

Fossil Free Campaign Orientation Paper for University of Ottawa

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June 10th 2015

Executive Summary

- Addressing global warming and the shift to a low carbon economy in order to stay within the 2°C target required for a sustainable planet is the central issue of our times. To achieve this goal, meaningful actions will be required from all institutions including universities.
- University of Ottawa is a world leader among universities in its responsible investment policies and practices.
- Universities need to leverage all their assets to address the issue of global warming. These include teaching, research, physical plant, public policy engagement and leveraging financial assets in an effective way that creates meaningful change.
- Divestment is seen as a blunt and ineffective policy by most responsible investors and RI experts.
- Responsible investors are using more effective approaches to address climate risk in their portfolios. These approaches include measuring and reducing the carbon footprint of their portfolios by shifting investment away from companies that use carbon inefficiently to those that use it in the most efficient way possible. This approach sends clear signals to the market of future change.
- This report recommends twelve concrete short-term, medium-term and long-term actions that could be taken by the University to develop effective strategies using all your available resources to address global warming and encourage the shift to a low carbon economy.
- This report does not recommend the University of Ottawa change its already existing practice on negative screens, and does not recommend that the blunt and ineffective instrument of divestment from fossil fuels be used.