



Northern Illinois University

Sustainability at NIU

Courtney Gallaher

Campus Sustainability Coordinator
Associate Professor in EAE/CSWGS

Why is sustainability important for NIU?



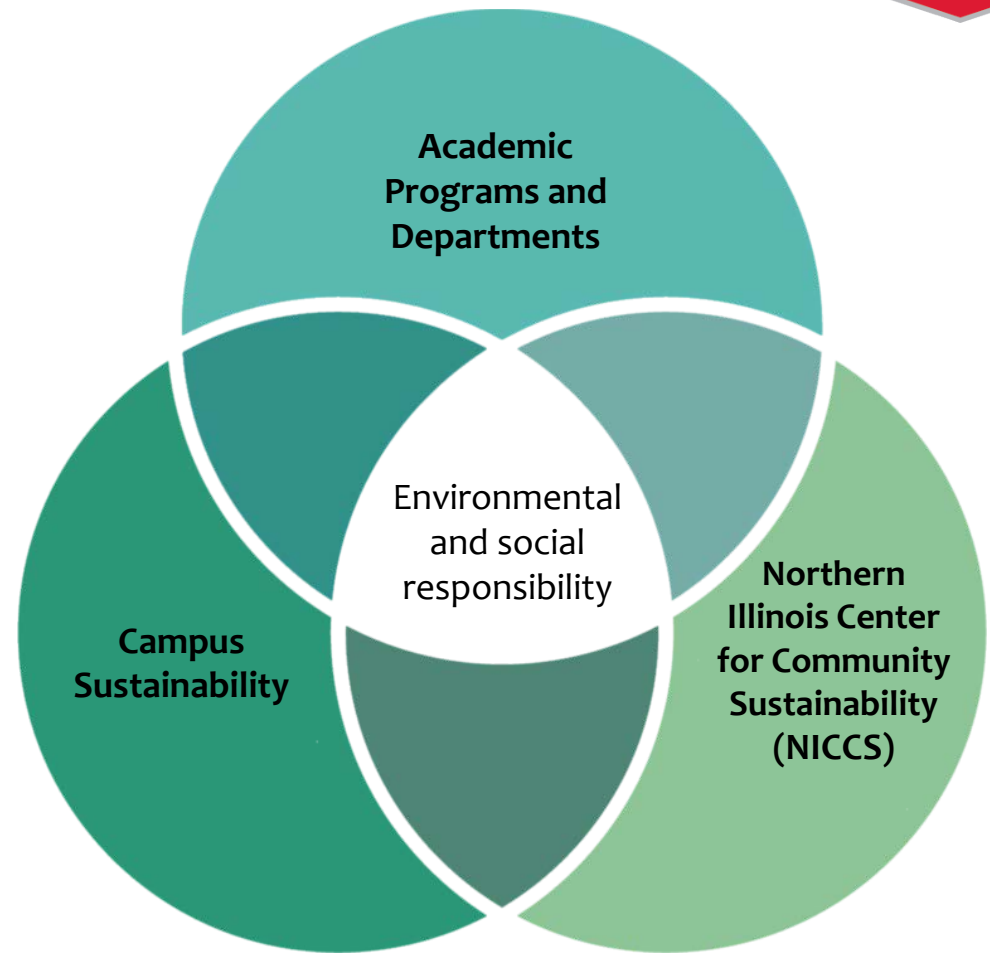
- The urgency of the climate crisis and other environmental crises
- Sustainability is aligned with NIU's mission
- Opportunity for us to be leaders in our community around sustainability
- Better choice from a long-term operational perspective
- Aligns with DEI initiatives through environmental justice
- Students want campuses to focus on sustainability
 - 74% of students consider sustainability when choosing schools
 - Learning opportunities for students to engage in sustainability teaching and research

Sustainability at NIU



“Sustainable development is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

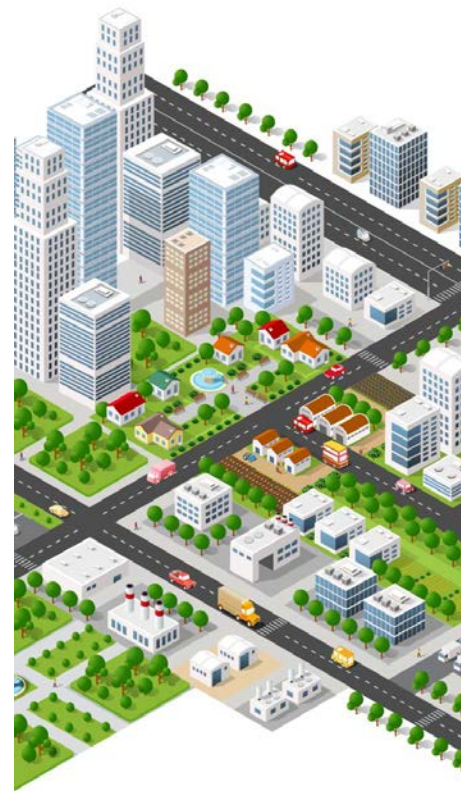
- Bruntland Report, 1987



Campus Sustainability



- Climate action planning
- Sustainable building design
- Grounds (tree care, native restoration, pollinator habitats, stormwater)
- Transportation (fleet, commuting, buses, bikes)
- Waste management and recycling
- Teaching, research, and outreach



Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, & Rating System



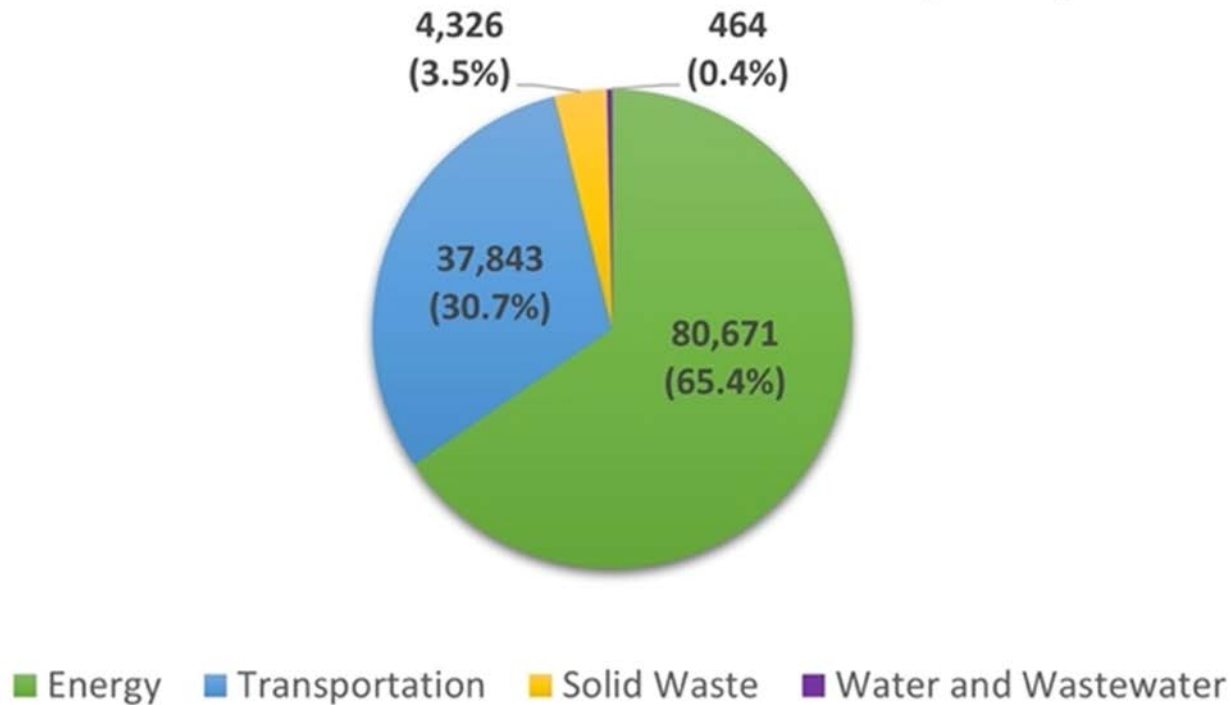
- Self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance
- Rates colleges based on their sustainability efforts
- Benefits of participation
 - Public recognition
 - Sierra Club’s “Cool Schools” List
 - Princeton Review
 - Benchmarking against other institutions
 - Creates a baseline for future planning
 - Helps to guide strategic planning around specific sustainability efforts



Greenhouse Gas Inventory



CO₂e Emissions in Metric Tons (2019)

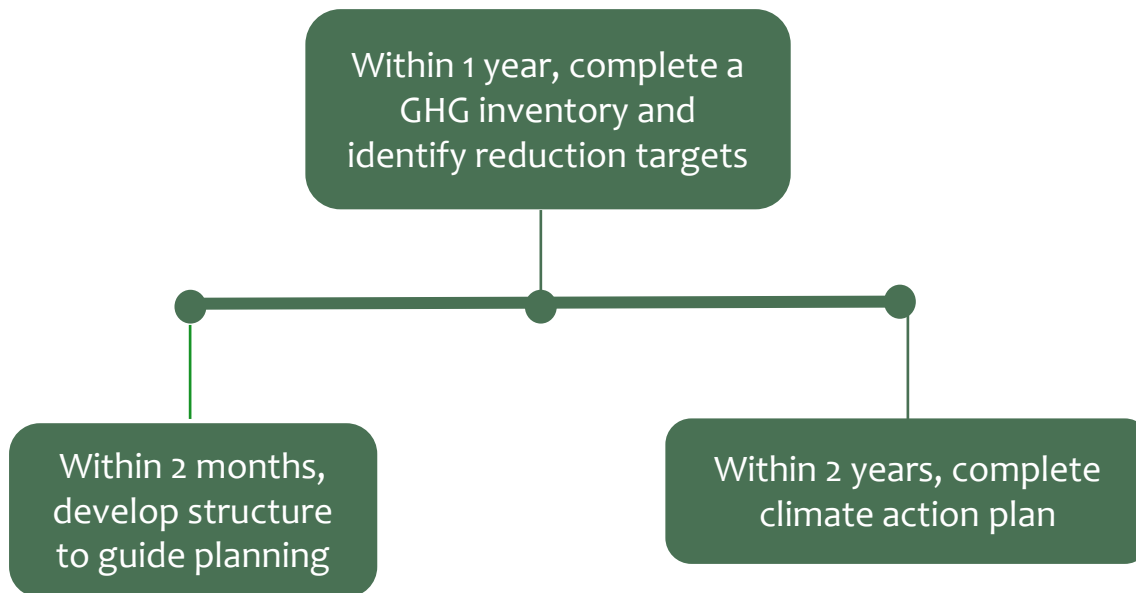


Report for 2019 and 2020 GHG inventories available at <https://www.niu.edu/sustainability/planning/index.shtml>

Second Nature Carbon Commitment



Commit to reduce GHG emissions and achieving carbon neutrality as soon as possible

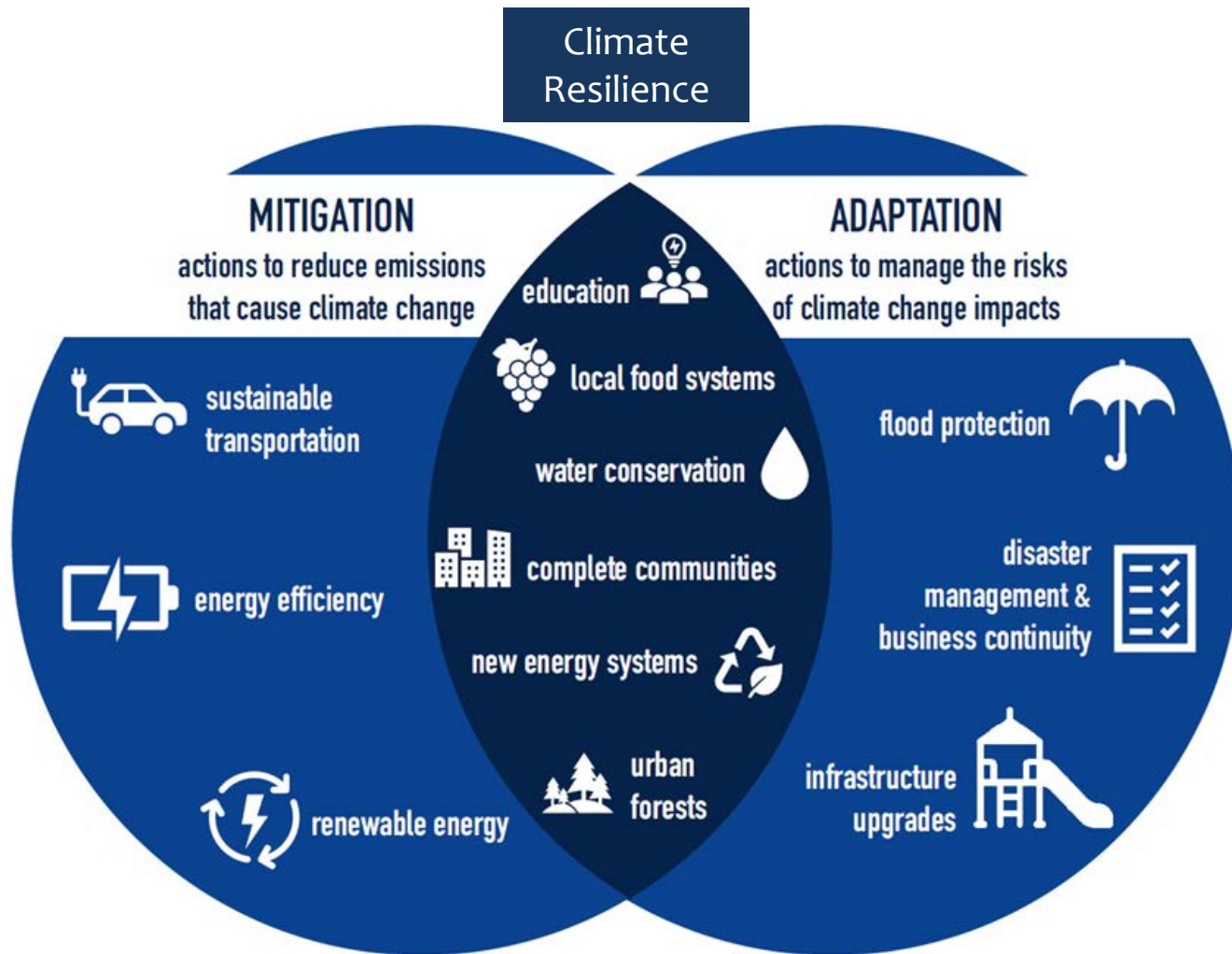


Sustainability and Climate Action Planning Taskforce



- Create NIU’s first campus-wide sustainability and climate action plan
- Objectives
 - Climate action planning that is tied to a “net zero” goal and date
 - Concrete goals for creating a more sustainable campus, including science-based targets for reaching those goals
 - Alignment of the sustainability plan with NIU’s master planning framework
 - Integration of sustainability planning into NIU’s institutional operations

Climate Action Plans



Campus Sustainability Plans



- Academics
- Engagement
- Operations
- Planning and administration
- Diversity and equity
- Investment and finance
- Employee wellbeing



Sustainability and Climate Action Planning



Steering Committee
(Senior Leadership)



Working Committee



Engage with
stakeholders across
campus



Public feedback

Timeline

