JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

ROADMAP TO PLANETARY WELL-BEING

University of Jyväskylä Environmental Programme for 2026–2035

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Introduction

The loss of biodiversity, climate change, and the overconsumption of natural resources are the most significant sustainability challenges of our time. The University of Jyväskylä (JYU) has an impact on these challenges through both its own operations and its core missions. Through its teaching, research, societal interaction, decision-making, purchasing and procurement, facilities, travel and investment, the University both causes adverse impacts on the climate and nature and generates knowledge, expertise and solutions to reduce these impacts and promote planetary well-being.

The environmental programme guides JYU's operations. It is based on JYU's national and international commitments and supports their practical implementation. JYU has made a Nature Positive Pledge as part of the Nature Positive Universities network,[1] signed the joint declaration of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters[2] and the international SDG Accord,[3] and committed to the Unifi theses of sustainable development and responsibility.[4]

The environmental programme was developed through extensive collaboration with staff, students, University management and external stakeholders. The process drew on workshops, surveys, student projects, previous research and national and international literature. Key background materials taken into account in preparing the environmental programme, such as Finnish universities' joint revision of their environmental goals, are available on the JYU website.[5]

JYU's environmental responsibility encompasses the impacts of its campuses on nature and the environment, as well as supply chains, food services, travel, energy use, teaching, research and societal impact. Some of these impacts are managed directly by the University, some arise through collaboration with partners and stakeholders, and some relate to the University's ability to influence societal development through research, education and interaction. Promoting environmental responsibility therefore requires, in addition to technical solutions, the adoption of new ways of working, collaboration, and continuous learning throughout the university community.

The programme outlines key concepts, JYU's vision and goals, and the operating models that support their implementation, responsibilities, monitoring and reporting. The aim is to integrate environmental responsibility into management, decision-making, teaching, research and day-to-day operations at the University.

[1] The pledge | Nature Positive Universities
[2] Joint declaration - Tiedeakatemia
[3] EAUC : SDG Accord
[4] Theses on sustainable development and responsibility - Unifi
[5] Sustainable and responsible university | University of Jyväskylä

Key concepts in the JYU context

Biodiversity footprint	The negative impacts of JYU's operations that lead to biodiversity loss, including the carbon footprint as a driver of biodiversity loss.
Carbon footprint	Greenhouse gas emissions resulting from JYU's operations.
Carbon negativity	A state in which sequestration exceeds emissions (i.e., net emissions are below zero).
Carbon neutrality	A state in which JYU's greenhouse gas emissions and the sequestration created or financed by JYU are equal.
Counterbalancing	Balancing the harmful climate or biodiversity impacts caused by JYU's operations through scientifically verified measures that improve the state of nature or remove greenhouse gases. In the context of value chains, counterbalancing biodiversity impacts does not constitute ecological compensation as defined in the Finnish Nature Conservation Act. Counterbalancing does not replace primary measures to avoid and reduce negative impacts.
Cultural environment	An environment shaped by the interaction between JYU and the natural environment of its campuses, comprising the built environment and botanical garden.
Nature positivity	The global societal goal of halting and reversing nature loss by 2030 on a 2020 baseline.[6]
Nature Positive University	A university whose overall impact on nature is measurably net positive.[7]
nBDe	The nano biodiversity equivalent (nBDe) is a unit of measurement used in the calculation of JYU's biodiversity footprint. It describes the risk of species extinction globally caused by JYU's activities.
Planetary well-being	Planetary well-being refers to a state where the integrity of Earth system and ecosystem processes remains unimpaired to a degree that species and populations can persist to the

[6] Nature Positive - A Global Goal for Nature
[7] https://www.emerald.com/ijshe/article/27/10/380/1382134/From-carbon-neutral-to-nature-positive-higher

	future and organisms have the opportunity to achieve well-being. [8]
Procurement	All purchases made by JYU, including those that fall below the threshold value defined in the Act on Public Procurement and Concession Contracts, and purchases of goods and services.
Scopes 1–3	Scopes 1, 2 and 3 are categories standardised by the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol that classify an organisation's greenhouse gas emissions according to their origin. Scope 1 includes JYU's direct emissions (emissions from its own vehicles). Scope 2 includes emissions from purchased energy (electricity). Scope 3 includes other value chain emissions (travel, rental expenses, investments and food).

[8] Planetary well-being | Humanities and Social Sciences Communications

Overall situation in 2026

The University of Jyväskylä's previous environmental programme, *Roadmap to planetary well-being*, was approved in 2022 and has been implemented through an action plan approved by the Rector. Progress towards the goals has been monitored using various indicators, including annual carbon footprint calculations, calculations of the biodiversity footprint of procurement, the WWF Green Office Consumer Habit Questionnaire, documentation of campus biodiversity initiatives, and descriptions of the positive impacts generated through teaching and research.

JYU has made significant progress in its biodiversity and environmental work, but progress towards achieving the goals set in 2022 has been uneven.[10] The University's total carbon footprint in 2025 was 29,551 tCO_2e, which is 17 percent below the 2019 baseline. The carbon footprint decreased until 2024 but began to rise again in 2025. The largest emission categories are investments, procurement, real estate and energy, and travel.[9] Further emissions reductions will require more systematic measures targeting these categories in particular.

When interpreting changes in the carbon and biodiversity footprints, it is important to note that calculation methods, the scope of emissions included in the calculations and available data have changed during the environmental programme period. JYU has been calculating its carbon footprint and the biodiversity footprint of its procurement since 2019, using 2019 as the baseline for monitoring progress. The methods have been updated so that, for example, the biodiversity footprint now takes into account freshwater and marine ecosystems in addition to terrestrial ecosystems, and the unit used has changed to the biodiversity equivalent. To maintain comparability, figures for previous years have also been recalculated retrospectively; however, this has not been possible for investments, for example. Changing the baseline year from 2019 to 2025 is therefore justified.

Calculations, particularly those relating to procurement, have mainly relied on euro-based data. Estimates based on monetary values do not necessarily account for factors such as environmentally certified products, plant-based options or qualitative differences between individual purchases. The calculations therefore do not capture all choices that promote sustainability, even when these may actually reduce environmental harm. Refining the calculations requires better and more detailed data, along with supplementary indicators to assess impacts. Improving the monitoring of the environmental programme requires both continuous refinement of methods and guidelines and more precise data collection.

The categories that contribute most to the biodiversity footprint of the University's procurement are IT equipment, licences and services; food products and services; and machinery, including research equipment and supplies as well as laboratory services.[10] The University's adverse impacts on nature cannot be reduced through individual measures on campus alone. Attention must also be paid to

[9] https://www.jyu.fi/en/file/jyu-sustainability-report-2025

consumption, material flows in research, digital services (including artificial intelligence), and procurement-related choices.

JYU held WWF Green Office certification from 2013 to 2026. The results of the WWF Green Office Consumer Habit Questionnaire have provided additional information on changes in day-to-day practices. The questionnaire identified areas for improvement at JYU, particularly in procurement and encouraging eco-friendly practices.

Systematic measures have been introduced to improve campus biodiversity. Between 2022 and 2025, several measures supporting campus biodiversity were implemented, including the creation of meadows, grasslands and deadwood gardens, additional planting, pilot projects for cultivating native plants, invasive species control, and science education and public outreach activities. In 2025, a study assessed the ecological condition of JYU's campus areas and nature value hectares.[10] The study provides a baseline for future comparisons of the ecological value of campus areas. According to the study, biodiversity on JYU campuses can be further improved, for example, by creating more meadows, increasing the amount of deadwood and shrubs, and removing invasive species.

JYU has also developed its efforts to promote nature positivity through teaching and research. The Open University's sustainability studies include, for example, courses on planetary well-being, ecological compensation, carbon footprints, the circular economy and biodiversity footprint. The "Planetary well-being 1" study unit has been compulsory to all JYU degree students since the beginning of the current curriculum period (2024–2028). Faculties also offer their own sustainability teaching, and a new multidisciplinary basic studies module in sustainability transitions was launched in 2025. Research promoting planetary well-being has been conducted in all JYU faculties and has become one of JYU's research profiling areas through JYU.Wisdom, the School of Resource Wisdom.[11]

Previous targets have steered JYU's environmental efforts in the right direction, but it is essential to re-examine the targets, indicators and implementation models. While advances in methodology can improve the ability to identify environmental impacts, they can also alter the comparability of results and reveal impacts that could not previously be measured. JYU's renewed environmental programme aims to combine ambitious targets with realistic implementation and flexible monitoring.

[10] Jyväskylän yliopiston kampusalueiden ekologinen tila ja luonnonarvohehtaarit 2025 :: JYX
[11] JYU.Wisdom - School of Resource Wisdom | University of Jyväskylä

Vision 2035

By 2035, the University of Jyväskylä will be a nature-positive organisation and a leader in promoting planetary well-being at local, national and international levels. The University will have significantly reduced the adverse climate and biodiversity effects impacts of its own operations and value chains, while strengthening its positive impacts on nature and society.

The University's operating methods, structures and decision-making processes will support resource-wise activities that are socially and ecologically sustainable. Through teaching, research and engagement with society, the University of Jyväskylä will actively promote planetary well-being and a just sustainability transition, and its students will be equipped to build and lead a sustainable future.

University-level goals and indicators

The programme's goals are based on monitoring data on JYU's environmental impacts,[12] research data[13], the University's national and international commitments[14], the target-setting workshop held on 15 April 2026, and an expert assessment by JYU's Ecological Sustainability and Responsibility Development Group. For each goal, its climate and biodiversity impacts, expected impact pathways, and the principles of monitoring and reporting are considered. Impact pathways describe expected mechanisms whose realisation is subject to uncertainty, particularly in terms of the long-term impacts of value chains, education, research and societal interaction.

The goals aim to support the integration of environmental responsibility into the University's management, decision-making, teaching, research and day-to-day operations. The goals are:

1. A nature-positive campus
2. A resource-wise campus
3. Sustainable and responsible value chains
4. Sustainable travel
5. Impact through investments
6. Planetary well-being in teaching
7. Planetary well-being in research

[12] See, e.g., https://www.jyu.fi/en/file/jyu-sustainability-report-2025
[13] See, e.g., Sustainability for JYU: Jyväskylän yliopiston ilmasto- ja luontohaitat 2020 :: JYX; Sustainability for JYU : Jyväskylän yliopiston ilmasto- ja luontohaitat :: JYX; Value-transforming financial, carbon and biodiversity footprint accounting | Journal of Industrial Ecology | Springer Nature Link; Jyväskylän yliopiston kampusalueiden ekologinen tila ja luonnonarvohehtaarit 2025 :: JYX
[14] See the introduction

GOAL 1: A nature-positive campus

Target	**The ecological status of the JYU campus area will improve by at least 5% by 2030 and by at least 10% by 2035 compared with the 2025 baseline.**
Grounds	The goal of nature positivity means that, by 2030, biodiversity will no longer decline but will instead improve. JYU's most direct opportunities to make a difference are on its own campuses. The report *Jyväskylän yliopiston kampusalueiden ekologinen tila ja luonnonarvohehtaarit 2025* (The ecological status of the University of Jyväskylä's campuses and the nature value hectares 2025)[15] describes opportunities to improve biodiversity on JYU's campuses.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Direct impact on biodiversity in campus areas.
Expected impact pathway	Use and maintenance of campus areas → habitats and green infrastructure → ecological status → biodiversity
Monitoring and indicators	Assessments of ecological status in 2030 and 2035 Indicator: nature value hectares
Responsibility for monitoring	Open Science Centre / Botanical Garden (supported by the Division of Policy and Planning)
Responsibility for implementation	Open Science Centre / Botanical Garden (planning development measures); Facility Services, University Properties of Finland and other campus operators (implementing development measures); University management (taking the goal into account in cooperation with University Properties of Finland, influencing land-use planning, and steering construction and renovation projects); academic units (teaching and curriculum planning).

[15] Jyväskylän yliopiston kampusalueiden ekologinen tila ja luonnonarvohehtaarit 2025 :: JYX

GOAL 2: A resource-wise campus

Target	2.1. The University of Jyväskylä will reduce the carbon footprint arising from energy use, waste management and the use of premises in its campus operations by at least 30% by 2030 and by 50% by 2035 compared with the 2025 baseline. At the same time, the University of Jyväskylä will reduce the biodiversity footprint of these operations and develop methods for monitoring, calculating and counterbalancing it during the programme period. 2.2. By 2030, JYU will be carbon neutral with respect to its Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions.
Grounds	In accordance with the real estate sector's energy efficiency agreement, energy consumption is expected to decrease by approximately 6% by 2030 and 10% by 2035. The district heating provider Alva aims to produce fossil-free district heating by 2030, which would significantly reduce the carbon footprint of heating at JYU. However, to fulfil its commitments, JYU must also implement its own emission reduction measures in collaboration with University Properties of Finland, including energy efficiency improvements and new low-emission energy solutions.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Energy use, waste management, the use of premises and the associated consumption have adverse impacts on the climate and biodiversity. Improvements in energy efficiency, circular economy solutions, low-emission energy solutions and more efficient use of resources can reduce the University's carbon and biodiversity footprints, but cannot eliminate them entirely.
Expected impact pathway	Consumption → energy production and material flows → emissions and harm to biodiversity → climate change and biodiversity loss
Monitoring and indicators	Annual monitoring as part of carbon and biodiversity footprint calculations. Indicators: carbon footprint (tCO_2e) and biodiversity footprint (nBDe). Energy consumption (MWh), water

	consumption (m³), the amount of mixed waste (kg), the recycling rate (%) and, where possible, the utilisation rate of premises (%) will also be monitored.
Responsibility for monitoring	Facility Services, supported by the Division of Policy and Planning
Responsibility for implementation	Facility Services, University management, University Properties of Finland, University Communications and users of the premises.

GOAL 3: Sustainable and responsible value chains

Target	By 2030, the University of Jyväskylä will have reduced the adverse biodiversity and climate impacts of its procurement of goods and services by at least 10% compared with the 2025 baseline. By 2035, these adverse impacts will have been reduced by at least 20% compared with the 2025 baseline and the University will have introduced a model for identifying, reducing and counterbalancing the remaining adverse impacts.
Grounds	The biodiversity impacts of the University's procurement arise mainly outside its own operations, in global value chains. The target level is based on an assessment of the University's ability to influence procurement volumes, composition and life cycles, as well as its opportunities to develop sustainability criteria in cooperation with suppliers and service providers. The interim target for 2030 allows progress to be monitored during the programme period, while the 2035 target helps to achieve the environmental programme's vision of significantly reducing adverse climate and biodiversity impacts throughout the value chain.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Purchased goods and services can have adverse climate and biodiversity impacts through global value chains, particularly through greenhouse gas emissions, the overconsumption of natural resources and habitat degradation. IT equipment, licences and services are prominent contributors to JYU's procurement-related biodiversity footprint. Changing procurement volumes,

	composition and life cycles can reduce the University's carbon and biodiversity footprints. Counterbalancing the remaining adverse impacts also aims to make the climate and biodiversity impacts within value chains more visible and to support changes in practices.
Expected impact pathway	Procurement → production and logistics → emissions and land use → climate change and biodiversity loss
Monitoring and indicators	Annual carbon and biodiversity footprint calculations, and assessments of compliance with sustainability criteria for catering in 2030 and 2035. Indicators: procurement-related biodiversity footprint (nBDe), procurement-related carbon footprint (tCO_2e), and the proportion of all catering that meets the sustainability criteria (%).
Responsibility for monitoring	Division of Policy and Planning (supported by JYU.Wisdom)
Responsibility for implementation	Financial Services, Digital Services, Procurement Services, academic units and management.

GOAL 4: Sustainable travel

Target	By 2030, the University of Jyväskylä will have reduced the adverse climate impacts of business travel by at least 20% compared with the 2025 baseline. By 2035, these adverse impacts will have been reduced by at least 40% compared with the 2025 baseline and will counterbalance the remaining adverse impacts.
Grounds	Air travel accounts for a substantial share (approximately 80%) of the carbon footprint of business travel at the University of Jyväskylä. Efforts to reduce emissions from business travel must at the same time safeguard the University's core missions, international cooperation in research and education, and societal impact. The target is based on an assessment of the University's capacity to replace some travel with remote and hybrid participation,

	favour low-emission modes of transport and develop travel practices during the programme period. The 2035 target supports the environmental programme's vision of significantly reducing adverse climate and biodiversity impacts and promoting planetary well-being in the University's own operations.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Mobility and travel affect the climate and biodiversity, particularly through greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption. Flying is one of the most environmentally damaging forms of transport in terms of its climate and biodiversity impacts. Its emissions accelerate climate change, a major driver of biodiversity loss. Moderating air travel and prioritising low-emission alternatives, such as rail travel and remote participation, are therefore key measures for achieving the climate and biodiversity goals.
Expected impact pathway	Business trips → air and car travel → greenhouse gas emissions → climate change → biodiversity loss
Monitoring and indicators	Annual calculation of the carbon footprint of business travel, and surveys of travel between home and campus in 2027, 2030 and 2033. Indicator: carbon footprint (tCO_2e).
Responsibility for monitoring	Financial Services, Facility Services and the Division of Policy and Planning, working together
Responsibility for implementation	Financial Services (travel guidelines), unit management (implementation of practices), staff (day-to-day choices), and University management (support and leading by example).

GOAL 5: Impact through investments

Target	5.1. The carbon footprint of the University of Jyväskylä's liquid investments will decrease by 50% by 2030 and 70% by 2035 compared with the 2025 baseline. 5.2. By 2030, JYU will have established principles for assessing the biodiversity impacts of its investment activities and introduced monitoring for selected investment classes.
Grounds	Investments constitute the largest category in the University of Jyväskylä's carbon footprint. The University's Asset Management Committee has set a target of reducing the investment portfolio's carbon footprint (Scope 1 and Scope 2) by 70% by 2030 and 100% by 2035. However, the GHG Protocol also recommends Scope 3 emissions to be included where they are significant. The targets therefore differ from those set by the Asset Management Committee. Substantial reductions in the carbon footprint of investments are needed to align JYU's targets with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C goal.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Investment activities have indirect but significant impacts on the climate and biodiversity, as they direct capital towards activities that affect emissions, natural resource use and land use. A carbon-neutral investment portfolio that supports nature-positive outcomes can reduce the adverse climate and biodiversity impacts of financed activities and support the transition to a sustainable economy that safeguards biodiversity.
Expected impact pathway	Investments → business activities and technologies → emissions and nature management → climate and biodiversity
Monitoring and indicators	Annual monitoring and reporting on responsible investment. Indicators: financed emissions (tCO_2e), weighted carbon intensity, coverage of investments in the calculations (% of investment assets), the proportion of investment assets to which nature or biodiversity criteria are applied, and a

	descriptive assessment of how the method for monitoring the biodiversity impacts of investments has developed.
Responsibility for monitoring	Chief Investment Officer, supported by the Division of Policy and Planning
Responsibility for implementation	Chief Investment Officer, supported by the Division of Policy and Planning (preparations) and the Asset Management Committee (decisions).

GOAL 6: Planetary well-being in teaching

Target	By 2032, all graduating students and all teaching and other staff will have demonstrated basic competence in planetary well-being.
Grounds	The target year is 2032, which marks the end of the University of Jyväskylä's next curriculum period. Promoting planetary well-being is central to the environmental programme's vision, and a core mission of the University is to ensure that students and staff are equipped to build and lead a sustainable future.
Biodiversity and climate impacts	Education can deepen understanding of the connections between planetary well-being and the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and of the role of organisations and individuals in addressing these drivers. The development of competence can support long-term change in individual choices, workplace practices and societal decision-making.
Expected impact pathway	Education → competence and values → decision-making and practices → climate and biodiversity impacts
Monitoring and indicators	Completed study units, competence assessments, curriculum integration Indicators: - Proportion (%) of graduating students who have completed the introductory course in planetary

	well-being or an equivalent study module; competence assessment results where necessary - Proportion (%) of staff members who have completed a training module, continuing education or another programme demonstrating competence in planetary well-being - Integration of planetary well-being into the learning outcomes of degree programmes (% of programmes) - Students' self-assessed competence or competence development (%)
Responsibility for monitoring	Education Council (teaching, curriculum planning and learning outcomes), HR (staff training), Division of Policy and Planning (compilation for inclusion in the University's sustainability report)
Responsibility for implementation	Faculties and degree programmes (curricula), teaching staff (teaching), Education Council (policies), and HR (staff training).

GOAL 7: Planetary well-being in research

Target	By 2035, the University of Jyväskylä will have strengthened research activities that promote planetary well-being compared with the 2025 baseline.
Grounds	Promoting planetary well-being is central to the programme's vision for 2035. Through research, the University generates knowledge, expertise and solutions that support efforts to prevent climate change and biodiversity loss and promote society's sustainability transition. Strengthening research requires sustained investment in research environments, multidisciplinary cooperation, research funding and competence development. The target therefore extends to the end of the programme period in 2035.

Biodiversity and climate impacts	Research generates knowledge and solutions that can help support efforts to identify, prevent and reduce the main drivers of climate change and biodiversity loss and promote planetary well-being. The intended impact arises from the long-term use of research knowledge in decision-making, policy processes and practical applications (JYU's positive handprint).
Expected impact pathway	Research → knowledge and innovations → decision-making and practices → climate and biodiversity
Monitoring and indicators	The direction of research and allocation of resources to support planetary well-being and efforts to prevent and find solutions to the climate and biodiversity crises are monitored through strategic focus areas, allocation of funding, and research project themes. The societal impact of research is described as part of the University's sustainability reporting. Indicators (2025 baseline): - Number of peer-reviewed publications affiliated with JYU.Wisdom - Number of researchers affiliated with JYU.Wisdom - Number of policy citations related to climate and nature. - Ongoing cross-faculty research projects related to planetary well-being.
Responsibility for monitoring	Research Council (strategic steering of research); faculties and research services (research themes and funding); Division of Policy and Planning and Open Science Centre (databases and compilation of information for inclusion in the University's sustainability reporting).
Responsibility for implementation	Research Council (strategic direction and priorities); faculties and research services (research resources, funding and development of research environments); JYU.Wisdom (support for multidisciplinary cooperation); communications (research visibility); research staff

	(conducting research, providing expertise and applying research findings).

Implementation and monitoring

The goals set out in this environmental programme are university-level goals, and achieving them requires systematic implementation at every organisational level. The programme applies across all University activities, and its goals will be taken into account in strategy implementation, decision-making, guidelines, annual planning and sustainability reporting. Successful implementation requires visible commitment from management, encouragement and incentives for the University community, adequate resources, and the integration of environmental responsibility into day-to-day operations, duties and work plans.

Unit management is responsible for linking the environmental programme's goals as closely as possible with the unit's own activities and taking them into account in the planning and resourcing of teaching, research, services and administration. Units (faculties, independent institutes and University Services) will include measures supporting the programme's goals in their annual plans. The Division of Policy and Planning will provide expert support to units where needed for this planning. Each year, the Division of Policy and Planning will compile the units' measures into a publicly available action plan.

Monitoring of the environmental programme will be implemented with minimal administrative burden by drawing on existing structures for management, annual planning, reporting and sustainability work. Units will report on progress with measures supporting the goals as part of their regular annual reporting. The Division of Policy and Planning will compile the information, assess progress towards the University-wide goals both quantitatively and qualitatively, and report the results as part of the University's sustainability reporting.

The Ecological Sustainability and Responsibility Development Group supports the implementation and monitoring of the environmental programme by reviewing progress, identifying areas for improvement, and helping to integrate the goals into the University's decision-making and operational development. The group provides a forum for dialogue and information exchange between University management, units, University Services, students and other key stakeholders.

Achieving the environmental programme's goals also requires the University community and key stakeholders to share an understanding of how their decisions and practices affect progress towards the programme's goals. Implementation will therefore be supported through practical guidance, examples, discussions, peer learning and expert support tailored to units' needs. The University will also actively participate in national and international cooperation aimed at developing solutions for responsible procurement, reducing adverse biodiversity and climate impacts, and promoting sustainable development in higher education, among other areas.