

Version 1 Created on 02/04/2020

Updated to Version 2 on 21/07/2023

Cyprus International University Plastic Reduction Policy

Purpose

This plastic Reduction Policy outlines Cyprus International University's (CIU) commitment to minimizing and eliminating plastic pollution campus. The goal is to transition from a linear "take-make-dispose" model to a circular economy, prioritizing source reduction and sustainable alternatives. This policy mandates a university-wide reduction in the consumption and disposal of plastics, with a primary focus on eliminating unnecessary and single-use plastics (SUPs). It aims to mitigate the environmental impact of plastic waste, conserve natural resources, and embed the principles of responsible consumption and production into all campus operations and culture.

Scope

This policy applies to all university activities, including academic and administrative departments, faculty, staff, students, contractors, vendors, licensees, and visitors across all CIU campuses and events.

Policy Statement

CIU is committed to becoming a single-use plastic-free campus. We will achieve this by eliminating the procurement, sale, and distribution of targeted SUPs, investing in reusable infrastructure, promoting behavioral change, and holding our community and partners accountable to these standards.

Objectives

1. **Reduce Single-Use Plastics:** To achieve a measurable, year-on-year reduction in overall plastic waste generated by the university.
2. **Promote Reusable Alternatives:** Encourage reusable products and materials, such as water bottles, bags, and containers.
3. **Increase Awareness and Education:** Raise awareness about the impact of plastic pollution and promote sustainable practices among the university community. To foster a culture of sustainability by educating the community and promoting innovative solutions for reducing plastic reliance.

4. **Engage Stakeholders:** Involve students, faculty, staff, and suppliers in efforts to reduce plastic use and promote sustainability, to ensure all university operations and partnerships adhere to the mandates of this policy.

Strategies for Implementation

1. Assessment of Plastic Use

- Conduct an inventory of current plastic use across campus to identify critical areas for reduction and target specific items.

2. Phased Implementation: The Sustainability Committee will create a binding timeline for the full implementation of all prohibitions, allowing for transition periods where necessary.

- **Sustainable Procurement:** The Procurement Office will integrate plastic reduction criteria into all purchasing decisions and vendor agreements.
- **Reusables Program:** The university will establish programs to make reusable kits (bottles, bags, containers) accessible and affordable for the entire community.
- **Supplier & Contractor Engagement:** All new and renewed contracts with suppliers and contractors must include a clause requiring adherence to this policy.

2. Elimination of Single-Use Plastics

- **Beverage Containers:** Phase out single-use plastic beverage containers in campus facilities and events. Promote the use of refillable water stations and provide incentives for using reusable bottles.
- **Dining Services:** Encourage dining services to replace plastic straws, cutlery, and containers with sustainable alternatives, such as compostable or biodegradable materials.
- **Events and Activities:** Implement guidelines for campus events that prohibit single-use plastics and promote sustainable practices, such as using real dishware or compostable options.

3. Promotion of Reusable Alternatives

- **Reusables Program:** Establish a program that provides students and staff with reusable bags, containers, and utensils and offers options for purchasing or borrowing items.
- **Campus Retailers:** Work with campus retailers to offer discounts for students and staff who bring their reusable containers or bags.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Sustainability Committee:** Has the overall authority for implementation, monitoring, enforcement, and annual reporting on the policy's progress.

- **University Management:** Responsible for allocating necessary resources and championing the policy at a senior leadership level.
- **Procurement & Contracts Office:** Responsible for enforcing policy compliance through supply chain and vendor management.
- **Facilities & Operations:** Responsible for maintaining and expanding the infrastructure that enables plastic reduction (e.g., hydration stations, dishwashing).
- **All Students, Faculty, and Staff:** Are expected to actively comply with and promote this policy, embracing a personal responsibility to reduce plastic consumption.

4. Education and Awareness Campaigns

- **Workshops and Seminars:** Organize educational events to inform the university community about the environmental impacts of plastic pollution and the benefits of reducing plastic use.
- **Marketing Materials:** Develop and distribute materials (posters, flyers, digital content) that promote the importance of plastic reduction and showcase alternative practices.

5. Collaboration with Stakeholders

- **Supplier Engagement:** Work with suppliers to identify and implement sustainable packaging solutions and reduce plastic use in the supply chain.
- **Student Involvement:** Encourage student organizations to participate in plastic reduction initiatives, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community.

5. Monitoring, Reporting and Review

- **Monitoring:** The Sustainability Committee will track key performance indicators, including the volume of prohibited items procured, usage of refill stations, and participation in reusable programs.
- **Reporting:** An annual Plastic Reduction Report will be published, detailing progress, challenges, and future targets, ensuring full transparency.
- **Review:** This policy will be formally reviewed every two years to assess its effectiveness and to set more ambitious future targets in line with SDG 12.

By adopting this Plastic Reduction Policy, CIU reaffirms its role as a leader in sustainability, taking concrete action to protect our environment and educate our community on the critical importance of responsible consumption.