

# POLICY DOCUMENT

# ZERO EMISSION POLICY

**Website**

[www.sustainable.mdu.edu.az](http://www.sustainable.mdu.edu.az)

**Email**

quality@mdu.edu.az

**Address**

D.Aliyeva st. 21. Mingachevir





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## Document Information

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# Purpose:

The purpose of this Net Zero Emissions Policy is to establish a comprehensive, structured, and forward-looking framework that guides Mingachevir State University (MSU) in achieving net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across its operations. This Policy defines the University's institutional commitment to climate action by setting clear directions for the measurement, monitoring, reduction, and, where necessary, offsetting of emissions, in alignment with internationally recognized standards and national sustainability priorities. This Policy aims to integrate climate responsibility into all core functions of the University, including governance, education, research, campus operations, and community engagement.

It provides a strategic foundation for embedding sustainability principles into decision-making processes and operational practices, ensuring that environmental considerations are systematically incorporated into institutional planning and development. A key purpose of this Policy is to support the University's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions for Scope 1 (direct emissions) and Scope 2 (indirect emissions from purchased energy) by the year 2030. In doing so, it establishes a clear pathway for emissions reduction through energy efficiency improvements, transition to renewable energy sources, sustainable transportation solutions, and responsible resource management.

Furthermore, the Policy seeks to enhance transparency and accountability by promoting data-driven approaches to emissions management, including the development of a comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory, the use of consistent methodologies such as the GHG Protocol, and the regular monitoring and reporting of emissions performance. It also aims to ensure continuous improvement through periodic review of targets, strategies, and implementation measures.

In addition, this Policy is designed to foster a culture of environmental awareness and responsibility within the University community. It encourages active participation of students, academic staff, and administrative personnel in sustainability initiatives, research activities, and climate-related innovation, thereby contributing to broader societal efforts to mitigate climate change.




Climate change has emerged as one of the most significant and complex challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. Its impacts—ranging from rising global temperatures and extreme weather events to resource scarcity and ecosystem degradation—pose serious risks to environmental sustainability, economic stability, and social well-being. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated, evidence-based, and long-term action across all sectors of society. In this context, higher education institutions have a critical role to play, not only as centers of knowledge creation and innovation but also as responsible actors that shape sustainable behaviors, policies, and practices.

Mingachevir State University (MSU) recognizes climate change as a multidimensional issue that intersects environmental, social, and economic domains. The University acknowledges its responsibility to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts by integrating sustainability principles into its institutional framework. This includes embedding environmental considerations into teaching and learning processes, advancing research and innovation in sustainability-related fields, and ensuring that campus operations are aligned with low-carbon and resource-efficient practices.


The University's commitment to sustainability and climate action is guided by its overarching strategic documents, including the "MSU 2030: Development Strategy" and the "Sustainable Development Plan 2023–2030." These frameworks establish a long-term vision for sustainable growth, institutional resilience, and regional leadership, while emphasizing the importance of environmental stewardship and responsible resource management. Within this strategic context, achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions is identified as a key institutional priority.

This Policy is further informed by internationally recognized climate frameworks and standards, including the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 13: Climate Action. Alignment with these frameworks ensures that the University's approach is consistent with global best practices while also supporting national development priorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan.


Mingachevir State University has formally committed to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2030. This commitment is supported by institutional initiatives such as the Net-Zero Emissions Roadmap 2023–2030 and the Climate Action Plan, which provide structured pathways for emissions measurement, monitoring, and reduction.




**Net zero emissions:** Net zero emissions refer to a state in which the total amount of greenhouse gases emitted is balanced by an equivalent amount removed or offset. Achieving net zero requires significant emissions reductions, energy efficiency improvements, transition to low-carbon energy sources, and the use of credible carbon offset mechanisms for residual emissions.




**Greenhouse gas emissions:** Greenhouse gas emissions are gases released into the atmosphere that contribute to climate change, including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e). At the University level, these emissions mainly result from energy use, fuel consumption, and operational activities.



**Scope 1 and Scope 2 Emissions:** Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by the University, such as fuel combustion and university vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from purchased electricity and energy consumption. Together, they form the primary focus of the University's Net Zero target.



**Baseline Year:** The baseline year is the reference year against which emissions reductions are measured. Mingachevir State University has designated 2023 as its baseline year, ensuring consistent tracking of emissions trends and progress toward net-zero targets.



**Renewable energy:** Renewable energy refers to energy derived from natural and replenishable sources such as solar, wind, and hydro power. Increasing the share of renewable energy is a key strategy for reducing emissions and achieving long-term sustainability goals.

# Scope of Application

This Net Zero Emissions Policy applies to all activities, operations, and institutional functions of Mingachevir State University (MSU). It defines the boundaries for measuring, managing, and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in line with the operational control approach of the GHG Protocol, ensuring consistency, transparency, and alignment with international standards.

The Policy covers all University-controlled locations, facilities, and infrastructure, including academic buildings, administrative offices, laboratories, research centers, libraries, student facilities, and technical service units. All energy use, resource consumption, and operational activities within these areas are included in the University's emissions inventory.

It also applies to all University-owned and operated transport systems, including official and service vehicles. Emissions from fuel consumption are categorized under Scope 1 and are fully integrated into the University's reduction strategy.

The Policy extends to all staff, students, and individuals operating within the University. While it does not directly regulate individual behavior, all members of the University community are expected to support its objectives through responsible resource use and participation in sustainability initiatives.

Additionally, contractors and external partners working on behalf of MSU are expected to align with the principles of this Policy. Sustainability requirements may be incorporated into procurement processes and service agreements where applicable.

The scope includes all Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, covering direct emissions from University-controlled sources and indirect emissions from purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are recognized as significant and will be gradually incorporated as data and institutional capacity improve.

This Policy applies to all current and future University activities, including new projects and infrastructure developments, ensuring alignment with long-term net-zero objectives.

## Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

MSU integrates environmental sustainability as a core institutional value across all activities, ensuring that environmental responsibility is embedded in strategic planning, academic programs, infrastructure, and operations.

## Alignment with International Climate Frameworks

The University aligns its climate actions with internationally recognized standards, including the GHG Protocol, the Paris Agreement, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring consistency with global best practices.

## Science-Based and Data-Driven Approach

All emissions measurement and reduction efforts are based on reliable data and internationally accepted methodologies, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and informed decision-making.

## Transparency and Accountability

MSU ensures regular monitoring, reporting, and public disclosure of emissions data, supported by clear responsibilities and performance indicators to track progress toward net-zero targets.

## Prevention First Approach (Avoidance Hierarchy)

The University prioritizes reducing emissions at the source through efficiency improvements and low-carbon solutions before considering offset mechanisms.

## Integration Across Institutional Functions

Climate action is embedded across all University functions, including teaching, research, governance, procurement, and campus operations, ensuring a holistic and system-wide approach.

## Achievement of Net-Zero Emissions by 2030

MSU aims to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for Scope 1 and Scope 2 by 2030 as its primary climate commitment. This will be accomplished through emissions reduction measures, energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy integration, and, where necessary, carbon offset mechanisms.



## Reduction of Direct Emissions (Scope 1)

The University seeks to significantly reduce emissions from fuel use, heating systems, and university-owned transport. This will be achieved by transitioning to cleaner technologies, electrifying systems, and improving operational efficiency.



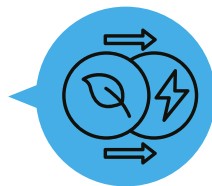
## Reduction of Indirect Energy Emissions (Scope 2)

MSU aims to reduce emissions from electricity consumption by improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy sources. Key actions include adopting energy-efficient technologies and expanding access to green electricity.



## Transition to Renewable and Low-Carbon Energy Systems

The University is committed to replacing fossil fuel-based energy systems with renewable and low-carbon alternatives, particularly solar energy. This transition will enhance both emissions reduction and long-term energy sustainability.



## Development of Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) System

MSU will establish a comprehensive system for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions in line with international standards. This system will ensure data accuracy, transparency, and effective tracking of progress toward net-zero targets.

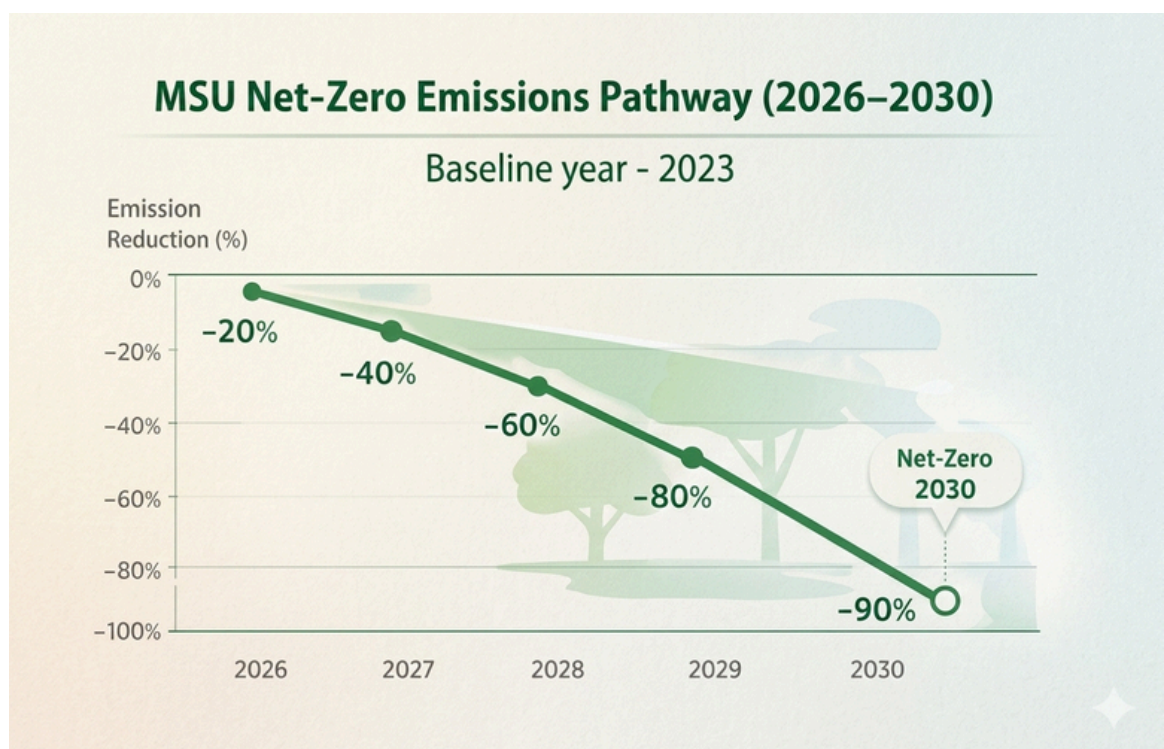


# Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Objective	Indicator (KPI)	Baseline (2023)	Target (2027)	Timeline	Responsible Unit
Achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions across the University	Total GHG Emissions (Scope 1 + Scope 2)	136 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	60 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	2024-2027	Sustainability Committee
Reduce direct emissions from fuel, gas, and transport	Scope 1 Emissions	51 tCO <sub>2</sub> e (2025)	30 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	2024-2027	Facilities Department
Reduce emissions from electricity consumption	Scope 2 Emissions	47 tCO <sub>2</sub> e (2025)	Near-zero via renewable energy	2024-2027	Finance and Supply Department
Improve overall energy efficiency across campus	Total Electricity Consumption	104,453 kWh (2025)	Year-on-year reduction	2024-2027	Facilities Department
Reduce transport-related emissions	Transport Emissions	10.85 tCO <sub>2</sub> e (2025)	7 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	2024-2027	Facilities Department

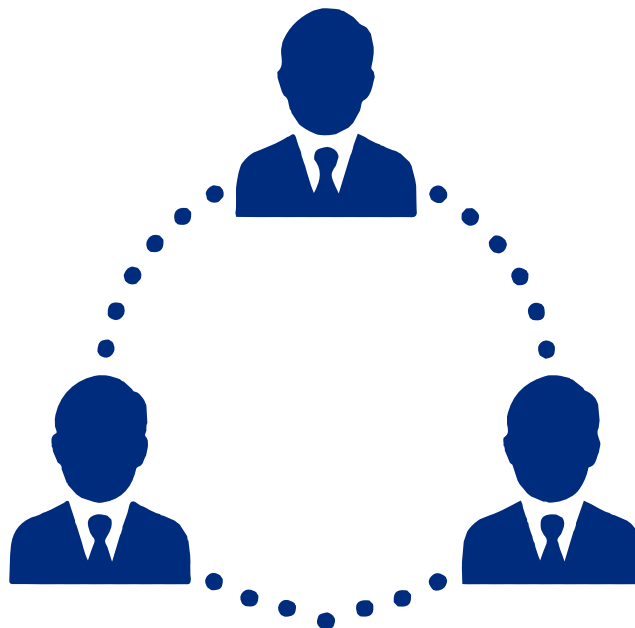
# Implementation Mechanism

The implementation of the Net Zero Emissions Policy at Mingachevir State University (MSU) is carried out through a structured and coordinated institutional approach. The University applies an integrated climate governance model that ensures emissions reduction measures are embedded across all operational, academic, and administrative processes. Implementation is guided by the Net-Zero Emissions Roadmap (2023–2030) and the Climate Action Plan, which define phased actions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Scope 1 and Scope 2 categories. These actions include energy efficiency improvements, transition to renewable energy sources, modernization of infrastructure, and sustainable mobility initiatives. All implementation activities are planned on an annual basis and aligned with the University's strategic objectives. Operational units are responsible for executing specific actions, while centralized coordination ensures consistency, resource allocation, and progress tracking.



# Governance and Responsibilities

Structure / Role	Responsibilities
<b>Rector</b>	Ensures approval and overall oversight of the policy, supports strategic financial decision-making, and allocates necessary resources for implementation.
<b>Sustainability Committee</b>	Serves as the highest coordinating body for Net Zero implementation. It is responsible for overall policy oversight, strategic direction, KPI monitoring, and annual reporting.
<b>Facilities Department</b>	Responsible for energy management, building efficiency, infrastructure modernization, transport emissions reduction, and operational implementation of Scope 1-related actions.
<b>Finance and Supply Department</b>	Responsible for investment planning, procurement of energy-efficient technologies, renewable energy investments, and financial resource allocation for sustainability projects.
<b>Department of Natural Sciences</b>	Responsible for sustainability education, climate change research, curriculum integration, and capacity building for students and academic staff.



# Monitoring and Evaluation

MSU implements a robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system to ensure progress toward Net Zero emissions is measurable, transparent, and continuously improving.

Key features of the system include:

- Annual greenhouse gas inventory reporting in accordance with the GHG Protocol
- Monitoring of all KPIs defined in the Net Zero framework
- Use of a baseline year (2023) for performance comparison
- Regular progress reviews conducted by the Sustainability Committee
- Data verification processes to ensure accuracy and reliability
- Mid-term (2025–2026) and final (2030) performance evaluations

Evaluation results are used to adjust strategies, improve implementation effectiveness, and ensure alignment with long-term sustainability goals.



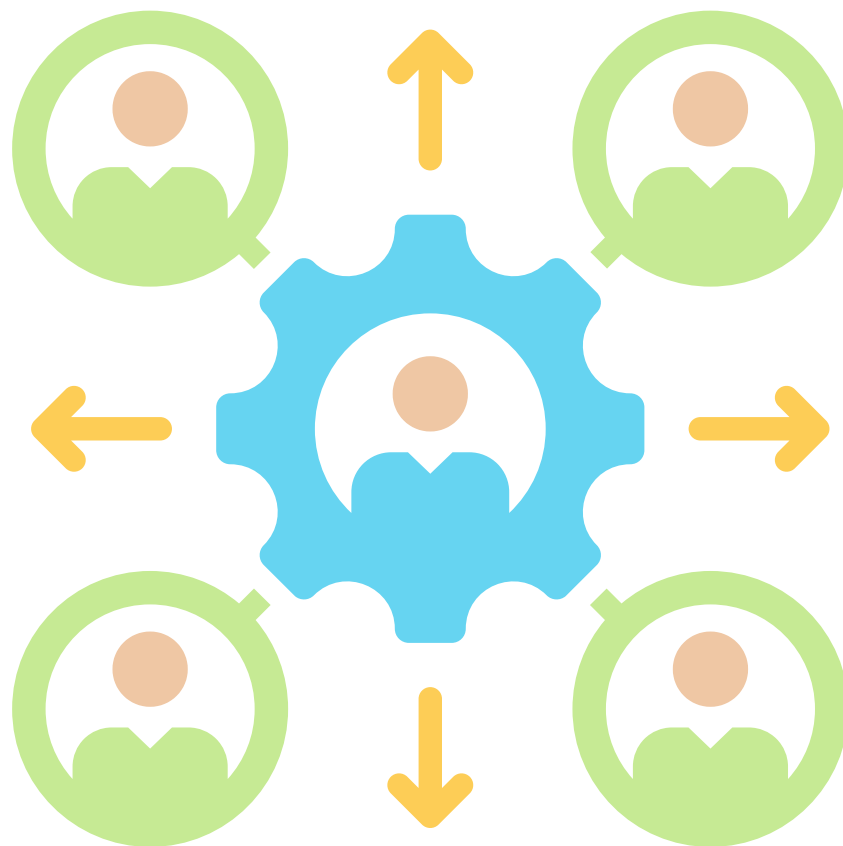
# Stakeholder Engagement

MSU recognizes that achieving Net Zero emissions requires active participation from all internal and external stakeholders. The University promotes a collaborative and inclusive approach to climate action.

Key stakeholder groups include:

- Students
- Academic and administrative staff
- University management and governance bodies
- External partners, including industry and government institutions

Engagement mechanisms include awareness campaigns, training programs, workshops, research collaborations, and student-led sustainability initiatives. The University also encourages behavioral change by promoting sustainable practices such as energy conservation, waste reduction, and environmentally responsible mobility within the campus community.



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# Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

**SDG 13: Climate Action** – Core focus on emissions reduction and climate resilience

**SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy** – Transition to renewable energy systems

**SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** – Sustainable infrastructure development

# Evidence and Reporting

MSU ensures transparency, accountability, and credibility in the implementation of its Net Zero Policy through evidence-based management systems.

Key accountability mechanisms include:

- Annual publication of greenhouse gas emissions reports
- Use of standardized methodologies (GHG Protocol) for emissions calculation
- Documentation of all energy, transport, and resource consumption data
- KPI-based performance tracking system
- Internal review and validation by the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Center
- External benchmarking against international sustainability standards where applicable

All sustainability actions are supported by verifiable data and documented evidence. This ensures that progress toward Net Zero emissions is measurable, auditable, and aligned with international best practices.

