

NEWS RELEASE**EMBARGO: 00:01 3 July 08****Contact:** Emma Hughes, People & Planet
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telephone: 01865 245 678
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email: gogreen@peopleandplanet.org
on-line: peopleandplanet.org/greenleague**British Universities cut the carbon
People & Planet publish *The Green League 2008***

Today, Thursday 3 July, the award winning **Green League** was published by People & Planet, the UK's leading student campaign network. The Green League 2008 shows a remarkable improvement in environmental management and performance in the UK's Higher Education sector over the past year.

Gloucestershire, Plymouth and University of the West of England top the league. Follow this link to see the full table: <http://peopleandplanet.org/gogreen/greenleague2008>.

The change in the sector has been driven by **thousands of students** who have been campaigning for greener campuses. **The Green League 2007** brought sustainability to the forefront of Vice Chancellor's minds and, one year later, the 2008 Green League is a clear indicator that there have been **tangible changes within the sector**. However, there is still **a long way to go** to minimise the sector's climate impacts. People & Planet call upon universities to improve their accuracy, transparency and reliability of monitoring and build upon this initial shift to drive up environmental standards.

The Green League, which last year won best campaign in the **British Environment and Media Awards**, is the only league table showing the environmental performance of Britain's universities. Published in **Times Higher Education** and sponsored by **WWF**, People & Planet's **Green League 2008** ranks all British universities – awarding them a First, 2:1, 2:2, Third, or Fail – based on nine environmental criteria, both policy and performance related. It incorporates data obtained through the freedom of information act, including the percentage of waste recycled and CO₂ emissions for each individual institution. The table also shows the **change in each university's ranking** between 2007 and 2008.

In addition to highlighting the performance of individual universities, the Green League provides an overview of the Higher Education sector and exposes the need for a **comprehensive carbon reduction strategy** to drive down carbon emissions year-on-year. People & Planet are calling for leadership and drive from the government combined with full support from all sector stakeholders. People & Planet would like to see the HE sector act as a role model for the public sector - providing evidence that a **transformation to a low carbon economy** is a realistic ambition.

"The dramatic improvements in the league after only one year should be celebrated. With many UK universities leading the research on the environmental threats facing our planet, it's common sense that they also lead in environmental performance. These advances are a welcome response to the urgency of tackling the threats to people and nature." David Norman, WWF-UK Director of Campaigns

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- Interviews with sixth-form and university students and further quotes are available on request.
- People & Planet's Green League 2007 won Best Campaign at the British Environment and Media Awards 2007.
- The Green League is produced as part of People & Planet's Go Green campaign which aims to transform the environmental performance of the UK education sector. This year 39 university, school and college groups staged campus actions as part of National Go Green Week – the UK's first national student week of action and events against climate chaos.
- People & Planet's Green Education Declaration was also launched this year. It calls for a strong Climate Change Bill that commits to at least 80% cuts in CO2 by 2050 and includes carbon reduction strategies for each sector, including the education sector itself. It currently has 51 signatories, - 46 of these are university vice chancellors. A full list of signatories is available: <http://peopleandplanet.org/greeneducationdeclaration>.
- 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 is a founding member of Stop Climate Chaos, the national coalition of civil society organisations campaigning on climate change <http://www.stopcliamtechaos.org>