

STANFORD  
UNIVERSITY



JOHN W. ETCHEMENDY

June 12, 2012

STARS Steering Committee  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)  
213 ½ North Limestone  
Lexington, Kentucky 40507

Members of the STARS Steering Committee,

On behalf of Stanford University, we are presenting our first submission to AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). Achieving a Gold STARS rating confirms sustainability as one of the university's core values and reflects decades of environmental stewardship.

As an AASHE member and a Charter Participant in the STARS program, Stanford continues its tradition of leadership in campus sustainability. From utilities to food systems to advanced research, scores of professionals throughout the Stanford community are involved with sustainability projects in their daily work. Our comprehensive STARS submission represents a diligent and forthright compilation of data from their respective efforts.

The data collection exercise allowed Stanford to evaluate campus-wide sustainability, enabling recognition of success and acknowledgement of the opportunities ahead. In order for STARS to remain relevant to Stanford in the future, however, the Steering Committee must address the limitations of an inflexible baseline year, imprecise definitions related to academic courses and programs, and arbitrary point allocation indifferent to the effort and investment required for progress. All these limitations currently penalize large research institutions and early-adopters of sustainable practices.

Stanford maintains an unwavering commitment to a sustainable future, as demonstrated by the recent Board of Trustees concept approval for Stanford's Energy System Innovations project, a unique and unprecedented solution to the university's energy needs through 2050. Once completed, the campus will use 70 percent of the waste heat currently expelled from cooling towers to meet 80 percent of its heat demand, reduce water consumption by more than 18 percent, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to less than half of today's amount. The implementation of this plan is well on its way and is scheduled to be complete in 2015.

Stanford looks forward to maintaining engagement with the AASHE Board of Directors and the STARS Steering Committee to support further maturation of the STARS program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Etchemendy".

John Etchemendy

Provost and Acting President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Reidy".

Robert Reidy

Vice President, Land, Buildings & Real Estate

Office of the Provost