

NEWS RELEASE

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People & Planet publish *The Green League 2007* Leeds Met is the greenest

Today, 7 June 2007, the UK's leading student campaign network, People & Planet, has published the **first ever green league table** showing the environmental performance of Britain's universities. Leeds Met, Plymouth and Hertfordshire top the leaderboard. **The Green League 2007** celebrates success, and exposes those institutions who are have yet to live up to their environmental responsibilities.

Follow this link now: <http://peopleandplanet.org/greenleague2007>

Published in the **Times Higher Education Supplement** today, People & Planet's Green League 2007 ranks all British universities – awarding them with a First, 2:1, 2:2, Third, or Fail – based on eight different environmental criteria, both policy and performance related. It incorporates data never before published in the public domain – obtained under the Freedom of Information Act – including the percentage of energy purchased from renewable sources, percentage of waste recycled, and CO₂ emissions for each institution. The results are interesting ... and surprising!

“British universities have been at the forefront of much of the research that has highlighted the threat of climate change. It is now imperative that they lead the way in making a decisive shift towards transforming the UK into a low carbon economy. The Green League table gives all of us - whether it's a student activist or a vice-Chancellor - the information and the motivation to make that shift.” (Mark Lynas, author of ‘Six Degrees: our future on a hotter planet’, and ‘High Tide: The Truth About Our Climate Crisis’)

The academy has a **significant environmental footprint**. **Lacking transparency and accountability** until today, many Vice Chancellors have been complacent about their institutions' environmental impacts. A recent report by Business In The Community[1] found that the HE sector scored a poor average of only 55% on the BITC environment index, compared to the business average of 83%.

“As one of the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the world the UK has a responsibility, and an opportunity, to take action to reduce the severity of the climate change threat. This table gives us a picture of the quality of environmental management as a whole across the Higher Education sector. It will enable us to set a benchmark against which we can monitor performance in the future.” (Ian Leggett, Director of P&P)

“Your choice of university has such a far-reaching effect on your future, that it makes sense to choose one which takes the long-term effects of its own behaviour seriously too.” (Ben West, sixth form student applying to university and P&P member, King Edward IV School, Southampton)

This table is designed to challenge poor environmental performance, and give strength to those voices within university communities who are working hard to achieve change. It will establish a competition mechanism between universities to drive standards up.

Leeds Met and the 14 others who top our ‘leader board’ display excellent practice in the sector. They have demonstrated a commendable institutional commitment to seeing their environmental performance systematically improve. In an age of ‘choice’, students in the education marketplace now have the information necessary to make informed university choices based on their values.

ENDS

NOTES

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[1] BITC & EAUC, 'Universities that Count',

<http://www.eauc.org.uk/documents/News/HE%20Benchmarking%20Project%20Report%20Final.pdf>

- People & Planet is the largest UK student network campaigning to end world poverty, defend human rights and protect the environment. Our network covers 70% of Britain's universities and 10% of Sixth Forms. For more info visit <http://peopleandplanet.org>.
- People & Planet's Go Green campaign aims to transform the environmental performance of UK Universities. Since 2003, P&P campus campaigns have resulted in several prominent Universities – e.g LSE, Nottingham, Warwick, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Edinburgh – going green by adopting our four ke demands <http://peopleandplanet.org/gogreen>.
- People & Planet is a founding member of Stop Climate Chaos, the national coalition of civil society organisations campaigning on climate change <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/>.

FUTHER QUOTES

- “NUS believes fundamentally in the green agenda. The People & Planet Green League 2007 will be a crucial tool in making the whole sector more accountable and transparent when it comes to it's environmental impact. The report raises some key issues about the way we live, work and study and how this effects the environment around us. Students and young people have a huge stake in the environment so we are extremely pleased to see so many leading the way and pushing their universities to get in tune with the green agenda.” (Gemma Tumelty, NUS National President)
- “P&P's Green League 2007 is a fantastic initiative, encouraging the UK's academic institution's to step up to the mark, ensuring that they are cutting their climate changing emissions and incentivising year on year improvement.” (Lucy Pearce, Stop Climate Chaos and I Count Campaign Manager)
- “The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) welcomes People and Planet's challenging and stimulating Green League. The table reflects the excellent practice demonstrated by universities but highlights the work still to be done in the sector. The EAUC supports institutions to embed sustainability into every aspect of their campus, curriculum and organisational culture. Vice chancellors and Principals who do so, will take their rightful place as leaders and role models of sustainability in the UK.” (Iain Patton, Executive Director, EAUC. NB: please use this quote only in its entirety)
- “As one of the biggest universities in the country with 52,000 students, our biggest environmental impact is going to be their future decisions.” He said of the university's position in the table: “I think it is fantastic, and a very good testimony to the work that everyone in the university has been doing.” (Mark Warner, environmental projects manager at Leeds Met and author of 'Universities that Count' report.)