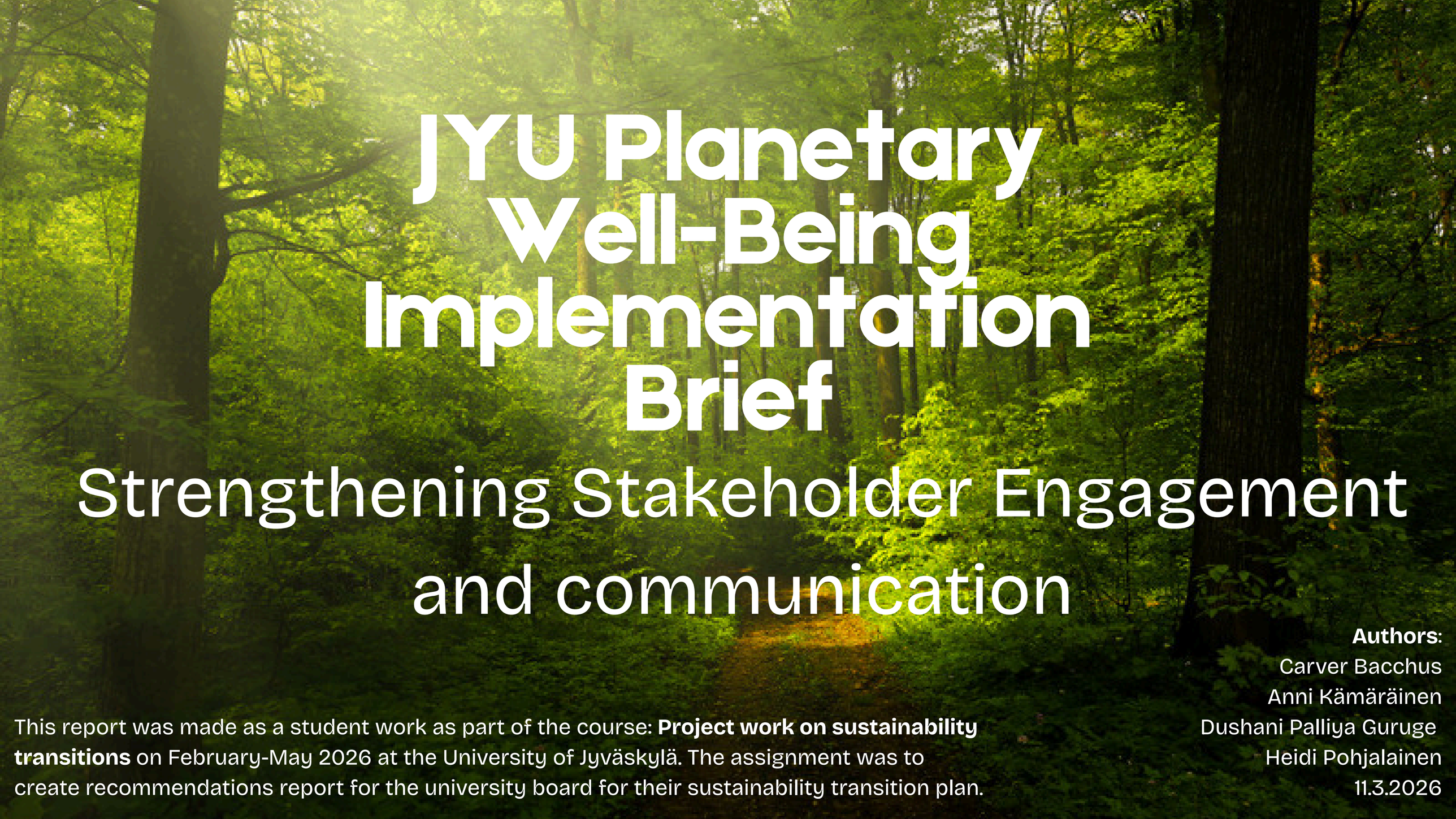


JYU Planetary Well-Being Implementation Brief

Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement and communication

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Situation Analysis

Three structural gaps:



Governance gap

Sustainability responsibilities, resource allocation, and priorities are not always clearly defined.



Behaviour gap

Sustainability knowledge does not consistently translate into everyday behaviour.



Communication gap

Research insights and environmental progress are not communicated in ways that effectively engage stakeholders.

University of Jyväskylä (JYU) has positioned **planetary well-being** as a core institutional priority in response to global biodiversity loss and climate pressures. This commitment is reflected in compulsory planetary well-being courses, interdisciplinary research initiatives, and collaboration with regional partners including the City of Jyväskylä and the Regional Council of Central Finland. JYU also contributes to international sustainability initiatives such as the FORTHEM Alliance.

While these efforts demonstrate strong institutional commitment, three structural gaps limit the impact: governance, behavior, and communication gaps.

The most relevant JYU's stakeholders considered in this report are:
→ JYU staff (especially in management, teaching and research)
→ JYU students
→ JYU partners

Addressing these challenges requires an integrated approach that aligns governance structures, behaviour change strategies, and communication tools

Strategic Approach

JYU should strengthen its planetary well-being programme through three reinforcing pillars, supported by a shared digital engagement platform.

Pillar 1 – Governance and Strategic Focus

Pillar 2 – Behaviour Change and Community Engagement

Pillar 3 – Knowledge Sharing and Strategic Communication



Pillar 1: Governance and strategic focus

To further emphasize the JYU's role as a pioneer in sustainability work, JYU should demonstrate the allocation of adequate resourcing, a clear prioritisation of goals and an increased accountability internally. Furthermore, key external stakeholders should be included in the goal review process.

Key actions are described on the following pages →

KEY ACTIONS

- Identify and allocate dedicated resources
- Prioritise sustainability goals
- Strengthen accountability
- Involve key external stakeholders in goal reviews

Identify and allocate dedicated resources

Identification:

To ensure that JYU staff have sufficient resources to perform sustainability work, a simple questionnaire should be sent to those responsible for actions: “Do you have sufficient resources to perform sustainability duties allocated to you? If not, a) what and how much do you require, b) what are the estimated impacts on the goals if no further resources are added?”. The supervisors of these employees should send the answers to the Ecological/Social Sustainability and Responsibility Development Groups, who should assess the results and their impacts on a) meeting the environmental goals and b) staff's wellbeing at work. If required, the group would escalate this to the owner of the action plan i.e. the Rector.

Allocation:

Based on the questionnaire, evaluate the requirements in JYU´s regular budgeting process. Explicitly define budget and staff time (FTE) allocated to sustainability work to ensure responsibilities are embedded within institutional operations.

KEY OUTCOMES:

→ Increased motivation and a perception of increased fairness among the employees, instead of considering project work a necessary evil on top of one's "real” duties

→ Sufficient resources enable a focused execution of sustainability work

Prioritise sustainability goals

Assess each environmental objective based on its expected contribution (e.g. into five buckets, 0-20%, 20-40%...) to overall climate and biodiversity targets. The assessment can consider for example, how much of total Co2 is the staff transport, and how much each means (less flying, more walking etc.) is expected to contribute by 2030. In case the goals are not prioritised (due to for instance, too much uncertainty in such calculations) in a measurable manner, it should be clearly outlined in the programme. Alternatively, the prioritisation could be done based on “best judgment” at the time and updated annually in the action plan.

KEY OUTCOME:

→ Prioritisation allows JYU to allocate resources to the actions with the greatest impact

Strengthen accountability

Assign clear responsibility for sustainability targets, introduce recognition or incentives for achieving goals, and ensure accountable leadership support.

Consider including personal consequences for those responsible for sustainability work. The more responsible people feel for their actions, the more likely they are to act in a more environmentally friendly manner (van Valkengoed et. al., 2022). Likely not performing their duties will result in negative comments in annual performance reviews. However, if a goal is met/not met, will there be any consequences? For instance, if a goal has been met, the person could get a monetary bonus or additional days off. If it is not met, it would decrease the annual overall rating, and result in a helpful investigation on underlying reasons. If the reason is “not enough time”, then it is for their supervisor/department to solve by allocating more time for this work, by reducing other matters on the person´s plate, or by escalating it as appropriate.

→ **Accountable leadership support is crucial.**

Include the names of individuals in the Action Plan. We assume no names are included due to staff turnover, but as The Plan is updated annually, we deem it to be accurate enough, even if all the names are not up-to-date all the time.
→ increased visibility of individuals and their work within the organisation.

KEY OUTCOME:
→ Staff involved feel more responsible, and with a clear escalation path, they feel more supported, to meet the goals owned by them.

Involve key external stakeholders in goal reviews

Identify critical external stakeholders for each goal and invite them to participate in the goal review process. Invite them to be part of the Ecological or Social Development Groups, if not yet done.

KEY OUTCOMES:

→ More timely identification of external influences, both supporting and hindering transformation; help for future goal setting

→ Positioning JYU as a pioneer and a living laboratory externally

Planetary well-being goals ultimately depend on behavioural change among students, staff, and institutional partners. Behavioural research should therefore inform programme design using the COM-B model (Michie et al, 2011).

The model identifies three factors influencing behaviour:

Capability – knowledge and skills
Opportunity – environmental and social conditions
Motivation – values, incentives and habits



Pillar 2: Behaviour Change and Community Engagement

Behaviour Change Research

Research across stakeholder groups should examine:

Capability

- awareness of environmental targets
- understanding of behavioural impacts
- confidence in sustainable decision making

Opportunity

- access to sustainable procurement options
- availability of recycling and energy-saving infrastructure
- sustainable transport alternatives
- prevailing social norms

Motivation

- alignment between personal and institutional values
- perceived effectiveness of individual actions
- interest in recognition, rewards or social comparison

Expected key outcome:

→ The research will generate a behaviour change insights report guiding communication planning, strategies, policy interventions and digital engagement tools.

Identification of gap:

JYU produces significant sustainability research through projects addressing biodiversity, circular economy, and sustainable food systems [BOOST, JUST FOOD project , KIRE circular economy ecosystem project, the Konnevesi Research Station, work of the School of Resource Wisdom (JYU.Wisdom)].

A key challenge is not only communicating results but sharing knowledge in a form that decision makers and stakeholders can directly use. When knowledge remains mainly within academic publications or internal reports, stakeholders may interpret research priorities differently, which can contribute to polarization and uneven understanding of project outcomes.

Researchers usually present findings in technical language and detailed reports while practitioners often need clear insights that can support decision making.



Pillar 3: Knowledge Sharing and Strategic Communication

Strategy

Translate sustainability research into concise, actionable knowledge products that support institutional and policy decision-making.

Intervention: Policy Brief Programme

Each research student would create a one-page, two-sided brief that distills the essential insights of their research.

The brief would start by clearly outlining the issue being studied and it would then provide three to four concrete recommendations targeted at policy makers or institutional decision makers.

Readers without specialized knowledge can understand the key message and its practical relevance. In this way, the policy brief functions as an effective knowledge sharing tool.

Expected Outcome

→ Receive concise recommendations

→ More accessible beyond the academic circle

→ May attract external public agencies, collaborative partners, especially when internal funding is limited

Better informed policy decisions

Risks

→ Since the students have different levels of experience in writing policy-oriented documents, the quality can be uneven

→ Even though briefs are produced but not actively shared with the relevant institutions

→ Difficulty in measuring the impact.

→ Sometimes the research output does not align with the timing of the policy cycles (minimize the immediate relevance)

Communication & engagement enhancements

JYU annual reports should present how much financial resources and working hours are allocated to (research) work, which aims at driving planetary well-being. Explicitly planning, stating, and communicating these resources will ensure that planetary well-being work is an integral part of JYU's strategy and operations.
Additionally, the status (“where are we at”) regarding climate and biodiversity impacts should be presented in the annual reports.

The JYU staff should receive certain number of work hours (e.g. 2 per week) to use for planetary well-being related activities. This could be something as simple as collecting trash from the nature. JYU management should give clear guidelines for how many work hours staff can use for this initiative, and the reporting of the used hours should be done transparently. The staff should, for instance, report weekly how they have used their planetary well-being hours to their team. This should be executed with a lightweight implementation: for instance, by attaching a photo of the task made with one sentence description of the task.

This model would aim to:
1. Measure how much time is used for this initiative
2. Verify that the time is used in the agreed manner and
3. Increase awareness of the actions people can, and are doing, in terms of planetary well-being.

In addition, to enhance the visibility of these initiatives, these staff reports could be presented publicly to the whole JYU community (via JYU Wisdom letters, JYU social media pages, planetary well-being course materials etc).

The environmental programme could include statements about what JYU believes is possible and what not (or very challenging) to do or change, and what values are assumed to be shared. This aims at making potential conflicts more transparent.

Stakeholders should be informed where the biggest potential for environmental impact reduction can be found.
This type of information should be presented visually e.g. on the screens at the campuses (dashboard). Use storytelling, visualisations, and short videos to communicate measurable outcomes.
This aims at letting stakeholders know the aspects that they can and should try to influence/concentrate on.

3. Enabling Platform: JYU Common Impact App

To support governance, behavioural engagement, and communication, JYU should implement a JYU Common Impact App.
This platform would serve as a shared digital infrastructure for monitoring sustainability actions, visualising environmental performance, and engaging the university community.

The App is described in the following pages.



Personal Impact Dashboard

Students, staff, and stakeholders can track sustainability-related actions such as:

- mobility choices
- food and procurement decisions
- energy-saving behaviours
- sustainability learning and research activities

Integration with existing institutional data (e.g., travel claims or procurement systems) would improve accuracy while enabling simplified personal carbon footprint calculations.

Collective Impact Dashboard

The platform would also display aggregated indicators at faculty, department, and institutional levels, including:

- progress toward environmental targets
- resource consumption indicators
- sustainability contributions across the university community

Information could be displayed through campus screens and digital platforms to reinforce shared commitment.

Expected Programme Outcomes

Community Engagement

- Majority stakeholder participation (target: 60% of the community actively using the platform)

Improved Monitoring

- Integration of travel, procurement, and facilities data within the platform
- Quarterly sustainability dashboards

Institutional Impact

- Clear governance structures for sustainability work
- Better alignment between research, policy and operational decision-making
- Stronger culture of planetary well-being across the university community

Summary of recommended actions

→ STAFF SURVEY FOR IDENTIFYING AND ALLOCATING RESOURCES
→ PRIORISATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME GOALS + ASSESSMENT OF CHALLENGES REGARDING ACHIEVING THE GOALS
→ INCENTIVES, REWARDS AND ACTIONS REGARDING ACHIEVING OR FAILING WITH TARGETS
→ EXTERNAL KEY STAKEHOLDERS REVIEWING GOALS
→ BEHAVIOR CHANGE INSIGHTS REPORT
→ POLICY BRIEF PROGRAMME
→ ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDING: RESOURCES, STATUS REGARDING THE GOALS
→ WORKING HOURS FOR PLANETARY WELL-BEING ACTIVITIES
→ INFORMING THE STAKEHOLDERS OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL ACTIONS
→ THE JYU COMMON IMPACT APP

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