

# **RHODES UNIVERSITY**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

### **1. Policy Particulars**

**Date of Approval:**

**Date of Approval by Senate:** 1998

**Date of Approval by Council:** 1998

**Commencement Date:** February 1998

**Revision History:**

**Review Date:**

**Policy Level:** All University structures, staff and students

**Responsibility** [Person/Division/Committee accountable for]: Mark Hazell

- **Implementation & Monitoring:**
- **Review & Revision:**

**Reporting Structure:**

### **2. Policy Statement**

#### **Policy Declaration**

In establishing this policy for Rhodes University, the University recognizes that its use of resources has an impact on the environment (socio-economic and physical). As a University that strives to meet internationally acceptable standards, Rhodes University should play a leading role within the Eastern Cape and South Africa in respect of environmental issues.

#### **2.2 GOAL**

The University will actively pursue a policy of environmental best practice in order to assist in creating an environmentally sustainable future.

## **2.3 AIMS**

1. To include and improve the environmental components of curricula.
2. To provide opportunities for students to study campus and local environmental issues.
3. To conduct a campus environmental audit.
4. To implement an environmentally responsible purchasing and campus stores policy.
5. To reduce campus waste.
6. To improve hazardous waste identification and management on campus.
7. To maximise campus energy efficiency.
8. To encourage the planing of indigenous flora on campus.
9. To optimise and control the use of water on campus.

## **2.4 OBJECTIVES**

### **2.4.1. Educational**

#### ***Curricula***

Rhodes University intends to enhance (increase and improve) the environmental content of curricula offered in all faculties at Rhodes University by:

1. Improving awareness amongst teaching staff around the environmental content of courses.
2. The inclusion of environmental issues in curricula where appropriate.
3. Promoting the environmental orientation of Rhodes for marketing and fund-raising purposes by producing suitable publicity.

#### ***Research***

The University will commit itself to encouraging environmental research by:

1. Encouraging students and staff to conduct environmental research on campus and in local areas (communities). Environmental audits could highlight possible environmental research issues.
2. Ensuring that research carried out at Rhodes is ethically and environmentally sound.
4. To establish a set of guidelines for research that could have a possible impact on the environment.

### **2.4.2. Resource Use**

#### ***Waste***

The University will aim to improve its management of both general and hazardous waste produced on campus by:

1. Minimising (reducing and /or recycling) wherever possible its solid and liquid waste streams at all discharge points on campus.
2. Using recycled products wherever feasible.
3. Adopting a purchasing policy sensitive to environmental concerns.

4. Identifying and minimising hazardous wastes on campus.
5. Ensuring satisfactory disposal of wastes (hazardous and general) that cannot be re-used or recycled.
6. Conducting a regular waste audit to assess improvement of waste management strategies on campus and to communicate these results to relevant parties.

### ***Energy***

The University will aim to maximise campus energy efficiency by:

1. Minimising and monitoring the total energy consumption.
2. Implementing wherever possible to best available energy technology for all new buildings and in existing structures where possible.

### ***Water***

The University will aim to manage its water resources efficiently:

1. Minimising and monitoring the total water consumption.
2. Ensuring that water systems on campus are not wasteful.
3. Encouraging the planting of indigenous flora to reduce water usage.

## **2.4.3. Partnerships and Communication**

### ***Community Involvement***

Through the implementation of the Rhodes University Environmental Policy it is important that partnerships are encouraged and formed between those directly associated with and affected by the actions of the University. This will be achieved by:

1. Approving and facilitating interactions and communications of the University's environmental actions between the University and members of the communities which surround its campuses and with which its staff interacts.
2. Reporting annually on how environmental practices in the community have been addressed by the University.

### ***Student Involvement***

The University will encourage students to play an important role in the implementation, maintenance and assessment of the environmental policy by:

1. Increasing the ways in which students can participate in the policy implementation i.e. through research.
2. Ensuring policy implementation is fed back to the students via relevant media.
3. Reporting annually on how students have been involved in implementing the policy and assessing environmental issues on campus.

### ***Management Involvement***

The University management will:

1. Incorporate the environmental responsibility into its mission statement.

2. Continue to uphold the University's responsibilities as a signatory of the Talloires Declaration.
3. Ensure the implementation and monitoring of the environmental policy.
4. Ensure that the University community is aware of the policy and to communicate the results of the monitoring process.
5. Maintain an environment which is conducive to good scholarship and provides good working conditions.

**2.5 The Talloires Declaration:  
University Presidents for a Sustainable Future  
Tufts University European Centre,  
Talloires, France  
October 4-7, 1990**

**2.5.1. Background**

Twenty-two Presidents, Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of Universities from all over the world convened at the Tufts European Centre in Talloires, France, from 4 to 7 October 1990, to discuss the role of universities and in particular, the role of university presidents in environmental management and sustainable development.

Assisted by internationally respected environmental leaders, the presidents explored the state of the natural environment, the impact of human population growth and economic activity on the environment and strategies for the future.

The presidents discussed the role of education, research, policy formation and information exchange in managing human impact on the environment. Since the majority of the presidents were from developing countries, concerns about resource depletion, poverty and the need for substantial assistance from developed countries received equal attention with local, regional and global pollution problems.

The Conference was organised and hosted by Tufts University President, Jean Mayer and sponsored by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the US Environmental Protection Agency and the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation. After a keynote address by Maurice Strong, secretary general of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (to be held in Brazil in June 1992), the presidents developed a series of recommendations which are summarised in this report. The Conference ended with a declaration of actions to be taken by the participants.

The presidents believe this conference is an important first step in engaging the considerable resources of universities to work toward an environmentally sustainable future. They pledge mutual support as they take actions at their own universities to implement the recommendations. They hope their deliberations will encourage other university leaders to initiate programs to prepare their graduates for the challenges of the twenty first century. They invite their colleagues to sign the declaration and join them in these efforts.

### **2.5.2. The Text of The Talloires Declaration**

We, the Presidents, Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of universities from all regions of the world are deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of environmental pollution and degradation, and the depletion of natural resources. Local, regional and global air pollution; accumulation and distribution of toxic waste; destruction and depletion of forests, soil and water; depletion of the ozone layer and emission of "green house" gases threaten the survival of humans and thousands of other living species, the integrity of the earth and its biodiversity, the security of nations, and the heritage of future generations. These environmental changes are caused by inequitable and unsustainable production and consumption patterns that aggravate poverty in many regions of the world.

We believe that urgent actions are needed to address these fundamental problems and reverse the trends. Stabilization of human population, adoption of environmentally sound industrial and agricultural technologies, reforestation and ecological restoration are crucial elements in creating an equitable and sustainable future for all humankind in harmony with nature. Universities have a major role in the education, research, policy formation and information exchange necessary to make these goals possible.

The university heads must provide the leadership and support to mobilise internal and external resources so that their institutions respond to this urgent challenge. We, therefore, agree to take the following actions:

1. Use every opportunity to raise public, government, industry, foundation and university awareness by publicly addressing the urgent need to move toward an environmentally sustainable future.
2. Encourage all universities to engage in education, research, policy formation and information exchange on population, environment and development to move toward a sustainable future.
3. Establish programs to produce expertise in environmental management, sustainable economic development, population and related fields to ensure that all university graduates are environmentally literate and responsible citizens.
4. Create programs to develop the capability of university faculty to teach environmental literacy to all undergraduate, graduate and professional school students.
5. School deans and environmental practitioners to develop research, policy, information exchange programs and curricula for an environmentally sustainable future.
6. Establish partnerships with primary and secondary schools to help develop the capability of their faculty to teach about population, environment and sustainable development issues.
7. Work with the UN Conference on Environmental and Development, the UN Environment Programme and other national and international organizations to promote a worldwide university effort toward a sustainable future.
8. Establish a steering committee and a secretariat to continue this momentum and inform and support each other's efforts in carrying out this declaration.

**Jean Mayer, President and conference Convener, Tufts University, USA / Pablo Arce, Vice-Chancellor, Universidad Autonomade Centro America, Costa Rica / L.Ayo Banjo, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ibadan, Nigeria / Boonrod Binson, Chancellor, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand / Constance W. Curris, President, University of Northern Iowa, USA / Robert W. Charlton, Vice-Chancellor and Principal University of Witwatersrand, Republic of South Africa Michele Gendreau-Massalous, Recteur de l'Academie de Paris, France / Adamu, Nayaya Mohammed, Vice-Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria / Augusto Frederico Muller, President Fundacao Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Brazil/Mario Ojeda Gomez, President, Colegio de Mexico, Mexico / Calvin H. Plimpton, President and Emeritus, American University of Beirut, Lebanon / Wesley Posvar, President, University of Pittsburgh, USA / T Navaneeth Rao, Vice-Chancellor, Osmania University, India / Pavel D Sarkisov, Rector, D I Mendeleev Institute of Chemical Technology USSR / Stewart Saunders, Vice-Chancellor and Principal University of Cape Town, Republic of South Africa / Akilagpa Sawyer, Vice Chancellor, University of Ghana, Ghana / Carlos Vogt, president, Universidade Estadual de Brazil / David Ward, Vice Chancellor, Canipinas, USA / Xide Xie, President Emeritus, Fundan University, People's Republic of China.**

**The list of the Talloires signatories is to be found at:**

**<http://www.ulsf.org/about/tallosig.html>**