



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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February 12, 2014

STARS Steering Committee  
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
1536 Wynkoop Street  
Suite 100  
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Members of the AASHE STARS Steering Committee:

On behalf of the University of Maryland, College Park, I am pleased to support and affirm our first submission to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS). The data submitted in our report provides an accurate, thorough and up-to-date picture of the university's sustainability programs.

As evident in our STARS Report, a culture of sustainability is integrated into many aspects of our institution. The 2008 University Strategic Plan, *Transforming Maryland: Higher Expectations*, firmly establishes sustainability as a part of the university's mission and sets forth our goal to be "a national model for a Green University." We are proud of the progress that the university is making, and recent milestones include: a 15% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; establishment of a Sustainability Studies Minor; a steadily growing supply of renewable energy; achievement of a 76% recycling rate; participation in the U.S. Department of Energy's Better Buildings Challenge; new incentives for sustainability-related research; and establishment of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, which oversees implementation of the 2010 Strategic Plan for Diversity. The University Sustainability Fund, created by undergraduate students and supported by student mandatory fees, is in its fourth year of contributing towards projects that promote sustainability and enhance the student experience. The Fund has provided over \$500,000 in grants to approximately 40 projects. One of the earliest projects involved the use of sphagnum moss to pre-treat water in the swimming pools on campus, which is featured in our STARS Report as an innovation credit.

The University is a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment and currently provides annual reporting of our greenhouse gas emissions and biennial reporting on the progress of the University of Maryland Climate Action Plan. The University Sustainability Council and the Office of Sustainability have found STARS to be a useful tool for benchmarking campus sustainability efforts, tailoring performance metrics and involving students in the process. I am pleased to expand the university's external reporting of sustainability metrics through STARS.

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The University of Maryland remains deeply committed to sustainability issues and innovation. Please contact Mr. Scott Lupin, Director of the Office of Sustainability at (301) 405-3968, if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wallace D. Loh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "W" and a stylized "L".

Wallace D. Loh  
President, University of Maryland

cc: Carlo Colella, Vice President for Administration and Finance  
Scott Lupin, Director, Office of Sustainability