

## SDG 13: CLIMATE ACTION

Lead: **The University of West Indies (UWI), Jamaica**  
<http://www.uwi.edu/>



**May 2024** – SDG 13 Climate Action Report

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The Office of Global Affairs

### **Partner Universities**

- *SUNY, USA*
- *University of Bergen, Norway*
- *TERI School of Advances Studies, India*
- *University of the South Pacific, Fiji*
- *University of Waterloo, Canada*
- *Universidad de los Andes, Colombia*
- *University of Witwatersrand, South Africa*
- *University of Aruba, Aruba*
- *University of Bristol, UK*
- *University of Ghana, Ghana*
- *University of Costa Rica*

Observer

- University of Delaware

### **Overview of activities of SDG 13 at The University of the West Indies**

Following the work that was achieved in July 2019 during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) which was convened by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) purposed to examining key areas of the Sustainable Development Agenda and its Goals notably SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

The continued work and associated work programmes have witnessed the continued output of initiatives and projects associated with SDG 13 (Climate Action). However, while this is indicative of a resumption of normalcy across our associated higher education institutes; opportunities are still scarce, and funding limited in many areas due to a number of externalities that require attention. Despite these challenges, The University of the West Indies along with Satellite institutions of the Global University Consortium (GUC) are able to engage and adopt methods of working through their own networks, leveraging on close relationship and in some instances working through bilateral engagements/partnerships to maintain a focus on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. This is further bolstered by the University of the West Indies appointing a more permanent managerial secretariat for the Consortium. This allows for a more continuous workflow and vision for the Global University Consortium.

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### GLOBAL UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM ON SDG 13

In the framework of the *International Association of Universities' (IAU) Global Cluster on Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development*, The University of the West Indies (UWI) was nominated in 2019 to lead the Global University Consortium on SDG-13 and has brought together 10 universities from across the globe, committed to developing the role of academia in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. In previous reports we noted the addition of two new institutions that have joined the Cluster – The University of Nairobi and The University of Costa Rica.

Focused on Climate Action and its interlinkages across the Sustainable Development Goals, the Global University Consortium since its first year has worked persistently to advance knowledge, engage in knowledge exchange, research collaborations, advocacy, North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

Reviewing the work of the Global University Consortium on SDG 13 and the 2019 report, it is evident that a significant outlook was forecasted for the Consortium and its members. The impact of Covid-19 significantly hampered discussions, projects and initiatives that were in the process for conceptualization and implementation. Despite that setback, the GUC continues to re-envision itself and resume its activities.

#### **For 2023 – 2024, outputs of the GUC have thus far included:**

- **The University of the West Indies**

The University of the West Indies has undertaken some activities for the 2023/2024 period in the area of SDG 13. These were:

##### *1. Responsible Futures*

The University of the West Indies has joined onto the Responsible Futures Programme being led by SOS-UK. This programme is aimed at incorporating sustainability with the institutions curriculum but also allowing students and staff to learn about sustainability and its benefits.

Link here: <https://www.responsiblefutures.org.uk/international-programme>

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### 2. *International School for Development Justice*

The UWI Pro-Vice Chancellor for Global Affairs continues to lead on the finalisation of the International School for Development Justice (ISDJ). This new school will form part of the UWI's Global Campus and offer post-graduate courses across all the SDGs.

### 3. *SDG Bergen Conference 2024*

SDG Bergen Conference 2024 hosted under the theme 'The role of Universities in Transformative Change'. The University of the West Indies was invited to speak on '***How universities can support students and staff in becoming the changemakers needed for transformative action for SDGs***'. Other participants were the University of Costa Rica (GUC member) as well as SOS-UK with the International Association of Universities (IAU) moderating the panel.

- **The University of Bergen**

The University of Bergen has undertaken some activities for the 2023 period in the area of SDG 13. These were:

#### 1. *Bergen Literature Festival*

A writing competition in collaboration with Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research at the University of Bergen and the Rafto Foundation was launched inviting young person's globally to write a poem or essay on about the climate crisis. Two persons were selected as the winners out of 533 entries from 119 countries.

Link here: <https://www.litfestbergen.no/en/litfestbergen-2024/programme/the-best-stories-about-the-climate-crisis/>

#### 2. *Indigenous Perspectives of Climate Change with young voices from the Arctic*

This discussion was hosted with Nivi Rosing (Arctic Youth Network), Anja Márjá Nystø Keskitalo (Saami Council), Ciera Lee-Kooneliusie (Canadian Coast Guard) and Kerim Hestnes Nisancioglu, the Leader of ClimateNarratives, Professor at UiB and representative of UiB to the SDG 13 Consortium. The conversation was moderated by Julia Morales-Aguirre of Arctic Frontiers. This discussion focused on how indigenous persons residing in Greenland perceive the changing climate. It also focused on how such changes can impact their daily lives and the culture in which they have come to embrace.

Link here: [https://www.uib.no/en/geo/169118/indigenous-perspectives-climate-change"-young-voices-arctic](https://www.uib.no/en/geo/169118/indigenous-perspectives-climate-change)

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### 3. *Ocean Stories*

The University of Bergen in partnership with Kode hosted an exhibition featuring art from the Pacific Ocean, Fiji, and Greenland as part of One Ocean Week. Artists from Greenland and Fiji told their stories and interacted with each other as these two locales engaged in discussion and knowledge exchange which was explored through artwork, lectures, and conversations. The exhibition is part of the "Climate Narratives" project, which is led by the University of Bergen, where research in the fields of art, social science and natural science engages in dialogue with site-specific indigenous knowledge, across cultures and generations.

Link here: <https://www.kodebergen.no/en/whats-happening/exhibitions/ocean-stories>

- **The University of Costa Rica (UCR)**

1. *SDG Bergen Conference 2024*

In February 2024, the University of Costa Rica was virtually represented at the Conference on SDGs, organized by the University of Bergen, particularly in the session “A Whole-Institution Approach for ESD and the SDGs”, with the presentation “Education for the SDGs at the UCR”, by Dr. Ana María Durán Quesada, teacher and researcher at the School of Physics and Environmental Pollution Research Center (CICA).

Link here: <https://www.uib.no/en/sdgconference>

2. *UCR international week*

The University of Costa Rica has been coordinating internal meetings to promote opportunities related to HESD Cluster. Recently, they hosted UCR’s first international week which incorporated a Webinar on IAU opportunities of internationalization for our professors and researchers.

- **Summary**

The biggest challenge affecting the work of the consortium remains resourcing (sustainable resources). Funding opportunities are few and far between and often times we do not have dedicated technical leads to advance projects beyond the ideation phase. It is recommended that the development of a catalog of project ideas and project summaries aimed towards collectively working with international donors and agencies to pivot some of these ideas to implementable projects.

As a follow up recommendation, I think it would be useful for the GUC to have a dedicate research presentation seminar on some thematic areas to boost the visibility of the GUC’s work. The UWI has a dedicated TV station where we could offer a selected slot to showcase the work of a partner university to deepening our international collaborative efforts.

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Looking ahead to 2024 - 2025, the Global University Consortium will continue to focus on its membership and administration, building momentum, and maximizing work and effort. We will continue to advance the work and implement a firm schedule for meetings to further our work as a consortium.