



SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

OF THE

ALMA MATER SOCIETY

OF QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY

Responsibility	Vice President (University Affairs)
Approved by	Assembly
Date initially approved	April 07, 2025
Date last revised	April 07, 2025

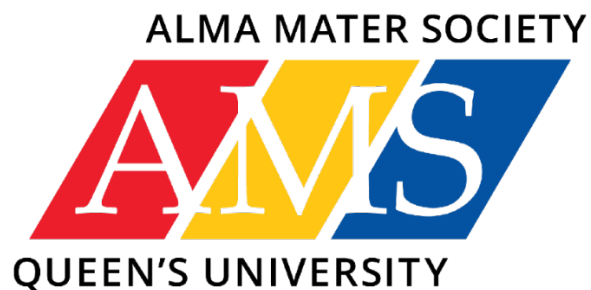


Table of Contents

Land Acknowledgement	4
Purpose and Statement	4
Scope	6
Terminology	7
Roles and Responsibilities	8
Part A: Commitments.....	10
Section 1: Principles.....	10
Section 2: Responsibilities.....	11
Section 3: Partnerships.....	12
Section 4: Procurement.....	12
Section 5: Facilities.....	13
Waste Management	13
Energy and Water Management	14
Development and Retrofits.....	14
Section 6: Advocacy	15
Part B: Commission of Environmental Sustainability.....	16
Section 1: Mandate	16
Section 2: Recognition	17
Section 3: Education and Engagement.....	17
Section 4: Leadership	18
Part C: Sustainable Event Certificate	19
Section 1: Purpose	19
Section 2: Eligibility Requirements	20
Section 3: Application	20
Section 4: Selection Criteria	21
Section 5: Timeline.....	21
Section 6: Benefits	21
Part D: Environmental Coalition.....	21
Section 1: Purpose	22

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements	22
Section 3: Terms of Reference	22
Part E: Environmental Caucus.....	22
Section 1: Purpose	23
Section 2: Eligibility Requirements	23
Section 3: Terms of Reference	23
Part F: Reporting.....	23
Section 1: Goal Plan	23
Section 2: Additional Reports.....	24
Monitoring.....	25

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Alma Mater Society (AMS) and Queen's University are situated on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinabek Nation in Katarokwi. We are grateful to live, work, and study on these traditional lands.

We recognize the powerful and enduring history Indigenous peoples have had with the lands that the AMS and Queen's University are located on, which began long before colonization and are maintained to this day as a part of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to mutually share and care for the lands and waters around the Great Lakes area. Katarokwi continues to be home to a rich and flourishing Indigenous community, including Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples, as well as other First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

As we work to enhance sustainability at our student government, we must keep in mind the crucial role that Indigenous peoples have played in responsibly stewarding the lands and waters of Turtle Island, as they have done for time immemorial. Any attempt at meaningfully advancing environmental action or addressing the climate crisis must also combat the destruction and oppression that colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism have inflicted upon both the environment and upon Indigenous communities and honour our responsibilities as Treaty peoples to commit towards truth and reconciliation.

Purpose and Statement

Anthropogenic climate change and pollution are two of the most urgent crises of our time. These environmental issues do not exist separate from other social justice concerns in our society, and are particularly connected to Indigenous rights and the ongoing movement towards reconciliation in Canada. Environmental injustice and colonialism go hand in hand: the denial of reciprocal relationships between humans and the environment has contributed to present-day environmental degradation and reflects the denial of reciprocal relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples perpetuated by colonialism. Indigenous communities have not only served as land and water defenders and knowledge keepers for generations, but also bear the brunt of environmental inequities such as pollution, environmental destruction, land rights violations, and the harms of climate change. The importance of this interrelationship is affirmed by the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#), which states that Indigenous peoples have the right to own and use the lands, territories, and resources they traditionally occupy, and the right to have their environment, lands, and territories

conserved and protected from pollution. Additionally, the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action](#) also calls upon the government to repeal concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands in Calls to Action 45, 46, 47, and 49, underscoring the importance of sovereignty and land rights in the fight for environmental justice.

When considering sustainability, it is crucial that the AMS shifts its perspective on the land and the environment from one of unilateral exploitation to one of mutual respect and caring. Just as environmental justice requires us to reframe the relationship between humans and the environment and consider their interdependence, reconciliation asks settlers and non-Indigenous people to redress their relationship with Indigenous peoples. As a representative of the undergraduate student population at Queen's, and an advocate for sustainable practices both within the Queen's and Kingston communities, the AMS is committed to setting a positive example for students on campus. As an organization that operates within a colonial history and setting, the AMS is committed to supporting Indigenization and decolonization and acknowledges the preeminence of Indigenous expertise, knowledge, and action in environmental stewardship and climate leadership.

The purpose of this policy is to describe principles for upholding a reciprocal and mutually respectful relationship with the environment and with Indigenous peoples. To do this, we utilized the [Four R's framework](#), developed by Verna J. Kirkness and Ray Barnhart in 1991, which was designed to promote equity for Indigenous students in higher education. This has been implemented throughout the Sustainability Policy through the following:

- **Respect:** Recognizing, valuing, and emphasizing Indigenous knowledge systems, worldviews, identities, cultural traditions, and peoples in environmental sustainability.
- **Relevance:** Ensuring the AMS' sustainability work is relevant to the needs, interests, and lives of Indigenous peoples.
- **Reciprocity:** Building reciprocal relationships between humans and the environment, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
- **Responsibility:** Committing to action to repair the harms caused by colonialism and unsustainable practices, and working to transform our systems and institutions.

At the beginning of each Part or Section of this policy, there is a statement explaining as to how the Four R's have been implemented and how this Part or Section has been made relevant to Indigenous communities, allowing us to integrate Indigenous engagement throughout. Additionally, each section names specific standards to uphold regarding our relationships with and responsibilities to Indigenous communities. Throughout the policy,

we also use the language 'human and more-than-human' to encompass all our relations in the environment, in order to move beyond the 'living/non-living' binary and acknowledge perspectives rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and being that acknowledge all parts of the natural world as living and interconnected.

The Sustainability Policy is meant to provide AMS staff with a clear understanding as to what obligations they have regarding the environment, serve as a guiding document to direct and justify current and future environmental action, and ensure the AMS' advocacy is conducted in an environmentally conscious manner that promotes lasting ecological wellbeing. The Sustainability Policy will also set standards and expectations that the AMS strives for with respect to the management of resources, waste, energy, activities, and personnel, in hopes of embedding values and systems that support sustainability into the AMS' governance in a durable manner and bringing the AMS up-to-date with best practices in sustainability at other Canadian universities and student governments.

Scope

The Principles and Positions policy of the Alma Mater Society affirms that "It is the position of the AMS Assembly that Queen's University must be committed to operating a sustainable campus and taking responsibility to lessen their environmental impact and address the climate crisis." This policy arises from the position of the Society on environmental sustainability and is intended to elaborate on the advocacy priorities of the Society, as well as set a framework by which the AMS can report on its own sustainability initiatives, demonstrating leadership and commitment to the very priorities it will advocate for, and advance. It is recognized that sustainability is an active and ongoing commitment that the Alma Mater Society makes, and as such, it is understood that the commitments laid out in Part A will not be achieved within a single academic year. Instead, the AMS should be reporting on the goals and priorities it sets on an annual basis, and continually working towards meeting and upholding these standards year after year.

The scope of this policy, whenever there is mention or influence on the Corporation, shall be limited to the extent determined by the Board of Directors. While the document and commitment is intended to serve as a resource for all members of the Alma Mater Society and its employees, the Board will make the final judgement on how outlined commitments will be implemented and prioritized on an annual basis, and also over its strategic cycles.

Terminology

1. **"AMS" or "the Society"** refers to the Alma Mater Society of Queen's University.
2. **AMS staff:** refers to all paid employees and unpaid volunteers of the AMS.
3. **Assembly:** refers to AMS Assembly, the highest legislative body of the AMS as defined in the AMS Constitution.
4. **Climate:** refers to the long-term weather patterns in an area. In this policy, it also refers to issues pertaining to **climate change**, a long-term shift in global temperatures and weather patterns caused by human activity, mainly due to greenhouse gas emissions, which poses a significant threat to the environment and to human health.
5. **Commissions:** refers to the 5 commissions defined by the AMS Constitution. This includes the Social Issues Commission ("SIC"), Campus Affairs Commission ("CAC"), Commission of External Affairs ("CEA"), Commission of Clubs ("CC"), and the Commission of Environmental Sustainability ("CES").
6. **Environment:** refers to the natural world that all human and more-than-human entities occupy on Earth, which can apply on a local and/or a global level.
7. **Indigenous:** refers to the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities, who are the original peoples of the country now known as Canada.
8. **Offices:** refers to the 6 offices defined by the AMS Constitution. This includes the Office of the AMS Secretariat ("the Secretariat"), the Communications Office, the Marketing Office, the Human Resources Office, the Informational Technology Office ("IT Office"), and the Orientation Roundtable ("ORT").
9. **Partners:** is an umbrella term that refers to the various organizations the AMS allies with, works with, and does business with. This includes, but is not limited to, faculty societies, clubs, suppliers, sponsors, contractors, and community organizations at Queen's and in Kingston.
10. **Pollution:** refers to contaminants that are introduced into the environment and cause harm to human and/or more-than-human things. Examples of pollution include smog, plastic waste, and chemical spills.
11. **Student-run Services** or **"Services"**: refers to the 10 services managed by the Board of Directors and defined by the AMS Constitution. This includes Common Ground Coffeehouse ("Common Ground"), Queen's Pub, the Tricolour Outlet, the AMS Media Centre ("AMC"), the Student Life Centre ("SLC"), the Queen's Journal, the AMS Food Bank ("Food Bank"), the Peer Support Centre, Walkhome, and Queen's Student Constables.

12. **Sustainability:** refers to the goal of ensuring resources and energy are used in a way that enables human and more-than-human entities to exist in perpetuity for a long period of time. Environmental sustainability, which is the main concern of this policy, refers to maintaining a balance in the Earth's cycles of resources, human and more-than-human entities, and energy sources, so they are not depleted at a rate faster than they can be renewed; and so waste, pollution, or greenhouse gas emissions are not produced at a rate faster than they can be removed from the environment.
13. **Queen's University or "University":** refers to Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

Roles and Responsibilities

In order to ensure this policy is properly implemented, it is crucial that the individuals the commitment applies to understand their duties.

Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability: The Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability is responsible for helping AMS members and staff adhere to the standards outlined in the Sustainability Policy; collecting and disseminating reports on progress from the Sustainability Goal Plan as outlined in the Sustainability Policy, Part F; updating the student body on the commitments needed to reflect the latest developments in the AMS; and monitoring progress within the AMS. The Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability is also responsible for monitoring this commitment, ensuring its compliance, and enacting accountability measures. Finally, the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability is responsible for helping senior managers, staff, and volunteers set and achieve the goals they describe in their Sustainability Goal Plans as described in Part H by providing advice, resources, and material support.

AMS Officers, Directors, Commissioners, employees and volunteers: AMS Officers, Directors, Commissioners, employees and volunteers are responsible for following the Sustainability Policy and upholding the standards outlined within.

Senior Managers: Senior Managers at each commission, service, and office are responsible for delivering a biannual report reviewing how they have met or worked towards the standards described in the Sustainability Policy.

AMS Executive: The AMS Executive is responsible for the implementation of this policy, ensuring staff are aware of the commitments of the AMS, and accommodating for it in their employees' goal plan and budget for each year.

AMS Assembly ("Assembly"): The AMS Assembly is the highest legislative body for the Alma Mater Society Inc. ("Corporation"), and has the purview, through its jurisdiction in the approval of Commission and Office budgets, to approve the Sustainability Goal Plan for each office or commission under its purview. In addition, in recognition of the matter that this commitment guides the Alma Mater Society Inc., the Assembly will have the purview to ratification of this document, and any subsequent changes. The Assembly will not have the power to direct or influence the Corporation, though it may, from time to time, receive updates on the progress of the Corporation with respect to this Commitment. For further clarity, as defined by the *Assembly Policy*, ratification of this document means that the Assembly may either accept or reject the document in full.

AMS Board of Directors ("Board"): The Board is the governing body for the Alma Mater Society Inc. The Board of Directors will review the Sustainability Goal Plan for each office and service within its purview and will have full jurisdiction on the approval of such plans with the goal plan of each service/office. The Board will have full jurisdiction and authority to implement and direct the sustainability practices of Services within its purview; and is not bound to this document except at the discretion of the Board. To that end, the Board may reference this policy as it sets the strategic vision and direction for the Corporation. The Board shall recognize the expertise of the Commission of Environmental Sustainability and consult with the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability.

AMS-Ratified Clubs and Affiliated Groups: AMS-ratified clubs and affiliated groups can reference this document as a resource on environmental sustainability, and work with the Commission of Environmental Sustainability to develop advocacy priorities and resources to support clubs with environmental sustainability.

Part A: Commitments

Section 1: Principles

Four R's Statement: Section 1 describes the fundamental principles and beliefs the Sustainability Policy operates on. Here, the importance of taking a decolonial approach is recognized; particularly when it comes to sustainability and emphasizing Indigenous worldviews on environmental action. This underscores the importance of reciprocity and taking responsibility for the environmental harms enabled by colonial organizations like ours – particularly harms which are faced by Indigenous communities. In doing so, the AMS embeds a commitment to Indigenous allyship into the underlying values of this document. It must be recognized that the improvement of sustainability is an ongoing, and active commitment; and improving it will require consistency and dedication towards certain central goals.

It shall be the position of Alma Mater Society to recognize:

1. That the continued wellbeing of all human and more-than-human parts of the natural world is a shared responsibility amongst all members of the Queen's Community.
2. That anthropogenic climate change is real and a significant threat to life at Queen's, as well as to the balance and wellbeing of all human and more-than-human life on Earth.
3. That individuals and organizations at Queen's have personal and professional obligations to repair and restore relationships between humans and the environment they live in, and to steward resources under their care in a responsible manner for perpetuity.
4. That responsible resource stewardship not only benefits the environment, but also the economy and human health.
5. That adopting a decolonial approach and taking actions that align with that framework is crucial to adequately addressing environmental issues.
6. That in order to advance environmental sustainability, we must also address how it intersects with other forms of injustice in our society, such as discrimination related to gender, race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, Indigeneity, labour, disability, and sexual orientation.
7. The value of Indigenous peoples, knowledge, and leadership in environmental justice, and to support and emphasize Indigenous worldviews, needs, and interests in its sustainability work accordingly.

Section 2: Responsibilities

Four R's statement: Section 2 describes specific responsibilities that arise to protect and promote the environment and Indigenous rights. This section ensures that an explicit commitment to the wellbeing of these entities, laying the foundation for the rest of the Sustainability Policy, which describes standards to be upheld to meet these responsibilities.

It shall be the position of the Alma Mater Society that a genuine commitment to environmental sustainability entails a responsibility:

1. To look for ways to support initiatives that contribute to the restoration and conservation of the local and global environment, particularly in ecologically vulnerable areas.
2. To balance the overall strategic development and financial wellbeing with the responsibilities to the environment.
3. To track, reduce, redirect, contain, and properly dispose of waste and pollution produced by its operations.
4. To ensure the goods, resources and services it offers are provided in a sustainable manner.
5. To track and decrease its energy and water usage and reliance on non-renewable energy sources or greenhouse gas-emitting sources of energy.
6. To develop and upgrade physical spaces to make them accessible, livable, and sustainable; and use resources responsibly in the process of building and occupying those spaces.
7. To enhance the availability of clean, unbottled drinking water for students.
8. To provide funds, grants, and monetary and/or reputational recognition for students, organizations, and initiatives that advance sustainability at Queen's and in Kingston.
9. To incorporate environmental principles and a consideration for sustainability into its leaders' decision-making processes.
10. To provide educational resources on relevant environmental and sustainability issues.
11. To communicate with constituents and partners regularly on environmental and sustainability issues relevant to students.
12. To regularly meet with constituents and partners to discuss environmental issues, collaborate on initiatives, and hear their feedback and concerns related to sustainability.
13. To create a space for sustainable innovation in all sectors.

Section 3: Partnerships

Four R's Statement: Section 3 describes guidelines to follow for recognizing ethical partnerships. This section will ensure the focus is on collaborating with organizations who demonstrate the characteristics described below, and who have worked to create meaningful relationships with the communities they operate in. As such, this section will uphold responsibilities to respecting environmental, human and Indigenous rights, and forms partnerships that align with Indigenous principles of mutual respect, non-interference, and support for self-determination.

The Alma Mater Society shall recognize that living and working in the Queen's community entails partnerships between the AMS, student groups and/or external groups not affiliated with the AMS, Queen's, or the SGPS. The section below shall guide the AMS' understanding of ethical partnerships. This section should apply whenever reasonably possible; that is, whenever achievable by the resources available under regular circumstances. This section shall also guide the AMS' position on ethical partnerships.

It is the position of the Alma Mater Society that ethical partners are those who:

1. Comply with municipal, provincial, and federal, national and international environmental laws and regulations.
2. Operate sustainably and show continual, thorough evidence of using their resources responsibly.
3. Have ratified sustainability plans, policies, commitments, and guidelines to address and mitigate their negative environmental impact.
4. Adhere to best standards in sustainability for their goods and services, such as Fair Trade or Forest Stewardship Council certification.
5. Provide a safe, healthy, and supportive working environment for their staff that respects human rights, workers' rights, and Indigenous rights.
6. Contribute to the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of the communities they operate in.

Section 4: Procurement

Four R's Statement: This section describes the principles to follow when procuring materials necessary for sustainable operations, given the environmental impact of the consumption and production of consumer goods and services. By committing to reduce the unnecessary and unsustainable procurement of goods and services, the AMS aims to reduce its negative impact on the environment, underscoring the interdependent relationship between humans and the environment and upholding Indigenous principles of not taking more than what is needed.

The Alma Mater Society recognizes that in the long term, a genuine commitment to sustainable procurement, where possible, includes an effort:

1. To procure goods and supplies that are locally produced, fair trade, organic, and/or otherwise more sustainably grown and manufactured.
2. To ensure suppliers, partnerships, and contracts align with the Guiding Principles and Beliefs described in Sections 1 and 2.
3. To adopt environmentally friendly shipping, packaging, and transportation methods, such as bulk ordering and using recyclable or compostable packaging and mailers.
4. To purchase long-lived versions of goods and supplies needed for its operation with the goal of reducing long-term consumption and waste.
5. To regularly evaluate its procurement and production practices, develop standardized procedures to reduce the purchasing of excess or erroneous goods, and avoid unnecessary acquisitions that will only contribute to waste.
6. To collect sales, usage, and inventory data to inform selection of products, order sizes, and order placements, so as to meet demands more efficiently and avoid ordering excess.
7. To look to find ways to support Indigenous suppliers with their procurement practices and compensate them in a fair and timely manner for their goods and services.
8. To use public, active, and shared transportation methods for the transportation of goods and personnel whenever reasonable.

Section 5: Facilities

Four R's Statement: This section describes the principles of sustainable management of waste, water, energy, and retrofits or building developments in the AMS' office spaces and facilities. This section recognizes the obligation to participate in sustainable resource sharing/usage and reduce the negative impact on the environment associated with our occupancy of physical space, as well as to create spaces on campus that support the wellbeing and rights of Indigenous communities.

Waste Management

The Alma Mater Society recognizes that in the long term, a genuine commitment to proper waste management includes an effort:

1. To track the types and quantities of waste produced by customers and employees, and report on these statistics on at least an annual basis.

2. To ensure students correctly sort and dispose of their waste in their facilities by implementing waste signage, education/awareness efforts, and standard procedures for waste sorting and disposal.
3. To ensure waste receptacles for all relevant forms of waste produced are present on its premises in sufficient numbers and locations.
4. To ensure waste receptacles for uncommon forms of waste such as e-waste, printer ink/toner, lightbulbs, and clothing/textiles are available and accessible for use by ensuring the proper promotion of their location.
5. To eliminate single-use supplies and materials and replace them with reusable, compostable, or recyclable versions whenever possible, in that order of priority.
6. To conduct a waste audit in its facilities every three (3) years to assess the effectiveness of its waste mitigation strategies, ideally with student participation.
7. To promote hybrid and digital-first work environments to reduce paper waste.

Energy and Water Management

The Alma Mater Society recognizes that in the long term, a genuine commitment to proper energy and water management includes an effort:

8. To staff turn off lights and electronic devices when not in use, by implementing energy consumption signage, education/awareness efforts, and standard procedures.
9. To turn off water-using devices when not in use, by implementing water consumption signage, education/awareness efforts, and standard procedures.
10. To install technologies in its facilities to reduce energy consumption, such as occupancy sensors, outlet timers, or energy-efficient electrical devices.
11. To install technologies in its facilities to reduce water consumption, such as low flow faucets and toilets.
12. To modify settings and operational choices on energy- and water-using devices to reduce energy and water consumption and waste.
13. To enhance access to and use of clean tap water within its facilities by installing and improving water fountains, water bottle filling stations, and signage.
14. To book mobile water stations to supply water for large outdoor events.

Development and Retrofits

The Alma Mater Society recognizes that in the long term, a genuine commitment to development and retrofits includes an effort:

15. To incorporate greenspace and carbon sinks into its facilities.

16. To incorporate artwork and design features that promote the principles of sustainability and Indigenous reconciliation into its facilities.
17. To install upgrades to its facilities to improve the sustainability and climate resilience of its buildings on a regular basis, and to keep up-to-date with best practices in environmental building standards being applied at the facilities of other Canadian student governments, with the assistance of Queen's Facilities.
18. To aim for all future facilities developments to adhere to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.
19. To ensure that the design and construction of its facilities are balanced with their responsibilities to the environment.

Section 6: Advocacy

Four R's statement: This section outlines the position of the Alma Mater Society on environmental advocacy topics. As such, this section embeds a concern for Indigenous and environmental wellbeing into the AMS' advocacy platform, and ensures the AMS uses its voice as a representative for undergraduate students to support Indigenous rights and issues as they pertain to the environment.

The Alma Mater Society shall advocate:

1. For affordable, sustainable, and accessible student transit options, by recognizing the connection between transportation accessibility and greenhouse gas emissions, the environment, and climate change.
2. For affordable, sustainable, and accessible student housing insecurity solutions, by recognizing the connection between housing availability and quality, the environment, and climate change.
3. For affordable, sustainable, and accessible student food insecurity solutions, by recognizing the connection between agriculture, food availability and food sovereignty, the environment, and climate change.
4. For comprehensive and timely climate change action and mitigation.
5. For protecting and conserving the natural environment.
6. For Queen's University to divest its financial holdings from the fossil fuel industry.
7. For supporting Indigenous-led clubs, community organizations, and groups at Queen's and in the Kingston area to help them attain environmental justice and advance reconciliation.
8. For Queen's and Kingston to reduce its usage of non-renewable or greenhouse gas-emitting sources of energy, and to transition to renewable energy sources and energy sources that produce no or minimal greenhouse gas emissions.

9. For actions that protect the environment, advance climate action, and engage students on environmental issues, and support Indigenous reconciliation, to the Ontario provincial government through the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance and any other means.
10. For actions that protect the environment, advance climate action, and engage students on environmental issues, and support Indigenous reconciliation, to the Canadian federal government.
11. For ensuring student representation on working groups, councils, and committees relevant to sustainability at Queen's and in Kingston, such as the Queen's Housing and Ancillary Services Sustainability Advisory Committee, and the City of Kingston's Climate Leadership Working Groups.

Part B: Commission of Environmental Sustainability

Part B of the Sustainability Policy describes the standards and expectations the Commission of Environmental Sustainability specifically is expected to work towards.

Four R's statement: Part B describes the responsibilities of the Commission of Environmental Sustainability. This includes provisions on how the Commission of Environmental Sustainability can support leadership, decision-making, and student-facing education and engagement activities. Part B also embeds commitments to respecting and valuing Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and peoples into our decision-making, advocacy, and educational campaigns; and underscores our responsibility to change the systems the AMS has influence in to prioritize sustainability and Indigenous rights.

Section 1: Mandate

1. The Commission of Environmental Sustainability acts in full compliance with the AMS Mission Statement to fulfill the following areas of jurisdiction:
 - a. Representing the undergraduate students through environmental activism;
 - b. Advocating for sustainable change and climate action;
 - c. Working with Offices, Services, and other Commissions to implement best practices in sustainability in line with the Sustainability Policy as outlined by Part A of this policy;
 - d. Working to fill gaps in sustainability work at the Society.
2. This policy shall guide the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability in the fulfillment of their constitutional responsibilities including during consultations with the Corporation on matters pertaining to sustainability.

Section 2: Recognition

1. The Commission of Environmental Sustainability shall maintain a grant that allocates funding to undergraduate students seeking to pursue initiatives that enhance sustainability on campus and in the Queen's community, such as through the Sustainability Action Fund as described in the *Grants and Bursaries Policy*.
2. The Commission of Environmental Sustainability shall maintain an award that recognizes its members' leadership and efforts in environmental and/or climate activism, justice, and organizing in the Kingston and Queen's community, such as through the Environmental Champion Award as described in the *Awards Policy*.

Section 3: Education and Engagement

It is recognized that in the peer-to-peer learning environment at Queen's, the Commission of Environmental Sustainability has a role to play in advancing the education, and engaging with students on their environmental priorities. To do so, the Commission of Environmental Sustainability is committed;

1. To organizing a mandatory sustainability training for all senior and assistant managers and Orientation executives that educates them on basic concepts related to environmental sustainability, waste management, sustainable procurement, energy usage, and the history and present state of colonialism and Indigenous relationships with the environment; as well as teaches them how they can implement sustainable practices that recognize Indigenous knowledge and values into their daily operations and activities.
2. To hosting at least two (2) student-facing events per semester that encourage students to make sustainable decisions or that educate them on environmental and climate issues, such as through its Sustainability Month events or the Sustainability Hubs.
 - a. To hosting at least one (1) student-facing event each year that educates students on intersectional environmental issues, such as environmental racism, environmental justice, ecofeminism, or Indigenous relationships with the environment.
3. To maintaining a resource containing sustainable event planning guidelines for all staff, students, or members of the Queen's community to use and follow, such as the Sustainable Event Certificate as described in the Sustainability Policy, Part C.
4. To maintaining a service which allows for staff and students to swap or reuse common goods instead of disposing them, such as the Collective Closet as described in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission of

Environmental Sustainability and Queen's Backing Action on the Climate Crisis; or the former Room of Requirement, which previously existed in the JDUC.

5. To maintaining a community gardening and composting program that allows students to collaborate, grow food, and learn about sustainable gardening techniques.
 - a. To using regenerative and organic gardening practices to reduce the impact of this gardening on the local environment wherever possible.
 - b. To integrating seasonal, native, and Indigenous wildlife and plants into its community gardens whenever possible, with the exception of plants and wildlife cultivated in Indigenous closed practices.
6. To hosting at least one (1) meeting per semester with environmental clubs, environmental representatives of faculty societies, and environmental representatives of services to seek their opinions and share progress with them, such as through the Environmental Coalition and Environmental Clubs Caucus.
7. To holding at least six (6) office hours a week so as to provide a space where AMS members can voice their concerns, opinions, and thoughts about the Society's progress on environmental sustainability.

Section 4: Leadership

As a leader in environmental sustainability, and to advance the commitment of the AMS to environmental sustainability, it shall be the responsibility of the Commission of Environmental Sustainability to serve as a central resource hub for sustainability within the AMS, and support the Executive:

1. To make decisions aligned with its stances on environmental sustainability as outlined in the Part A; and the Principles and Positions Policy.
2. To weigh the short- and long-term environmental impact of decisions made against any other potential benefits and drawbacks these decisions could have, including the potential unique and disproportionate impacts of these decisions could have on marginalized communities and Indigenous peoples.
3. To consult with relevant experts, stakeholders, and the student body to assess the environmental impact of its decisions and operations, including Indigenous communities and stakeholders, particularly when these stakeholders could be negatively impacted.
4. To stay up-to-date on best practices in sustainability being employed at other student governments, universities, community organizations, and comparable institutions in Canada and worldwide, and to consider their implementation in the Society.

5. To support Indigenous reconciliation initiatives being undertaken by university, student, and community organizations as they have to do with sustainability whenever appropriate and otherwise aligned with the Society's mandate by offering resource referral, advising, and material support.
6. To meet at least biannually with the Energy and Waste Management team at Queen's Facilities to create, review, and update an energy and water management plan to be implemented in its facilities.
7. To help track energy and water consumption in AMS facilities and offices where possible with the assistance of Queen's Facilities, and release a summary of this information on at least an annual basis.
8. To conduct at least 1 plebiscite survey every three (3) years evaluating students' environmental and climate advocacy priorities, to ensure its advocacy goals are up to date.

Part C: Sustainable Event Certificate

Four R's Statement: Part C describes protocols related to the Commission of Environmental Sustainability' administration and awarding of the Sustainable Event Certificate, which contains criteria on both the sustainability of an event as well as the importance of choosing ethical partners and sponsors aligned with social and environmental justice. By developing a mechanism with which to evaluate the sustainability of student events and incentivizing those who host more environmentally and socially beneficial activities, the AMS builds a concern for the environment into students' everyday behaviour. This aligns with Indigenous principles of relational consciousness and sustainable stewardship such as Seven Generations Thinking, which encourages decision-making that considers future generations.

Section 1: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Sustainable Event Certificate is:
 - a. To provide a framework for assessing the environmental impact of events held by members of the Queen's and Kingston community.
 - b. To provide suggestions and guidelines that will support event organizers in planning more sustainable events.
 - c. To reward groups and individuals who choose to host more sustainable events that meet the Sustainable Event Certificate's criteria.

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

1. Any individual or group in the Queen's or Kingston community hosting an event on Queen's campus or in Kingston is eligible to apply.
2. The Sustainable Event Certificate can only be awarded once to an event happening at a particular time and location. Subsequent events must apply for the Sustainable Event Certificate every time the event is hosted again.

Section 3: Application

1. Applicants must complete a scored form that lists criteria used to evaluate the sustainability of their event. Points will be awarded for each criterion that is achieved, and the extent of the achievement. The Sustainable Event Certificate will be awarded upon the attainment of a sufficient number of points. Additional benefits (other than the receipt of the certificate) may also be awarded upon the attainment of a sufficient number of points.
 - a. Applicants must provide proof in their submission form to indicate these criteria have been fulfilled for points to be awarded.
 - i. Proof may be provided in the form of receipts, pictures, written event plans, or other relevant evidence.
 - b. The number of points needed to award of the certificate is up to the discretion of the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability.
2. The Sustainable Event Certificate should be awarded based on criteria related to the following topics:
 - c. **Event Planning Fundamentals:** how the event aims to be sustainable through its expression of underlying values and beliefs, its theme, its planning team, its partners and sponsors, its marketing, and its attempts to engage in carbon offset activities.
 - d. **Food and Beverages:** how the event aims to be sustainable through its provision and production of food, beverages, and utensils.
 - e. **Transportation and Location:** how the event aims to be sustainable through its location selection and accessibility/transportation considerations.
 - f. **Decor, Merchandise, and Printed Materials:** how the event aims to be sustainable through its use of decor, merchandise, event supplies, and print materials.
 - g. **Waste Reduction:** how the event aims to be sustainable through waste mitigation.

- h. Other than these broad topics, the exact criteria for the Sustainable Event Certificate and the point value within each criterion is up to the discretion of the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability.

Section 4: Selection Criteria

1. Applicants will be assessed on how well they meet the eligibility criteria, and number of points garnered through the application.

Section 5: Timeline

1. The Sustainable Event Certificate is open year-round.
2. All applications will be reviewed within 7 business days of an application's submission.

Section 6: Benefits

1. Each event that earns the Sustainable Event Certificate is entitled to the following benefits:
 - a. Usage of the Sustainable Event Certificate seal logo on their event advertising and promotional materials.
 - b. Statement that their event has been certified by the Sustainable Event Certificate.
2. Each event that earns the Sustainable Event Certificate may be granted the following benefits:
 - a. A 10% Student Life Centre booking discount. Whether this discount is offered, and/or continues to be offered is subject to an annual review by the Director of the Student Life Centre and/or Board.
 - b. Social media promotion on the Queen's Backing Action on the Climate Crisis (QBACC), and/or AMS social media channels. Whether this is offered is determined on an annual basis by the QBACC co-presidents, and/or Director of Marketing.

Part D: Environmental Coalition

Four R's Statement: Part D describes protocols pertaining to the Environmental Coalition, a group of sustainability-focused groups and organizations managed by the Commission of Environmental Sustainability. The Environmental Coalition emphasizes the importance of cooperation and collaboration when it comes to sustainability, which aligns with Indigenous perspectives on developing effective partnerships and mutual relationships

between individuals and nature. Additionally, the Environmental Coalition serves as a gathering place where groups at Queen's or in Kingston, including Indigenous-led groups, may discuss concerns and needs and come to a collective agreement.

Section 1: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Environmental Coalition is to provide a space for environmentally-oriented organizations at Queen's and in Kingston to discuss shared issues, collaborate, and share information.

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

1. Any environmentally-oriented organization at Queen's or in Kingston, or an environmental representative of an organization at Queen's or in Kingston is eligible to join. This includes, but is not limited to, AMS-ratified clubs, clubs ratified with other faculty societies, non-ratified clubs, environmental representatives of faculty societies, and sustainability representatives of the services.
2. Membership is ultimately up to the discretion of the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability and the Environmental Sustainability Internal Manager.

Section 3: Terms of Reference

1. Environmental Coalition meetings must occur at least once a semester. Environmental Coalition meetings may also occur at the same time as the Environmental Clubs Caucus.
2. Environmental Coalition meetings should follow procedure in accordance with Bourinot's Rules of Order.
3. An agenda shall be sent for every meeting. Minutes shall be recorded at every meeting.

Part E: Environmental Caucus

Four R's Statement: Part E describes the Environmental Caucus, a collective of sustainability-focused AMS-ratified clubs managed by the Commission of Environmental Sustainability and the Clubs Commission. The Environmental Clubs Caucus enables partnerships for the betterment of the environment, taking on a community-led character that aligns with Indigenous principles of consensus-based decision-making. Additionally, the Environmental Clubs Caucus allows for organizations with interests in advocating for environmental justice and Indigenous rights to share and strategize with other clubs, allowing them to advance these goals more readily at the university.

Section 1: Purpose

1. The purpose of the Environmental Clubs Caucus is to provide a space for environmentally-oriented AMS-ratified clubs to discuss common issues, collaborate, and share information.

Section 2: Eligibility Requirements

1. Any environmentally-oriented AMS-ratified club at Queen's is eligible to join.
2. Membership is ultimately determined by the Commissioner of Clubs, in consultation with the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability.

Section 3: Terms of Reference

1. The terms of reference for the Environmental Caucus are described in the *Clubs Policy*.

Part F: Reporting

Four R's Statement: Part F describes the reporting on the advocacy and implementation of the commitment of the Alma Mater Society towards environmental sustainability, to ensure continued accountability, drawing upon the Four R's principle of responsibility to ensure the AMS examines and changes its behaviours and addresses the harms it has done to the environment and to Indigenous communities.

Section 1: Goal Plan

1. All Senior Managers, as defined by the Constitution, will complete a Sustainability Goal Plan using a template provided by the Commission of Environmental Sustainability, and approved by the Executive, at the start of their terms to outline their sustainability priorities and initiatives for the year. The Senior Management team may draw upon Part A in consultation with their reporting Executive to set such goals. All sustainability goal plans should be reviewed by the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability, who may provide feedback and guidance. However, the final approval of each Sustainability Goal Plan rests with the Board and/or Assembly.
2. All senior managers will provide a biannual Sustainability Progress Report to the Commission of Environmental Sustainability detailing what progress they have made in meeting the goals set in their Sustainability Goal Plan: once in time for December Assembly, and once in time for April Assembly. This progress will be summarized by the Commission of Environmental Sustainability in a report, which

will be delivered upon each senior managers' behalf at the December Assembly and at the April Assembly.

3. All reports related to the Sustainability Policy will be made public and stored in the Assembly archives, with the support and direction of the Secretary of Internal Affairs.
4. The Commission of Environmental Sustainability is responsible for supporting senior managers, staff, and volunteers achieve the goals they describe in their Sustainability Goal Plans by providing advice, resources, and material support.

Section 2: Additional Reports

The annual report compiled by the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability will also include a statement on:

1. How the Common Ground, Tricolour Outlet, the Queen's Pub, the AMC, and the Food Bank strive to enhance students' ability to make sustainable choices from the selection of goods or services they offer, such as by providing vegan or low-carbon meal options at food and beverage services, or sustainable textile products at clothing services.
2. How the Common Ground, Tricolour Outlet, the Queen's Pub, the AMC, the Food Bank, and the Queen's Journal gather information about how products provided at their outlets are produced, manufactured, and transported; and enhance the transparency and availability of this information to students.
3. The use and other statistics related to Part A and their implementation.

Monitoring

Part A of this policy outlines the commitment of the Alma Mater Society towards sustainability, and the position(s) that the AMS will advocate for implementation both within the Queen's and Kingston communities, and any spaces it exists in. It is recognized that often, the implementation of sustainability action items as listed in Part A will require advocacy over multiple years, and as such, Part A, should be binding only to the extent reasonable (as determined by the Executive and Board of Directors, in matters related to the Corporation). Whenever a standard described in the Sustainability Policy is outside the purview of the AMS (such as space usage and allocation at Queen's), the AMS should instead serve as an advocate to ensure that it meets the sustainability best practices stated.

Compliance with the remainder of this policy will be monitored by the Vice-President of University Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Internal Affairs. The Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability is primarily responsible for the implementation and execution of Parts B to E. The Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability should also provide guidance and support to all members of the AMS, including the Corporation, upon request by the Board and/or Executive. The role of the Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability under Part F should not be understood or exercised in a manner that undermines the responsibilities of the Executive Board or Assembly. To that end, while reporting to the Commission of Environmental Sustainability is a responsibility of all Senior Managers through a form approved by the Executive, the contents of that report are at the discretion of the Senior Manager, in consultation with their reporting Executive. In this sense, the Commission of Environmental Sustainability serves as a central hub to facilitate and report on sustainability initiatives both within the Society and the Corporation. This policy should be reviewed on a triennial basis, and/or as needed. Review of this policy should be made in consultation with the Sustainability Advisory Committee, a standing Committee under the Assembly.

Contact Person	<i>Commissioner of Environmental Sustainability</i>
Date of Next Review	April 2027
Related Policies, Procedures and Guidelines	<i>Awards Policy, Clubs Policy Grants and Bursaries Policy Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission of Environmental Sustainability and Queen's Backing Action on the Climate Crisis Principles & Positions Policy</i>
Policies Superseded by this Policy	N/A