



# SUSTAINABILITY NEWS BEAT

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University of California, Santa Barbara  
<http://sustainability.ucsb.edu>

## Fishing for a Solution

By Chris Darancette

Most lifestyle-conscious Santa Barbara community members are familiar with former UCSB professor Garret Hardin's thesis, *The Tragedy of the Commons*. His look at 18<sup>th</sup> century English land management has made waves in the seas of some of the most heavily fished regions in our country. A recent study investigating domestic fisheries sourced by the Environmental Defense Center, a partner of the Sustainable Fisheries Group, has found that of the over 230 fisheries assessed, 54 are overfished while 45 fisheries are currently experiencing overfishing.

The Sustainable Fisheries Group, a powerhouse alliance in battling overfishing, combines the Donald Bren School of Environmental Science and Management; Marine Science Institute; National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis; and the Carsey-Wolf Center for Film, Television, and New Media. UC staff and faculty are making strides into providing economic incentives to fisherman and fisheries to market and catch more sustainable fish stock. The project, outlined by Associate Professor for Environmental Economics at the Bren School, Christopher Costello, looks to make an impact by making near shore fisheries both sustainable and more profitable.

Costello's project works to create Dedicated Access Privileges (DAPs) for fisherman fishing off the coast. DAPs refer to limiting the space or the harvest of fisherman by providing cooperative and tradable permits for fishing rights. Along the same vein of the Environmental Defense Center is working to limit by-catches, fish caught in nets which are thrown back because they are not marketable or in too small quantities. Fish caught as by-catch are usually dead by the time they are thrown back due to the amount of time it takes to pull the fish out of the net and determine which fish the fisherman wants to keep and which is not wanted. The Environmental Defense Center is also creating catch shares (limited access privileges).

The Sustainable Fisheries Group uses a fisheries fund, boosted by a considerable donation from the Paul G. Allen foundation, to designate long-term solutions to collapsing fisheries. With a revolving fund from local and state nonprofits, the

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Photo credit: California Seafood Council, UC Davis

SFG works to curb overfishing by making local fisheries robust with lively and managed fish stock.

Professor Costello believes that creating local cooperatives will propel sustainable fishing as a marketable and effective tool to combat over-usage of our shared resource.

The Sustainable Fisheries Group is a research project of the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis.

For more information please visit:  
<http://www.nceas.ucsb.edu/>

### UPCOMING SUSTAINABILITY EVENTS

**Media and the Environment: Communicating about Santa Barbara's Ocean, Air, and Land**  
Tuesday, March 18 - 7:00-9:00 pm  
Faulkner Gallery, SB Public Library - 40 E. Anapamu Street  
Free admission and refreshments

**Cash for the Coast - 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Naples Coalition Benefit Concert**  
Friday, March 21 - 7:30-10:00 pm  
Lobero Theater - 33 E. Canon Perdido Street  
Kenny Loggins, Glen Phillips, and many others performing  
More information: [info@savenaples.org](mailto:info@savenaples.org)

**UC/CSU/CCC Sustainability Conference**  
Registration opens - Thursday, March 27  
[www.sustainability.calpoly.edu](http://www.sustainability.calpoly.edu)

For more events: <http://sustainability.ucsb.edu/events>

## UCSB Selected for STARS Pilot Program

By Perrin Pellegrin

UC Santa Barbara is among more than 90 college and university campuses selected to participate in the pilot phase of a rating system for sustainability in higher education developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The self-assessment system, called STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System), was launched on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Participating college and university campuses will test the system over the course of 2008, and provide feedback to AASHE that will inform STARS version 1.0, planned for release in spring 2009.

“We are honored to be selected as one of the universities for the STARS pilot program. The program will assist us in tracking all the sustainability improvements we have made to the UCSB campus and provide a benchmark for all campuses to strive for. Plus, we hope to garner innovative ideas from other institutions of higher education from across the country and to share our experiences with them,” said Perrin Pellegrin, Campus Sustainability Manager at UCSB.

The 90-plus participating campuses were selected to represent a wide range of institutional types, sizes, and geography. They include public and private schools, community colleges and research universities.

STARS is designed to:

- Help gauge the progress of colleges and universities toward sustainability in all sectors, from governance and operations to academics and community engagement.
- Enable meaningful comparisons across institutions as well as benchmarking within institutions.
- Create incentives for continuous improvement toward sustainability.
- Facilitate information sharing about sustainability practices and performance in higher education
- Build a stronger, more diverse campus sustainability community.

Given the rapid growth of sustainability initiatives at institutions of higher education in North America, measuring and assessing progress

toward sustainability goals has become increasingly important. While many institutions have undertaken sustainability assessments and while a variety of assessment tools are available, there is currently no system that translates disparate sustainability indicators into a single metric that enables both institutional benchmarking and easy comparison across a large number of campuses in terms of overall level of achievement.

*“We are honored to be selected as one of the universities for the STARS pilot program.”*

“The launch of the pilot phase is a major milestone in the development of STARS,” said Judy Walton, AASHE’s acting executive director. “It has taken nearly two years of hard work and the contributions of hundreds of individuals from every sector of the higher education community to bring us to this point.”

The system is similar to the LEED (Leadership in Energy Environmental Design) green building rating system. STARS, however, is applied to an entire campus rather than a single building or set of buildings and evaluates social responsibility as well as environmental stewardship. Campuses may earn credits in three categories - 1) Curriculum and Research, 2) Operations, and 3) Administration and Finance. Within each category are subsections of credits, ranging from “purchasing” and “buildings” in Operations to “investment” and “planning” in Administration and Finance.

For more information on the STARS Pilot Program: <http://www.aashe.org/stars>

### ECO FACT:

*UCSB's Facilities Management estimates that computers use about 14% of the electricity used on campus.  
Kill a watt when not using it!*

## Coastal Watershed Contamination on the Rise

By Scott Heimerman

The conclusions of a three-year long investigation into Santa Barbara's creek beds show a rising concentration of coliform indicator bacteria in the local watershed. The report, released this past September, focused on examining the urban storm drains that flow into the Arroyo Burro and Mission Creeks. The Holden Lab in the Bren School of Environmental Science & Management released the report in conjunction with the City of Santa Barbara and is currently working to analyze the specific DNA structures of the microbes in our water. In other words, they are working to find out exactly what kinds of creepies and crawlies contaminate our water.

Dr. Patricia Holden, leading the research group at UCSB, is interested in determining the presence and origins of pathogen-containing fecal material in coastal freshwaters that discharge into our ocean. The group discovered an active discharge of contaminated water during Santa Barbara's hottest and driest months. This presents some interesting questions, such as, "Where does this water, and the bacteria in it, come from?" and "How does microbial pollution change or survive on its journey from upstream to our beaches?"

These questions can be solved with rigorous field and laboratory work. The group seeks to use their collected data to create a model that can serve as a basis for spatial-temporal analysis of creek runoff for any coastal community.

While the presence of the indicator bacteria does not have any known direct effects on human health, it does imply that pathogens, like cholera and salmonella, could co-migrate with it. The City of Santa Barbara has indefinitely redirected the affected storm drains to a nearby sewage plant. However, there are still plenty of reasons for the City to be concerned. As little as one gram of human feces contains approximately 12 billion microbes, including pathogenic viruses, bacteria, protozoa and parasites.

According to Holden, the group plans to further develop their coastal-creek model, continue to expand the scope of their research and look for other potential sources of creek pollution.

## New Literature and the Environment Specialization for English Majors

By Joshua Kelley

The UCSB English department began offering a specialization program for environmentally-conscious English majors Fall Quarter 2007. The Undergraduate Specialization in Literature and the Environment can be obtained by taking four Literature and the Environment (L&E) courses. There are over thirty such courses, of which several core classes are cross-listed with the Environmental Studies Department.

According to L&E Director Ken Hiltner, the environment has been a fundamental aspect in literature for over 2,000 years, dating back to the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, which postulates on the ramifications of deforestation.

"L&E will examine the environmental issues of today, but even more importance will be placed on how we got to our contemporary attitudes on the environment," Hiltner says. "For example, the idea of a wilderness is a culturally created notion that has evolved over the past two hundred years. The original environmentalists tried to preserve the environment, but today the concern is on how we occupy our environment."

While much of the L&E focus is on texts written hundreds of years ago, contemporary issues are also emphasized. Professor Stephanie LeManager's American Cultures and Global Contexts: Global Ecologies course, among other things, analyses the conflicting discourses on global warming. Some English courses that normally handle broader topics have L&E counterparts that center on environmental issues, such as this quarter's Science Fiction course, taught by Professor Carl Gutiérrez-Jones.

The primary goal of the L&E program is to raise awareness on environmental issues, producing graduates who are not only familiar with the language and concepts of ecocriticism, but also capable of becoming active participants in the efforts for environmental justice.

"It is unfortunate," says Hiltner, "that environmental discourse, fueled by the current environmental crisis, will be the defining movement of the twenty-first century."



## Energy Efficiency Summit Sheds Light on Logistics of Energy Conservation

By Taylor Orr

The Energy Efficiency Summit, a mid-year meeting sponsored by the Alliance to Save Energy, occurred in San Diego from February 10-11, 2008. The theme for the event was *creating partnerships for an energy and climate secure tomorrow*.

The summit provided an opportunity for students involved in the Green Campus Program, which is a student organization that exists to promote energy efficiency on 13 UC and CSU campuses, to meet with stakeholders to plan further energy savings on college campuses.

Fifty-two Green Campus interns from 13 California campuses participated in the event. Interns met with investor-owned utility companies, including Southern California Edison (SCE), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), San Diego Gas and Electric, and Sempra to discuss ways in which energy can be used more efficiently. Students also met with energy professionals to discuss potential careers in the environmental field after college.

On the first day of the event, there was a Green Campus Boot Camp for the interns. During the boot camp, Jennifer Alvarez, a Program Associate for the Green Campus Program explained energy basics and energy basics, regulation, and policy.

“Energy efficiency is the quickest, cheapest, and easiest way to conserve resources. Wind energy is flashier, but turning out your light is simple and doesn’t cost anything. Energy efficiency is the first choice,” Alvarez said.

A welcome reception involving students as well as the heads of California utility companies, UC Office of the President and CSU Office of the Chancellor proceeded the day of events at San Diego State University featuring distinguished speakers in the field of energy and environmental sustainability.

Among the events on Monday’s meeting included a panel of speakers piloting new approaches for energy savings. Humboldt State University interns discussed a successful project in which they collaborated with the utilities department on campus to change the settings of the campus’s copiers to drastically reduce energy output when the copiers are not in use. A Chico State University intern presented a project that highlighted the importance of forging partnerships in changing campus thermostat policy.

After leaving the conference, Green Campus interns are determined to start new projects they saw implemented by other campuses at the summit. Green Campus interns Jordan Sager and Sonny Hoang

are currently testing out the Smart Strip’s, a power strip that tries to stop idle electrical current from wasting electricity, effectiveness for the manufacturer, BITS Limited.

Upcoming projects by UCSB Green Campus include a CFL exchange in Santa Rosa Residence Hall and a Green Campus education program in local Santa Barbara schools.

Sarah Bresko, UCSB Green Campus Team Manager, said, “The Energy Efficiency Summit provided a great opportunity for our team to get to know each other, test out new energy efficient technologies and meet with the heads of PG&E and SCE to learn what they are doing to decrease energy use in California.”

### INTERESTED IN INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES?

The Sustainability Internship Program is consistently offering new academic credit, volunteer and even paid internships. This is a great opportunity to build your resume and see if sustainability is the field you want to work in after college. Projects range from energy and water efficiency, to environmental literacy and green chemistry. Email: [kmaynard@geog.ucsb.edu](mailto:kmaynard@geog.ucsb.edu)

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