential information next year's Impacts Committee members will need. Every 5 years, the AMS must undertake a major revision and review of the Lighter Footprint Strategy in order to keep it up to date, and modify targets accordingly.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Use the *Strategic Framework* to engage AMS Council in setting high level goals and priorities for the year. (President)
2. Directly oversee the Sustainability Coordinator. (VP Finance).
3. Chair Impacts Committee. (VP Finance)
4. Incorporate sustainability into lobbying efforts each year. (VP Academic, VP External)
5. Ensure implementation of the strategy in the businesses through the GM and Senior Management team. (President, VP Administration, VP Finance)
6. Ensure the implementation of the strategy in the services. (ECSS, President)
7. Build partnerships with the UBC Sustainability Office, the University administration and other external groups. (VP Academic, VP Admin)

## SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Sit on the following committees: Impacts Committee, Business Operations Committee, Renovations Planning Group, Communications Planning Group.
2. Work with the Impacts committee to establish annual goals and priorities.
3. Work with the Impacts committee and the VP Finance to create action plans for all annual projects and goals.
2. Implement the projects and goals set out by Impacts Committee each year.
3. Set up and oversee student research projects (working with SEEDS, AgSci 450, etc)
4. Hire and manage any potential interns or volunteers to help implement projects.
5. Build partnerships and work with student groups, clubs and resource groups.
6. Work with the Communications Department to communicate sustainability initiatives and progress to the membership
7. Work with the VP Finance and Senior Managers to help implement sustainability initiatives in the AMS Businesses
8. Work with the ECSS to implement sustainability initiatives into the AMS Services
9. Work with the UBC Sustainability Office and other campus organizations or University departments.
10. Work with the Sierra Youth Coalition and student unions across Canada that are working on sustainability initiatives.

# Appendices

Due to the length of these appendices, we have not attached each directly to this document. Instead, you will only find a summary here. To read each full appendix, please see the document *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy: Appendices*.

## **APPENDIX A: Ecological Footprint Analysis**

This document analyzes the ecological footprint analysis in greater depth. It gives greater history and context of the EF framework, how it has been used in the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* and how it can be used to make decisions regarding prioritization of targets. This document is very useful for student leaders, AMS Councilors, AMS Executive and senior managers to better understand how the AMS' environmental impact can be quantified better.

## **APPENDIX B: Environmental Impact Audit**

This document outlines our initial audit of all the AMS activities and operations and attempts to conceptualize the environmental impacts of the AMS. This resulted in focusing on the AMS' sphere of influence – dividing our targets into internal and interactive targets. This document is useful for getting a better sense of how the *AMS Lighter Footprint Strategy* was created, how targets were set, and how the scope of this strategy was defined.

## **APPENDIX C: Consultation Summary**

This document summarizes the feedback that we received from our various consultation initiatives. These initiatives included a survey (over 200 respondents), several focus groups (55 participants), and tables set up in the concourse (50 visitors). This feedback was subsequently incorporated into later drafts of the strategy.

## **APPENDIX D: Strategic Framework**

We added a fifth value to the AMS Strategic Framework in order to further institutionalize sustainability into the AMS' long-term strategic planning. Subsequently, we also added sustainability to the "Measuring Outcomes" section, and to the annual strategic planning timeline. The additions are included here for information. If you would like to see the entire AMS Strategic Framework, please visit the AMS website, [www.ams.ubc.ca](http://www.ams.ubc.ca).

## **APPENDIX E: Additional Resources**

Links to other environmental organizations' websites, other student unions doing work in sustainability, and background resources on ecological footprint can all be found in this document. They are also online at [www.ams.ubc.ca](http://www.ams.ubc.ca).