



"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

Robert Swan, Polar explorer

UWC: UNITING THE WORLD FOR OUR PLANET AND OUR FUTURE

Educating for Sustainability





ABOUT UWC

Founded in 1962, UWC (United World Colleges) is a global education movement that makes education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.

Eighteen UWC schools on four continents deliver a challenging and transformational educational experience to a deliberately diverse group of young people, inspiring them to become agents of positive change.

In addition to academic rigour delivered through student-centred curriculum frameworks, including the International Baccalaureate programmes, UWC places a high value on leadership skills and experiential learning in sustainability, social justice, intercultural dialogue, community service and physical challenge.

To honour our focus on deliberate diversity, most of our IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) classes comprise students selected from more than 150 countries through our unique national committee system. These selections take place on a needs-blind admissions basis, further underscoring our belief that accessing education should be independent of a student's socioeconomic means. More than 80% of national-committee-selected students in their IBDP years receive either full or partial financial assistance. Thus, UWC becomes a place where students' paths intersect in a way they may not have done otherwise, creating opportunities to inform, interact and inspire each other.

UWC fosters a lifelong commitment to contributing to a better world for all through social responsibility and individual action. It has inspired a worldwide network of 60,000 alumni to make a difference locally, nationally and internationally.

ABOUT UWC	3
THE CHALLENGE	4
THE POTENTIAL	6
REACHING TOMORROW'S CLIMATE LEADERS TODAY	9
WHAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS	11
OUR CHANGEMAKERS	20
HELP US EDUCATE CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERS	25



THE CHALLENGE

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time. We have all experienced its impact to some degree, but we know that the most significant fallout of climate change will unfairly and disproportionately affect future generations.

A recent [Special Report](#) from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) affirms that we can still limit global warming to 1.5°C, but only with “unprecedented transitions in all aspects of society.” Every choice we make impacts our generation and those that follow.

As educators, we have a moral imperative to prepare young people for what lies ahead. To rise to these challenges, students need skills, knowledge and applied experience that traditional education does not deliver. In addition, students need access to natural ecosystems, environmental organisations and businesses to understand the nature of our interdependence – to see for themselves how one change can impact us all.

Climate is changing the game; education must change as well.

To thrive in careers unknown to them, young people need a framework as dynamic, adaptable and interconnected as the global challenges they face. They need the freedom to discover, explore, and extrapolate. They need to witness their diverse, purposeful, and sustainable actions positively impact our planet. These lessons must go beyond theoretical and become experiential.

Delivering sustainability education requires agile, innovative teachers whose commitment extends beyond the curriculum. They must embrace a holistic approach, which seeks to understand, acknowledge, mentor and support a generation facing global challenges on an unprecedented scale.

When education, youth and opportunity converge – powerful, systemic changes occur. Our challenge is to ensure these powerful forces continue to converge on our campuses for generations to come.

Traditional education is not moving as quickly as climate change. “[Only half of the national curricula in the world](#) have a reference to climate change.”

One year and one month after Greta Thunberg’s solo strike, [4 million protesters](#), many of them schoolchildren, gathered in 2019 for the [largest climate protest in history](#).

0

There is no data for SDG 4.7.1, which measures whether countries are delivering on the vision that all learners have the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.

0.5

4

5

According to [drawdown.org](#), educating girls is the fifth most impactful climate solution for keeping global temperatures below 1.5°C. Learn more about how UWC Empowers Women [here](#).

18

The number of UWC schools with an explicit focus on sustainability.

33

In Italy, climate change and environmental sustainability are taught for a minimum of 33 hours in every grade, thanks to an initiative led by Italian Education Minister [Lorenzo Fioramonti](#).

37

According to a Post-KFF poll, 37% of Black and 41% of Hispanic teens in America say people need to act on climate change in the next year or two, compared with 24% of Caucasian teens.

45

The percentage of education sector plans or strategies explicitly referring to climate change education (CCE). According to UNESCO’s research on climate change education, just over one-third of countries have a law, strategy or plan specifically on CCE.

7,140

The number of square metres of a football pitch – equivalent to the amount of Amazon forest – we lose *every minute*.

9.8 million

The number of [children affected](#) by new weather-related internal displacements; that’s over 26,000 displacements every day.

9.4 billion and 10.1 billion

The number of humans projected to inhabit the planet by 2050, all of whom will be drivers of emissions production and consumption, largely fossil-fueled.



THE POTENTIAL

UWC recognises our interdependence with the environment and actively seeks solutions that contribute to a sustainable future. But to live up to our mission to *use education as a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future*, we know we must do more, and we must do it now.

We will double down on climate-focused education while educating future climate leaders.

In honour of our global responsibility and respect for individual school contexts, UWC will double its efforts to create and promote educational programmes that radically alter the view of the planet as a *resource for economic development*. Furthermore, UWC commits to developing solution-focused climate action programming rather than simply problem identification.

UWC will also signal the role of climate justice in addressing global disparities and inequities related to the management of resources, land rights, consumerism, corporate responsibility and social justice. In doing so, UWC aims to contribute to future climate leaders' diverse perspectives and equip them with concrete skills, experiences and pathways to maximise their contribution toward the Paris Goals and UNSDGs.

We will make significant investments in green building to reduce our carbon footprint.

While we are moving towards more sustainable campuses, we are not moving quickly enough. Reaching "net zero" by mid-century will be challenging, but each UWC school and college is committed to developing a local strategy comprising targets and programmes to achieve this goal. Due to our campuses' varying financial, climatic, and geographic conditions, these local strategies will differ, but each campus must do more to minimise its collective impact. One area of focus includes re-visiting the impact of student and staff airline travel and looking to greener, virtual options whenever suitable.

We will do more to elevate the voices of students from deeply affected communities – ensuring their stories and ideas are heard.

According to a study by Stanford University, climate change has increased economic inequality between developed and developing nations by 25% since 1960. It has also displaced more than 80 million people. According to the World Bank, this number will reach 143 million by 2050 due to conflict over food and water insecurity and climate-driven natural disasters. UWC's deliberate diversity means that our student body is representative of these fragile communities, and many of our schools are located in places which are projected to be too hot to inhabit by 2070. Our students have powerful climate impact stories from their homelands, and their contribution is vital. We must do more to ensure we hear their voices.

We will do more to encourage our communities and those around us to develop highly sustainable habits.

Part of every UWC school's aim is to enrich the communities they reside in – and those beyond – by being innovators, collaborators and catalysts for change. For example, at UWC ISAK Japan, a group of climate-conscious students won the Zayed Sustainability Prize for their plan to become the most sustainable school in the country. After working with Earth Company, local NGOs and individuals, the students crafted eleven measures to reach their goal, many of which involve outreach and education with the local community.



REACHING TOMORROW'S CLIMATE LEADERS TODAY

A person's younger years can be a formative time when acquired knowledge and hands-on experiences combine to create a profound and lasting impact on their values, beliefs and actions. There has been much research showing that exposure to nature correlates to positive effects on mental health and well-being, higher academic performance, improved social skills, and the increased likelihood of acting as a custodian of the planet into adulthood. These positive correlations between youth and nature are why experiential outdoor education is a critical component of UWC's sustainable education, and why UWC scholarships focus on students aged 15-19.

Thanks to strong local partnerships and a network of over 4,000 volunteers worldwide, UWC finds budding changemakers and climate leaders in the most disparate corners of the world. These young people are selected to attend UWC based on their passion and potential. They receive financial assistance based on need, as well as other forms of support from in-country selection committees – many of whom are UWC alumni themselves.

At UWC schools and on UWC short courses, these students learn alongside peers from the most diverse backgrounds. Through a delicate balance of support and independence, UWC students begin to understand and explore their agency, and are empowered to become leaders who make a positive difference in their communities and the wider world.

"If we want children to flourish, to be truly empowered, then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it."

David Sobel, Environmental Educator



WHAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS

Across the entire UWC movement, programmes are rolling out in support of our sustainability commitment around four key areas:

1. CLIMATE STRATEGIES AND GREEN CAMPUS INITIATIVES
2. EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION – CURRICULUM AND GREEN SKILLS
3. ENGAGEMENT AND CITIZENSHIP
4. CLIMATE JUSTICE

1.

CLIMATE STRATEGIES & GREEN CAMPUS INITIATIVES

Goal: Report our climate impact to inform solutions-based efforts and enable cooperation among the UWC schools and colleges in implementing individual climate strategies.

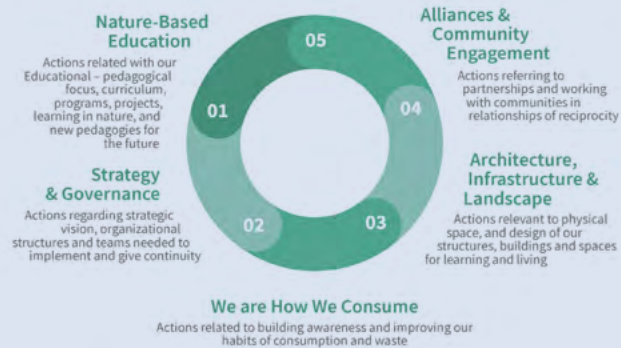
A New Sustainable Campus for UWC Costa Rica

To help lead our way forward and towards a new campus, a Sustainability Framework with guidelines for activating a culture of sustainability in UWC Costa Rica was created. The Framework comprises guiding “sustainability principles” and “action areas” which encompass critical elements needed to transition towards a school exemplary in its sustainability and inherent values, and which cuts across all areas of the school.

Sustainability Principles



Action Lines



Just outside the [Braulio Carrillo National Park](#), UWC Costa Rica aims to build a new campus in San Isidro de Heredia, a flagship for sustainability where students care for, protect and regenerate 35 hectares of woodland.

Within the framework, the college also aspires to support and amplify Costa Rica's ground-breaking decarbonization plan, including the development of buildings under high-efficiency standards and low emission processes. In addition, the new UWC Costa Rica campus will incorporate innovative sustainability systems that can serve as a model for other Latin American schools.



MUWCI's Comprehensive Approach to Sustainability and Conservation

Over the past two decades, [UWC Mahindra](#) (MUWCI) has created a biodiversity reserve on its 71-hectare campus. The reserve is home to 405 plant species, 90 bird species, 19 snake species, several hundred insect species and 28 species of mammals, including deer, the Indian crested porcupine and the endangered Indian pangolin. To protect the reserve and prevent the release of CO2 into the atmosphere, MUWCI's Fire & Rescue Service trains students on how to prevent wildfires on campus.

MUWCI deeply embeds climate change and sustainability themes into its CAS curriculum and through specialised sessions in its CORE programme to further enrich its IB curriculum. Each summer, MUWCI conducts the Youth, Environment and Sustainability (YES) programme, a short course enabling young people to understand environmental issues and identify sustainable solutions to combat climate change, biodiversity loss, water pollution etc.

In May 2020, these efforts led to MUWCI's certification as a platinum-rated Green Campus by the Indian Green Building Council. This rating is evidence-based and awarded to existing educational campuses with exemplary work in sustainable energy, water, waste, and green cover management.

All food waste is being converted into biogas and manure, and all sanitary waste is segregated and incinerated scientifically. Biomedical waste is collected separately and handed over to an authorised agency for safe disposal. MUWCI aims to achieve a 50% reduction in paper usage on its campus by 2025, and a complete ban on plastic bag use on campus has been in effect since 2018.

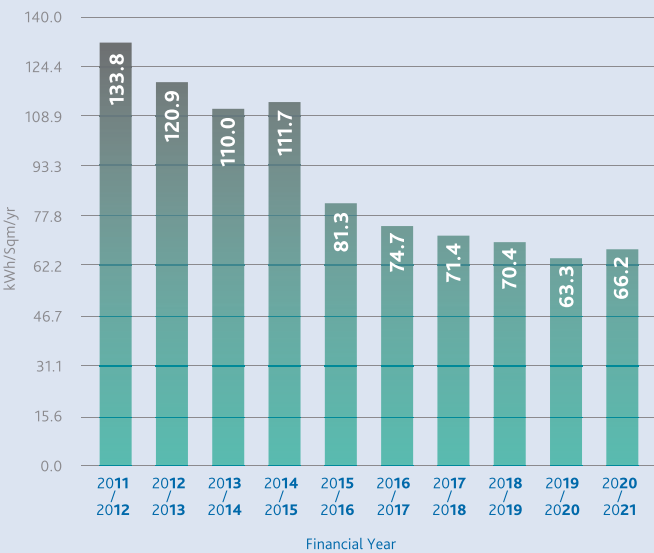


Sustainable building management at UWC SEA

UWC South East Asia (UWC SEA) started tracking its sustainable building management data a decade ago, and has made formal commitments to operating its buildings at the highest standards as defined by the Building Construction Authority of Singapore.

The school's East Campus was designed and built to be a green campus from the outset, whereas its 50-year-old Dover Campus has been on a journey to becoming a super low-energy building. Small progressive actions over the last ten years to reduce the Dover campus' energy consumption by a half are depicted in the graph below. As per the standards in Singapore, UWC SEA is now running both of its buildings at approximately 60% lower-energy than any other educational institution of a similar footprint.

Dover Energy Usage Intensity (EUI)



These results have been achieved by tracking water and electricity, looking at efficiencies in all critical infrastructure, controlling food supplies and waste management, adjusting bus service routes and producing renewable energy. UWC SEA's approach is based on focusing on small changes in lifestyle and making commitments as a community to prioritise climate over convenience, keeping in mind that “every action, small or big, contributes significantly.”

UWC SEA is constantly looking for further improvements and collaborating with subject-matter experts. In 2022, the school successfully implemented an open source network digital dashboard for smart buildings to dynamically adjust to energy needs.

UWC SEA is not only looking at improving energy efficiency but also developing structured learning modules for its students through campus case studies. The school has recently partnered with the Building Construction Authority to use its campuses as live case studies to certify “Green Managers” in Singapore to increase its commitment to sustainability and climate education.



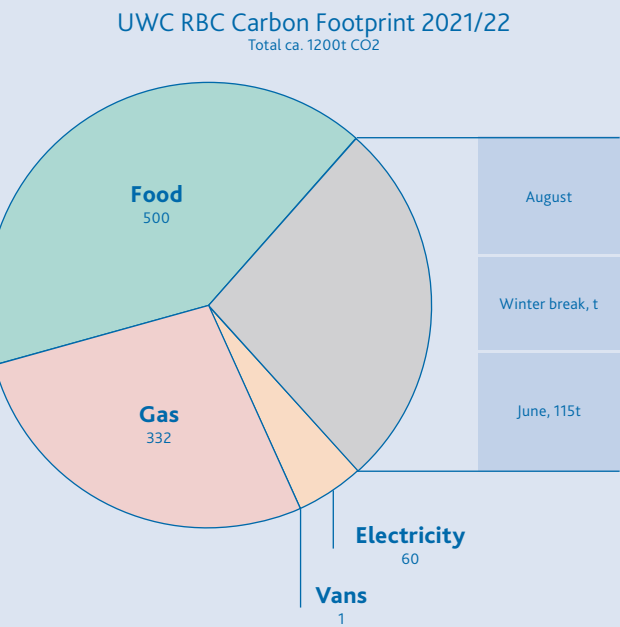
Climate Monitoring at UWC Robert Bosch College

As part of its Climate Crisis Response Strategy, UWC Robert Bosch College (UWC RBC) monitors three areas believed to account for most of its carbon footprint: use of gas and electricity, travel to and from the school, and food provided by its canteen. In 2021/22, this amounted to approximately 1,200 tonnes of CO2 equivalent. With a little more than 200 students and staff living on campus, this is roughly 6t per person – higher than the global per-capita average of around 4.5t per person – but lower than the per-capita average for Germany of 8.56t. Considering that this does not account for consumption, schools must do more to reduce per capita emissions to 3t by 2030 and 1t by 2050 to limit global warming to 1.5°C.

The amount of travel across all UWCs is significant. Yearly travel to UWC RBC adds up to 1t per student or more, with the top 15% percent of students accounting for half of the total travel emissions, compared to 100 students and staff with the shortest travel distances who account for only 10%. During the winter break in 2020/21, pandemic travel restrictions meant most students stayed on campus or in Europe, reducing emissions by more than 100t. This insight has started a discussion about encouraging students to stay in Europe over the winter break.

To help offset its emissions, UWC RBC works with the High Atlas Foundation (HAF), an NGO in Morocco that helps local communities plant fruit and nut trees in the High Atlas Mountains. UWC RBC pays HAF to plant enough trees to eventually absorb the amount of CO2 emitted by the campus each year. Plans are also underway to develop a summer course on ecological restoration at UWC RBC inspired by this partnership.

UWC RBC continues to work with staff from other UWCs to develop tools and recommendations so that every school and college can measure their climate footprint, creating a movement-wide initiative.



Mangrove Reforestation with UWC Thailand

Mangrove forests are essential for tropical marine areas because they help create a biodiverse environment and protect the coastline. In addition, mangrove forests sequester a large amount of carbon and trap pollution that would otherwise end up in our oceans. Historically, mangrove forests in Phuket were cut down for beachfront property, charcoal production and shrimp farming, but work to replace these lost forests is underway. UWC Thailand (UWCT) is a longstanding partner in the island's reforestation and afforestation efforts. With its own Mangrove Restoration Centre on campus, UWCT invites the entire community to participate in these mission-aligned efforts to promote sustainability and student agency.

With the campus mangrove nursery, students learn about the preparation process of collecting pods and growing them before they mature enough for replanting in the mangrove forests. The school's weekly beach cleaning activities include a mangrove pod collection to ensure ample nursery supply. Along with mangrove seedlings from the nursery, many other seedlings are brought to campus through partnerships with the Phuket Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) and other local nurseries.



Rainforest Restoration Project with UWC South East Asia (UWC SEA)

The Rainforest Restoration Project works to grow seedlings of indigenous plant species for planting both on campus and around Singapore. Through its specialist nurseries on both campuses, UWC SEA has been sheltering hundreds of often critically endangered tree seedlings. Its approach is helping to nurture the next generation of reforestation scientists and advocates. UWC SEA has a long-term partnership with the National University of Singapore (NUS) and NParks, the Singapore government's National Parks Board, to both provide excellent opportunities for applied learning for UWC SEA students, and contribute to Singapore's national strategy for biodiversity conservation.



2.

EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION – CURRICULUM

Goal: Equip UWC students with concrete skills, experiences and pathways that will maximise their contribution toward the goals of The Paris Agreement and the UN SDGs. Work to create and promote further educational programmes that radically alter our view of the planet as a resource in the service of economic development.

A UWC education teaches young people that to tackle the issues of our changing climate, we need a systems-based approach to taking action. Within the schools and colleges, concrete examples of this action include:

- The new Climate Action Leadership Diploma (CALD) at Pearson College UWC; a first-of-its-kind IB Career-related Programme for 16-19 year-olds wanting to specialise in climate leadership. As future entrepreneurs, scientists, changemakers in the financial and resource sectors, innovators in tech and global health and collaborators in policymaking, CALD graduates will build lasting climate solutions based on the UN SDGs. Effective future climate leadership requires a broad set of skills, interests and applications to help accelerate the global and multi-sectoral change society needs to make, and CALD intentionally reflects this.
- The new Sustainable Business & Entrepreneurship at UWC Maastricht is designed as an IB Career-related Programme for 16-19 year-olds with a keen interest in sustainability and business, and is taken alongside 2-4 IB diploma courses and other UWC opportunities. The course is examined by the Sustainability Management School, based in Switzerland. It combines taught units on Sustainability and Business Leadership with experiential Project-Based Learning. Students can specialise in sustainable hospitality, fashion or nature conservation. The students will take the lead in managing UWC Maastricht's eco-school & sustainability strategy, the school's reforestation project and Youth Social Entrepreneurship (YSE) and Youth Mayors programmes.
- Systems Transformation Pathway: Leadership for Just Futures, pioneered at UWC Atlantic, equips tomorrow's leaders to tackle this climate-changed world. In partnership with the International Baccalaureate, this bespoke

curriculum explores complex systemic challenges around ecological and social justice, focusing on four impact areas: Biodiversity, Energy, Food and Migration. In doing so, it will shine a spotlight on transformative change, systems leadership and just futures. UWC Atlantic is the first school to pilot this model as part of the IB's review of its 16+ educational model.

This pathway is part of the Centre for Systems Transformation and includes opportunities like The Lighthouse Project, which supports inspirational student ideas to enact positive change in the world and their communities. It will also become home to The Changemaker Curriculum, where teachers and students work together to innovate and trial new approaches to teaching and learning.

- SUSCO, the Student Sustainability Council at UWC Adriatic, is very active throughout the school year but pools its efforts to host a Green Week each term to raise awareness with sustainability education activities. A typical Green Week involves external speakers, and roundtable discussion on the school's social, economic and environmental pillars, as well as fun activities such as making raw, vegan cookies. Green Weeks are a highly successful way for the college community to come together and consider a solutions-focused approach to sustainability. Beyond campus, UWC Adriatic students frequently engage in activism related to sustainability, including participating in the Fridays for Future school strike initiative established by activist Greta Thunberg. Every year, the students participate in a public protest in the neighbouring city of Trieste that calls for governments, organisations and individuals to do more to protect our planet.
- Several UWC schools and colleges offer immersive, high-impact short courses, which take place over two to three weeks. Young people attending these courses experience the empowerment of building an entrepreneurial, can-do mindset while learning about the tools and resources they will need to become changemakers. Short courses focused on sustainability and climate action include: 360 Sustainability Experience (Costa Rica), Sustainability Action Challenge (UK), Sustainability as Social Justice (Dominican Republic), Pearson Seminar on Youth Leadership (Canada), YES: Youth, Environment, Sustainability (India).

3.

ENGAGEMENT AND CITIZENSHIP

Goal: Develop solutions-focused climate action programming rather than simply identifying problems.

Student-Led Green Initiatives Across the UWC Movement

There are many ways UWC student projects positively impact our planet. The depth and breadth of support for UWC students to turn their ideas into action set a UWC education apart. From hands-on support of local initiatives and high-profile advocacy to UWC's own [GoMakeADifference](#) Grants, UWC student impact affects almost every continent. We are proud to see UWC students and alumni regularly leap into action on projects like [cleaning up oil spills](#), helping [embed sustainability in Argentina](#) and bringing the [climate crisis to the International Court of Justice](#). The following are just a handful of UWC student-led impact projects:



BALADNA PROJECT

Southern Region, Jordan – (2007)
Encouraging youth participation in politics, fight for recognition of environmental issues and establishing local environmental organisations. Led by: Jihad Ayoush

LESS TEARDROPS, MORE WATER DROPS

Jinja, Uganda – (2018)
This project provides sustainable, clean, purified water for 600 families in Jinja, Uganda. It involves building a solar water pump that includes a water treatment system. Led by: Pelin Turkmen

THE TRIPLE R PROJECT

Trinidad and Tobago, – (2017)
A recycling initiative in Trinidad and Tobago, a small Caribbean country with one of the highest CO2 emissions in the world. Aimed to sensitise the public about the topic and increase reducing, reusing and recycling among youth. Led by: Gabrielle Branche & Judith Benk



Student-Led Green Initiatives Across the UWC Movement

There are many ways UWC student projects positively impact our planet. The depth and breadth of support for UWC students to turn their ideas into action set a UWC education apart. From hands-on support of local initiatives and high-profile advocacy to UWC's own [GoMakeADifference](#) Grants, UWC student impact affects almost every continent. We are proud to see UWC students and alumni regularly leap into action on projects like [cleaning up oil spills](#), helping [embed sustainability in Argentina](#) and bringing the [climate crisis to the International Court of Justice](#). The following are just a handful of UWC student-led impact projects:

GREENLIJAN

Dilijan, Tavush Region, Armenia – (2019)
Project contributing to solving the deforestation of Dilijan through environmental education. Led by: Mikayel Kamendatyan & Albert Ananyan



RHI-ZONE

Dilijan, Armenia – (2018)
Rhi-Zone is a project promoting the use of recyclable cloth bags and empowering local women in Dilijan with sewing skills by giving them a source of income independent from their male family members and by involving them in awareness-raising campaigns. Led by: Yuyang Wu & Jiaying Wu

SUSTAINABLE ITACARÉ

Itacaré, Bahía, Brazil – (2017)
An education project focused on developing environmental awareness and solutions to current problems in the community. Activities for young people, encouraging creativity and intrepidity, as well as confidence and self-initiative. Led by: Maria Eugenia Perera Visconti

URBAN GREEN LEGACY

Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina - (2023)
A community building reforestation project involving the youth in Mostar. The project aims to create a green legacy by and for schools in Mostar by planting and taking care of trees in school yards. Led by: Victoria Hidalgo, Wilma Decker, Beatrice Lewis, Abdulrahman Alhamadeh

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE NAIJA

Abuja, Nigeria – (2017)
This project seeks to introduce the practice of recycling to Nigerian cities as a solution to hygiene challenges and as a way to care for the environment and promote sustainability through youth involvement and public awareness. Led by: Melie Ekunno

ONE TREE = ONE TOURIST

Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal – (2011)
This simple message of 1 Tourist = 1 Tree helps raise awareness and motivate tourists to plant trees. Each tourist pays £10 to plant a tree and have their name engraved on that tree. Led by: Sajjan Karki & Julius Tian-Di Bleinroth

DON'T TAKE MY FUTURE

Colima, Mexico – (2020)
A climate action forum for youth and stakeholders urges the State to declare a Climate Emergency. Led by: Carlos Christian Montes Covarrubias & Hideki Diego Harada Oyakawa



SAVING THE OCEAN

Nuuk, Greenland – (2020)
This initiative is about producing environmentally friendly coffee cups. Led by: Nuiana Hardenberg

CHE-CHE PLASTIC BAGS

Dilijan, Armenia – (2024)
To fight single-use plastic pollution, students create reusable mesh bags by hiring women from Dilijan. Led by: Gevorg Margaryan & Dasha Khamaza

CLEAN AND GREEN SUDAN

Khartoum and Dongola, Sudan – (2020)
The project aims to share awareness about the environment and plant 1,000 trees. Led by: Abrar Mohamed



TENNYEN

Tennessee, USA – (2011)
The goal of this initiative is to establish an environmental network amongst state youth, share learning and ideas and visit schools to encourage the same. Led by: Laura Rigel & Alex Durand

LIVING THE SUSTAINABLE LIFE!

Lima, Apurimac, Cuzco, Loreto, Piura, Peru – (2020)
The project aims to educate teenagers about sustainable measures to be implemented in the country and carry them out. Led by: Leini Maria Miranda Condori & Carmen Rubi Miranda Condori

4.

CLIMATE JUSTICE

Goal: Signal the role of climate justice in addressing global disparities and inequities related to the management of resources, land rights, consumerism, corporate responsibility and social justice.

Climate Catalysers Scholarship Programme

UWC's commitment to sustainability is part of our mission, and we are proud that many alumni have chosen to act upon this principle. We would like to amplify this focus across the movement through a 'Climate Catalysers' Scholarship Programme to increase the number of young people attending UWC from contexts most impacted by climate change.

Scholarship recipients will study the IBDP at a UWC school, where they will begin to develop the suite of skills and experiences foundational to climate leadership and action. In addition to their study, recipients will undertake a project that analyses and proposes solutions for climate issues and develops their advocacy skills by participating in global and regional youth forums. Scholarship recipients will have the opportunity to access a university education that allows them to be part of the solutions their countries and regions need.



OUR CHANGEMAKERS



BHUSHAN TULADHAR
Nepal, UWC-USA (1985-1987)

Bhushan recalls his time at UWC-USA as inspirational and a place where he developed a greater sense of awe and respect for the natural world. "At school, I enjoyed and appreciated the outdoors by rock climbing in New Mexico, cross-country skiing in Colorado, hiking the Grand Canyon in Arizona and climbing the volcanoes in Mexico," he explains.

Feeling he had the responsibility to "give something back," Bhushan decided to return home to Nepal after studying at UWC-USA and Cornell University and has worked as an environmental engineer for over 25 years. He began his career working for an international organisation helping the government of Nepal develop a system for environmental impact assessments and preparing pollution control plans. But after being approached by the newly elected Mayor of Kathmandu, Bhushan decided to join the Kathmandu City Government, initially as the Mayor's advisor and then as the Head of the Environment Department and a Member of the City Planning Commission. He relished the chance to work on critical urban environmental plans at the local level, as these issues directly impacted people's everyday lives.

Moving into the non-government sector, Bhushan then led Clean Energy Nepal and joined the Environment and Public Health Organisation, a research-based non-profit. He was keen to uphold the strong presence of local civil society organisations. Bhushan later joined the UN as the

Chief Technical Advisor for South Asia at UN-Habitat and is now leading a USAID-supported initiative on clean air. Demonstrating his unwavering commitment to supporting environmental sustainability in Nepal, Bhushan has worked as a CEO and board member of a public transport cooperative; he has helped establish a private company providing environmental services and has taught Environmental Systems and Societies as part of Nepal's first International Baccalaureate programme.

Bhushan credits UWC-USA with instilling in him the desire to commit to a cause he believed in and says the friendships he made with people from countries across the world have stayed with him. In addition, the UWC educational model encouraged him to believe he could make a difference, and his positive attitude reflects this: "Change is possible, and it is up to each of us to take the lead wherever that may be."

Bhushan believes the next generation of changemakers' main challenge is to "establish the urgency of change and the need for immediate action. While it is good to see countries and companies committing to carbon neutrality by 2050, people must understand this is not enough. We need urgent action, and we need it now."



SELINA LEEM
Marshall Islands, UWC Robert Bosch College (2014-2016)

As a self-proclaimed "climate warrior," Selina advocates for global justice to preserve the culture and ways of life of her home, Aelōn Kein Ad, now known as the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Situated halfway between Hawaii and Australia, the Marshall Islands are at the frontline of the climate crisis. Selina has spoken movingly at high-profile events such as the Skoll World Forum, COP21 and the G20 protests in Germany, calling for global justice: "We all cohabit and share the same planet. What happens in my home affects others in the Pacific, places you have never even heard of or knew existed. There is frustration and fear among island nations, but there's also a fierce determination to make it through. We want global justice. And that means my home, our home, stays. We are trying and doing our part. We expect the rest of the world to do its part too."

After growing up in a small island nation, studying at UWC Robert Bosch was a life-changing, connection-building experience for Selina: "Going to an international school like UWC Robert Bosch College with students from 88 countries makes you feel connected to the whole world."

Selina knew the college focused on sustainability, and by becoming an active part of student life, she saw the effects of climate change outside of her home country. She recalls myriad opportunities that helped grow her confidence as a public speaker: "I remember being encouraged by my teachers to speak about my homeland

at the 4th International Convention of Environmental Laureates in 2015. I remember the impact of the global affairs classes we participated in every Tuesday. I remember the service programme I was part of, and I remember how we discussed social issues at every meal and in every class. Being surrounded by staff and students who believed in change and wanted to make a difference made me feel that we could do something. That was the start of my journey as a climate warrior."

Selina's power as a public speaker comes from her lived experience. She speaks about the reality of rising sea levels, drought and flooding in communities often underrepresented on the global stage. "It is said that by 2030 my islands and other island nations will disappear underwater. But we refuse to accept this prediction", she explains. After first speaking up about the effects of climate change on her homeland, the audience's reaction struck her. It made her realise how important it was to raise awareness, and it helped her understand that people do care. Selina believes that adaptation and indigenous knowledge will provide the solutions, so the world must be bold in its vision for the future. "This," she asserts, "must become the decade for action."



AURELIO RAMOS
Colombia, UWC-USA (1989-1991)

Aurelio describes himself as being fascinated by the natural world, and experiencing the beauty of nature within and around UWC-USA's campus made him reflect more on the link between nature and human well-being. Influenced by school wilderness expeditions, economics and biology classes, and discussions with friends and teachers, Aurelio chose a career in environmental sustainability.

After leaving UWC-USA, his studies focused on environmental economics, searching for ways to reveal the value of nature and sustainability. Aurelio's first job was at the Alexander von Humboldt Biological Research Institute in Colombia. He then joined the Latin American Development Bank CAF. Later, he joined The Nature Conservancy, running conservation projects in Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and northern Peru. With his background in economics, Aurelio worked with his team to generate economic incentives for private and communal landowners to increase biodiversity protection in the face of infrastructure expansion. He was particularly proud of the successful Bio-Trade programme he pioneered in the Andean region that is used now in other parts of the world.

Aurelio is now Senior Vice President of the International Alliances at the National Audubon Society, a non-profit environmental organisation dedicated to incorporating the conservation of birds into national and local development agendas. Aurelio's work involves engagement with a range of partners – NGOs,

business interests, policymakers, and community leaders – to deliver results at scale and pace. The Society's international plan focuses on the most critical habitats that migratory, endemic and threatened birds across the Americas need to survive and thrive. But, Aurelio is quick to add, "although our strategies emphasise bird conservation, the goals and strategies include broader conservation goals and economic and human well-being benefits."

His work's tangible impact on nature and people drives Aurelio forward in his career. And he hopes that future generations of environmentalists will have the capacity to "Think big, global and local so that we can have the kind of transformational changes that nature and humanity so urgently need."



KRESSE WESLING CBE
Canada, Li Po Chun UWC of Hong Kong (1994-1996)

Having always had a keen interest in the environment and general waste, environmental entrepreneur Kresse Wesling launched Elvis & Kresse in 2005. The company turns industrial waste into innovative lifestyle products and returns 50% of its profits to waste-related charities. Their first line of products included luxury bags made from decommissioned London fire hoses, using more than 275 tons of reclaimed material that would otherwise have gone to landfill. Elvis & Kresse now rescues 12 different waste streams, maintains several charitable partnerships and is involved with collaborations across industries, from fashion houses to FTSE 100 companies.

Kresse speaks of being driven by her desire to find innovative solutions to waste problems, and this means taking a deep dive into understanding the problem, "We met fire brigades across the country to understand how they work with the material, the extreme situations it is designed to survive and the workload it has to bear. We researched the entire life cycle of the hose, from birth to death. We also spoke with hose manufacturers and academics to understand the base materials that made up the hose and researched where and how these materials are used beyond the fire service. We became hose and hose-waste experts."

The production process highlighted another problem which Kresse was keen to tackle, "800,000 tonnes of leather waste are produced as off-cut each year. For us, this was a much

more ambitious challenge to take on, and it required an equally audacious and innovative solution. So instead of designing products, we focused on designing a modular system, looking at specific shapes that could be woven together and taken apart to create whole new hides."

Kresse realised they would only be able to solve the leather-waste issue if Elvis & Kresse could scale up. So in 2017, thanks to a partnership with The Burberry Foundation, they were able to dramatically increase their capacity and establish an apprenticeship programme at their site in Kent.

Kresse says her time at Li Po Chun UWC helped to lay the foundations for her future career in many ways: "My time at UWC was an unbelievably awesome gift. The quality of education was a significant step up from my rural Canadian high school. Moving to the other side of the world at a young age gave me enormous confidence and exposure to a broader spectrum of cultures and ideas. I formed life-long friendships among a peer group that continues to support me. There is no way that I could do what I do now without the UWC experience. How I live and how the company runs reflects a debt I know I can never repay, no matter how much we rescue or donate."



HELP US EDUCATE CLIMATE CHANGE LEADERS

Climate change is no longer a far-off future threat for the generation of young people attending UWC today. Our world needs more courageous and meaningful action, so we seek like-minded partners and supporters to upscale our programmes significantly and help us fulfil our mission.

With your help, we can educate a new generation of climate change leaders to make a difference in the world and inspire others to act. At UWC, support comes in many forms: donating time to participate in student-led projects, sharing sustainability expertise, connecting professional networks to assist in curriculum innovation, or donating funds designated for the 'Climate Catalysers' Scholarship Programme, for green building projects or for expanding the reach of our environmental short courses.

BECOME A SUPPORTER

By clicking on this [link](#), you can donate directly to UWC Education for Climate Action. Your much-needed donation can be made via credit card or bank transfer.

BECOME A UWC FUNDING PARTNER

UWC welcomes strategic partnerships with like-minded individuals and organisations to amplify our impact and achieve common objectives. We would be delighted if you joined this group of highly committed partners.



www.uwc.org

info@uwcio.uwc.org

The United World Colleges (International)
55 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1BS
United Kingdom
+44 (0) 20 7269 7800

Registered in England and Wales
and Limited by Guarantee, No. 908758
Registered Charity No. 313690

—

United World Colleges International gGmbH
Schiffbauerdamm 5, 10117 Berlin, Germany
+49 (0) 30 64089601

Handelsregister: HRB 213353 B Amtsgericht Berlin Charlottenburg



UWCInt



UWCInt



UWCInt



uwcinternational



uwcinternational