

IMU SDG PROGRESS REPORT

on **SDG-14 LIFE BELOW WATER**



SDG PROGRESS REPORT

ISTANBUL MEDENIYET
UNIVERSITY

**Istanbul Medeniyet University
Sustainability Office**

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SDG Icons

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/>

Sustainable Development Report Maps

<https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/map/>

SDG Statics

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2024/>

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

FOREWORD

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 with the mission statement “a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all people and the world by 2030” have become guiding principles for all of us as countries, institutions, and individuals today. In this context, the new vision for universities has now shifted from the older scholastic concept of education solely oriented toward professional training to an understanding that prioritizes human and social responsibility. Therefore, universities are central to the achievement of sustainable development goals. Thus, as İstanbul Medeniyet University,

We always consider sustainable development goals in our university’s high-level strategies, organize our management and implementation processes in line with these principles, and follow up on our activities and process of sustainability through reports for continuous improvement. (OPERATIONS)

While we help our students gain professional and personal skills and qualifications, we are raising future leaders, decision-makers, entrepreneurs, teachers, and more importantly, individuals with the awareness of creating a better world through the sustainability trainings we include in our course contents. (LEARNING)

We carry out a wide range of activities and events to share our knowledge, experience, and best practices about the implementation of SDGs with our students, staff, and local community with the ultimate aim of building a more conscious society. (EVENTS)

In 2022, IMU Sustainability Office was established to assume the role to place “Sustainable Development Goals” in the center of our institutional practices, educational planning, and research activities and to lead toward the realization of these goals. IMU Sustainability Office plays a significant part in developing our institutional strategies for SDGs, planning and carrying out our related activities and reporting on our progress. In addition to its contribution to institutional development, the Office also organizes public training programs and workshops.

Our Sustainability Office has planned to create annual sustainability development goals progress reports that will include all the goals and all areas of activity of our university so that we can see our progress in achieving SDGs to create new and better strategies and the report you are reading has been issued for the year 2024 as a result of these efforts. I thank everyone who have contributed to the creation of the report and especially Res.Asst. Ayça ÇELİKBİLEK, Lect. Zehra SAVAN and Res.Asst. Furkan ERUÇAR, who have edited and published all the content for our SDG website and our reports. I hope that our efforts will inspire new ideas, actions, and collaborations to take action for a more sustainable and livable future.

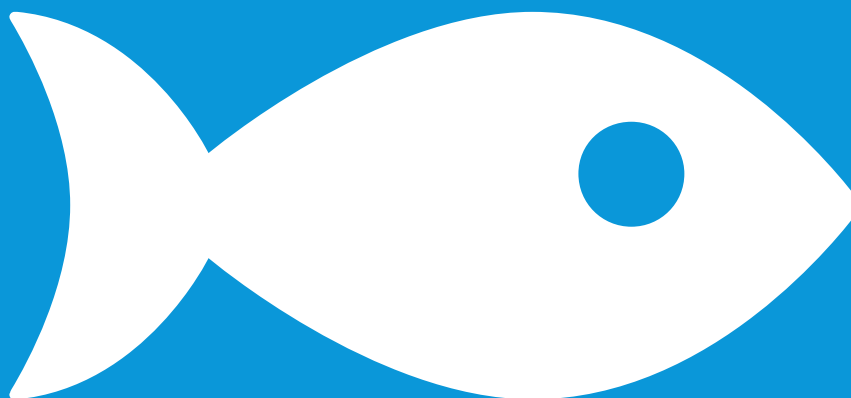
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Vice-Rector and Sustainability Office Coordinator
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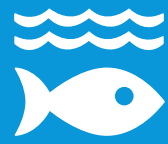
The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, which assesses the contribution of universities around the world to sustainable development goals, has been an important source of motivation for us to see our place in the world and measure our contribution with all the activities we carry out for sustainable development as a higher education institution. As Istanbul Medeniyet University, we were included in THE Impact Ranking for the first time in 2021 by applying with only 4 SDGs, while we applied with 11 SDGs for 2024, being ranked 601-800 in the global ranking. The table below shows IMU's continued rise on this ranking.

Sustainable Development Goals	THE Impact Rankings 2025	THE Impact Rankings 2024	THE Impact Rankings 2023	THE Impact Rankings 2022	THE Impact Ranking 2021
General Ranking	401-600	601-800	801-1000	1001+	1001+
SDG 1 No Poverty	801-1000	601-800	601-800	-	-
SDG 2 Zero Hunger	301-400	301-400	401-600	401+	301-400
SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being	401-600	301-400	301-400	401-600	401-600
SDG 4 Quality Education	801-1000	1001-1500	801-1000	801-1000	601-800
SDG 5 Gender Equality	1001-1500	801-1000	801-1000	-	-
SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth	601-800	401-600	401-600	401-600	-
SDG 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	601-800	801-1000	601-800	601+	-
SDG 10 Reduce Inequalities	401-600	401-600	401-600	401-600	-
SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	401-600	601-800	401-600	601+	-
SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production	101-200	201-300	201-300	-	-
SDG 15 Life on Land	101-200	-	-	-	-
SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals	301-400	401-600	601-800	1001+	601-800

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



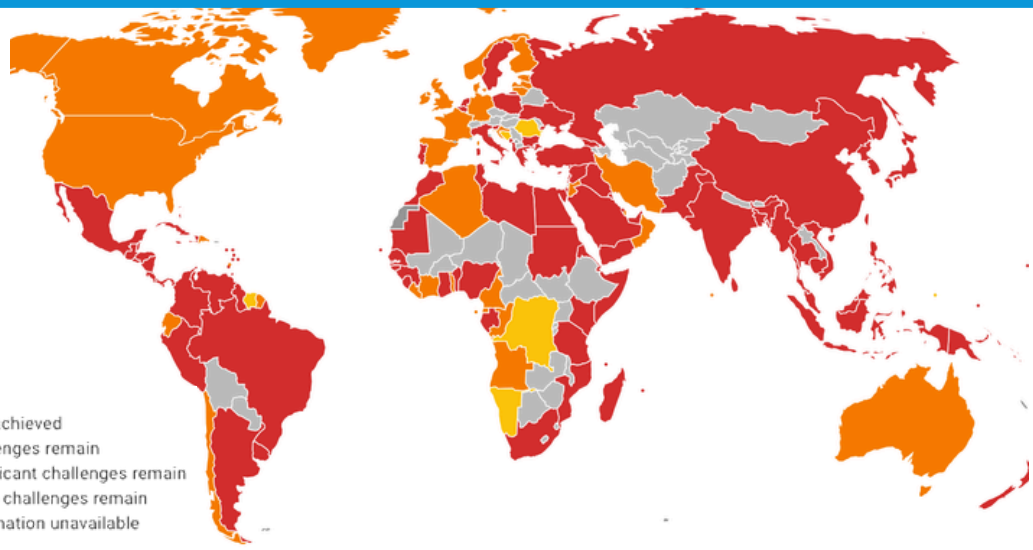
The world's oceans – their temperature, chemistry, currents and life – drive global systems that make the Earth habitable for humankind. How we manage this vital resource is essential for humanity as a whole, and to counter balance the effects of climate change. Over three billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods. However, today we are seeing 30 percent of the world's fish stocks overexploited, reaching below the level at which they can produce sustainable yields.

Oceans also absorb about 30 percent of the carbon dioxide produced by humans, and we are seeing a 26 percent rise in ocean acidification since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Marine pollution, an overwhelming majority of which comes from land-based sources, is reaching alarming levels, with an average of 13,000 pieces of plastic litter to be found on every square kilometre of ocean. The SDGs aim to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution, as well as address the impacts of ocean acidification. Enhancing conservation and the sustainable use of ocean-based resources through international law will also help mitigate some of the challenges facing our oceans.



Legend

- SDG achieved
- Challenges remain
- Significant challenges remain
- Major challenges remain
- Information unavailable

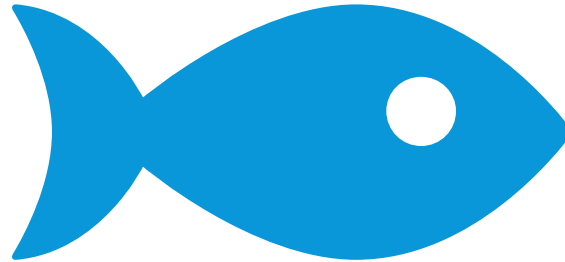


3 R&D LABS

are researching aquatic ecosystem damage prevention



filtering systems
for wastewater

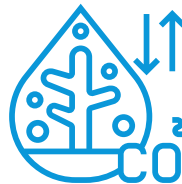


1 R&D LAB

is researching for maintaining aquatic ecosystems and their biodiversity



reduce plastic waste to prevent
pollution of water ecosystems



transnational ocean
biodiversity research

Istanbul Medeniyet University cleans the wastewater inside the campus areas using certain **filtering systems** before discharging it. For instance, we have oil filters installed in the dishwashing sites in our campus kitchen and other facilities to prevent the oily wastewater from polluting the discharged water. These filters are regularly cleaned and the oil waste collected are delivered to ISTAC Inc., an affiliation of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality that is in charge of waste management.

Wastewater from campus use is collected by the **wastewater network** and dispatched to the treatment facilities of Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (İSKİ), which is in charge of treating wastewater using various systems from preliminary treatment to advanced biological treatment so that wastewater is eliminated without environmental damage and water resources, Istanbul Strait, and the Marmara Sea are protected from the threat of wastewater.

Actions to Reduce Plastic Waste

Istanbul Medeniyet University primarily follows a policy of reducing consumption to reduce waste. Therefore, certain strategies have been implemented to gradually **reduce single-use plastics in the campus areas**. For instance, our contract with the catering service provider for our lunch services contains a clause on serving meals in chinaware and using metal cutlery.

Thanks to these practices, we prevent the use of single-use plastics in eating utensils and thereby reduce plastic waste generation in all our campus areas.

In 2019, Istanbul Medeniyet University joined the “Zero Waste” program carried out under the auspices of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey as part of the [“Zero Waste Regulation”](#) to contain waste in line with the sustainable development goals and to leave a clean Turkey for future generations. Issues such as reducing the generation of waste and chiefly of plastic, which greatly damages aquatic, terrestrial, and aerial ecosystems, and recycling plastic waste form an integral part of our university’s vision. In this context, we removed the waste bins from the university’s indoor areas and started to collect and sort recyclable waste and chiefly plastic waste in six categories. Plastics that are thus saved from becoming garbage are delivered to the relevant municipal authorities for recycling.



"Zero Waste" Project Recyclable Waste Boxes

OPERATIONS

Istanbul Medeniyet University carries out practices that will contribute to the plastic reduction targets throughout Turkey. For example, in order to contribute to the goal of the Packaging Waste Control Regulation of 2017, which aims to reduce the annual use of plastic bags per capita by no more than 40, cloth bags are distributed to our staff members, which can be used as an alternative to plastic bags, every year.



IMU Cloth Bags Distributed to Our Staff Members

“

1,415
CLOTH BAGS

distributed to staff members to reduce using plastic bags in 2024.”



Thanks to all such measures to reduce plastic use and waste, IMU aims to prevent plastics from polluting natural areas and water resources and thus to avoid the death of organisms in the aquatic ecosystem due to plastics and microplastics.

Istanbul Medeniyet University leads numerous public institutions, research institutions, universities, local schools, and NGOs toward numerous goals that would help us achieve the objective of conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Leading the Technologies towards Aquatic Ecosystem Damage Prevention

Developing technologies to prevent aquatic ecosystem damage is an important field for our institution. In this context, IMU Science and Advanced Technology Application and Research Center (IMU BILTAM) contains two [R&D Laboratories](#) researching the technologies that can prevent the aquatic ecosystem pollution and reduce the aquatic ecosystem damage.

An R&D laboratory was established under leadership of Prof.Dr. Erkan ŞAHİNKAYA to conduct research on the optimization of the simultaneous nitrification and denitrification process in an intermittently aerated membrane bioreactor to treat wastewater.

OPERATIONS

BILTAM also has another R&D laboratory led by Asst.Prof.Dr. Senem TEKSOY BAŞARAN, conducting research on maximizing energy conservation potential by wastewater treatment and organic matter recovery with super fast membrane bioreactor (SFMBR) process.

Maintaining Ecosystems and their Biodiversity

Protecting and maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity is crucial for the Earth's future. Being aware of the importance of the issue, our university established an [R&D laboratory](#) in BILTAM under the leadership of Prof.Dr. Turgay ÇAKMAK to conduct research on determining the coastal microalgae and cyanobacterial diversity of Horseshoe island, creating a culture collection, and evaluation of the general biotechnological characteristics of cultured species.

Technologies Towards Aquatic Ecosystem Damage Prevention

Prof.Dr. Erkan ŞAHİNKAYA, a faculty member of IMU Bioengineering Department, served as a consultant in the design and planning of the DOSAB **wastewater recycling facility** in the scope of engagement with the industry on developing technologies towards aquatic ecosystem damage prevention and contribute to protection of seas and streams and the life inside. DOSAB Wastewater Recycling Facility received the **best application award** in the 'Be Friends with the Environment Good Application Awards Competition' organized by Bursa

Metropolitan Municipality in 2022 in order to highlight the good applications in the field of environment and to increase environmental awareness. Water scarcity and increasing water pressure in the world have brought the recycling of wastewater and the use of these waters as a new resource to the agenda.

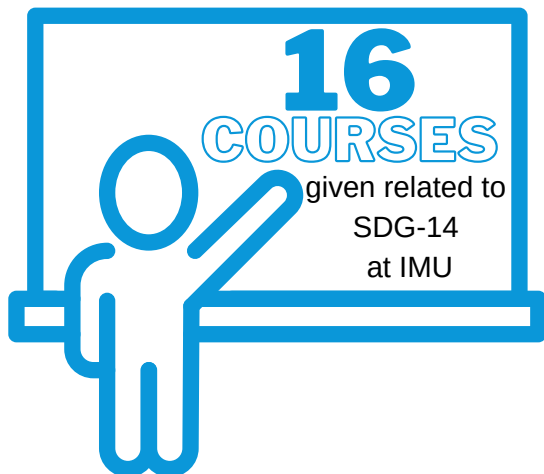
One of the most effective methods for water sustainability is Wastewater Recycle Systems. With the help of these systems, purified wastewater from enterprises and treatment plants can be brought to a quality that can be reused in enterprises by using advanced treatment techniques. Thanks to this facility, within a year; nearly 4 million cubic meters of treated water is put into production again, protecting underground water resources, standing out as environmentally friendly and sustainable production, and making participating companies preferred in the international arena.



DOSAB Wastewater Recycling Facility

LEARNING

Learning processes are key in achieving SDGs. Thus, universities play a critical role both by training professionals who will prioritize SDGs in their future practices and by increasing local, national, and global capacity to successfully achieve SDGs. As Istanbul Medeniyet University, we are aware of our critical role and therefore, we primarily inform our students, the leaders and decision-makers of the future, about the Sustainable Development Goals through course contents, co-curricular activities and student club activities and strengthen their awareness. For this purpose, each of our faculties and departments prepares SDG-related course contents, including courses that address the Sustainable Development Goals holistically, as well as specific contributions that can be made by the expertise of the relevant professional field in which they provide training. In 2024, 16 courses related to SDG-14 were given at IMU. Some of these are listed below.



Faculty	Course
Arts and Humanities	FEL458 - Bioethics and Environmental Philosophies
	SOS324 - Environmental Sociology
Education Sciences	SNE009 - Environmental Education
	ECE007 - Environmental Education and Sustainability in Early Childhood
Engineering and Natural Sciences	INS058 - Water Resources Engineering
	INS461 - Water Supply and Environmental Health
	BYM416 - Micropollutants, Treatment and Effects on Human Health
	MBG362 - Evolution and Biodiversity
Political Science	ULİ462 - Environmental Problems and the World
Law	HUK342 - Environmental Law
Tourism	TİŞ224 - Sustainable Tourism
	TİŞ326 - Alternative Tourism
All - Elective	IMU071-Introduction to Sustainability
Institute of Graduate Studies	BYM 517 Introduction to Environmental Bioengineering
	BYM709 Industrial Applications of Environmental Biotechnology

EVENTS

IMU Sustainability Office and Sustainability Club organizes various [Plastic-Free July](#) events every July to draw attention to the environmental problems, water pollution and damage to marine life caused by single-use plastic waste and to encourage our scampus members to adopt habits that will reduce usage of single-use plastics. They organized the fourth in these series of events throughout **July 2024** within the scope of the social responsibility project launched in this month to reduce the amount of plastic waste and to encourage people to live a plastic-free life, to raise awareness on this issue, and to help them gain habits that will make a difference in their daily lives.

IMUSUS collaborated with Miadrops to discourage the use of [personal care products containing microplastics](#) and promote sustainable alternatives. On July 30, 2024, students from the Sustainability Club and the Sustainability Office team visited offices and common areas on Göztepe North Campus to raise awareness about environmental pollution and health risks linked to microplastics in cosmetic products. During this outreach activity, community members were gifted natural moisturizing cream, facial cleansing oil, and lip & cheek balms, encouraging a shift toward plastic-free consumption.

During the event, academic advisors explained that plastic waste is not limited to bags or packaging, but also includes microplastic particles added to exfoliating or abrasive personal care products.

These particles, often derived from plastics such as polyethylene or polyethylene terephthalate (PET), contribute significantly to microplastic contamination, a growing threat to water quality, aquatic ecosystems, and ultimately marine biodiversity. The team highlighted that microplastics washed off during product use enter wastewater systems, many of which cannot filter such small particles, allowing them to flow into rivers, seas, and oceans. This process accelerates marine pollution and disrupts marine ecosystems, directly impacting species survival and ocean health.

IMUSUS also collaborated with Cen Cam to discourage the use of non-recyclable [single-use plastic straws and plastic-coated paper straws](#) and to promote the use of glass straws as sustainable alternatives. Commonly used single-use straws are one of the important sources of plastic pollution in nature, and pointed out that the production process of straws also involves high resource use in terms of raw materials and energy consumption. It was also emphasized that single-use plastic straws, which are most commonly found among waste on coasts and beaches, can easily find their way into the sea and waterways.

Academic advisors explained that there are currently 8.3 billion plastic straws littering beaches worldwide. Single-use plastic straws are one of the 10 most common types of plastic found in beach cleanups. Because they are lightweight, they can easily drift and end up in waterways and seas. Straws are also deadly for many animals if they get stuck in the airways and are swallowed.



PLASTICFREE July

30

Which one is more important: the exfoliating effect of your skin care product or potable water resources and biodiversity?

The particles you see in most cosmetic products that are meant to remove dead skin cells are actually microplastics that cause serious damage to our planet. While these skin products cover your wrinkles with plastic dust, the microplastics that enter your body negatively affect your health in many ways, including your respiratory tract. Since many wastewater treatment systems do not have the capacity to separate microplastics from water, the part of the particles that mixes into the water when you wash it enters the water ecosystem and the food chain and poses a great threat to all living things.

**JOIN US
AND**

Prefer microplastic-free skin care products!
You can join the Instagram giveaway today or get your Miadrops cosmetic product from the

Sustainability Office
sdg.medeniyet.edu.tr



PLASTICFREE July

12

The straw from the juice you drank as a child and threw away after a few minutes is still in nature. And it will remain in nature for more than 200 years.

Single-use plastic straws and plastic-coated paper straws cannot be recycled.

There are currently 8.3 billion plastic straws littering beaches worldwide. Single-use plastic straws are one of the 10 most common types of plastic found in beach cleanups. Because they are lightweight, they can easily drift and end up in waterways and seas. Straws are also deadly for many animals if they get stuck in the airways and are swallowed.

**JOIN US
AND**

Do not use a straw or use a reusable one.
You can join the Instagram giveaway today or you can come to the Sustainability Office to get your Cen Cam glass straw.

sdg.medeniyet.edu.tr

CEN
CAM

