



# PERIYAR UNIVERSITY

Salem- 636011, Tamil Nadu, India

## **Green and Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development**

A Green Campus is a place where environmentally friendly practices and education combine to promote sustainable and eco-friendly practices in the campus. The green campus concept offers an institution the opportunity to take the lead in redefining its environmental culture and developing new paradigms by creating sustainable solutions to environmental, social and economic needs of the mankind.

India's National Environment Policy (NEP) reflects commitment to a clean environment as mandated in Articles 48A and 51A(g) of the Indian Constitution. While recognizing the conservation of environmental resources as necessary to secure the livelihood and well-being of one and all, the NEP strives to ensure that people dependent on particular resources obtain better livelihood from their conservation, rather than degradation. The NEP reiterates that only such development is sustainable, which respects ecological constraints, and the imperatives of social justice.

The NEP takes a comprehensive view of our environmental concerns and also outlines a few guidelines which deserve mention as a preface to the Periyar Universities' Policy on Environment and Sustainable Development (Periyar University). The key objectives of NEP are: conservation of critical environmental resources, intra• generational and inter-generational equity, and integration of environmental concerns in economic and social development, efficiency in utilization of potential environmental resources, environmental governance, and enhancement of environmental conservation. The policy highlights the prescriptive principles underlying policy action, strategic themes for intervention, broad indications of the legislative and institutional development needed to accomplish the strategic themes, and mechanisms for implementation and review. It also intends to guide actions in such areas as regulatory reform, programmes and projects for environmental conservation; and review and enactment of legislation, by agencies of the Central, State, and Local Governments. The NEP recognizes that maintaining a healthy environment is not the state's responsibility alone, but also that of every citizen and thus encourages individual as well as institutional participation for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment.

In accordance with the India's National Environment Policy, the Periyar University expresses its commitment to be a positive and creative catalyst in the protection and enhancement of the local and global environment and sustainable development through teaching, research, public service, administrative and support operations. The University is committed to adoptive a culture of environmental responsibility, both within and outside the University. Thus, Periyar University is hereby crafted to ensure that the protection and improvement of the environment remains the guiding principle for all our activities within and across the University.

### **Purpose**

The policy statement outlines how the University shall pursue best practices in the realm of environment and encourage the sustainable use of community resources. It sets out the principles, priority areas and procedures for implementation, management and evaluation of the environment plan for the University. The enactment and implementation of this visionary Periyar University will serve an model of how Universities could assume the stewardship in the advancement of environment and sustainable development within the campus and in larger community.

### **Context**

The University remains dedicated to high standards of environmental protection and leadership as reflected in a range of its activities including teaching, research and community service. The University has in fact developed a strong environmental research focus and a reputation for being an environmentally responsible institution. The green campus of the University encompassing extensive nature areas and farm land has added to its credentials in this area. The University believes it has a special responsibility to exercise environmental leadership.

Being a reflection of the larger community in which they exist, the Universities too have to deal with the problem posed by the struggle between a fast-paced development to meet the rapid growth in population and the imperative of sustainable development. The University can help by generating useful resources and repositories of knowledge in the field of sustainable development and also by being the sources of technical and societal solutions to a vast array of issues relating to sustainable development.

## **Principles**

In pursuing its environment policy, Periyar University shall:

- ensure that the environment will not suffer as a result of various activities undertaken by the University. This entails minimization of negative impacts on the environment, conservation and judicious use of natural resources, respect for biodiversity and rehabilitation of degraded environmental components.
- provide safe and healthy environment for staff and students.
- promote environmental awareness and sensitivity among the University community by sensitizing how their actions can affect the environment, and how even small changes in their attitudes and actions can collectively contribute to a more sustainable future and improved quality of environment.
- ensure compliance with all applicable environmental regulations.
- develop environmental auditing and monitoring procedures effective for a University setting.
- ensure and encourage greater commitment to multidisciplinary research in various key environmental issues at local, national and global levels.
- participate and contribute to the environmental decision-making processes at the community level and launching initiatives to promote networks cutting across Universities and civil society thus assuming the stewardship of the region an environment.

## **Priority areas**

### **Water**

The University shall conserve water and minimize its utilization through efficient water management practices. All the buildings are RO water facilities for drinking purposes and well connected with Rainwater Harvesting System (RHS) in terms of artificial recharge and revival of traditional methods for enhancing groundwater recharge. An on-going programme of water conservation would be instituted to monitor the consumption, reduce the leakage and eliminate the excessive or unnecessary use. Besides, the wastewater from various buildings and hostels are subject to sewage treatment and used for irrigation purposes within University campus premises.

## **Air Quality**

The University shall mitigate the harmful effects of its traffic on the environment. Our University is advised to the students and all the staff members for minimal utilization of vehicles within the campus. Walking, cycling and use of electric and battery vehicles inside the campus shall be encouraged. Further, University promotes the '*periodical emission quality checking*' of the vehicles in order to avoid air and noise pollution.

## **Waste Management**

The waste management policy of the University shall aim to reduce the generation of wastes in all ways possible. This will be done by reducing the acquisition of new materials, and by re-using and recycling the existing materials and, if this is impractical, by disposal in such a way that will have least impact on the environment and which conforms to the statutory requirements. It shall attempt to minimize the quantities of polluting effluent and emissions to air, land and water, and noise, and odor. The University shall also minimize the use of hazardous chemicals and toxic sanitary substances in the research laboratories. The University shall collect the wastes in separate containers for both biodegradable and non-biodegradable which shall be easily handled for further processing. The collected leaf litters shall be used for sustainable organic farming practices including biocomposting and vermin composting. The University commits to a comprehensive recycling programme as the final step in solid waste reduction and as a means to transform waste into resources. It shall segregate, recycle, and reuse its solid wastes and shall develop biogas production from hostel and canteen food waste.

## **Energy**

The University shall conserve energy by minimizing its usage to significantly reduce the University's carbon footprint by pursuing a low carbon regime pathway. The University shall strive to maximize energy efficiency in existing buildings, renovations, and new construction. It will periodically review its energy sources, energy forms, and energy efficiency with a view to cause least environmental impact. It will carry out a continuous programme of energy conservation by monitoring the consumption and eliminating redundant or avoidable energy loss.

## **Green Buildings**

The University recognizes the importance of environmentally responsible practices in developing the physical characteristics of the University. The University shall consider environmental implications in the development, construction, and operation of campus infrastructure, grounds, and buildings. It shall develop and so maintain its buildings and estate to conserve resources and minimize its negative impact on the environment. It shall ensure that the potential environmental impacts of all its building will be assessed and minimized. It shall consider the possibility of green building concepts include the use of building materials from sustainable sources, methods of construction which make best use of resources and designs which result in low maintenance and high energy efficiency.

## **Biodiversity Resources Sustainable Resource Acquisition**

The University recognizes that one of the primary methods of exercising its commitment to environmental responsibility is through its resource acquisition choices. The University shall strive to obtain maximum value for its expenditures and shall work towards obtaining the "best value" by balancing short and long-term costs, maintenance, life cycle, and environmental costs in purchasing goods and services. Sustainable purchasing is all about taking environmental and social factors into account in making purchasing decisions. Therefore, through its purchasing policies, the University shall seek goods and services, which do least harm to the environment in their production, delivery, packaging, use, re-use, recycling and disposal. It shall seek to purchase from local or regional suppliers which will maximize the University's input to the local community and minimize transport. Policies will encourage obtaining products that minimize waste production, have high recycled content, use green production methods, demonstrate maximum durability or biodegradability, reparability, energy-efficiency, non-toxicity, and recyclability.

## **Environmental and Green Audit**

The University is committed to the environmental audit needs and will try to impart training which will be beneficial to staff and students. For this, University will look forward for opportunity in tying up with Audit Agencies and would also be aware of the future developments taking place in the global scenario. Natural Resource Accounting is an entirely new area in which University shall embark upon and explore different horizons. Carbon credit earning can be a new avenue for revenue generation.

## **Environmental Education, Training and Awareness**

Periyar University shall promote the awareness of environment and sustainable development issues amongst its staff and students. For this, the University shall provide staff with training in environment and sustainable development matters, encourage the inclusion of environment and sustainable development content within academic curricula, and sponsor campaigns to raise the awareness of environmental issues among staff and students. The University shall also promote environment sensitization in the communities at local and regional levels and assist, network and jointly sponsor environment initiatives.

## **Publication and Dissemination**

The University shall build partnerships with the local community and national organisations to promote its environmental objectives and communicate and disseminate its environmental performance and activities with the local community through publications and media. The University shall plan to conduct several awareness programmes within the campus and neighbor villages and town to create an environmental awareness on the eve of important international days pertaining to Sustainable development Goals (SDGs)

## **Implementation of the Policy**

To implement this Policy on Environment and Sustainable Development:

- The University shall establish a ‘Campus Environment Development Committee’ commissioning academic and administrative staff, and students.
- The role of the Campus Environment Development Committee shall be to:
  - i. develop and recommend programmes to meet the objectives set for each of the priority areas listed above. Community participation shall be encouraged in this process.
  - ii. establish action groups to develop and recommend Programmes and performance indicators to monitor progress in each of the priority areas.
  - iii. Experts in each of the areas from both within and outside the University shall be consulted wherever desired.
  - iv. oversee implementation of the Periyar University in the University;
  - v. Periodical review of University policies and procedures to ensure consistency with the Periyar University.

- vi. carry out appropriate environmental audits.
- vii. Undertake education and training programmes to inform the University community about this policy and how its members can meet the objectives set forth in it;
- viii. monitor best practices and formulate and publicize environmental 'Do, and Don't,' for the residents from time to time;
- ix. annually issue a report that includes sections on each of the priority areas, presenting a summary of monitoring information, summarizing initiatives undertaken and identifying matters that require particular attention;
- x. the University shall designate a 'Campus Environment Development Officer' who shall act as Secretary of the Campus Environment Development Committee.
- xi. the 'Campus Environment Development Officer' shall receive complaints and suggestions from campus residents regarding environmental violations and shall take necessarily follow up action in the matter.
- xii. appropriate Units, as determined by the University administration, shall be required to prepare their action plans based on the framework established in this Periyar University.