



Edinburgh Climate Change Institute

Collaborating to accelerate climate action

Vision Statement | November 2022



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH

About us

The Edinburgh Climate Change Institute was established in 2010 to support the transition to a climate neutral resilient Scotland. The climate change challenge is an environmental, social and economic priority, and therefore our focus is identifying the most effective ways to accelerate action towards a thriving and sustainable net zero Scotland.

We are the University of Edinburgh's climate change institute and provide its hub for supporting evidenced-based climate action across Scotland. Based in our award-winning energy efficient building in central Edinburgh, we are a thriving community of leading climate change academics, researchers, practitioners and communicators on climate change in Scotland. See here details on ECCI's array of programmes and teams: <https://edinburghcentre.org/>

The ECCI community includes agencies who work to tackle climate change and experienced researchers and practitioners working on externally funded challenge driven projects. Bringing together experts from across the University and beyond, such as Sniffer, Wave Energy Scotland and Scottish Carbon Capture and Storage is essential to achieving climate neutrality and resilience.

Located in the heart of Edinburgh, ECCI is a leading centre for research, teaching, policy and practice for climate action.

The University of Edinburgh holds a wealth of climate change expertise and the ECCI community actively works across multiple schools and institutes to connect and harness this expertise for Scotland's climate resilience. Our community also includes students studying climate change and those that teach them. We are therefore an interdisciplinary collective of experts who deliver research, policy, education and training.

ECCI led projects are primarily funded through research and government grants, public and private sector support, and through expert consultancy. We seek to work with a diverse range of agents for change focused on evidence based climate solutions.

This document sets out the ECCI vision and strategic goals (2022-2027). These were co-created by the ECCI community and will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Our vision

Our vision is a resilient, just and climate neutral Scotland, showing leadership in global climate action.

We create, support and work in partnership with researchers, communities, policy makers and businesses to find and implement place-based climate solutions, such as reducing emissions, building resilience and promoting equality and justice to tackle the climate emergency.

What we do?

Understand: We collaborate to deliver outstanding research that identifies the need for, and how climate action can be tailored.

Act: We recognise the need to take action even when there is uncertainty, therefore we provide evidence, advice and tools to support rapid and informed decision-making.

Connect: We provide connections and opportunities for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Teach: We build climate change capacity and forge learning communities.

Innovate: We support key organisations and policymakers to lead system change on climate impact.

Collaborate: We share a collaborative physical and virtual space to provide access and visibility to challenge driven interdisciplinary research, practice and learning.

Nurture: We build professional skills and workforce capacity in climate mitigation and resilience.

Independent: We strive to be a trusted voice within climate change policy and action.

Partnership: We work with the public and private sector to develop and share new ideas to implement climate action and design new tools to meet mitigation and adaptation needs.

Quality: We deliver research excellence to support evidence-based local through to global decision-making.

A Community of Practice

ECCI is home to:

Post-graduate students spanning the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Specifically reading Carbon Management; Energy, Society and Sustainability and Environment and Development.

Sustainable Scotland Network – Scotland’s public sector climate change and sustainability network. [*sustainable-scotland.network.org*](https://sustainable-scotland.network)

SNIFFER and Adaptation Scotland – A charity that provide advice and support to help Scotland be prepared and resilient to the effects of climate change. [*sniffer.org.uk*](https://sniffer.org.uk); [*adaptationscotland.org.uk*](https://adaptationscotland.org.uk)

ClimateXChange – Working on behalf of the Scottish Government and its agencies CXC acts as a climate knowledge broker between researchers and policy. [*climatexchange.org.uk*](https://climatexchange.org.uk)

Scottish Carbon Capture and Storage – The largest CCS research group in the UK, coordinating all aspects of CCS in Scotland. [*sccs.org.uk*](https://sccs.org.uk)

Wave Energy Scotland – Accelerates development of cost effective wave energy technology for deployment in Scotland. [*waveenergyscotland.co.uk*](https://waveenergyscotland.co.uk)

Place-Based Climate Action Network (PCAN) – A UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) supported network translating climate policy into action on the ground. [*pcancities.org.uk*](https://pcancities.org.uk)

Partnerships Team – Supporting businesses and public organisations to accelerate the transition to a net zero economy, through a portfolio of projects designed to enable innovation, build capacity, and embed climate impact into strategy, investment and decision making.

Business Development Team - Responsible for leading innovation across the School of GeoSciences and providing the primary point of contact for all commercial engagement and partnerships. The team works in cooperation with Edinburgh Innovations Ltd to link our academics to wider services, facilities and resources to support a range of innovation activities

Edinburgh Earth Initiative - accelerating the University of Edinburgh’s response to the climate crisis. Working with academics, students, staff, and partners, we help ensure the University of Edinburgh is at the leading edge of climate research, teaching, innovation and action. [*earth.ed.ac.uk*](https://earth.ed.ac.uk)

We work in collaboration to address issues of zero carbon transition, as well as climate risk and adaptation. Together we are an interdisciplinary community of practice tackling the complexity of climate change.

How we deliver on climate action?

Our core aim is to enhance our provision of evidence for climate policy and action, focused on underpinning robust action at national and local government levels in Scotland, together with support for public bodies and the private sector. We will do this through the three goals outlined below by combining the breadth and depth of research expertise on climate change across the University, together with the extensive climate policy, research translation and practice expertise of the ECCI programme teams and resident agencies, known collectively as the ECCI community.

The ECCI community works as both individual agencies, and as a collective, to understand and deliver targeted action on a range of needs including adaptation, energy transition, and emissions reduction. We target collaborations and partnerships that can have most impact and influence on climate change, working directly with both public and private sector partners on collaborative projects to develop strategies for emissions reduction with the tools, capability and capacity to deliver them. We understand the value of working across sectors and aim to build strong networks with those working in business, sustainability and biodiversity across the University and beyond.

We work together through thematic Communities of Practice (CoP) and collaborative applied projects. Drawing on research and resident agencies experience, the CoPs bring our expertise together to capture best practice and share lessons, co-develop applied projects and provide technical support to external partners and stakeholders.

We host postgraduate students and provide applied knowledge exchange through teaching, collaborative dissertations and placements. ECCI offers students the chance to get practical experience and build professional networks across the public and private sector. We support a range of leading postgraduate courses including an MSc in Carbon Management, which is one of the longest running climate change courses in the world and now has a global alumni of over 600 climate change experts working across more than 60 nations.

ECCI also hosts the Edinburgh Earth Initiative (EEI), with EEI being a key member of the community and allowing ECCI teams to explore potential links and collaborations internationally. While ECCI is focussed on supporting evidenced-based climate action in Scotland, EEI has an international remit. Together, we are able to enhance the sharing of good practice and learnings from climate action in Scotland in a way that maximises their benefits internationally.

Goals and targets 2022-2027

The ECCI community have co-created three key goals and related targets for the next five years. This is to enable us to build and sustain our programme of work and increase our impact on climate change action. These goals are designed to:

- Respond to future opportunities and challenges to accelerate action on climate change;
- Bring our current work programme to long term financial sustainability;
- Build a future pipeline of climate skills, talent and leadership;
- Foster a unique and integrated community of researchers and practitioners;
- Increase our impact on climate change action locally and nationally.

1. Enhancing the student-research-practice pathway

A multi-dimensional approach to connect learning, research and practice for climate change action.

- We will seek collaborative funding to develop research and impact projects.
- We will target climate challenge areas for potential impact, such as area-based emissions, energy transitions, sustainable business and behaviour change.
- We will create thematic communities of practice to address the challenges we face in implementation mitigation and adaptation in Scotland.

1.1 ECCI Associates and Early Career Researchers (ECRs).

Linked with all subsequent actions, a range of climate change-focussed academics and researchers from across the University appointed as 'ECCI associates' with Terms of Reference (ToR) designed to maximise engagement, collaboration and partnership across research, teaching and impact.

Target 1.1.1: By end of 2022 to have agreed ToR and established an initial cohort of ECCI Associates (circa 10-15) spanning ECRs through to senior colleagues in School of Geosciences and the wider University; to include hot-desking in ECCI space, hosting networking meetings (linked with action 1.2), and shared projects (e.g. with the Centre for Business, Climate Change and Sustainability)

Target 1.1.2: By end of 2023, Edinburgh Earth Initiative (EEI) fellows and/or ECRs are hosted within ECCI community with ECCI staff offering project design support, mentoring and collaboration.

1.2 ECCI networking lunches.

To stimulate and grow engagement of climate change-focussed academics and researchers (especially ECRs) from across the School and wider University with our series of 'networking lunches' designed to showcase the specific work of the ECCI community, including our resident agencies, and identify opportunities for collaboration.

Target 1.2.1: By end of 2023 to have widespread attendance (average 20 per session) at networking lunches by colleagues across the School and wider University.

Target 1.2.2: By end of 2024 ~10 networking lunches per year at ECCL led by a specific ECCL or climate related university team each time, involving colleagues from across the University.

1.3 ECCL partnership fund.

In alignment with School of GeoSciences small grant and meeting budget allocated to research institutes, this seed budget will support new academic-led partnerships (i.e. for workshops, meetings or travel costs) aimed at realising collaborative climate change research, teaching and training projects. This is additional to ongoing funding and business development work across the school.

Target 1.3.1: By mid-2023 to have a defined budget and proposal selection process in place, with students and staff in the School of GeoSciences actively proposing partnership meetings and projects based on seed support from this fund.

Target 1.3.2: By end of 2023 have successfully funded at least two pilot seed-projects and reported progress and plan for scaling to SPARC.

Target 1.3.3: By end of 2025 have successfully completed pilot projects and initiated at least five further projects and continuous roll out of between three-five seed projects per year until 2027.

2. Achieving impact through scaling up programme delivery Driving forwards evidence based decision making for climate resilience.

2.1 The ECCL programme model.

To further develop, expand and communicate the current ECCL programme model for the school and wider university and create synergies between programmes and external stakeholders.

The ECCL programmes such as ClimateXChange and the Sustainability Scotland Network (SSN) are run by University of Edinburgh staff through ECCL. These programmes are externally funded, with resources primarily directed towards delivering climate research, decision support and impact. The model supports partners and stakeholders to build their capability and capacity for action on climate change, supporting the delivery of national and global targets for sustainability and emissions reduction. It is important for the continued success of ECCL that this working model is understood and communicated widely, so that these programmes are valued and supported by the School and wider University.

Through resourcing of core capacity in these programmes, as an integrated component of the School's funding and staffing strategy, the ECCI collaborative programmatic model can be replicated and/or scaled to deliver additional large externally-funded projects with a long-term view to delivering much more 'REF-able' impact by bringing research into practice (e.g. Goal 2.3).

Target 2.1.1: By mid-2023, arrangements have been made with Edinburgh Innovations (EI) to support, where appropriate, ECCI led bids for competitive tenders and feed into the IRM reporting system.

Target 2.1.2: By end of 2023, all area leads and climate change-focussed colleagues in School of Geosciences and beyond are familiar with what ECCI does and collaborations around research and teaching are increasing in number, breadth and magnitude.

Target 2.1.3: By end of 2023, all supported programmes in ECCI will share progress and successes to the Schools senior decision-making body (SPARC) via a new ECCI reporting mechanism and where appropriate the University's IRM.

Target 2.1.4: By end of 2025 a further large scale ECCI programme (~£1-2million) will have been successfully won for long-term applied research on mitigation and adaptation with input from wider school and university colleagues.

2.2 Multi-year Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) and ClimateXChange (CXC) programmes.

Liaise with Scottish Government on potential for multi-year core funding so that the SSN team can secure additional and significant funding that secures staff capacity.

Target 2.2.1: By March 2023 to have provided support to the SSN team to secure a multiyear commitment to core funding of SSN.

Target 2.2.2: By 2025 successfully deliver the initial 3 years of the new CXC programme and, by end 2025, secure 2 years of extension funding (>£4m)

Target 2.2.3: By end of 2025 to be delivering comprehensive support on climate change monitoring, reporting and action to national government, as well as all local authorities and public bodies in Scotland, including professional capacity building, coordination and implementation of consistent tools and methodologies (linked to 2.3).

2.3 Placed-based Climate Action.

The Climate Partnerships Team, work to enable small businesses to contribute to and be successful in the transition to a zero carbon economy. The Climate Partnerships team will work with key partners and funders to engage with businesses, and to develop and deliver tools, training and support.

Together with support from the school Business Development and Innovation team and where appropriate Edinburgh Innovations Limited, in partnership with resident agencies and academic leads will develop and secure significant new funding to deliver area-wide emissions reporting, mitigation and adaptation action (capacity-building in local authorities; decision tool development and application; area-based net zero pathway implementation).

Designing and supporting place-based strategies for emissions reduction and climate action presents huge opportunities to turn research into impact, and to develop new projects that incorporate the systems and behavioural changes needed to facilitate adoption of research outputs and innovation at scale.

Target 2.3.1: By end of 2023 to have dedicated staff resource in place to underpin development and delivery of 2.1 and 2.2.

Target 2.3.2: By end of 2023 ECCI staff will host regular thematic funding and project design workshops with relevant staff across the university to embed academic research leadership within ECCI programmes and projects. These will include researchers from across human geography, social sciences, Earth Observation as well as physical sciences.

Target 2.3.3: By end of 2023 to have identified at least one other major funding partner for to scale our work in supporting SMEs.

Target 2.3.4: By the end of 2024 have strengthened School partnerships with resident agencies through co-developed targets e.g. Sniffer, Wave Energy Scotland, Scottish Carbon Capture and Storage, and co-delivered at least three targets together.

Target 2.3.5: By end of 2024 to have secured £0.5M per annum of annual revenue from partnership work supporting SMEs and other organisations reporting via the IRM system.

Target 2.3.6: By end of 2024 have secured a multi-million funding agreement from Scottish Government and local government partners to lead capacity building, net zero pathway design and implementation for all of Scotland's cities and regions.

3. Building a space for learning, capacity building and leadership Creating a shared space for climate change collaboration, knowledge exchange and the nurturing of future climate leaders.

3.1 Climate Convening Power.

ECCI hosts key climate change organisations in Scotland, and is a space for climate change events, workshops and meetings. This includes the reconfiguration of ECCI space for improved hybrid working, teaching and research-to-practice connection.

Target 3.1.1: By the end of 2022, upgrade the AV provision in the main ECCI spaces to provide high quality hybrid event and meeting rooms for knowledge exchange, teaching, and climate relevant research and policy conferences.

Target 3.1.2: By end of 2025, undertake a full review of AV provision and plan for next upgrade.

Target 3.1.3: By end of 2023 have a significant (>20) and growing number of climate-focussed ECRS and academic colleagues across the School of Geosciences and more widely (called ECCI associates) as an active part of the ECCI community and collaborating with ECCI-based staff on research bids, teaching and impact centred on enhancing climate action in Scotland.

Target 3.1.4: By end of 2025, have a trusted, valued and well-used facility for climate-focussed events, teaching and meetings for both internal and external colleagues; to host one or more climate change events of national or international importance each year (e.g. intergovernmental)

3.2 Climate Learning, Training and Literacy.

ECCI as a home for climate change post-graduate teaching and professional capacity building.

Target 3.2.1: By end of 2022 have supported the successful business case for new Lecturers in Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation within the School of GeoSciences.

Target 3.2.2: By end of 2023 ensure integration with School teaching and Edinburgh Earth Initiative capacity building strategy and provision by formal involvement of learning leads with ECCI (i.e. named Associates).

Target 3.2.4: By the end of 2024, establish a mechanism with the Scottish Government for researcher to policy exchanges for climate change to embed researchers within a policy environment and provide civil servants a space within a research environment.

Target 3.2.5: By end of 2024 have expanded the portfolio of open access climate change courses to include three or more additional courses in partnership with the UK Government, with global take-up in the tens of thousands and with aligned marketing within each of these to support our UG and PG recruitment in the School.

Target 3.2.6: By end of 2026, run at least two bi-annual professional climate change skills development courses including a climate change adaptation literacy course in collaboration with resident agencies such as Sniffer. These will be delivered in person and/or online for Scottish and UK public and private sector stakeholders.



Edinburgh Climate Change Institute
High School Yards, Infirmary Street
Edinburgh EH1 1LZ

t: +44 (0)131 650 5326
e: ecci.info@ed.ac.uk
edinburghcentre.org