

Final Report

UVic Sustainability Scholars Program

UVic Sustainable Procurement Initiatives: Developing an Implementation Strategy for  
Supplier Code of Conduct and EcoVadis Supplier Sustainability Assessments

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Date completed: August 23, 2024

## Disclaimer

This report is a product of the UVic Sustainability Scholars Program, a partnership between UVic and various on- and off-campus organizations offering internship opportunities to graduate students working on sustainability-focused research projects that advance sustainability in the region. This project was conducted under the mentorship of UVic Purchasing Services staff.

## Territorial Acknowledgement

*I acknowledge and respect the ləkʷəŋən peoples on whose territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.*

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## Introduction

Public post-secondary institutions are driving Sustainable Procurement (SP), given its impact on various stakeholders and partners through direct expenditures, collaboration, and research. In addition, the higher education sector stimulates economic activity in the broader supply chain and has a multiplier effect on the national economy (Filho et al., 2019). From the early objectives of reducing waste and packaging and evaluating suppliers based on their environmental footprint, SP has extended to social issues like modern slavery, child labour, and internal governance. In recent years, including the triple bottom line of profit, people, and planet metric has expanded the understanding and relevance of SP in the sector.<sup>1</sup> In Canada, various higher-educational institutions have adopted more sustainable sourcing strategies that align with university-wide sustainable goals.

To understand how higher education institutions evolved from conventional procurement practice to a greener purchasing process, below table provides a snapshot of initiatives by select Canadian universities:

*Table 1: SP Practices of Selected Canadian Universities<sup>2</sup>*

Institution	SP Practices
<b>University of Victoria (UVic)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creation of Supplier Code Conduct in 2019</li><li>• First Canadian University to implement EcoVadis assessment in 2020</li><li>• Modern Slavery report submission for the fiscal year ending April 2024.</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Research done on the Sustainability and procurement practices in higher education institutions: Barriers and drivers. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 231 (2019) 1267-1280

<sup>2</sup> Data collated for the various University Websites and info sheets from the Universities such SFU's Social Procurement Guide

<b>Simon Fraser University</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Social Procurement Guide with other Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia (UNBC, BCIT, VIU) in 2021. This guide aims to provide steps and perspective on how to incorporate social value in procurement practices.</li> <li>• Created dedicated EcoVadis landing page for its suppliers.</li> <li>• Developed specific guidelines to encourage participation and sourcing from Indigenous businesses.</li> </ul>
<b>University of British Columbia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first Canadian University to adapt a sustainable development policy in 1997 which was the foundation of the Sustainable procurement practices of the institutions.</li> <li>• Implemented the Financial Operations Supplier Code of Conduct in 2008 which sets the ethical expectations of goods, services, or equipment.</li> <li>• Preference of purchase on Fair Trade products and suppliers who can guarantee fair labour practice.</li> <li>• Supplier's sustainability programs accounts for 10% of a Request for Proposal (RFP) evaluation criteria.</li> <li>• Campus wide recycling programs like the <i>Reuse-it</i> UBC and UBC's <i>Recyclepedia</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Queens University</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed a social procurement framework that promotes diversity in supply chain, better access for disabled persons, and increasing indigenous supplier base.</li> </ul>
<b>University of York</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of the first Canadian institutions to adopt a social procurement practice in 2019 to improve supplier diversity and workforce development.</li> <li>• Incorporated weighted social procurement criteria into its RFP for general contracting services.</li> </ul>

*Table 2: SP Practices of Selected International Universities<sup>3</sup>*

<b>Institution</b>	<b>SP Practices</b>
<b>University of Cambridge (UK)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable procurement is one of the nine themes within the Environmental Sustainability Vision, Policy, and strategy of the university</li> <li>• In 2019, the first university in the world to announce a science-based target to reduce energy related carbon emissions to absolute zero by 2048 with the aspiration to achieve this by 2038.</li> </ul>
<b>Stanford University (USA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procurement Services established a partnership with the university's office of sustainability and scope 3 emissions program to develop and implement responsible purchasing solutions.</li> </ul>
<b>University of New South Wales (Australia)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched Sustainable Procurement Vision 2018-2025 aimed to deliver environmental, social, and economic benefits to its</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Data collated for the various University Websites and info sheets from the Universities

	<p>community through understanding and strengthening its supply chain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key focus: 1) Addressing Modern Slavery across its supply chain 2) Supply Diversity and Inclusion 3) Emission Reduction (Net Zero Strategy)</li> </ul>
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## UVic addressing Modern Day Slavery in the Supply Chain

Another key pillar of SP is the social aspect, which includes responsible sourcing and the fight against modern-day slavery and child labour. An estimated 27.6 million people globally are victims of forced labour, which generates up to CAD 323 billion of illegal profits each year. Figures show that up to 39% of these victims are women, and 12% are children, who are the most vulnerable members of society (International Labour Organization, 2024). Forced labour is present in the global supply chains of both public and private institutions in Canada.<sup>4</sup> To address this issue, the Canadian Government has passed the *Fighting Against Forced Labour and Child Labour in Supply Chain Act* (“*The Act*,” formerly known as the Bill S-211) to prevent and reduce forced labour along the Canadian Value Chain. As a baseline, UVic has implemented the *Purchasing Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct* (SCoC), which provides clear expectations and minimum ethical, social, and environmental standards that all suppliers and their subcontractors need to meet to offer services and goods to the University (UVic SCoC, 2020).

With the Act fully enforced, all government entities, including post-secondary learning institutions and certain private organizations, have reporting obligations to the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.<sup>5</sup> The initial report, in particular, is a key document that outlines the steps taken in the previous fiscal year to prevent and reduce the risk of forced and child labour along the supply chain. UVic has complied with this

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<sup>4</sup>Statistics and figures from the International Labour Organization; Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour (2024).

<sup>5</sup> Part 1 of Bill S-211 sets out new reporting obligations for government institutions. Clause 6(1) of the bill requires all government institutions that produce, purchase or distribute in Canada or elsewhere to submit annual reports to the appropriate Ministry.

requirement for the fiscal year ending on March 31st, 2024, by completing the mandated questionnaire and submission of a report as required by Clause 6(2) of the Act. However, there are identified gaps in UVic's steps to prevent and reduce modern slavery risks, as the institution has only taken 25% of the prescribed steps in the questionnaire for the previous fiscal year<sup>6</sup>. UVic must provide remediation steps to address these gaps in the questionnaire in the coming fiscal years. This could include implementing a more robust reporting system, conducting regular audits, and ensuring all relevant staff are trained on the Act's requirements. A reliable and standardized reporting tool is needed to ensure UVic's compliance with the Act. Apart from the reputational risks for failure to comply with the reporting obligations of the Act, the Government can impose penalties of up to CAD 250,000 fines on any entities failing to meet their annual reporting obligations, a significant financial risk to the University.<sup>7</sup>

## Research Approach

Research methodology for this project included both primary and secondary research. Primary research will consist of data from interviews and discussions with the UVic Purchasing Services team, UVic internal stakeholders such as the Campus Planning and Sustainability Office, EcoVadis team and external vendors, including Thermo-Fisher Scientific North America and Coca-Cola Bottlers Canada. This approach is expected to provide context for the baseline understanding of the issues, gaps, and opportunities in driving SP. Secondary research included scholarly journal articles, company & industry reports, white papers, and industry proposals.

This comprehensive research provided in-depth analysis, actionable insights, and evidence-based strategic recommendations to promote the adaption of EcoVadis assessment for external suppliers and improved engagement with internal clients of the Purchasing Services team.

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<sup>6</sup> UVic affirmed 6 out of the 24 steps in the questionnaire submitted to the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

<sup>7</sup> Clause 19 of the Act makes it an offence for any person or entity to fail to meet their annual obligations. Each is a summary conviction offence with fines of up to \$250,000.

*Part 1: Issues Identified by the Internal Team*

Below are the recurring barriers or gaps identified during the initial engagements, meetings, and interviews with the Purchasing Service team and the Campus Planning and Sustainability Office representatives regarding driving SP within the UVic network.

*Table 3: Identified barriers in UVic internal and external partners*

Internal Stakeholders	External Suppliers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of familiarity on EcoVadis assessment</li> <li>• Expectations on immediate benefits of EcoVadis assessment and SP.</li> <li>• Fear that preferred suppliers would not be selected in the process</li> <li>• Functionality of goods and services are more important than the ‘sustainability’ aspect.</li> <li>• Lack of follow-through</li> <li>• Uniform Sustainability Metrics</li> <li>• Engagement with the Campus Planning and Sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of familiarity on EcoVadis assessment</li> <li>• Lack of readiness of the suppliers</li> <li>• Complexities of internal structures (ie hierarchy of orgs/ who to lead between account rep or sustainability lead)</li> <li>• May stem from lack of understanding</li> <li>• No clear directions from the supplier’s internal organization</li> <li>• Lack of follow through after completing assessment.</li> <li>• Lack of resources</li> <li>• No assigned person(s) to complete the assessment</li> <li>• Time constraints</li> <li>• Cost constraints particularly smaller-sized organizations</li> <li>• Vendors with unique goods and services may have leverage to reject invitation to complete assessment</li> </ul>

In a study on higher education sectors across the globe, the barriers mentioned above align with most of the challenges faced by the sector summarized below:

Figure 1: Barriers to implementing SP at Universities

Barriers <sup>a</sup>	Respondent statements
Lack of evaluation and recognition	"Departments are encouraged, but unfortunately are not needed, to improve their environmental performance through sustainable procurement and reduced use of resources".
Bureaucratic barriers Roman (2017)	"The practice of the SP is part of the IES 2013–2020 strategic plan, the absence of a green purchasing coordinator, and bureaucratic barriers between departments are the main weaknesses in promoting SP practices".
Decentralised purchasing structures McMurray et al. (2014)	"Absence of legal leadership and unwillingness of the authorities whose management of their institutions is incumbent". "There is no department or section related to the sustainability policy." "Autonomy of restaurants in the purchase of food, difficulty for suppliers to adhere to sustainable practices." "Lack of coordination".
Lack of policy and guidelines for SP Gormly (2014)	"The policy is not formalized and there is no adequate coordination within the organization." "There is no defined guideline." "Lack of management guidelines."
Lack of awareness McMurray et al. (2014)	"A great weakness is that not every teacher and his division of chair are equally interested in sustainability". "Lack of awareness about sustainable purchases."
Lack of resources available and cost of sustainable goods Preuss (2007)	"Lack of involvement with sustainable practices in different areas of the university." "There is a lack of resources available for investment, which limits the program." "Higher cost of sustainable goods".
Lack of knowledge of options Walker and Brammer (2009), Brammer and Walker (2011); Young et al. (2015)	"Lack of transparency in the supply chain in many categories, an extremely diversified supply base."

<sup>a</sup> All except Young et al. (2015) are studies of public sector SP.

Source: (Filho et al., 2019). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.05.202>

## Part 2: Issues Identified by Suppliers

Through the initial engagements, meetings and interviews with select vendors such as Thermo-Fisher Scientific North America and Coca-Cola Bottlers Canada, below are the recurring barriers or gaps identified on driving SP and adaption of EcoVadis Assessment

Table 4: Supplier barriers in the adaption of SP and EcoVadis Assessment

Adaption of SP	EcoVadis Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time and resources constraints</li> <li>• Educating leadership, internal stakeholders, and decision-makers about the importance of sustainability</li> <li>• Additional cost</li> <li>• Proof the sustainability practices can lead to commercial success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breathe of questions of Ecovadis Assessment</li> <li>• Ability to answer the questions in a timely manner</li> <li>• Resources to manage the tasks</li> <li>• Other customers asking for other sustainability assessments other than EcoVadis (ie IS-14001, Sedex, proprietary sustainability system)</li> <li>• Business case that proves that EcoVadis can improve sustainability performance</li> </ul>

## Critical Issues

With the diverse issues identified above, this section identifies critical challenges the UVic Purchasing Services team can address that are within their control and influence. Furthermore, the problems are divided into internal and external to allow greater focus on the implementation of proposed strategies. The author recommends focusing on the following critical issues:

*Table 5: Six Critical Issues in Driving SP*

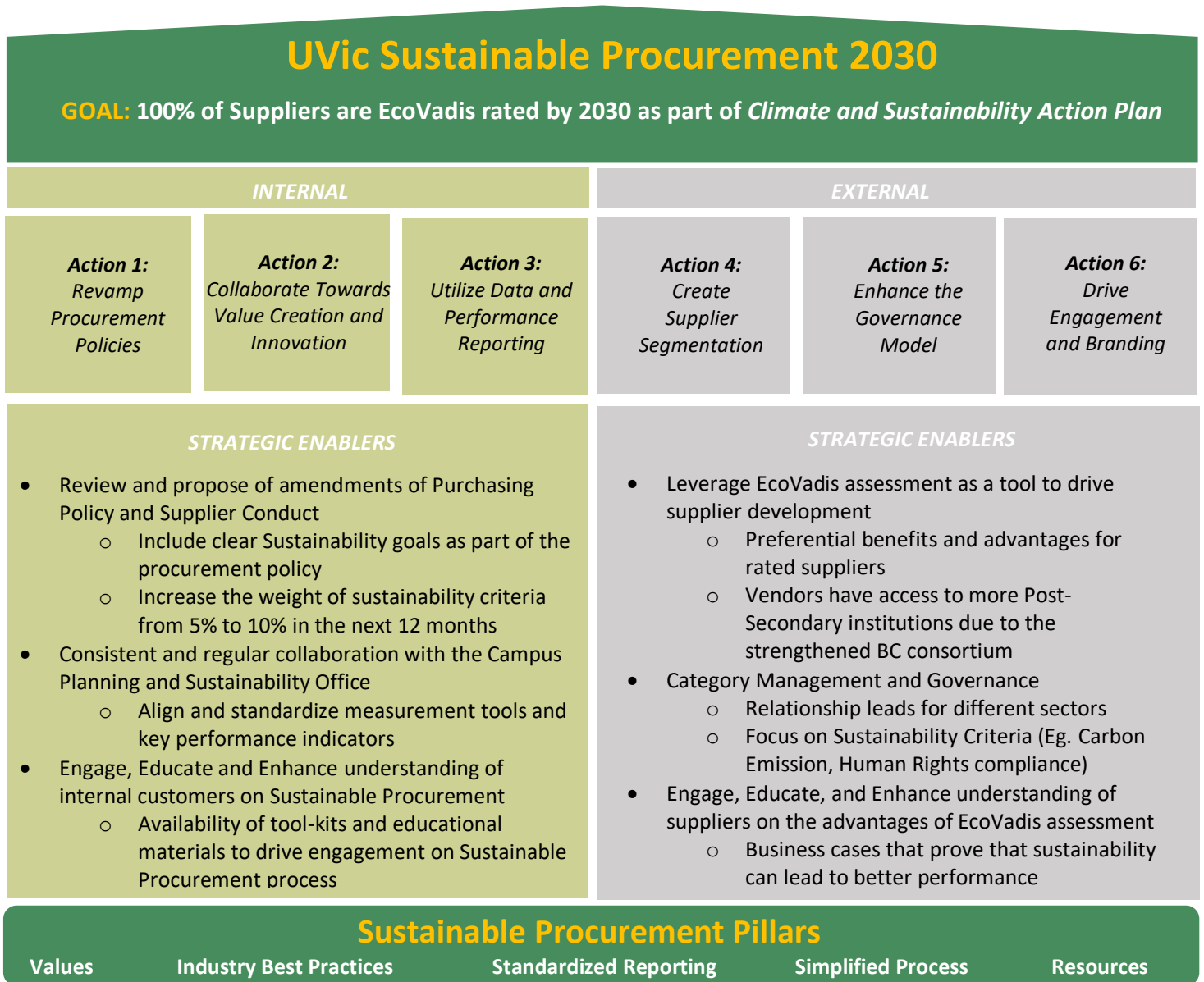
Internal Issues	External Issues
1. Lack of familiarity with EcoVadis Assessment and Sustainability Metrics	4. Educating leadership, internal stakeholders, and decision-makers
2. Expectations on the Immediate Benefits of Sustainable Procurement Practice	5. Perceived Complexity of the EcoVadis Assessment
3. Internal alignment and follow-through	6. Lack of understanding of the benefits of EcoVadis Assessment

The six key issues above are the basis for the recommended action steps supported by strategic enablers.

## Proposed Strategy Framework and Approach

In developing the implementation SP strategy, utilizing the *House of Strategy* framework was highly advantageous in establishing clear goals, objectives, and engagement approaches for driving SP practices within the UVic community. The framework seamlessly integrates the EcoVadis metrics' main value proposition and foundational capabilities, effectively aligning them with the target users. In the long run, the UVic Purchasing Services Office can refine the *House of Strategy* framework to calculate each strategy's weight using the key metrics identified (Prusty et al. 2017)

Figure 2: House of Strategy Framework and Methodology



Source: (Prusty et al. 2017). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cie.2017.04.001>

*Action step 1: Revamp Procurement Policy*

The first recommended action step is to enhance UVic’s *Purchasing Policy and SCoC* to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Define SP goals such as carbon emission reporting. There’s an opportunity to align the purchasing services’ goals with UVic’s Climate and Sustainability Action Plan 2030 (CSAP), particularly on issues related to reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) and

Scope 3 of GHG emissions and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is part of the CSAP target 3.

Figure 3: UN SDG Goals by 2030



Source: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Relevant SDGs to the Purchasing Services may include the following SDGs, as these may be influenced by the procurement process either through direct involvement, such as utilizing EcoVadis performance evaluation, or indirect participation through collaborations with internal customers, stakeholders, and suppliers.

- SDG Goal 4 (Quality Education), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)
- SDG Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)
- SDG Goal 13 (Climate Action)
- SDG Goal 17 (Partnerships for Goals)

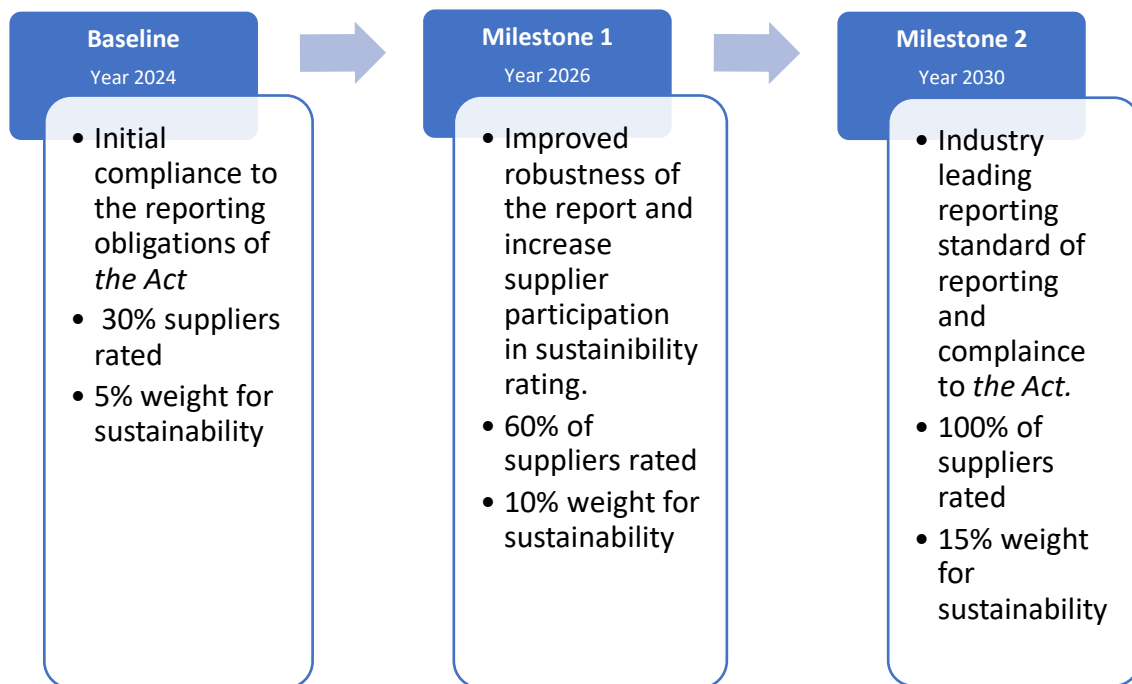
Mandatory EcoVadis assessment for existing and prospective suppliers and integration of forced and child labour evaluations along the vendors' supply chain to comply with the Act's compliance guidelines.

- Create a roadmap to meet Sustainability goals and the Act's reporting obligations by gradually increasing the target supplier participation and weight of the sustainability criteria from a baseline of 5% of any request for proposals (RFPs) submitted to the UVic Purchasing Services Office, see *Figure 4*.
- Prospective bids are evaluated using the evaluation criteria and metrics of UVic's SCoC. The recommendation is to increase the weight assigned to the sustainability ratings until this metric reaches 15% of the evaluation criteria in accepting bids submitted to UVic's Purchasing department, ideally by 2030. This could increase the suppliers' participation in the SP and enhance transparency in reporting forced and child labour along the value chain.

The gradual increase of the sustainability criteria could provide enough lead time for suppliers to adapt to the new standard and allow various stakeholders within the UVic community to be trained in the new RFP process and guidelines. The phasing of targets and milestones will effectively showcase UVic's year-on-year improvement in compliance with the reporting obligations stipulated in the Act.

This action step is promising as it allows UVic's internal stakeholders and external suppliers to adapt to the changes in the procurement process in several stages. However, there is no guarantee that the set targets and milestones will be achieved. This could lead to a greater need for monitoring and follow-throughs, which could take significant time and resources from UVic's Purchasing Services and Campus Planning and Sustainability Offices.

Figure 4: Roadmap to improve Sustainability goals and compliance to the Act



*Action Step 2: Collaborate Towards Value-Creation and Innovation*

Driving SP as a new standard would involve alliances and partnerships with internal stakeholders, especially with UVic’s Campus Planning and Sustainability office. Based on initial engagement with the said office, there is a significant opportunity to partner with various members of the UVic community. One of the low-hanging fruits is to align the procurement goals, such as driving EcoVadis assessment with the Campus Planning and Sustainability Office, as this latter can support in driving internal engagement, educational drive, and communication with most of the internal customers of the Purchasing Services Office.

In addition, the Purchasing Services Office can play a vital role in the Scope 3 emission reporting, which is primarily driven by external partners such as suppliers and vendors. This is crucial as UVic’s CSAP Target 1 mainly focuses on reducing GHG emissions.

It is imperative that the Purchasing Services Office secure internal buy-in from various stakeholders and understand their perspectives and goals. The table below exemplifies collaborating with various internal stakeholders to drive SP.

*Figure 5: Internal Stakeholder Perspectives on Driving SP, particularly Scope 3 reporting*

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE IN SUPPLIER ENGAGEMENT	PRIORITIES	HOW TO FRAME THE INITIATIVE
<b>ESG &amp; Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial driver for setting an SBT</li> <li>Technical support and training on GHG emissions and SBTs</li> <li>Calculating and tracks scope 3 emissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driving the company's sustainability performance and implement associated initiatives</li> <li>Ensuring climate leadership and credibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A leading practice in sustainability and GHG management</li> <li>An opportunity to integrate sustainable practices into the business</li> </ul>
<b>Senior leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign off on SBTs</li> <li>Program oversight and performance tracking</li> <li>Resource enablement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business performance and meeting objectives</li> <li>External stakeholder expectations</li> <li>Company credibility and reputation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating business value</li> <li>Meeting external stakeholder expectations</li> <li>Enhancing leadership on sustainability</li> </ul>
<b>Sourcing &amp; Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary contact for suppliers, managing contracts</li> <li>Integrating supplier expectations and requirements into existing processes</li> <li>Supporting supplier training and accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streamlining procurement processes</li> <li>Ensuring teams understand supplier expectations and are supported in the process</li> <li>Getting technical support from sustainability teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to enhance supplier quality, relationships, and collaboration</li> <li>Prioritize folding initiative into existing processes</li> <li>Commitment to deliver training and ongoing support to the team</li> </ul>
<b>Accounting &amp; Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supplying annual direct and indirect procurement spend data</li> <li>Implementing any financial supplier incentives (i.e. payment terms)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring no interruptions to supplier business agreements or processes</li> <li>Understanding required data needs and timing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present a clear timeline on annual data request and requirements</li> <li>Prioritize folding initiative into existing processes</li> </ul>

Source: <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/resources/files/Supplier-Engagement-Guidance.pdf>

### *Action Step 3: Utilize Data and Performance Reporting*

With Step 2, there's a need to standardize and align the different sustainability metrics within the UVic community, enabling more data-driven decision-making regarding SP. UVic CSAP target 2 advocates using the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Ratings System

(STARS)<sup>8</sup> to achieve a Platinum rating by 2026. Currently, the Campus Planning and Sustainability Office uses this metric system to measure and track sustainability metrics such as energy consumption, transportation and waste reduction. The recommendation is to consistently align the metrics with internal stakeholders for reporting and documentation purposes.

Moreover, the EcoVadis performance metrics should be aligned with vendors to track supplier performance relative to the industry performance. It would be ideal to review the scorecards of the rated suppliers at least once a year for follow-throughs, corrective action planning, and alignment of next steps, especially for Platinum and Gold-rated suppliers, as these are the most strategic vendors. To support this, the author proposes including governance targets to help the procurement team track adherence to the recommended SP enhancements, as shown below in *Table 6*.

*Table 6: Suggested Governance Key Performance Indicators*

Metric	Purpose
% of supplier compliance to UVic Supplier Code of Conduct and Purchasing Policy	Basic compliance to do business with the University.
% EcoVadis Rated Suppliers vs Benchmark	To support the goal of 100% EcoVadis rated suppliers by 2030
Number of suppliers with UN SDGs integration	To align with UVic CSAP Target 3: demonstrate advancement towards the UN SDGs
% of suppliers that filled EcoVadis questionnaire	For Suppliers who cannot complete the full evaluation.
% of Suppliers following the compliance reporting on Forced and Child labour	To comply with the Act’s yearly disclosure requirement on tracking forced and child labour along the value chain.

Source: <https://sievo.com/en/resources/sustainable-procurement-101#howtocreatesustainableprocurementpolicy-section>

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<sup>8</sup> STARS is a self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. Refer to this site for more details <https://stars.aashe.org/about-stars/>





#### *Action Step 4: Create Supplier Segmentation*

The following recommended step to drive SP is to categorize the suppliers based on their sustainability rating, with the highly rated and most compliant vendors identified as preferred partners. Suppliers in the preferred list are rewarded with access to bidding opportunities, less stringent monitoring, and a more extended supplier accreditation period. On the other hand, less compliant vendors are subjected to more rigorous assessment and limited transactions to minimize UVic's risks. This 'carrot-and-stick' approach could change the behaviour of prospective and existing university suppliers to align with the sustainability drive of UVic purchasing department.

Prioritizing suppliers based on their EcoVadis Rating and providing tiered benefits has the advantage of a 'carrot and stick' approach. This approach departs from a demand-driven supplier segmentation observed in conventional procurement processes where the emphasis is on the cost structure, payment terms, and access to more awards. Instead of prioritizing suppliers based on traditional purchasing parameters, the proposed supplier segmentation below lays out clear benefits for vendors to improve their EcoVadis performance rating. Based on the highlighted issues raised by suppliers, some organizations seek clear benefits of the EcoVadis performance rating system. By associating the supplier ratings achievement with financial, social, and governance benefits, this approach positively reinforces the need to undergo the EcoVadis performance evaluation as it could potentially unlock incentives such as streamlined procurement process, inclusion to a preferred supplier list and access to dedicated category managers (or Procurement Officer).

While this proposed policy change seems to be the most proactive and sweeping approach, the complexities of implementing a mandatory rating assessment and reporting could make it challenging to meet the next fiscal year's reporting obligations and engage suppliers to adapt new changes in the procurement policy may take more time and resources. Hence, the author recommends reiterating the following benefits with the suppliers, see *Table 7*.

Table 7: Proposed Tiered Benefits for EcoVadis-Rated Suppliers

Rating	Overall Score Range	Potential Benefits
	<p>Top 1% (99+ Percentile)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion to preferred Supplier List</li> <li>• Certified UVic Sustainability Alliance Partner</li> <li>• Dedicated Category Manager</li> <li>• Access to more business partnerships</li> <li>• Streamlined procurement process</li> <li>• Best Payment terms</li> <li>• No Charge on EcoVadis assessment</li> </ul>
	<p>Top 5% (95+ percentile)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion to preferred Supplier List</li> <li>• Certified UVic Sustainability Alliance Partner</li> <li>• Dedicated Category Manager</li> <li>• Access to more business partnerships</li> <li>• Streamlined procurement process</li> <li>• No Charge on EcoVadis assessment</li> </ul>
	<p>Top 15% (85+ percentile)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion to preferred Supplier List</li> <li>• Certified UVic Sustainability Alliance Partner</li> <li>• Streamlined procurement process</li> </ul>
	<p>Top 35% (65+percentile)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified UVic Sustainability Partner</li> <li>• Streamlined procurement process</li> </ul>

Source: <https://support.ecovadis.com/hc/en-us/articles/210460227-Understanding-EcoVadis-Medals-and-Badges>

### Action Step 5: Enhance the Governance Model

One of the key strengths of the UVic Purchasing Services model is managing the different categories or sectors, such as the Information Technology sector, Facilities Management and Construction, Researchers, and the Scientific community within UVic ecosystem. This framework can be enhanced by including a Responsibility Assignment Model called the RACI Matrix, which stands for **R**esponsible, **A**ccountable, **C**onsulted, **I**nformed Matrix.

Table 8: Illustration of an Enhanced Governance Model using RACI matrix

Tasks	Procurement Officer	Project Manager	Procurement Director	Sustainability Office
EcoVadis Assessment for Supplier XYZ	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed
Update Procurement Website	Accountable	Responsible	Consulted	Informed
Create Educational Materials	Informed	Accountable	Consulted	Responsible
Engage with EcoVadis team	Responsible	Accountable	Informed	Consulted
Enhance Category Management	Consulted	Accountable	Responsible	Informed

#### Designations:<sup>9</sup>

**Responsible** = person or team who does the actual work. This person or group should complete the task assigned.

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<sup>9</sup> Definition of the RACI designation sourced from this article <https://www.cio.com/article/287088/project-management-how-to-design-a-successful-raci-project-plan.html>

*Accountable = the task owner who signs off and decides on the objective of the specific task; this person or group assigns the responsibilities for the task.*

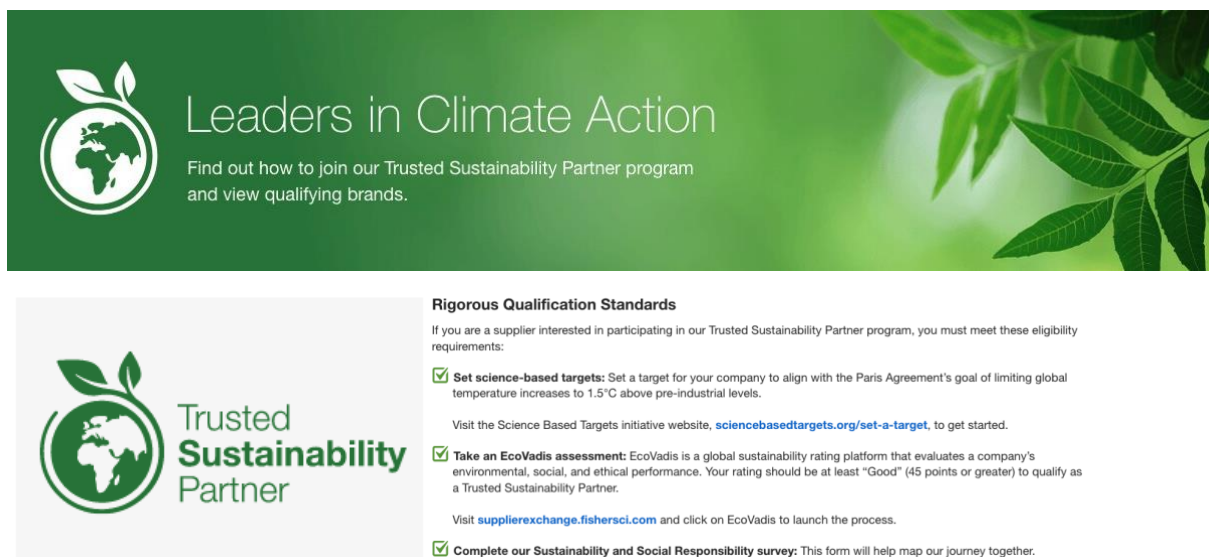
*Consulted = person or team who needs to give input and should be actively involved in the task*

*Informed = person or team who needs to be notified of the status, decisions, and outcome of the tasks. This person or group is not expected to give input or make a decision to achieve the objective of the task.*

### *Action Step 6: Drive Engagement and Branding*

Based on related literature, SP can increase brand value by 15-30% (World Economic Forum, 2015). From the same publication, supply chain costs can be reduced between 9% to 16% and drive revenue growth by as much as 20%, which are clear economic advantages for driving SP. These benefits can be amplified by building strategic alliances with suppliers to drive more sustainable practices and goals. One of the best practices that the author encountered is Fisher Scientific's Trusted Sustainability Program as seen in *Figure 6* below.

*Figure 6: An example of a Sustainability Driven Alliance by Fisher Scientific*



The image shows a promotional banner for Fisher Scientific's 'Leaders in Climate Action' program. The banner features a green background with a white globe icon and the text 'Leaders in Climate Action' and 'Find out how to join our Trusted Sustainability Partner program and view qualifying brands.' Below the banner is a section titled 'Rigorous Qualification Standards' which lists three requirements for suppliers interested in participating in the program. The requirements are: 1) Set science-based targets, 2) Take an EcoVadis assessment, and 3) Complete our Sustainability and Social Responsibility survey.

**Leaders in Climate Action**  
Find out how to join our Trusted Sustainability Partner program and view qualifying brands.

**Rigorous Qualification Standards**  
If you are a supplier interested in participating in our Trusted Sustainability Partner program, you must meet these eligibility requirements:

- ✓ **Set science-based targets:** Set a target for your company to align with the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.  
Visit the Science Based Targets initiative website, [sciencebasedtargets.org/set-a-target](https://sciencebasedtargets.org/set-a-target), to get started.
- ✓ **Take an EcoVadis assessment:** EcoVadis is a global sustainability rating platform that evaluates a company's environmental, social, and ethical performance. Your rating should be at least "Good" (45 points or greater) to qualify as a Trusted Sustainability Partner.  
Visit [supplierexchange.fishersci.com](https://supplierexchange.fishersci.com) and click on EcoVadis to launch the process.
- ✓ **Complete our Sustainability and Social Responsibility survey:** This form will help map our journey together.

#### Shop Trusted Sustainability Partners



Source: <https://www.fishersci.ca/ca/en/trusted-sustainability-partner.html>

A simple engagement tool such as building a Sustainability Alliance program can help reinforce UVic's SP goals while influencing vendors to undertake shared goals such as taking the EcoVadis performance assessment, setting clear sustainability goals aligned with UVic CSAP targets on GHG emissions and championing UN SGDs. UVic Purchasing Services can create the UVic Sustainability Alliance that showcases suppliers who have adopted a shared sustainability vision with the University. Through branding and marketing, the UVic Sustainability Alliance partners can be incentivized through certification and awarding of badge that highlights the partnership. Like the industry best practice, UVic and allied suppliers can showcase the partnership to several branding initiatives. Moreover, this benefit complements the EcoVadis badge and supplier segmentation highlighted in Step 4.

## Summary and Conclusion

In summary, the proposed actions aim to address the six main issues identified throughout the research project. There is an opportunity to integrate some of the actions within the existing practices, such as defining more sustainability goals within the procurement processes, increasing the weight of the sustainability-weight RFPs, and improving the governance framework. The rest of the recommended actions will require greater agency and collaboration with various stakeholders, such as the Campus Planning and Sustainability office, as some proposed action steps would require internal review and partnership, such as branding and engagement.

By reviewing the recommended action steps, UVic Purchasing Services strategically positions itself to capitalize on its structured SP practices, fostering triple-bottom-line results. Integrating some of the recommended actions into Purchasing Services' strategic

planning will optimize the procurement process and enhance the company's adaptability in responding to shifting market conditions, ultimately driving long-term stakeholder success.



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## Acknowledgements

The author would like to acknowledge several persons and team who made this research project possible.

First, thank you to **Laurel Currie**, Program Manager of the Sustainability Scholar Program, and her team for creating opportunities for UVic students to gain practical experience in driving sustainability through research, partnership, and collaboration with on—and off-campus organizations.

To **Xavier Serrano**, the previous UVic Director of Purchasing, for entrusting the author with the research project. To **Krittiya Allan**, Procurement Officer and Sustainability Champion of the UVic Procurement Services, who provided guidance and leadership throughout the project. With her help, the author was able to (barely) navigate the complex world of procurement. To the entire UVic Procurement Services Office, with special thanks to **Sabrina Su** and **Tom Lam**, who provided their invaluable insights and time during the preliminary stages of the research. To **Elke Kite**, who made the onboarding process seamless.

To the Campus Planning and Sustainability Office with the help of **Kylie Hissa** and her team for sharing various resources on Sustainability reporting and metrics. Thank you also to external partners of the UVic Purchasing Services for their time and insights sharing- **EcoVadis Canada**, **Thermo Fisher-Scientific North America**, and **Coca-Cola Bottlers Canada**.

A Big Thank You!