


Environmental Sustainability Strategy University of Oxford

Harriet Waters, Head of Environmental Sustainability

24 May 2022

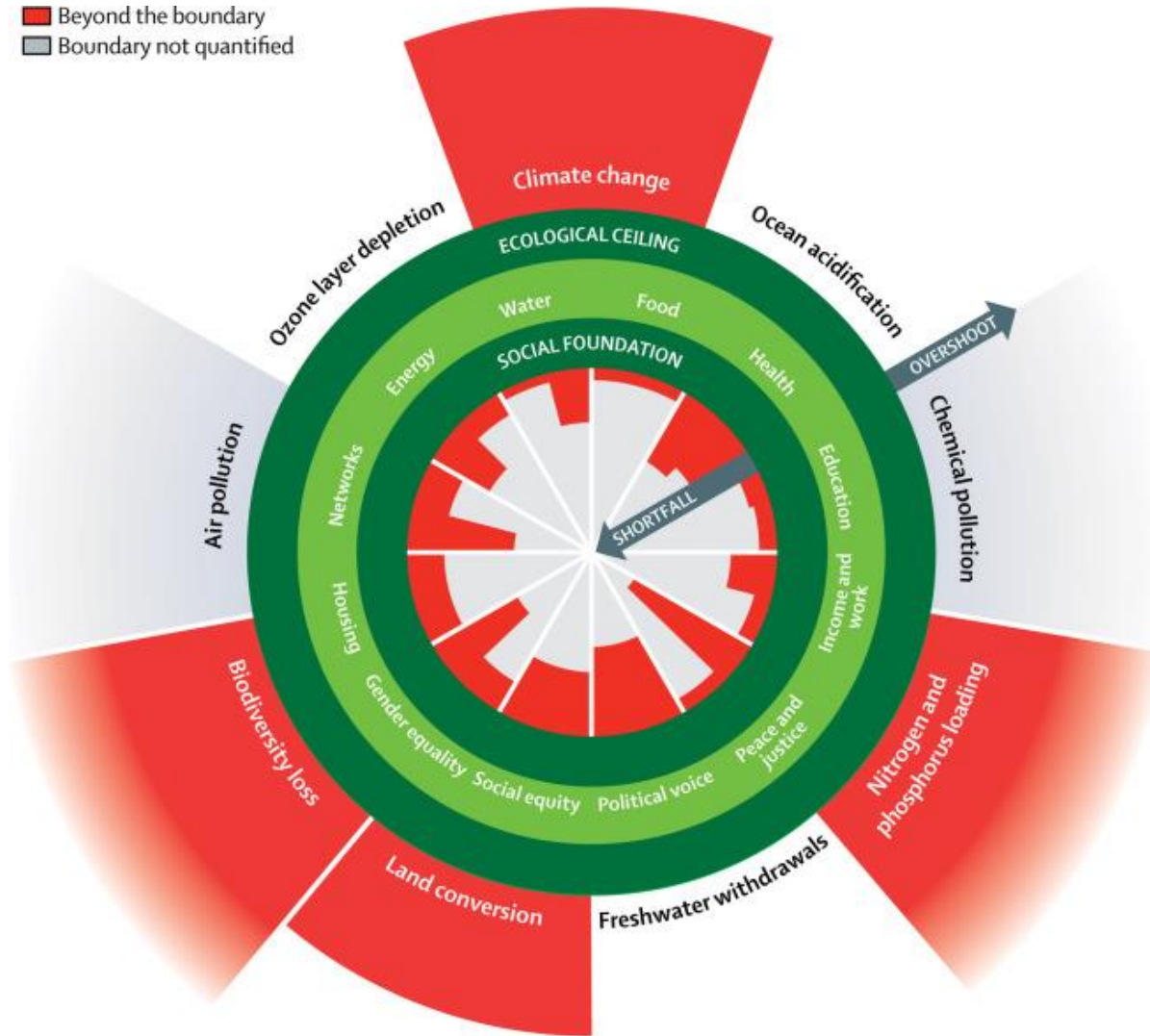
A photograph of an academic assembly in a grand, wood-paneled hall. Several individuals are seated in rows of dark wooden chairs, many wearing black academic gowns with red stoles. They are looking towards the right side of the frame. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders, also in academic regalia, is visible. On the right, a woman in a white blouse and dark jacket stands at a wooden podium, addressing the group. The background features ornate, dark wood paneling with arched decorative elements.

“At an institutional level, we can examine our own practices and targets and ask if they are enough...

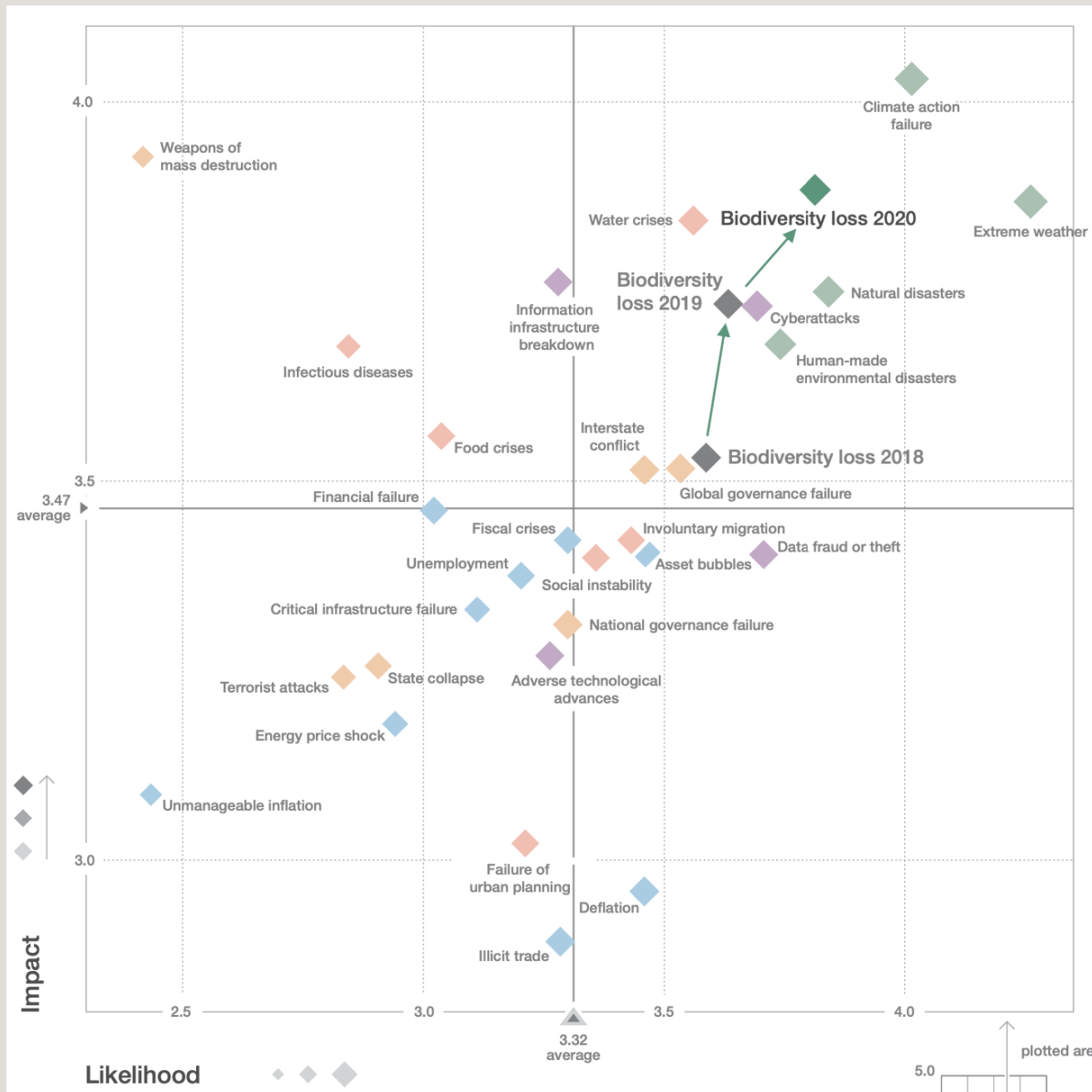
Personally, I am not convinced that they are.”

Our Planetary Boundaries, Doughnut Economics

■ Beyond the boundary
■ Boundary not quantified



World Economic Forum 2020 assessment of global risks



Key

- ◆ Economic
- ◆ Environmental
- ◆ Geopolitical
- ◆ Societal
- ◆ Technological

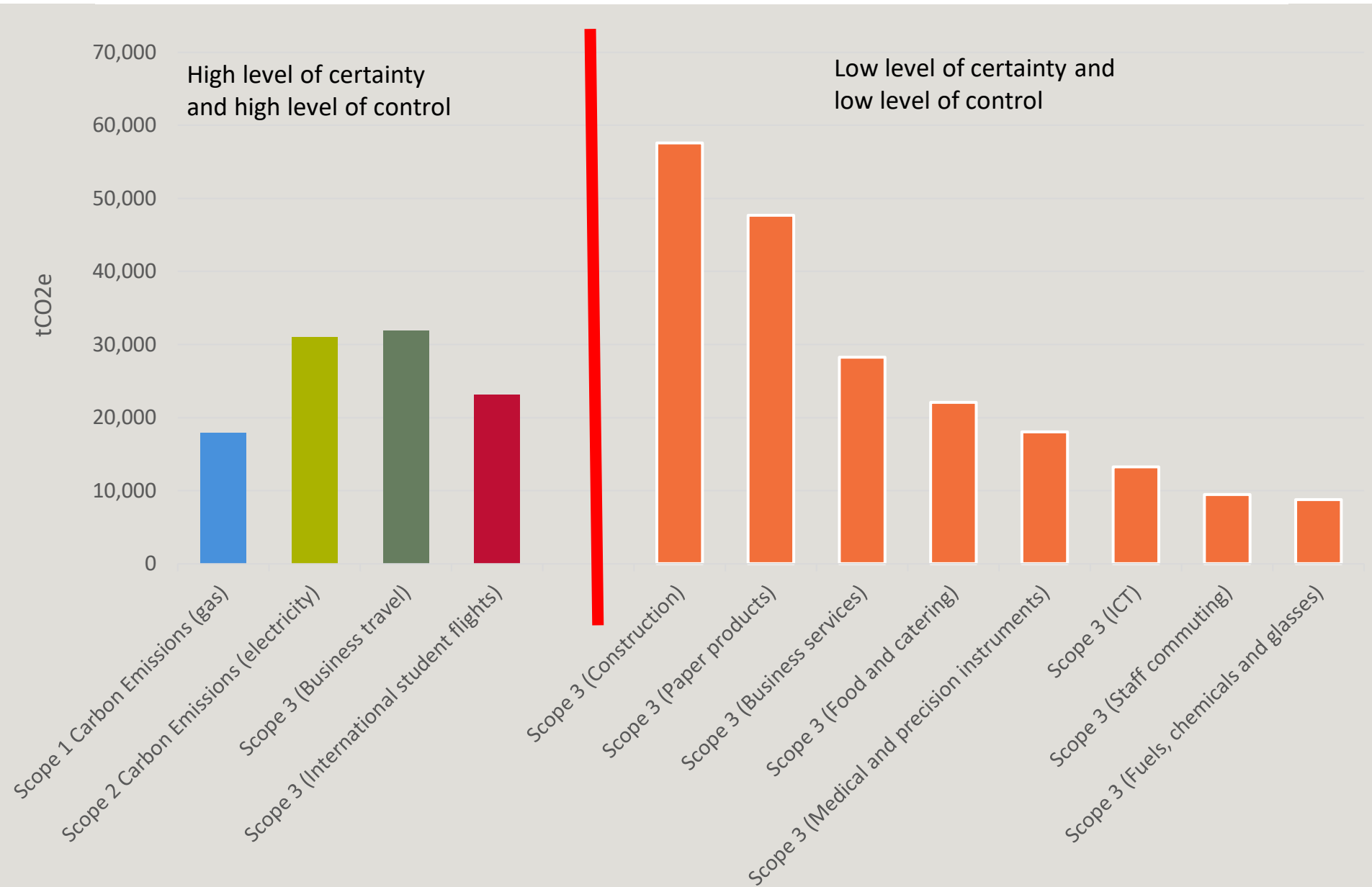
Strategy Development Process



Existing University Targets

Biodiversity	Carbon reduction
2016 Biodiversity Strategy adopted	2011 target of 33% reduction in carbon emission by 2020 (baseline 2005/06)
2017 Biodiversity net gain in Sustainability Design Guide	2019 target of 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 (baseline 2009/10)

University Carbon Emissions 2018-2019



Spring 2020 Staff and Student Consultation

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2 MARCH – 14 APRIL 2020



ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Staff and students, respond here:

sustainability.admin.ox.ac.uk/strategy-consultation



CURRICULUM | RESEARCH | ENERGY USE | FLIGHTS | BIODIVERSITY | FOOD

Emerging Draft Environmental Sustainability Strategy

Dual targets

Net Gain in Biodiversity

Net Zero Carbon

BOTH by 2035

Emerging Draft Strategy: Four Enablers

- Embedding environmental sustainability in the University's governance and decision making;
- Developing a system of annual reporting of carbon emissions and biodiversity impact within the first twelve months;
- Establishing the Oxford Sustainability Fund to finance the programme of action required to reach net zero carbon and biodiversity net gain by 2035;
- Establishing a policy for carbon offsetting and biodiversity offsetting.

Ten priorities

Priority	Examples of action
Research	Support interdisciplinary sustainability research teams in responding to major funding opportunities
Curriculum	Support new interdisciplinary environmental courses
Carbon emissions from energy consumption	Introduce a building retrofit programme to maximise energy efficiency
Biodiversity	Measure, report and compensate for the damage to biodiversity caused by the University's operations and supply chain
Sustainable Food	End the use of bottled water and ensure tap water is freely available to all staff, students and visitors.
Sustainable Resource Use	Set a target to increase the recycling rate, potentially using a building recycling league table
International Travel	Develop and implement a Travel Policy which incorporates a Travel Hierarchy
Local Travel	Reduce the need for staff to travel by supporting remote and agile working
Investments	Actively engage with fund managers using the Oxford Martin Principles for Climate-Conscious Investment
Learning from the pandemic	Support the New Ways of Working group with data and recommendations for more flexible ways of working and estate efficiency

Environmental Sustainability Strategy



Two Targets

Net zero carbon

Net gain in biodiversity

Both by 2035

Four Enablers

Governance

Reporting

Funding

Offsetting

Ten Priorities

Research

Curriculum

Carbon emissions from buildings

Biodiversity

Sustainable food

Sustainable resource use

International travel

Local travel

Investments

Learning from the pandemic

Everyone has a personal contribution to make

Your first steps for **Environmental Sustainability** in Oxford University



with 24,000 students and 14,000 staff members,
our small daily acts make a big difference:



Rethink your
commute



Switch off
un-used
appliances

Go
paperless



Reduce, reuse,
recycle.
Think twice before
buying.

Choose a plant-
based diet, even 2-3
times a week



Lessons learned from the pandemic

Returning to work on site is an opportunity for us to re-evaluate our ways of working, and with that incorporate more sustainable practices.

Join GREEN IMPACT

1. Purchase sustainable alternatives to day-to-day products such as coffee and tea, cleaning material, recycled paper and more.
2. Reduce the use of paper.
3. Consider reuse and recycle items before disposing

RETHINK YOUR RESOURCES

REMIND, ADVISE, AND SUPPORT
Your team members about the individual steps they can take for environmental sustainability.

CONSIDER
The environmental implications of business travel.

CHOOSE
Plant-based or vegetarian food for meetings or events.

Next Steps

- Introduction of a carbon tax on flights
- Setting up of the Oxford Sustainability Fund
- Finalising our updated carbon management plan

Conclusions

- Action by the University to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions is essential
- The strategy enables us to safeguard the future, live by our values and protect and enhance our reputation
- In order to be ambitious, comprehensive, academically lead and evidence based an in depth business case was required.