UNIVERSITY POLICY NO. 044, SERIES OF 2025

POLICY ON TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION, BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION, ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION, AND SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

SECTION 1. POLICY DECLARATION

Quezon City University (QCU), in fulfillment of its institutional commitment to environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, ecological protection, climate resilience, and responsible stewardship of natural resources, hereby adopts this Policy on Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation, Biodiversity Protection, Ecological Restoration, and Sustainable Land Management.

The University recognizes that terrestrial ecosystems, including forests, mountains, drylands, urban green spaces, grasslands, and other land-based habitats, are essential to biodiversity conservation, ecological balance, climate regulation, soil protection, water resource management, and human well-being.

As a public higher education institution, QCU acknowledges its responsibility to protect, conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems associated with University operations, infrastructure, research, instruction, extension services, and institutional partnerships.

Consistent with Sustainable Development Goal 15 (Life on Land), QCU shall promote responsible land management practices that prevent ecosystem degradation, protect native biodiversity, support ecological restoration, and strengthen environmental sustainability.

The University shall integrate terrestrial ecosystem conservation into campus planning, landscaping, infrastructure development, environmental management, academic programs, research, and community extension initiatives.

QCU shall prioritize the protection of existing vegetation, mature trees, native plant species, soil resources, and ecologically significant habitats within University-managed areas.

The University shall also support the conservation and restoration of terrestrial ecosystems beyond its campuses through authorized research, extension activities, community partnerships, and environmental stewardship programs.

Special consideration shall be given to forest ecosystems, mountain environments, drylands, and other environmentally sensitive terrestrial areas where the University undertakes relevant activities.

This policy establishes the institutional framework for terrestrial ecosystem conservation, biodiversity protection, ecological restoration, sustainable land management, environmental monitoring, and continuous improvement.

SECTION 2. LEGAL AND POLICY BASES

This policy is anchored on the following legal, regulatory, and international frameworks:

2.1. The 1987 Philippine Constitution, Article II, Section 16. Recognizes the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology.

2.2. Republic Act No. 9147, or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act. Establishes the legal framework for the conservation and protection of wildlife resources and their habitats.

2.3. Republic Act No. 7586, as amended by Republic Act No. 11038, or the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System Act. Provides for the establishment, management, and protection of designated protected areas.

2.4. Presidential Decree No. 705, or the Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines, as amended. Establishes relevant requirements concerning forest resources and forest land management.

2.5. Republic Act No. 10176, or the Arbor Day Act of 2012. Promotes tree planting and environmental stewardship.

2.6. Republic Act No. 9729, as amended, or the Climate Change Act of 2009. Establishes the national framework for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

2.7. Republic Act No. 10121, or the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. Establishes relevant requirements concerning disaster risk reduction and environmental resilience.

2.8. Republic Act No. 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000. Establishes requirements for responsible solid waste management.

2.9. Republic Act No. 9275, or the Philippine Clean Water Act of 2004. Provides relevant measures for protecting water quality and associated ecosystems.

2.10. Presidential Decree No. 1586, or the Philippine Environmental Impact Statement System. Establishes environmental impact assessment requirements for covered projects.

2.11. Applicable Department of Environment and Natural Resources Regulations. Provide requirements concerning tree cutting, wildlife protection, biodiversity conservation, reforestation, protected areas, and environmental compliance.

2.12. Applicable Quezon City Environmental Protection, Urban Greening, and Climate Action Policies. Provide relevant local frameworks for environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

2.13. Convention on Biological Diversity. Establishes international commitments concerning biodiversity conservation, sustainable use, and equitable benefit-sharing.

2.14. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Promotes sustainable land management and addresses land degradation and desertification.

2.15. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 13. Promotes climate action.

2.16. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 15. Promotes the protection, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems.

All legal references shall be interpreted according to their current legal effect and applicability to University activities.

SECTION 3. OBJECTIVES

3.1. General Objective

To establish an institutional framework for the conservation, restoration, protection, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems associated with Quezon City University through responsible land management, biodiversity conservation, environmental education, research, and community engagement.

3.2. Specific Objectives

This policy specifically aims to:

1. Protect terrestrial ecosystems within University-managed properties and areas.
2. Promote the conservation of native plant species and terrestrial biodiversity.
3. Prevent unnecessary habitat destruction, vegetation loss, and soil degradation.
4. Establish environmentally responsible campus landscaping and land management practices.
5. Promote ecological restoration and appropriate reforestation initiatives.
6. Support the conservation of forest, mountain, dryland, and other terrestrial ecosystems associated with University activities.
7. Integrate biodiversity protection into infrastructure planning and campus development.
8. Promote sustainable soil and water resource management.
9. Prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species through University activities.
10. Strengthen environmental research, instruction, and extension programs.
11. Establish partnerships supporting terrestrial ecosystem conservation.
12. Develop monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for ecosystem protection.
13. Promote awareness and participation among students, faculty members, employees, and communities.
14. Support QCU's contribution to SDG 15 and related sustainability objectives.

SECTION 4. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This policy shall apply to University-managed properties, relevant institutional activities, and authorized programs affecting terrestrial ecosystems.

4.1. Campus Grounds and Green Spaces

The policy shall cover applicable campus grounds, landscaped areas, gardens, vegetation, trees, soil resources, and other green spaces under University management.

4.2. University Infrastructure Development

The policy shall apply to relevant planning, construction, renovation, and infrastructure projects that may affect terrestrial ecosystems.

4.3. Research and Academic Activities

The policy shall cover authorized research, fieldwork, instruction, and academic activities involving terrestrial ecosystems.

4.4. Community Extension Programs

The policy shall apply to University-led or University-supported environmental extension activities, including tree planting, ecological restoration, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land management initiatives.

4.5. Institutional Partnerships

The policy shall cover relevant environmental conservation partnerships with government agencies, communities, civil society organizations, and other institutions.

4.6. Forests, Mountains, and Drylands

Where QCU conducts authorized activities in forest, mountain, dryland, or other environmentally sensitive terrestrial environments, the University shall comply with applicable conservation requirements and promote responsible ecosystem management.

4.7. University Community

All students, faculty members, administrative personnel, contractors, service providers, and authorized participants in covered activities shall comply with applicable provisions of this policy.

SECTION 5. DEFINITION OF TERMS

5.1. Terrestrial Ecosystem refers to a land-based ecological system comprising living organisms and their physical environment, including forests, grasslands, mountains, drylands, and urban green spaces.

5.2. Ecosystem Conservation refers to the protection and responsible management of ecosystems to maintain ecological functions, biodiversity, and environmental sustainability.

5.3. Ecological Restoration refers to activities intended to assist the recovery of degraded, damaged, or destroyed ecosystems.

5.4. Biodiversity refers to the variety of living organisms, including diversity within species, between species, and among ecosystems.

5.5. Sustainable Land Management refers to land use and management practices that maintain ecological functions, soil productivity, biodiversity, and long-term environmental sustainability.

5.6. Native Species refers to plant or animal species occurring naturally within a particular geographic area or ecosystem.

5.7. Invasive Alien Species refers to non-native species whose introduction or spread threatens biodiversity, ecosystem functions, or other environmental interests.

5.8. Reforestation refers to the re-establishment of forest vegetation in areas previously supporting forest ecosystems.

5.9. Afforestation refers to the establishment of forest vegetation in areas not previously classified as forest, subject to ecological suitability.

5.10. Habitat Protection refers to measures intended to preserve or maintain environments necessary for the survival and reproduction of organisms.

5.11. Soil Conservation refers to practices intended to prevent soil erosion, degradation, contamination, and loss of ecological productivity.

5.12. Ecological Monitoring refers to the systematic observation and assessment of environmental conditions, biodiversity, and ecosystem changes.

SECTION 6. GENERAL POLICY GUIDELINES

6.1. Institutional Commitment to Ecosystem Conservation

QCU shall promote the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems associated with its operations and authorized activities.

6.2. Protection of Existing Campus Vegetation

The University shall prioritize the preservation of existing healthy trees, vegetation, and green spaces where consistent with safety, accessibility, and legitimate institutional development needs.

6.3. Conservation of Native Biodiversity

QCU shall encourage the use and protection of ecologically appropriate native plant species in campus landscaping and environmental programs.

6.4. Prevention of Unnecessary Habitat Destruction

University activities shall avoid unnecessary destruction of vegetation, wildlife habitats, and other ecologically significant areas.

6.5. Sustainable Campus Landscaping

Campus landscaping shall incorporate environmentally responsible practices, including:

a. Selection of appropriate plant species.

b. Conservation of existing trees.

c. Water-efficient landscape management.

d. Soil protection.

e. Responsible pruning and vegetation maintenance.

f. Reduction of unnecessary chemical inputs.

g. Appropriate management of landscape waste.

6.6. Ecological Restoration

QCU shall support the restoration of degraded terrestrial areas through appropriate planting, habitat rehabilitation, erosion control, and other evidence-based restoration measures.

6.7. Responsible Tree Planting

Tree planting initiatives shall prioritize appropriate species, suitable planting locations, long-term maintenance, and ecological survival.

The University shall evaluate tree planting success based on survival and ecological suitability rather than the number of seedlings planted alone.

6.8. Forest Ecosystem Conservation

Where QCU undertakes authorized activities involving forest ecosystems, the University shall promote forest protection, responsible restoration, and compliance with applicable forest management regulations.

6.9. Mountain Ecosystem Protection

Activities in mountain environments shall consider slope stability, soil erosion, biodiversity protection, watershed conservation, and other relevant environmental risks.

6.10. Dryland Ecosystem Conservation

Where University activities involve dryland environments, QCU shall promote appropriate land restoration, drought-resilient vegetation, soil conservation, and responsible water management.

6.11. Soil Conservation

The University shall promote practices that reduce soil erosion, compaction, contamination, and unnecessary land degradation.

6.12. Sustainable Water Management

Campus land management shall consider the relationship between vegetation, soil health, drainage, water conservation, and ecosystem sustainability.

6.13. Prevention of Invasive Species

QCU shall discourage the introduction of invasive alien species through landscaping, planting, research, or environmental activities.

6.14. Wildlife and Habitat Protection

The University shall prohibit unauthorized collection, destruction, or disturbance of protected wildlife and habitats within its lawful authority.

6.15. Sustainable Infrastructure Development

New infrastructure projects shall consider potential effects on vegetation, soil, biodiversity, and ecosystem functions.

Where required, projects shall undergo applicable environmental assessment and permitting procedures.

6.16. Waste and Pollution Prevention

The University shall implement appropriate waste management and pollution prevention measures to reduce adverse effects on terrestrial ecosystems.

6.17. Environmental Research

QCU shall encourage research concerning biodiversity, urban ecology, ecosystem restoration, sustainable land management, and environmental resilience.

6.18. Community Engagement

The University shall support environmental extension activities that promote terrestrial ecosystem conservation and community participation.

6.19. Institutional Partnerships

QCU may collaborate with government agencies, communities, environmental organizations, and other institutions to support ecosystem conservation and restoration.

6.20. Continuous Improvement

The University shall periodically review its ecosystem conservation practices and identify opportunities for strengthening environmental stewardship.

SECTION 7. CAMPUS TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION PROGRAM

QCU shall establish a Campus Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation Program appropriate to the ecological characteristics of its properties.

The program shall include the following components.

7.1. Campus Green Space Inventory

The designated office shall identify and document relevant campus green spaces, trees, vegetation, and other terrestrial ecological features.

7.2. Tree and Vegetation Assessment

The University shall assess relevant tree and vegetation conditions, including species, location, health, and maintenance requirements.

7.3. Biodiversity Documentation

Where feasible, QCU shall document relevant plant and animal species occurring within University-managed areas.

7.4. Sustainable Landscape Management

The University shall develop appropriate landscape maintenance practices supporting biodiversity, soil health, water conservation, and environmental quality.

7.5. Ecological Restoration

The University shall assess degraded or environmentally vulnerable areas for appropriate restoration measures.

7.6. Green Space Protection

Campus development planning shall consider the preservation of ecologically significant vegetation and green spaces.

7.7. Environmental Monitoring

The University shall periodically assess the condition of relevant terrestrial ecological features and identify appropriate corrective actions.

SECTION 8. ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND REFORESTATION INITIATIVES

8.1. Restoration Planning

University-supported restoration activities shall be based on appropriate ecological assessment and site conditions.

8.2. Selection of Plant Species

Planting activities shall prioritize suitable native species and avoid inappropriate species that may threaten local biodiversity.

8.3. Site Suitability

Select restoration sites based on ecological suitability, applicable permissions, and relevant environmental considerations.

8.4. Community Participation

Where appropriate, restoration activities shall involve local communities, environmental organizations, students, faculty members, and other stakeholders.

8.5. Post-Planting Maintenance

Restoration activities shall include appropriate maintenance, monitoring, and survival assessment.

8.6. Restoration Performance

Success shall be evaluated using relevant indicators, including vegetation survival, habitat improvement, soil stabilization, and other ecological outcomes.

8.7. Coordination with Competent Authorities

Activities involving public lands, protected areas, forest lands, or other regulated sites shall be undertaken only with appropriate authorization and coordination.

SECTION 9. CONSERVATION OF FOREST, MOUNTAIN, AND DRYLAND ECOSYSTEMS

9.1. Forest Ecosystems

QCU shall promote forest ecosystem conservation through authorized research, extension, partnerships, and restoration initiatives.

Activities shall prioritize biodiversity protection, habitat conservation, and sustainable resource management.

9.2. Mountain Ecosystems

University-supported activities in mountain environments shall incorporate appropriate measures for protecting vegetation, watersheds, slopes, and ecological habitats.

9.3. Dryland Ecosystems

Where applicable, QCU shall support responsible dryland management, drought-resilient vegetation, erosion prevention, and restoration of degraded land.

9.4. Environmental Compliance

All activities shall comply with applicable land use, environmental protection, wildlife conservation, and protected area regulations.

9.5. Community and Institutional Partnerships

The University may collaborate with authorized government agencies and community stakeholders in ecosystem conservation initiatives.

SECTION 10. INTEGRATION INTO CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

10.1. Environmental Considerations

Relevant campus infrastructure proposals shall consider potential impacts on trees, vegetation, soil, drainage, and biodiversity.

10.2. Avoidance and Minimization

Project planning shall prioritize avoiding or minimizing unnecessary ecological damage.

10.3. Tree Protection

Tree removal, cutting, or relocation shall comply with applicable laws and permitting requirements.

10.4. Sustainable Site Development

Projects shall incorporate appropriate measures for erosion prevention, drainage management, vegetation protection, and responsible land use.

10.5. Restoration and Rehabilitation

Where ecological disturbance cannot reasonably be avoided, the University shall implement appropriate mitigation and restoration measures consistent with applicable requirements.

SECTION 11. RESEARCH, INSTRUCTION, AND EXTENSION INTEGRATION

QCU shall promote the integration of terrestrial ecosystem conservation into its academic and community engagement functions.

11.1. Instruction

Relevant academic programs may incorporate concepts concerning biodiversity, ecological restoration, sustainable land management, and environmental stewardship.

11.2. Research

The University shall encourage relevant research addressing:

a. Urban biodiversity.

b. Native plant conservation.

c. Ecosystem restoration.

d. Soil conservation.

e. Sustainable landscaping.

f. Forest and watershed protection.

g. Climate resilience.

h. Community-based environmental management.

11.3. Extension Services

QCU shall support appropriate community extension activities concerning environmental education, tree planting, habitat restoration, and sustainable land management.

11.4. Student Participation

Students shall be encouraged to participate in authorized conservation, research, and environmental stewardship activities.

SECTION 12. INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

QCU may establish appropriate partnerships with:

a. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

b. Quezon City Government.

c. Relevant local government environmental offices.

d. National and local environmental organizations.

e. Academic and research institutions.

f. Community-based organizations.

g. Other institutions engaged in biodiversity conservation and ecological restoration.

All partnerships shall comply with applicable laws and University procedures.

SECTION 13. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1. Office of the University President

The Office of the University President shall provide overall institutional leadership, policy direction, and oversight.

13.2. Office of the Vice President for Administration or Equivalent Office

The designated administrative office shall oversee coordination and implementation of campus ecosystem conservation measures.

13.3. Physical Facilities and Grounds Management Office

The designated facilities or grounds management office shall:

a. Maintain appropriate campus green space and vegetation records.

b. Coordinate sustainable landscaping.

c. Monitor relevant tree and vegetation conditions.

d. Implement appropriate land and soil protection measures.

e. Coordinate ecological considerations in infrastructure projects.

13.4. Sustainability or Environmental Management Office

The designated sustainability office or focal unit shall coordinate environmental monitoring, conservation initiatives, and sustainability reporting.

13.5. Research and Extension Offices

The designated research and extension offices shall support relevant ecological research, community partnerships, and environmental stewardship activities.

13.6. Academic Colleges and Departments

Academic units shall support appropriate integration of terrestrial ecosystem conservation into instruction, research, and student activities.

13.7. Student Affairs and Services Office

The designated student affairs office shall support authorized student participation in environmental conservation activities.

13.8. Planning and Development Office

The designated planning office shall incorporate relevant environmental considerations into institutional development planning.

13.9. Finance and Budget Office

The designated finance office shall support appropriate financial planning for approved conservation initiatives.

13.10. Contractors and Service Providers

Contractors and service providers shall comply with applicable environmental requirements and approved contractual obligations.

SECTION 14. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

QCU shall establish a monitoring and evaluation framework for terrestrial ecosystem conservation.

Performance indicator	Measurement or monitoring requirement
Terrestrial ecosystem conservation policy	Approved and publicly accessible policy
Campus green space inventory	Documented inventory of relevant University-managed green spaces
Tree and vegetation inventory	Number and condition of documented trees and relevant vegetation
Native species conservation	Number of appropriate native species maintained or introduced
Ecological restoration activities	Number of authorized restoration projects
Tree planting survival	Survival rate of planted trees after a defined monitoring period
Habitat protection measures	Number of relevant protection or rehabilitation initiatives
Sustainable landscaping	Documented implementation of appropriate land management practices
Forest, mountain, and dryland conservation	Number of authorized relevant research or extension activities
Environmental research	Number of relevant research projects
Community engagement	Number of relevant environmental extension activities
Institutional partnerships	Number of active relevant conservation partnerships
Annual ecosystem review	Completion of annual implementation assessment

Monitoring shall distinguish between activities undertaken and verified ecological outcomes.

SECTION 15. ANNUAL TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION REVIEW

The designated coordinating office shall conduct an annual review of policy implementation.

The review shall examine:

1. Condition of campus green spaces.
2. Tree and vegetation management.
3. Biodiversity conservation initiatives.
4. Ecological restoration activities.
5. Sustainable landscaping practices.
6. Relevant infrastructure impacts.
7. Forest, mountain, and dryland conservation initiatives.
8. Research and extension activities.
9. Institutional partnerships.
10. Identified environmental risks.
11. Corrective actions and recommendations.

An Annual Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration Report shall be prepared for institutional review.

SECTION 16. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDKEEPING

QCU shall maintain appropriate records demonstrating implementation of this policy.

Relevant documents may include:

1. Approved Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation Policy.
2. Campus green space maps.
3. Tree and vegetation inventory records.
4. Biodiversity assessment reports.
5. Sustainable landscaping plans.
6. Ecological restoration project proposals.
7. Tree planting and maintenance records.
8. Tree survival monitoring reports.
9. Environmental assessment documents.
10. Relevant permits and authorizations.
11. Research and extension reports.
12. Institutional partnership agreements.
13. Environmental education materials.
14. Annual Terrestrial Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration Reports.

Records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable University records management and government regulations.

SECTION 17. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

QCU shall promote awareness of terrestrial ecosystem conservation among students, faculty members, employees, and relevant stakeholders.

Activities may include:

a. Biodiversity conservation seminars.

b. Tree planting and restoration programs.

c. Environmental awareness campaigns.

d. Sustainable landscaping workshops.

e. Campus biodiversity documentation activities.

f. Community-based conservation education.

g. SDG 15 awareness programs.

h. Student environmental stewardship initiatives.

SECTION 18. FUNDING AND RESOURCE SUPPORT

Implementation of this policy shall be supported through appropriate University resources, subject to approved budgets and applicable government financial and procurement regulations.

The University may explore authorized grants, partnerships, and technical assistance supporting biodiversity conservation, ecological restoration, and sustainable land management.

SECTION 19. COMPLIANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

All concerned University offices, personnel, students, contractors, and authorized participants shall comply with applicable provisions of this policy.

Activities affecting regulated lands, wildlife, trees, or protected ecosystems shall comply with applicable environmental laws and permit requirements.

Noncompliance shall be addressed through appropriate administrative, contractual, or legal procedures.

SECTION 20. POLICY DISSEMINATION AND PUBLIC ACCESS

Upon approval, this policy shall be disseminated to all concerned University offices, faculty members, employees, students, and relevant stakeholders.

The policy shall be made publicly accessible through the official Quezon City University website and other appropriate institutional communication platforms.

SECTION 21. POLICY REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

This policy shall be reviewed at least once every three (3) years, or earlier when warranted by changes in applicable environmental regulations, institutional development priorities, or emerging conservation needs.

The designated coordinating office shall conduct an annual implementation review.

Proposed amendments shall be submitted through appropriate University approval procedures.

SECTION 22. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE

If any provision of this policy is declared invalid or unenforceable by competent authority, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 23. REPEALING AND AMENDING CLAUSE

All existing University policies, memoranda, guidelines, and procedures inconsistent with this policy shall be reviewed and, where appropriate, amended or superseded in accordance with applicable institutional procedures.

SECTION 24. EFFECTIVITY

This policy shall take effect upon approval by the University President, subject to any additional approval requirements under applicable laws, University governance rules, and institutional procedures.

All concerned University offices shall undertake the necessary measures for its dissemination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

APPROVED BY:

DR. THERESITA V. ATIENZA
University President

Date Approved: January 10, 2025

Cc: *Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs*
Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance
Records Management Office

www.qcu.edu.ph @qcu1994 673 Quirino Hwy., Novaliches, Quezon City, Metro Manila, 1116 8806 3081 repl@qcu.edu.ph