

# **Sustainable Development Vision and mission of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt**

– Overall Sustainability Concept 2020 to 2030 –

(adopted on March 31, 2020, by the University Management  
and the steering group “Sustainability & Fair Trade”)

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## Preliminary remark

The present concept was developed by the Sustainable Development Coordinator of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (KU) in collaboration with her employee, the Campus Environmental Manager and the steering group “Sustainability & Fair Trade” that includes members of all departments and status groups at the University as well as representatives from the sustainability cluster within the transfer project “Mensch in Bewegung”.

The framework paper “Education for sustainable development – vision and mission of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt” that preceded this concept was first approved in a meeting of the University Management on December 1, 2010. Since then, it serves as a basic guideline for action in management decisions taken by the University Management.

The present new concept that was unanimously adopted by the steering group on December 3, 2019, is based on the framework paper from 2010 and seeks to consolidate already implemented measures and develop them further as well as to define new objectives for the next ten years until 2030 in line with new scientific findings and past experiences. The measures that are to be implemented for attaining stipulated objectives are agreed on annually in the context of the sustainability program.

## 1 Social and political framework conditions

Drawing on the study “Our Common Future” published by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, the paradigm of sustainable development has increasingly made its way into politics, the economy and society. At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, 1992), the world community included the topic of sustainable development as a development guideline in the “Agenda 21”. In chapter 36, the Agenda 21 establishes the first official connection between sustainable development and education.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 emphasized the connection between sustainable development and education and declared the period from 2005-2014 to be the World Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The UN World Decade was followed by the Global Action Programme ESD in 2015 (2015-2019) that was developed by the UNESCO as an international framework for follow-up activities to the UN Decade. It is integrated into the Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Meanwhile, the Global Action Programme was extended until 2030 with the official motto “Education for Sustainable Development: Towards achieving the SDGs”.

In the same year in which the Global Action Programme was launched, Pope Francis published the encyclical “Laudato Si” that also addressed global environmental and development problems.

In his letter, the Pope requested that global development must change direction and progress must be newly defined.

In 2017, Germany adopted its National Action Plan ESD as a result of the Global Action Programme that defined objectives and measures for all educational fields, including the higher educational sector.

## 2 Development at university level

Already in the 1990s, higher education institutions worldwide started to react to the new requirements in the educational system with the implementation of the Copernicus Charta. In Germany, the German Rectors' Conference and the German UNESCO Commission issued a common declaration on university education for sustainable development based on the UN Decade in 2010. It appeals to all universities to base their actions more strongly on the guiding principle of sustainability and implement ESD as a constitutive element in all fields of action, i.e. research, teaching and campus management. This declaration was the decisive motivation for the KU to adopt an overall concept and set out towards becoming a more sustainable university in 2010.

In the context of the Global Action Programme and resulting from the National Action Plan, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) has repeated its appeal to German universities in 2018, reiterating the request to increase sustainability efforts. Despite all efforts, it must be stated that only about 5-10% of German universities have to date established an overall sustainability concept (Whole-Institution Approach). It is expected that the implementation of the National Action Plan ESD in the German federal states from 2017 onwards will provide for increased momentum when it comes to structural implementation of ESD at universities in the future. The German Council for Sustainable Development seeks to support these initiatives with the development of a sustainability code specifically for the higher educational sector that was published in 2018. In its resolution "For a culture of sustainability" taken in 2018, the German Rectors' Conference takes up the topic of sustainability again and lists successful ways for implementing increased sustainability as an updated summary of its declaration published in 2009.

In the past years, scientific approaches to sustainability have also significantly increased at German universities. The first step was to gain an overview of what could already be achieved (see Bavarian project STMUV on sustainable universities: criteria for evaluating the status quo (*KriNaHo*)) and implementation of sustainability activities at universities (Project *Hoch-N* funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (*BMBF*)). Furthermore, many structural requirements for activities in the field of sustainability were implemented in the past

years (BMBF/GWK funding line innovative university) and also students' interest in getting involved in sustainability issues has increased (e.g. through the 'network n'). Already existing research results mainly dealt with developing an awareness for sustainability and expanding on the three original fields of action in connection with sustainability at universities – research, teaching and campus management – by adding the two additional fields of transfer and governance (*Hoch-N*) as well as by making student initiatives the sixth field of action (*KriNaHo*; see also Fig. 1).

### 3 Developments at the KU

#### 3.1 Understanding of sustainability and action areas at the KU

In the context of this Overall Sustainability Concept, the KU defines sustainable development as a basis for action as follows (see sustainability report 2018/19, p. 6):

*In line with the concept outlined by the German Council for Sustainable Development, we generally understand sustainable development as a form of development that is ecologically, economically, and socioculturally balanced and takes global and intergenerational fairness into account. In this context, we have committed to the objective of a so-called strong sustainability, because we consider natural resources to be the basic prerequisite for all other fields of development.*

With its understanding of sustainability, the KU is in line with the scientifically developed understanding of sustainability, as is illustrated in a more differentiated way by the above-mentioned projects *Hoch-N* and *KriNaHo*.

The Overall Sustainability Concept can be seen as a long-term strategy for raising KU employees' and students' awareness for the topic of sustainable development so that they, as future decision-makers, can act in favor of sustainable development when shaping corresponding processes. In this context, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) requires a close collaboration between research and teaching. This symbiosis can especially be successful when sustainability measures are generally implemented on campus as a whole. Therefore, the KU wants to anchor sustainable development as a constitutive element in all six action areas in line with a whole-institution approach. In doing so, the KU is particularly aware of its social responsibility (Third Mission) and is actively working towards a sustainable development of society on all levels (local, regional, national, global).

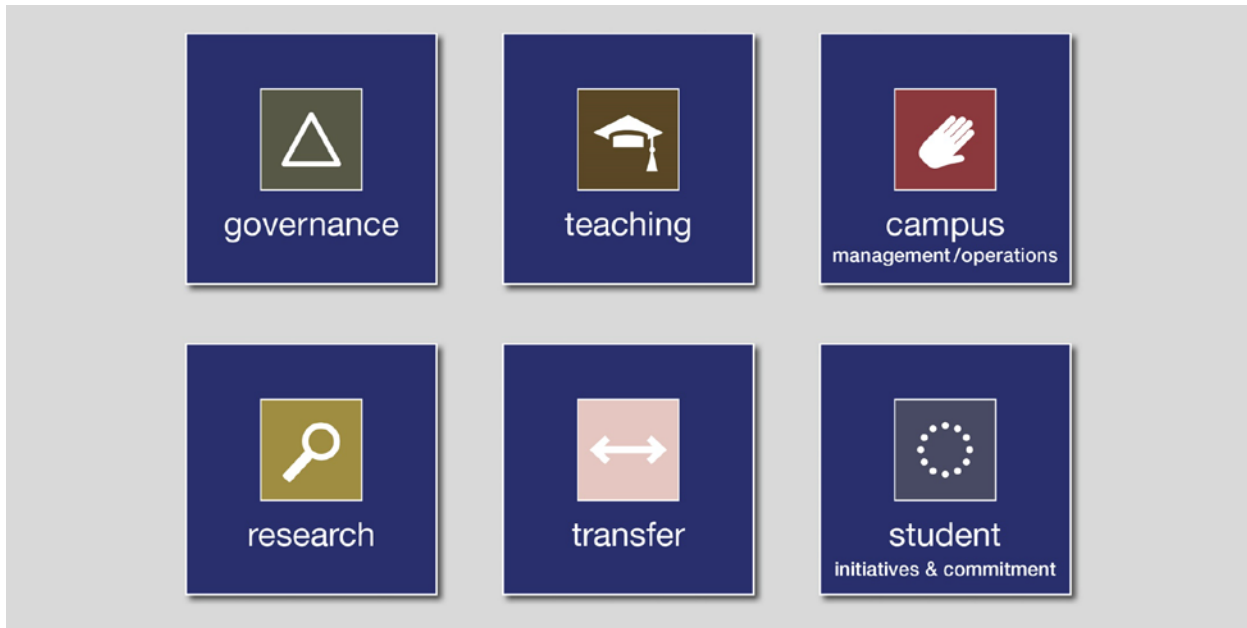


Fig. 1: The six sustainability action areas at the KU (C. Pietsch).

### 3.2 Overall guidelines at the KU: Foundation Charter, Basic Rules, development plan and guiding principles

Just as in the previous version of the Foundation Charter dated September 15, 2010, the new KU Foundation Charter dated April 01, 2020, also refers to sustainability in Article 3, para. 5, stating that the University “...is an academic community which is grounded in the Christian view of human life, the ethical foundations of personality, justice, solidarity, subsidiarity and sustainability.” This basic orientation was reinforced by the preamble of the Basic Rules in 2016.

In 2014, sustainability was included as a central action area in the KU’s development plan. “*In this context, the KU considers itself as an institution serving sustainable development for society and wants to make a contribution to raising awareness for and overcoming the global problems and crises of our times (...)*”. (Development plan 2014, p. 3)

Furthermore, the University adopted guiding sustainability principles in the context of being awarded the EMAS certificate in 2015. These principles outline fundamental guidelines for action at the KU and were drafted in line with the requirements of the EMAS regulation.

### 3.3 Past development at the KU

The KU has been following a whole-institution approach since 2010, when it adopted a sustainability concept for the entire institution with the aim of increasingly anchor the topic of

sustainability in its structures (see Fig. 2).

In 2014, the KU received an award from the German UNESCO Commission (DUK) for its sustainability concept in the context of the World Decade ESD. One year after the award, the University received its EMAS certificate. In the context of the UN Global Action Programme on ESD, the KU was repeatedly praised as “exemplary place of learning” by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German UNESCO Commission in 2016, 2018 and 2019. Furthermore, the KU was awarded the title “Fairtrade University” in 2017 and was the first university in Germany to be awarded the “EMASplus” certificate in 2019. In summer 2019, the KU was the first university in Germany to undergo an evaluation process with its Overall Sustainability Concept being assessed by external experts.

Among the wide range of sustainability activities in all six action areas, these two major projects should be highlighted in particular: The project ‘Laudato Si’ that aims to open up the papal encyclical to wide discussion and analyze its effectiveness, as well as the transfer project “Mensch in Bewegung”, which has set up a sustainability cluster to promote sustainable development in the region.

All developments at the KU in connection with sustainability are published in an annual sustainability report since 2012. Furthermore, the KU’s sustainability website ([www.ku.de/nachhaltigkeit](http://www.ku.de/nachhaltigkeit)) offers comprehensive information on the initiatives and measures.



Fig. 2: Sustainability developments at the KU (C. Pietsch).

## 4 Action areas, aims and measures

In order to attain the objectives for sustainable development and Education for Sustainable Development at the KU in the framework of the overall concept and in line with a whole-institution approach, operationalized objectives and measures must be implemented in the action areas of research, teaching, campus management, governance, student initiatives & commitment and transfer. When differentiating between these action areas, the KU takes current scientific discourse as a basis (see Chapter 2).

In the following, we will start by presenting an interpretation of the fields of action and criteria in accordance with the above-mentioned documents and results of scientific studies followed by a brief summary of the status quo regarding implementation at the KU and conclude with an outlook on the objectives that are to be fulfilled by 2030. The measures for attaining these objectives are agreed on in the annual sustainability program and, where possible, formulated in line with the SMART method (specific, measurable, activating, reasonable, time-bound). Progress with regard to these objectives is documented and reflected on each year in the context of the sustainability report that is issued publicly and the EMAS management review for the University Management.

#### 4.1 Objectives in the action area governance

The basis for a sustainable university development is a supportive governance structure within the University. All university activities should be based on the guiding sustainability principles in all six action areas. The University Management is in the process of setting up a target-oriented control system and institutionalizing sustainability by allocating clear responsibilities and process descriptions to integrate sustainable development as a strategic task that has an impact on all internal processes and structures and the core pillars of research and teaching.

As already described in chapter 3, the KU has been actively committed to implement sustainable development since 2010 and has already made significant progress. Figure 3 shows the current status of institutionalization of sustainability at the KU.

### Governance-structure – using the example of KU

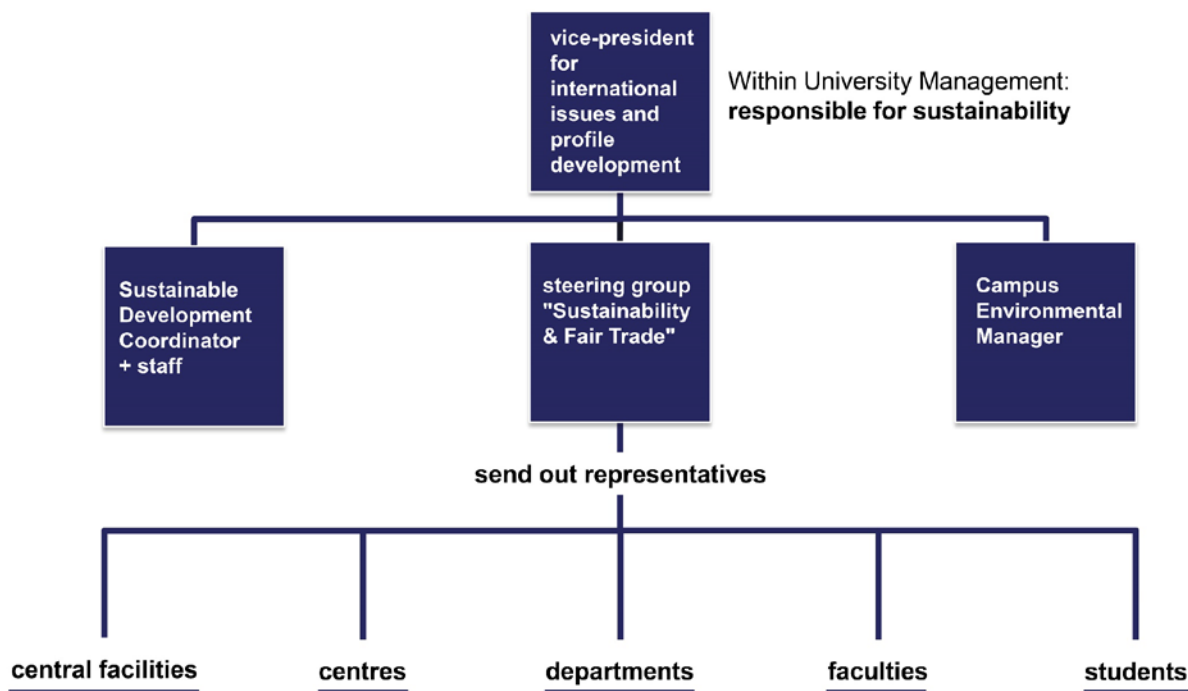


Fig. 3: Current governance structure in the field of sustainability at the KU (C. Pietsch).

For the next ten years to come, the KU has set the following objectives for the field of governance in order to consolidate sustainability in its structures and processes further. It is planned that the KU reaches these objectives by 2030:

#### Governance objective 1:

**The profile element of sustainability at the KU is clearly and visibly anchored in the University's Mission Statement and development plan. On this basis, a joint and widely supported understanding of sustainability at the KU will be developed further.**



**Responsibilities within the field of sustainability have been clearly allocated to different officers and those officers have received adequate equipment (responsible for implementation: University Management).**

**Governance objective 2:**

**The profile element of sustainability and all connected structures and activities are clearly visible both internally and externally (responsible for implementation: Department of Communication and Marketing, Sustainable Development Coordinator).**

**Governance objective 3:**

**Sustainability criteria are involved in all major decisions within the KU; internal processes and structures are designed in a sustainable way; progress will be assessed and documented, reported and evaluated in regular intervals and corresponding measures will be passed based on this evaluation (responsible for implementation: Heads of committees and heads of departments, Sustainable Development Coordinator).**

**Governance objective 4:**

**The profile element of sustainability is anchored in the appointment policy and human resource development at the KU (responsible for implementation: University Management, HR Department, Staff Representative Committee).**

## 4.2 Objectives in the action area research

The topic area of sustainability is an interdisciplinary cross-cutting issue. In addition to subject-specific scientific findings, it focuses mainly on interdisciplinary research findings, as these are of particular importance due to the complexity and multiple causality of environmental and development problems. The findings and expertise gained in the humanities, in economic and social sciences and natural sciences must be interlinked more closely in order to be able to take into account all complex interdependencies between humans and their social environment.

In 2010, a research training group established the topic of sustainability as an important field of research at the KU. In the more recent past, an increasing number of research projects and publications that have an explicit or significant connection to the field of sustainability were acquired/published. These projects and research questions already involve several different disciplines. Subject-specific and interdisciplinary research collaborations have been established – often also involving external colleagues.

The understanding of sustainability research in this concept is based on the *Hoch-N* sustainability guideline in higher education research type 2 (research for a sustainable development) and type

3 (sustainability research). The process shall be accompanied by discussions, e.g. on cultural and global differences in perception of sustainability and a critical reflection of the transformation. It is planned that the KU reaches the following objectives by 2030 in close collaboration with the responsible officers for research and early-career researchers:

**Research objective 1:**

**Research for a sustainable development and sustainability research is structurally anchored at the KU in 2030 and receives strong support (responsible for implementation: University Management, Research Service Center, researchers).**

**Research objective 2:**

**The research projects for sustainable development and sustainability research at the KU are clearly visible both internally and externally (responsible for implementation: Research Service Center, Library, Sustainable Development Coordinator, researchers).**

**Research objective 3:**

**The KU is represented in relevant regional, national and international research programs and sustainability networks (responsible for implementation: University Management, Research Service Center, Sustainable Development Coordinator, researchers).**

#### 4.3 Objectives in the action area teaching, studies, professional development and continuing education

In line with the program *Transfer 21* that was initiated by the federal-states-and-government-commission, the aim of ESD is to impart “skills for shaping developments” (“*Gestaltungskompetenz*”). This includes the ability to apply knowledge on sustainable development and to recognize problems connected to non-sustainable development. This means that actors in the field must be able to draw conclusions on ecological, economic and social developments from analyses of the present and future scenarios by taking into account mutual interdependencies. Furthermore, they must be able to make corresponding decisions based on this, as well as to understand and implement according actions with which sustainable development processes can be realized. In this context, ESD has an influence on all levels and phases of lifelong learning.

Within the teaching practice, it is the task of universities and higher education institutions to promote acquisition of knowledge and skills that allow students to understand sustainability in all its facets and to recognize and assess challenges along the way towards sustainable development. This will enable them to act responsibly in their future life and careers (“skills for

shaping developments”). In this context, specialist knowledge must be combined with communicative skills for participatory decision-making and problem-solving competence. Connecting the fields of research and teaching as well as disciplinary and interdisciplinary study offers is of crucial importance in this respect.

As early as in 2010, ESD was incorporated in some individual fields within the teaching practice at the KU (environmental education, global learning, responsibility for creation). With the launch of the Master’s degree program in “Geography: Education for Sustainable Development” in the 2010/2011 winter semester, the University has made an important step towards integrating the topic in its teaching practice. Meanwhile, the degree program also comprises three virtual modules.

Both modules on sustainable development that are included in the Studium.Pro offer as well as the module on sustainable nutrition are offered for all KU students as required elective modules or elective modules. Furthermore, the module “Foundations and Examples of Practical Implementation of Sustainable Development” gives students the possibility to gain practical experience in the project *Kapuzinergarten Eden* and the beekeeping project. The KU also offers intra-faculty teaching offers, for example with the project seminars in the Master’s program, in the project module ‘Sustainable Development’ or with the ‘Changemaker’ module introduced in 2018. They offer students the possibility to work on practical solutions for pressing socio-ecological problems and, where possible, implement them straight away.

The collaboration project “Mensch in Bewegung” that was launched in 2018 together with the TH Ingolstadt has set up the transfer clusters “Sustainability” and “Social Engagement” that seek to make enhanced use of the potential of the teaching practice and make it usable for transfer activities.

A focus on sustainability or certain sustainability modules has existed in several Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programs for years (e.g. in Geography, Political Science, Social Work, Business and Economics). For the 2019/20 winter semester, the already existing Master’s degree program in Tourism and Sustainable Regional Development strengthened its orientation towards sustainable development by adapting its title and module offer.

For several years now, the KU has been offering continuing education and professional training in ESD for teachers of all school types. The area of professional development and continuing education will be given even more attention at universities in the future. The certificate course in “Sustainable Education at Catholic Schools based on the Marchtaler Plan”, which was developed further in 2019, already reflects this development. This course ensures innovative continuing education and professional development opportunities for teachers at Catholic schools as regards ESD and transfer to educational institutions.

The supplementary program in “Sustainable Development” was launched in the 2019/20 winter

semester. This offer enables all interested students to take a closer look at the topic.

The KU's Mission Statement for Studies and Teaching that was adopted in 2019 explicitly includes the topic of sustainability. We want to achieve the following objectives in the areas of teaching, studies and continuing education by 2030 in consultation with the responsible officers for teaching and the Student Representatives Council:

**Teaching objective 1:**

**All students have come into contact with sustainable development and/or ESD in the course of their studies and have the possibility to take advantage of an accredited ESD offer (responsible for implementation: lecturers, University Management, administration, University Teaching Methodology Department).**

**Teaching objective 2:**

**Sustainability/ESD is integrated into a clearly visible proportion of degree programs, certificates and focus areas at the KU (responsible for implementation: lecturers, Center for Teacher Education (ZLB), subject areas, faculties).**

**Teaching objective 3:**

**The KU is an important point of contact for continuing education and professional development in the field of ESD at several levels (responsible for implementation: lecturers, University Teaching Methodology Department, Center for Teacher Education (ZLB), Staff Representative Committee, Campus Environmental Manager, Sustainable Development Coordinator, HR department/HR development).**

#### 4.4 Objectives in the action area campus management/operations

On an institutional level, universities should also adapt their internal procedures to reflect the guiding sustainability principles. Energy-efficient construction of university buildings, energy saving, effective management of resources, sustainable mobility concepts, and consideration of fair trade principles in procurement – these are some examples of areas in which universities can act as role models (see also KU EMAS Sustainability Guidelines).

Some of the measures that were demanded by the student initiative "Sustainable Campus" have already been implemented at the KU, among them, for example, the university-wide use of recycled paper for all printers, tips on energy saving in the event rooms or the offer of fair trade products in the cafeteria and the vending machines of the *Sozialwerk*. In addition, the KU has committed to a continuous improvement process through its EMAS certification in 2015. Since 2017, the University bears the title "Fairtrade University" and continuously seeks to promote the use of fair products further. In 2019, the KU was awarded the EMASplus certification, with which

it extended its environmental management to become an overall sustainability management.

The following objectives were set for the next few years to be implemented until 2030 at the latest in close collaboration with the University Management and the respectively responsible actors:

**Campus objective 1:**

**The sustainability management of EMASplus and the associated annual sustainability program has led to visible and measurable progress (traceable through fixed indicators) in all three areas (ecological, social and economic).**

**The individual measures for the objectives of the Overall Sustainability Concept are reflected in the sustainability program (responsible for implementation: Sustainable Development Coordinator, Campus Environmental Manager, steering group).**

**Campus objective 2:**

**The KU is climate-neutral in line with formulated system boundaries by 2025 at the latest.**

**Campus objective 3:**

**Many KU members are actively involved in the sustainable design of the campus and participate in a sustainable campus life.**

**Campus objective 4:**

**The objectives, measures and successes within the framework of EMASplus or campus management are clearly communicated and perceived both internally and externally.**

**(Responsible for implementation: Department of Communication and Marketing, Campus Environmental Manager).**

#### 4.5 Objectives in the action area student initiatives & commitment

Student initiatives and their commitment for sustainable development within and outside the University play an important role in the initiation of and the KU's further development towards a sustainable university. These include, for example, actions such as the Human Rights Day, the lecture series on the topic environment, the clothes-swap parties and the Sustainability Week, which is jointly organized by several initiatives each year. This commitment should be recognized and promoted in the best possible way by the University Management and KU staff, as it enables students to acquire important aspects of "skills for shaping developments".

The commitment of the University's student groups in the field of sustainability, above all the groups "environmental group" and "DenkNachhaltig! e.V.", but also the Amnesty International University Group, has contributed greatly to the further development of the KU towards a sustainable university in the past years and has also played a significant role in shaping the external

impact of the KU in this field.

The following goals will be pursued over the next few years in close cooperation with the University Management and student initiatives and should be achieved by 2030:

**Commitment objective 1:**

**Involvement and commitment in student initiatives is valued and encouraged (responsible for implementation: University Management, lecturers, foundations).**

**Commitment objective 2:**

**The participation of students is high at various levels (especially in teaching and committees) due to the structural integration into the sustainability activities at the KU (responsible for implementation: University Management, everybody).**

**Commitment objective 3:**

**Students' activities in the field of sustainability are supported structurally and financially (responsible for implementation: University Management).**

#### 4.6 Objectives in the action area transfer

As places where knowledge is acquired and imparted, universities are important players in adequately meeting the global and regional challenges connected to sustainable development. They play a key role in the further development of concepts and educational innovations for the implementation of sustainable development worldwide and in the transfer to local and regional society and the respective innovation systems. The interaction of research, teaching and practice, as anchored in *Hoch-N* and *KriNaHo*, supports the adjustment process of a society to ever new challenges.

As a sustainable university, the KU has set out on the path of using knowledge for the necessary transformation towards a sustainable society in a targeted manner. In order to be effective in society, it is dependent on mutual exchange with actors from civil society and their practical experiences. Together with the department "KU.impact – Knowledge Transfer, Educational Innovation and Social Responsibility" as well as the University Management, the steering group Sustainability & Fair Trade and other responsible persons, the following goals in the action field of transfer will be pursued for the coming years and should be achieved by 2030:

**Transfer objective 1:**

**Due to its competence in the field of sustainable development, the KU has established as a popular partner for social and scientific players outside the University (responsible for implementation: Department KU.impact, researchers, Sustainable Development Coordinator).**

#### **Transfer objective 2:**

**The KU has continuously expanded its transfer activities and thus offers a supportive framework for initiatives and projects in the field of sustainability within the University (responsible for implementation: University Management, Sustainable Development Coordinator, department KU.impact).**

#### **Transfer objective 3:**

**In developing the KU transfer strategy, the Overall Sustainability Concept has been considered and anchored (responsible for implementation: University Management, department KU.impact, researchers).**

## 5 Implementation strategies

### 5.1 Coordination and steering

The University Management has appointed a Sustainable Development Coordinator, who is responsible for the coordination of the KU's sustainability activities in close cooperation with the University Management and the steering group Sustainability & Fair Trade. One member of staff and the Campus Environmental Manager provide support (see Fig. 3). The steering group consists of representatives from the faculties, the institutions, the administration and committed student groups, such as the environmental group, DenkNachhaltig! e.V., Amnesty International University Group and Students for Future.

### 5.2 Website

The KU's activities in the field of sustainability are always published and kept up-to-date at [www.ku.de/nachhaltigkeit](http://www.ku.de/nachhaltigkeit). Major innovations or events are also reported on the KU's main page. The latter should be published twice a month on average.

### 5.3 Evaluation

The overall sustainability concept is to be evaluated externally on a regular basis, e.g. by external expert evaluations, EMAS audits, BMBF and UNESCO awards.

This framework concept is to be understood as an open concept, which is open for constant further development and adaptation to the organizational conditions.

The following KU members have contributed to the development of this Overall Sustainability Concept:



*The steering group "Sustainability & Fair Trade" with its members (alphabetical order): Prof. Dr. Ulrich Bartosch, Johannes Baumann, Dr. Simone Birkel, Dr. Nils Blümer, Barbara Böhm, Bernhard Brandel, Eduard Breitenhuber, Prof. Dr. Ina Brendel-Perpina, Prof. Dr. Bernd Cyffka, DenkNachhaltig! e. V., Jennifer Dobschenzki, Christine Feierle, Prof. Dr. Alexis Fritz, Prof. Dr. André Habisch, Siegfried Hartmann, Christiane Heimerer, Prof. Dr. Ingrid Hemmer, Andrea Käsbohrer, Christian Klenk, Simone Leneis, Ina Limmer, Prof. Dr. Anne-Kathrin Lindau, Christian Meier, Albert Pfaller, Hans-Martin Pfrang, Claudia Pietsch, Daniel Romic, Michael Schieder, Prof. Dr. Robert Schmidt, Constantin Schulte-Strathaus, Thomas Schwab, Bernhard Semmler, Prof. Dr. Thomas Setzer, Umweltreferat, Prof. Dr. Rainer Wenrich, Stefan Wenzel, Alexander Würth, Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Zademach, Prof. Dr. Burkard Zapff, Michael Zörner.*