



Green Gown
Awards 2016



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Finalist's case study

ENSAT (École Nationale Supérieure Agronomique de Toulouse)

Continuous Improvement : Institutional Change

Agro Toulouse, the dynamic campus on the move for a sustainable future



Profile

- Higher Education
- 860 students
- 92 staff
- Campus' surface area (including open green spaces) : 53,000m²

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About the project

Summary

Ever since 2009, ENSAT has set great store by positioning itself as an example in sustainable development (SD) measures. Beyond the dedicated research and teaching themes, the whole life of the school revolves around projects related to SD. Whether pertaining to energy-saving measures, waste sorting, biodiversity, or reduction of environmental impacts, the entire ENSAT community is committed to SD on a daily basis. The founding of the GreenSAT organization in 2014 served to keep the movement going and get students, teachers and staff involved by proposing and implementing concrete initiatives. The teams' efforts were rewarded by achieving ISO 14001:2004 certification in 2014 for all the activities carried out on the main ENSAT site. ENSAT is now identified amongst its partners as a major player in sustainable development on the Toulouse site.

Project partners

Sustainable development is part of the agronomy school's DNA. With teachers' support, students participate actively in the student organizations mentioned above during their school years. When events or communication campaigns are held, they contribute to raising awareness, training and informing in-house users as well as the general public.

A new building is currently under construction with an overall cost approach including requirements of 30-year maintenance-operation and environmental performance. The construction of the new 6-million euro building is jointly financed by the State in the framework of the Plan Campus and by SICOVAL.

ENSAT collaborate with: IAVFF-Agreenium (to create MOOCs), CROUS (to reduce food waste), SICOVAL, a partnership of several local authorities (to sort waste), the national uniAgro federation (to organize lecture-debates on COP21), industrial partner VEOLIA (installation of a rainwater harvesting system), Conso'Respo (distribution of local products). In 2013, the organization GreenSAT was founded, bringing staff and students together to work on practical projects (kitchen garden, composting bin, insect hotel on campus and creating a carpooling area).

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The results

The problem

The sustainable development approach at ENSAT is original and innovative because it is carried out as a matter of course. Thought out in a comprehensive manner, it applies to the scale of the living environment, its operation, the staff and the course of studies. The deep involvement of all parties in the school fosters the development of a true policy of transition and innovation in sustainable development and social responsibility. The sustainable development approach is intrinsic to the areas on which the research done in the school's laboratories focuses (e.g., agro-ecology and sustainable management of forest resources). Everything that can contribute to making the school a sustainable campus is now part of the school management's major orientations. Certification has set in motion a virtuous circle of continuous improvement of environmental performance by involving the personnel and users of the school. Sustainable development has thus naturally become firmly established, allowing the school to be run in an environmentally responsible way.

The approach

The initiatives undertaken to promote sustainable development are funded by the school's own resources and account for a budget of about 80,000 euros a year. This project has prompted further thought about the school's purchasing policy, which today promotes sustainable development. Under the catering contract, there are clauses that impose waste sorting and recycling, and even for some services, the use of organic and/or locally sourced products. The school has set up a partnership with a company that facilitates the inclusion of workers with disabilities into the workforce for the upkeep of the grounds and promotional items. Lastly, for the construction of the new building, the school has implemented an overall cost approach, an unusual step in public project management.

Our goals

Since 2009, ENSAT has been committed to an environmentally-friendly approach aimed at reducing the impact of its activities on its environment. The school's initiatives have been structured around the following areas of focus:

- Overall management :

Introduction of an EMS (first French school of agronomy to be ISO 14001 certified). Continuous improvement of the school's environmental performance by getting staff and students involved.

- Infrastructure :

Since 2010, significantly reducing energy consumption (-28% gas, -14% electricity), raising the staff's awareness, regulating temperatures by means of the CTM, organizing lighting campaigns (LED lights), a new entry airlock and installing presence detectors.

Since 2011, introducing waste sorting, installing containers and creating a small waste collection centre.

A new building is currently under construction with an overall cost approach including requirements of 30-year maintenance-operation and environmental performance.

- Educational programmes:

In the first year, basic notions of SD, principles of systemic analysis and complex environmental issues are broached. In the second year, pre-specialization modules (e.g., ethics and land development, green growth) are proposed. In the third year, students may choose a specialization such as sustainable development engineering, environmental engineering, or environmental quality and resource management.



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Obstacles and solutions

Obstacles	Solutions
Maintaining daily commitment from students (new arrivals at each semester) and staff	Large and frequent communication of our good results in term of energy, impact of our activities on environment.
Needs of financial aid to improve our actions	Recognition and rewards for our environmental policy, such as ISO 14001 certification and the Green Gown Awards, help us to value our actions with our partners and funders.

Performance and results

The various steps taken since 2010 were motivated by the quest for savings, by regulatory obligations or by the desire to be exemplary and to provide users with a high-quality environment. These initiatives cover the following benefits, among others:

- since 2010, the gas bill has gone down by 35%, a saving of €41,230. For electricity, higher taxes cancelled out expected savings. Significant return on investment for all the initiatives is expected within the next 3 years.
- reduction of consumption of paper and consumables: installing shared duplex printers, using paper produced by an ecological and sustainable industry, and encouraging offices to go paperless by dematerializing their documents;
- use of natural products in the buildings (ecolabel) and elimination of pesticides for upkeep of the grounds;
- reduction of greenhouse gas emissions: setting up video-conferencing to cut down on travel, creating a carpool area in the school's car park;
- preservation of biodiversity: mowing lawns using an alternative technique, creating a kitchen garden on the campus with an insect hotel nearby, installing compost bins;
- reduction of energy consumption: setting up Centralized Technical Management (CTM), adjusting outdoor lighting via precise settings, installing presence detectors, building a new server room to save on cooling of the units, launching an Energy Performance Contract for the buildings in 2015.
- quality of the living environment : lecture-debates, purchasing policy with an environmental clause or a clause pertaining to integration of workers with disabilities, especially for catering and construction/renovation contracts, installing canvas sun shades in the patios to provide cool shade and cut down on use of air conditioning.



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The future

Lessons learned

ENSAT's quality and environment approach is a collective endeavour in which every individual's contribution is paramount. We know we can count on everyone to come on board and be involved in implementing this approach. The success of such a project depends on 3 major indissociable items:

- a project that unites and mobilizes people
- relevant, effective internal communication (awareness raising and training initiatives for all students and staff)
- environmentally responsible actions adopted by all parties, which have achieved remarkable results (lower energy consumption, thermal comfort and biodiversity).

Sharing your project

The school cares deeply about sharing its experience with other institutions and welcomes them during key phases of SD projects (audits, management reviews, site inspections). Lecture-debates open to the public are regularly organized, so all parties can meet specialists and compare their points of view on questions of SD&SR. ENSAT, which pursues a strong policy of external communication, knows how to collaborate with local players to encourage environmentally responsible civic initiatives. These initiatives encourage our regional and national partners to stay mobilized and ensure the longevity of the projects. This influence can be proved by the considerable amount of coverage in the media (2 to 6 press mentions a month).

For a more responsible, more sustainable daily life, the environmentally responsible civic actions introduced at ENSAT can be reproduced in any other type of structure.

The educational material is also accessible as part of training courses throughout one's life and through MOOCs, thus enabling everyone to consolidate their knowledge in the field of sustainable development.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

Our commitment to sustainable development and the environmental approach are reflected in the entire campus. Being a Green Gown Award finalist is an acknowledgment of all the work accomplished by staff and students and gives an international visibility to our project. This offers an external evaluation of our policy and our many actions.

Further information

ENSAT (École Nationale Supérieure Agronomique de Toulouse)

<http://www.ensat.fr>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/ENSAT_INP

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ENSAT.agrotoulouse>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/edu/school?id=21222>

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