

**AZERBAIJAN STATE
UNIVERSITY OF
ECONOMICS (UNEC)
ZERO CARBON POLICY**

Zero Carbon Policy

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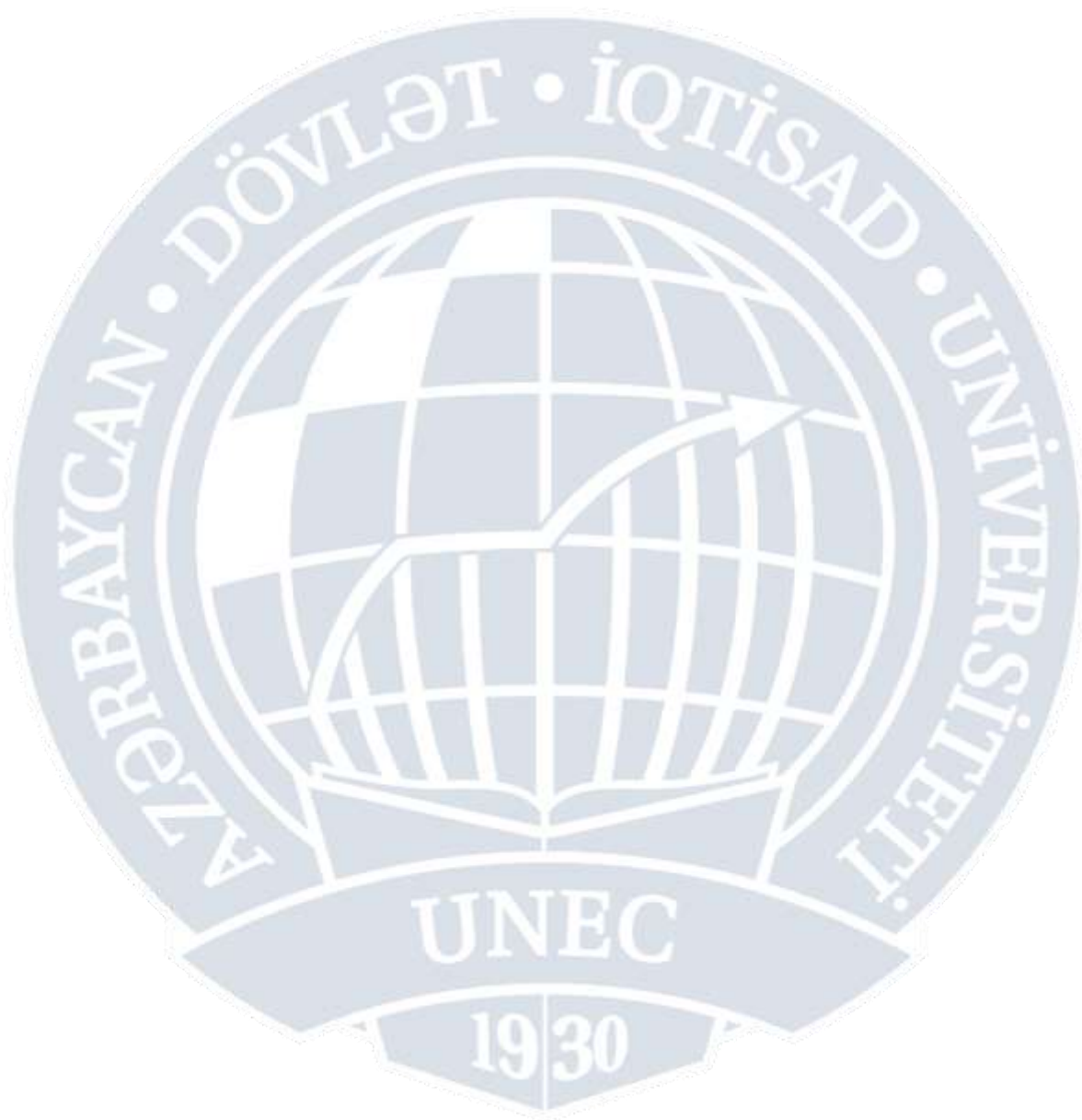
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Section 1. Introduction

The Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) is committed to achieving a zero-emission and sustainable campus through comprehensive environmental policies, technological innovation, and community engagement. As one of Azerbaijan’s leading institutions in sustainability and green economy education, UNEC recognizes its responsibility to reduce its carbon footprint and to serve as a national model for climate action in higher education.

This Zero Emission Policy outlines UNEC’s strategies and commitments toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting sustainable transportation, enhancing energy efficiency, and integrating sustainability principles into all aspects of university operations and governance. The policy aligns with Azerbaijan’s national environmental strategy and supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 13 (Climate Action). Within this policy, the term ‘zero emission’ refers to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions through reduction and offset mechanisms.

Section 2. Policy Objectives

The primary objectives of UNEC’s Zero Emission Policy are:

1. To achieve carbon neutrality by 2035 through systematic emission reduction and renewable energy transition.
2. To reduce on-campus transportation emissions by promoting sustainable mobility alternatives and minimizing private car use.
3. To enhance energy efficiency in all university buildings and operations.
4. To integrate zero-emission principles into institutional planning, procurement, infrastructure, and community culture.
5. To engage students, staff, and partners in the transition to a carbon-neutral academic ecosystem.

Section 3. Scope of Application

This policy applies to:

- All UNEC campuses, departments, and research centers.
- University-owned vehicles, facilities, and energy systems.
- Activities conducted by staff, faculty, students, and contractors within university premises.

- All procurement, construction, and event planning initiatives related to UNEC's operations.

Section 4. Policy on Parking Reduction and Sustainable Mobility

4.1 Objective

To reduce vehicular emissions from university-related transport by decreasing parking availability, encouraging public transport use, and supporting non-motorized mobility.

4.2 Strategies

- **Reduction of On-Campus Parking Spaces:**

UNEC will gradually reduce parking availability by 20% by 2026 to discourage private vehicle use. Priority parking will be reserved for electric and hybrid vehicles only.

- **Promotion of Public Transportation:**

The university cooperates with the **Baku Transport Agency** to ensure accessibility to eco-friendly transport routes. Subsidized public transport passes for students and staff will be expanded.

- **Encouragement of Active Mobility:**

UNEC will improve pedestrian infrastructure and introduce dedicated bicycle parking areas and e-scooter stations on campus to promote healthy and zero-emission commuting.

- **Green Shuttle Initiative:**

UNEC will operate an electric shuttle service between main campus sites and dormitories. These vehicles will be powered by renewable electricity generated on campus through solar panels and energy-efficient charging systems.

Section 5. Zero Carbon Operations Policy

5.1 Energy Efficiency

- All university facilities will adopt LED lighting, motion sensors, and smart thermostats to optimize energy usage.
- Regular energy audits will be conducted to identify and reduce wastage in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
- The university will invest in solar energy panels and heat recovery systems to meet at least 30% of campus energy demand by 2030.

5.2 Renewable Energy Transition

- UNEC collaborates with the Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency (Azərbaycan Dövlət Su Ehtiyatları Agentliyi) to ensure sustainable water and energy systems.
- Treated and recycled water from Ceyranbatan Ultra Filtration Plant is used to reduce the energy demand associated with water purification.
- Plans are underway to install rooftop solar arrays and micro wind turbines to supply clean power for administrative buildings and research labs.

5.3 Waste and Emission Reduction

- UNEC has established contracts with Express Təmizlik LTD and BT Techno Service, which manage waste recycling and hazardous waste disposal.
- Organic waste from campus cafeterias is repurposed for composting and agricultural use, reducing methane emissions from landfills.
- Digital systems such as DocNet, Eduman, ATIS, and Window (Bir Pəncərə) reduce paper use, cutting carbon emissions from printing and logistics by over 60%.

Section 6. Monitoring and Reporting

6.1 Carbon Footprint Assessment

UNEC conducts an annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory to measure carbon emissions from energy, transport, and waste. This data is used to monitor progress toward emission reduction goals and to publish the university's Sustainability Report.

In alignment with Azerbaijan's national climate commitments under its updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) - which target a 35% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and 40% by 2050 - UNEC applies internationally recognized carbon accounting methodologies. In particular, the university utilizes the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and ISO 14064 standards to ensure consistency, transparency, and accuracy in emissions measurement and reporting.

6.2 ICT Integration

ICT systems play a crucial role in tracking environmental performance. Real-time energy monitoring dashboards, water management sensors, and smart campus software enable precise data collection and analysis.

These digital systems support data-driven decision-making and enhance UNEC's capacity to monitor emissions in accordance with global ESG reporting practices, including frameworks such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB).

6.3 Public Transparency

The results of UNEC's emission reduction efforts are made publicly available through its Sustainability Web Portal, ensuring accountability and stakeholder engagement.

By aligning its reporting approach with international standards and national climate targets, UNEC strengthens institutional transparency and contributes to broader environmental governance and sustainability reporting practices in Azerbaijan.

Section 7. Awareness, Education, and Research

UNEC integrates sustainability and emission reduction into its academic curricula, research programs, and community outreach activities.

- Courses on green economy, circular business models, and environmental management are offered across faculties.
- Research projects focus on renewable energy, smart cities, sustainable finance, and low-carbon innovation.
- Annual events such as the VII International Scientific Conference on Circular Economy and Sustainable Ecosystem and Green Campus Week engage global and local experts in climate action dialogue.

Student organizations like the UNEC Eco Club and Youth for Sustainable Development Group organize awareness campaigns, tree-planting drives, and workshops on zero-emission living.

Section 8. Governance and Implementation

8.1 Responsible Units

- **UNEC Green Campus Office** – Oversees zero-emission implementation and sustainability reporting.
- **Research and Innovation Department** – Integrates sustainability into research and monitors emission-related projects.
- **ICT Department** – Manages data systems for emission tracking and resource efficiency.
- **Facilities and Operations Department** – Ensures compliance with energy and transportation policies.

8.2 Review Cycle

The Zero Emission Policy will be reviewed every two years to assess progress and align with new national and international climate targets.

Section 9. Expected Outcomes

1. Significant reduction in campus CO₂ emissions aligned with roadmap targets.
2. Complete transition to renewable energy sources by 2035.
3. Zero-emission transportation system within all UNEC campuses by 2030.
4. Increased environmental awareness and engagement among students and staff.
5. Recognition as a national leader in sustainable university operations.

Section 10. Emission Classification Framework

UNEC categorizes greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with internationally recognized carbon accounting standards, particularly the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and ISO 14064 framework:

Scope 1 – Direct Emissions

Emissions generated from university-owned or controlled sources, including campus vehicles, generators, and on-site fuel combustion.

Scope 2 – Indirect Energy Emissions

Emissions resulting from purchased electricity, heating, and cooling consumed by university facilities.

Scope 3 – Value Chain Emissions

Indirect emissions arising from university-related activities not owned or controlled by UNEC, including procurement, commuting, business travel, outsourced services, waste treatment, and supply chains.

This classification framework ensures methodological consistency and comparability with global best practices. Furthermore, UNEC supports ESG-aligned environmental disclosure in line with frameworks such as GRI and SASB, enhancing transparency across all emission categories.

UNEC commits to progressively measuring, reporting, and reducing emissions across all three scopes as part of its carbon neutrality roadmap, contributing to both institutional sustainability goals and Azerbaijan's long-term climate commitments for 2030 and 2050.

Section 11. Net-Zero Roadmap and Milestones

To ensure systematic progress toward carbon neutrality by 2035, UNEC establishes the following milestone targets, aligned with Azerbaijan’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and international climate frameworks:

- **2026:** 15% reduction in total institutional emissions through initial efficiency measures and operational optimization
- **2028:** 30% reduction supported by partial transition to renewable energy infrastructure and energy management systems
- **2030:** 45% reduction aligned with national climate targets, including full transition to low-carbon transport systems and expanded renewable energy adoption
- **2033:** 75% emissions reduction alongside the implementation of carbon offset mechanisms and advanced sustainability solutions
- **2035:** Net-zero greenhouse gas emissions achieved across all operational scopes

These milestones are developed in line with globally recognized standards, including the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and ISO 14064, ensuring consistency in measurement and reporting.

Annual progress will be reviewed and adjusted based on performance data, technological advancements, and evolving national and international climate commitments, including Azerbaijan’s long-term targets for 2030 and 2050.

Section 12. Climate Risk Management and Resilience

UNEC recognizes climate change as an institutional risk factor affecting infrastructure, operations, and academic continuity. The university therefore commits to:

- conducting periodic climate risk assessments
- identifying environmental, operational, and financial risks related to emissions
- developing mitigation and adaptation strategies
- ensuring emergency preparedness for extreme weather or energy disruptions

Climate risk considerations will be integrated into infrastructure planning, procurement decisions, and strategic development programs.

Section 13. Compliance, Enforcement, and Accountability

All university units, employees, contractors, and partners must comply with the requirements of this policy.

Failure to comply may result in:

- corrective action plans
- internal compliance reviews
- suspension of non-compliant operational activities
- contractual revision for external partners

The Facilities and Operations Department, in coordination with the Green Campus Office, is responsible for monitoring compliance and initiating corrective procedures when necessary.

Section 14. Sustainable Procurement and Supply Chain Standards

UNEC requires all suppliers, contractors, and service providers to adhere to environmentally responsible practices. Procurement decisions will be considered:

- lifecycle environmental impact
- energy efficiency standards
- recycled or sustainable materials
- supplier carbon disclosure

Preference will be given to vendors demonstrating certified environmental management systems or sustainability credentials.

Section 15. Green Building and Infrastructure Standards

All new construction, renovation, and infrastructure projects shall align with recognized green building principles. UNEC will prioritize:

- energy-efficient architectural design
- low-carbon construction materials
- water-saving technologies
- natural lighting optimization
- smart environmental control systems

Where feasible, buildings should comply with internationally recognized sustainability certification frameworks.

Section 16. Independent Verification and Audit

To ensure transparency and credibility, UNEC will periodically seek independent third-party verification of its emissions data, sustainability reports, and environmental performance indicators.

External audits may be conducted by accredited environmental assessment organizations or sustainability certification bodies.

Section 17. Internal Carbon Reduction Incentive Mechanism

UNEC may introduce internal incentive schemes to encourage emission reduction across departments. These may include:

- sustainability performance benchmarks
- green innovation grants
- resource-efficiency recognition awards
- departmental carbon reduction targets

Such mechanisms aim to foster institutional ownership of sustainability goals and encourage innovation.

Section 18. Policy Review and Continuous Improvement

Beyond scheduled reviews, this policy may be revised earlier if:

- International Environmental Standards Change
- national legislation is updated
- new technologies enable improved performance
- monitoring results indicate the need for strategic adjustment

Continuous improvement is recognized as a core principle of UNEC's environmental governance approach.

Section 19. Conclusion

UNEC's Zero Emission Policy embodies the university's dedication to shaping a climate-resilient, low-carbon future through responsible governance, innovation, and education. Guided by Azerbaijan's environmental vision and the UN SDGs, UNEC strives to inspire sustainable change both within and beyond its campuses-setting an example for institutions across the region.

