

# Memorandum

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**TO:** Board of Governors  
**FROM:** Yves Beauchamp, Vice-Principal (Administration and Finance)  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Report on McGill Sustainability and Climate Initiatives  
**DATE:** October 5, 2017  
**DOCUMENT #:** GD17-14  
**ACTION REQUIRED:**  INFORMATION  APPROVAL/DECISION

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**ISSUE & EXPECTED OUTCOME** An annual report on the University’s current sustainability and climate-related activities, is presented to the Board of Governors for information.

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**BACKGROUND & RATIONAL** On March 23, 2016, the Board endorsed the recommendations contained within the Report of the Committee to Advise on Matters of Social Responsibility (CAMSR) which recommended that the University undertake a series of actions to promote sustainability and to advance the understanding of climate change. In line with the Report’s recommendations, the Board requested regular annual reports on the progress towards a comprehensive climate action plan.

At the Board meeting of May 16, 2016, Board members received an overview of the University’s sustainability and climate-related activities. This first regular annual report builds on the overview previously presented, providing updates on McGill’s sustainability and climate-related activities as they pertain to governance and administration, research and education, and operations.

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**ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES** The activities described in the presentation align with the University’s Sustainability Policy and with the decision made by the Board in March 2016 to endorse the recommendations contained within the CAMSR Report that the University take action to promote sustainability and advance the understanding of climate change. In addition, the presentation is in line with the Board’s sustainability stewardship role.

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**COMPLIANCE WITH UNIVERSITY POLICY** This report is in line with McGill’s *Sustainability Policy*, which states that the University aspire to achieve the highest possible standards of sustainability on its campuses and in its day-to-day activities through academic practices, in its facilities and operations, and by its outreach to the broader community.

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**COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION/EXTERNAL** There are no known legislation or external regulation requirements applicable to this report.

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**REGULATIONS**

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**RISK FACTORS**            The University is committed to promoting activities and practices that advance solutions to sustainability and climate-related challenges.

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**SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**            Sustainability is a central focus of the present report.

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**IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS**            The discussion arising from this report will inform the development of sustainability and climate-related actions on schedule for the coming year.

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**MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL**            N/A

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**APPENDICES**            Appendix A: McGill's sustainability: Overview of current sustainability and climate-related activities

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# McGill's sustainability: Overview of current sustainability- and climate-related activities

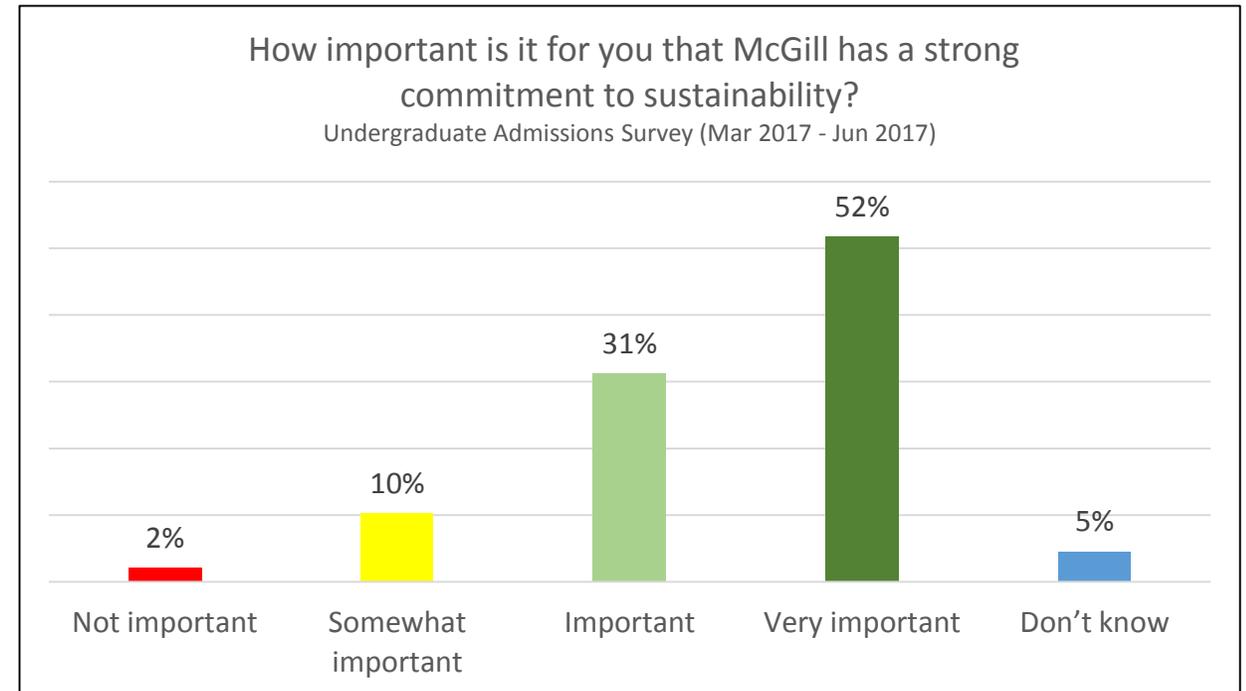
Presented to the Board of Governors  
Vice-Principal, Administration and Finance, Yves Beauchamp  
October 5, 2017



**McGill**

# Introduction and Context

- University administration reports to the Board annually on sustainability and climate initiatives (as recommended in the March 2016 CAMSR Report).
- Incoming students are interested in McGill's commitments to sustainability.



# McGill's Sustainability Strategy – Vision 2020

- 2014-2016 Sustainability Action Plan
  - 89% of actions complete.
- 2017-2020 Climate & Sustainability Action Plan
  - The consultation process is complete (Sept 2016 to May 2017).
  - It engaged +500 people over +20 events.
  - Will be presented to the Board December 12, 2017.



**“The Board and senior administration to work collaboratively on further integrating and expanding initiatives (...) to create a comprehensive climate action plan.”**

*-CAMSR Report*



**McGill**



# Sustainability at McGill: Governance



In 2016-2017:

- McGill received a GOLD Sustainability Rating by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).
- An Advisory Council on Sustainability was established.
- Board and Senate members jointly discussed McGill's Sustainability Plans and Initiatives (Nov. 10, 2016).
- A Climate Officer position was created to help reduce McGill's carbon footprint.



**McGill**

# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education

**“No university can lead globally in the 21st century without putting sustainability at the centre of its operations, research, and teaching.**

**We will work with various sectors of the University to implement additional institution-level programs to facilitate individual and collective action to reduce the University’s carbon footprint.”**

*McGill University Strategic Academic Plan 2017-2022*



**McGill**

# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education

Highlights from 2016-2017:

- \$3M from the Government of Canada for research to help farmers cut GHG emissions.
- \$250K from Hydro-Québec and \$50K from Ottawa for McGill & Concordia students to participate in a Solar Decathlon in China.
- McGill's sustainability research highlighted at the World Economic Forum in Davos.
- A McGill *Bright Spots* project was initiated to understand successful initiatives at the university that could be scaled up.



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# Sustainability at McGill: Research & Education

In 2016-2017:

- McGill Sustainability Systems Initiative (MSSI) – \$10M allocated over 5 years by the University – adopted three research themes:
  - Sustainable Landscapes for the Future
  - Creating Sustainable Materials for the Future
  - Adapting urban environments for the Future
- A Sustainable Labs Guide was launched to promote best practices.
- Waste educators in residence cafeterias trained incoming students on how to properly recycle and compost.



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations

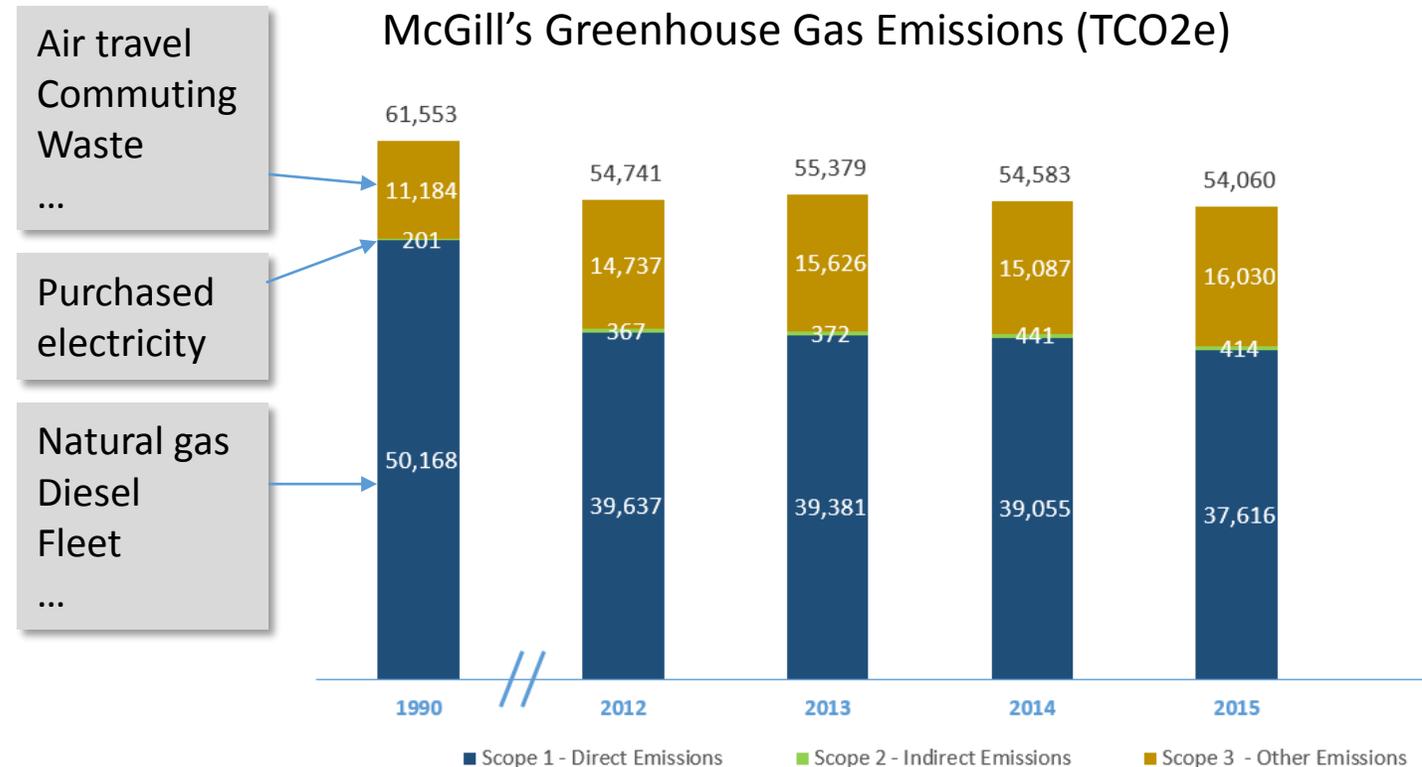
Since 2010, \$20M invested in energy conservation.

Building-related greenhouse gas emissions:

-34% below 1990

Energy use intensity:

-26% below 2002-2003



# Sustainability at McGill: Operations

In 2016-2017:

- McGill Energy Management Plan 2016-2021 is expected to reduce building-related GHG emissions by 64% below 1990.
- A new Power House at the Macdonald Campus was built to increase efficiency and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- McGill received approximately \$65M from the Strategic Investment Fund, the majority of which is dedicated to increased material and energy efficiency.



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# Sustainability at McGill: Operations



In 2016-2017:

- McGill was designated the 2016 Fair Trade Canada Campus of the year.
- Over \$20,000 worth of IT equipment were redeployed for reuse across departments.
- 50 staff members participated in a Staff Community Garden project.
- A mechanism\* is planned to offset a portion of our GHG emissions associated with air travel.

\*Purchase carbon offsets using the rebate money generated through the future BMO Airfare Virtual Card from air travel booked through McGill's contracted Travel Management Company.



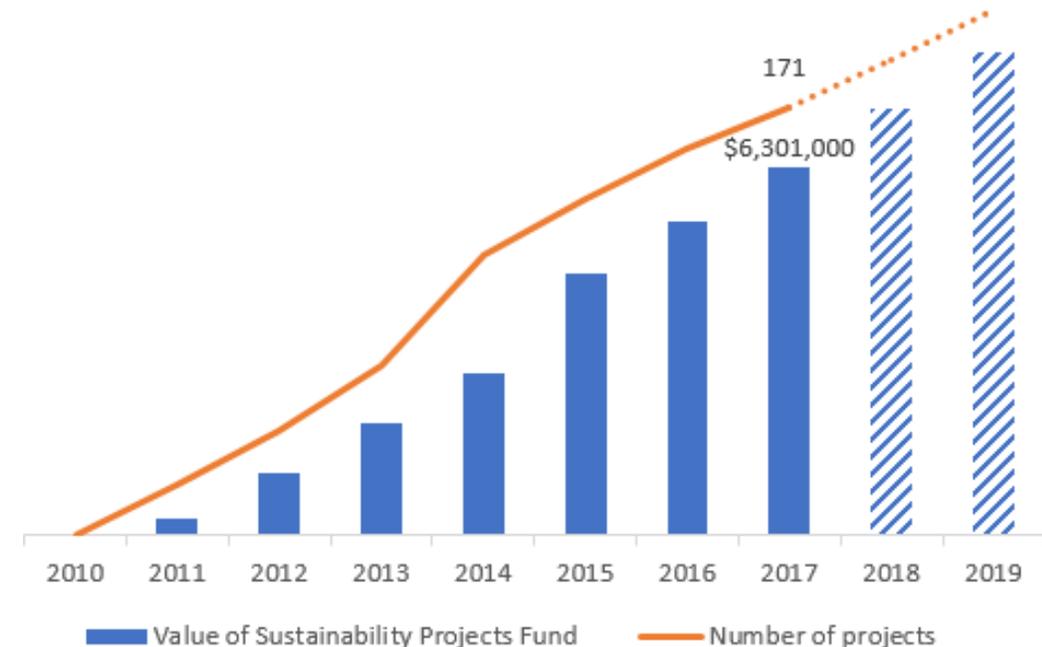
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# The Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) - A tool for implementation

The SPF:

- Is the largest fund of its kind among North American universities.
- Won a prestigious award from the City of Montreal for innovative work in financing the transition to sustainability in 2017.
- Funded 171 projects since 2010 worth \$6.3 M.

Value and Number of Sustainability Projects



# Planning Forward

- To be presented at the December 12, 2017 Board meeting:
  - 2017-2020 Climate & Sustainability Action Plan
  - Sustainability KPIs
- Waste Reduction & Diversion Strategy to be completed this Winter.
- This Fall and Winter, student referendum (SSMU, MCSS, PGSS) to renew the SPF fee levy.



# Appendix A

## McGill's Sustainability Achievements

(The following information will be available on McGill's website)

# SUSTAINABILITY

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS FUND

MCGILL HAS THE **LARGEST FUND** DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY AMONG NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES. THE SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS FUNDS (SPF) AIMS TO CREATE A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY AT MCGILL.

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THE SPF HAS ALLOCATED NEARLY **\$6 MILLION** IN FUNDING TO **+170 PROJECTS** SINCE ITS CREATION IN 2010.

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IN **2017**, THE SPF WON A **PRESTIGIOUS AWARD** FROM THE CITY OF MONTREAL FOR INNOVATIVE WORK IN

### BUILDINGS

IN 2014, MCGILL ESTABLISHED **GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS** FOR ALL UNIVERSITY CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION PROJECTS.

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MCGILL'S LIFE SCIENCES COMPLEX WAS THE **FIRST UNIVERSITY-OWNED LABORATORY** IN QUEBEC TO RECEIVE **LEED GOLD CERTIFICATION**.

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IN 2017, MCGILL AND TWO OF ITS AFFILIATED HOSPITALS RECEIVED **\$70.7 MILLION** THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FUND THAT WILL HELP FUND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, UPGRADES TO A SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS LAB AND MORE EFFICIENT VENTILATION SYSTEMS, AS WELL AS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BUILDING TO HOUSE TWO NEW ENERGY-EFFICIENT GENERATORS.

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MCGILL AIMS TO OBTAIN A **LEED OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE** DESIGNATION FOR SEVERAL BUILDINGS ON CAMPUS, A CERTIFICATION THAT RATES THE ENERGY AND WATER PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS.

# ENERGY

MCGILL HAS ACTIVELY BEEN INVESTING IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROJECTS SINCE 2002. TO DATE, THE UNIVERSITY HAS REDUCED ITS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY APPROXIMATELY **34%** AND INVESTED MORE THAN **\$19.1 MILLION** IN ENERGY-SAVING PROJECTS.

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MCGILL USES THE **PULSE ENERGY DASHBOARD**, A TOOL TO VISUALIZE THE ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS ON CAMPUS ONLINE IN **REAL TIME**, IN ORDER TO RAISE AWARENESS OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND ENABLE FACILITIES TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT TO INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

# FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**6 ACRES** OF LAND AT MACDONALD CAMPUS ARE USED TO GROW FOOD FOR MCGILL.

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IN 2015-2016, OUR DINING HALLS SERVED MORE THAN **20,000 KG** OF PRODUCE, **3,400 KG** OF BEEF AND **180,000** EGGS FROM THE MACDONALD CAMPUS FARM.

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MCGILL WAS NAMED **FAIR TRADE CAMPUS OF THE YEAR** IN 2017 BY FAIR TRADE CANADA, COMPETING AGAINST 21 OTHER UNIVERSITIES.

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MCGILL FOOD AND DINING SERVICES RECEIVED THE **MARINE STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL** CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION IN 2013, BECOMING THE FIRST CANADIAN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE MSC FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO SERVING SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD.

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MCGILL WAS THE **FIRST UNIVERSITY IN CANADA** TO ACHIEVE SPE CERTIFICATION (SANITAS PER ESCAM OR "HEALTH THROUGH FOOD") FOR TWO DINING FACILITIES BASED ON SOURCING AND SUSTAINABILITY, NUTRITION AND MENU BALANCE, AND TRAINING AND TRANSPARENCY.

# TEACHING AND LEARNING

APPROXIMATELY **83%** OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AT MCGILL ARE ENGAGED IN RESEARCH RELATED TO SUSTAINABILITY.

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INCREASED **PROGRAM OFFERINGS** REFLECT THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY. THESE INCLUDE:

- MCGILL SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT
  - JOINT INTERFACULTY B.A. & SC. IN SUSTAINABILITY, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY
  - TROTTIER INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN ENGINEERING AND DESIGN
    - BCOM IN MANAGING FOR SUSTAINABILITY
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OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS, SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED RESEARCH HAS SECURED MORE THAN **\$270 MILLION** IN NATIONAL COMPETITIONS AND PRODUCED MORE THAN **4,000** PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS.

# PROCUREMENT

MCGILL'S PROCUREMENT SERVICES WON **2 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS** IN 2016 FOR ITS FIVE-YEAR SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY.

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AS PART OF MCGILL'S ASSET LIFECYCLE MANAGEMENT, THE UNIVERSITY HAS REDEPLOYED OVER **\$20,000** WORTH OF IT EQUIPMENT FOR REUSE ACROSS DEPARTMENTS.

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IN 2016, PROCUREMENT SERVICES DEVELOPED A **SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT** INTEGRATING ETHICAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES IN ALL UNIVERSITY PURCHASING CONTRACTS.

# GOVERNANCE

IN 2016, MCGILL CREATED AN **ADVISORY COUNCIL** ON SUSTAINABILITY CONSISTING OF FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENTS, AND EXTERNAL EXPERTS THAT PROVIDE STRATEGIC GUIDANCE TO POSITION MCGILL AS A LEADING INSTITUTION IN NORTH AMERICA ON SUSTAINABILITY.

## WASTE

STUDENT HOUSING AND HOSPITALITY SERVICES CURRENTLY EMPLOYS **WASTE EDUCATORS** IN RESIDENCE CAFETERIAS TO TEACH INCOMING STUDENTS HOW TO REDUCE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT BY PROPERLY RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING.

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IN 2015-2016, OVER **200,000 LITRES** OF AGRICULTURAL GRADE SOIL WERE CREATED AND **190 TONNES** OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS WERE REDUCED DUE TO THE RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING EFFORTS IN MCGILL RESIDENCE DINING HALLS.

## INVESTMENTS

APPROXIMATELY **17%** OF THE MCGILL ENDOWMENT POOL LISTED SECURITIES ARE IN SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS.

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SINCE APRIL **2008**, A SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT OPTION HAS BEEN AVAILABLE FOR THE MCGILL UNIVERSITY PENSION PLAN MEMBERS, WHICH NOW INCLUDES MORE THAN **\$30M** IN ASSETS.

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IN MARCH 2017, MCGILL'S INVESTMENT COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED A **SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT FUND** OPTION FOR DONORS INTERESTED IN SUCH AN OPTION. IT WAS ESTABLISHED WITH A **\$5 MILLION** INVESTMENT OF ENDOWMENT ASSETS IN A NON-FOSSIL FUEL, NON-COAL GENERATING GLOBAL EQUITY MANDATE.

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AT THE END OF 2016, **77%** OF MCGILL INVESTMENT POOL ASSETS WERE MANAGED BY INVESTMENT MANAGERS WHO HAD EITHER ADOPTED AN ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG) POLICY OR WERE SIGNATORIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE INVESTING (UNPRI). AS OF JUNE 2017, THIS PROPORTION GREW TO **79%**.