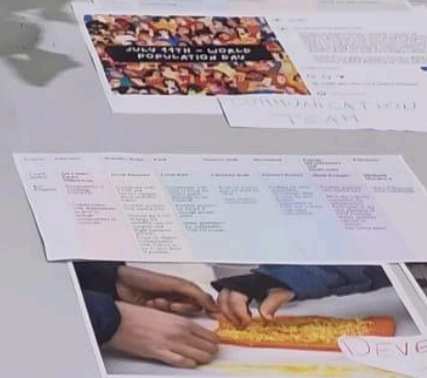
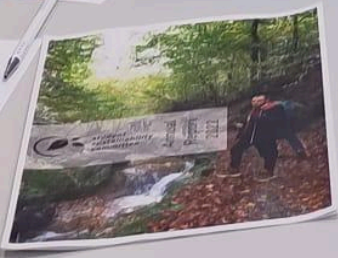




student
sustainability
committee

Annual
Report
2023

student
sustainability
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Welcome to SSC

We are the **Student Sustainability Committee** at ETH Zürich. While the roots of the association started around 2001, we act as a committee of the general student organization VSETH since 2016 with the goal of fostering sustainability within and around ETH. We aspire to be the first point of contact for students interested in sustainability at ETH. Our main activities consist of organizing a large variety of events, developing and implementing projects for a more sustainable university, and bridging connections between different sustainable causes in Zurich. This report shows the achievements of our committee in the year 2023.

February 2024, SSC board

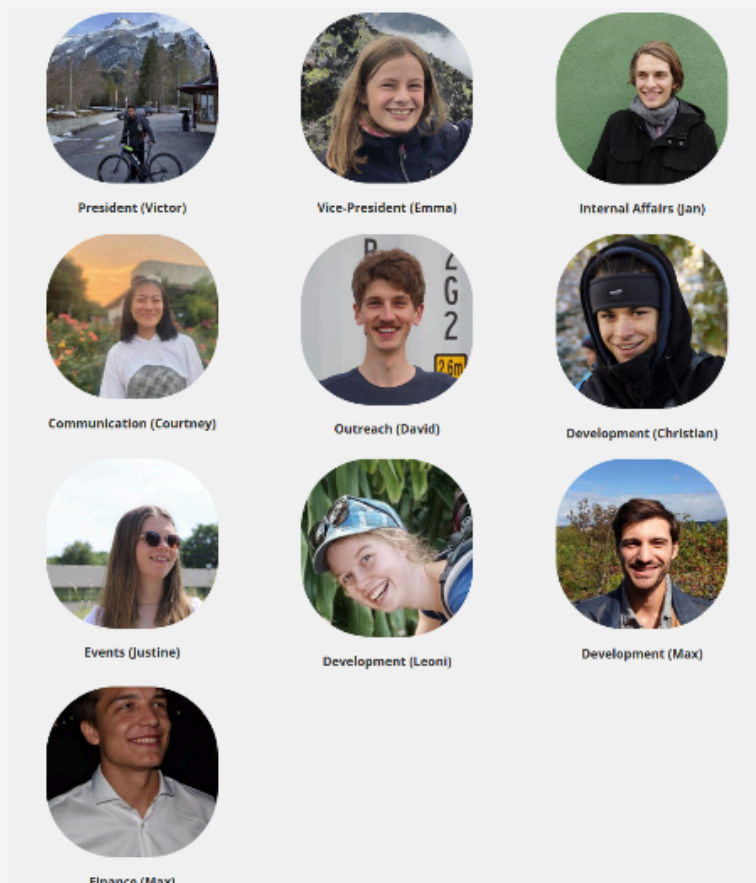
Where we stand

ETH Zurich students will realise their careers in times in which we need to limit climate change to 1.5°C and become net zero as quickly as possible. In addition to this climate challenge, they will also be confronted with other sustainability challenges, such as the biodiversity crisis. While some actions finally get started, such as the net zero project of ETH, we think that many students, professors, and scientific staff could benefit from becoming more aware of the existing and upcoming issues. We want to take an active part in the sustainable transition of the university, but also of society in the upcoming years.

We are a dynamic group of students from all fields taught at ETH, studying in our bachelor's, master's, or even PhD's. Everybody interested in joining a small project, one of the teams or the board is always welcome.

Our goals

- **educate** — It's important for students to have a good understanding of the climate crisis and its causes and impacts. Providing resources and information about the issue can help students to feel more informed and motivated to take action.
- **encourage student leadership** — Student activists can be powerful advocates for change, but they may need support and encouragement to take on leadership roles. Encouraging students to take the lead on projects, campaigns, or events can help to empower them and give them the confidence to make a difference.
- **connect students to each other and to resources and opportunities** — There are many ways for students to get involved in addressing the climate crisis. We connect students from diverse backgrounds to tackle the problem together. And by giving them access to resources and opportunities to get involved, we can make it easier for them to take collective action.
- **support** — Students may face challenges and setbacks as they work to address the climate crisis. We offer to support them and offer guidance and encouragement along the way. This can help to keep them motivated and focused on their goals.



Our values

- **inclusion** — we value and respect diversity, prohibit any type of discrimination, encourage open communication and dialogue. All members should feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas, and diversity of perspective is seen as a strength.
- **students** — we do not pursue projects that are not in the students' best interest. Each of our various University Development projects are led by a Representative, elected by the VSETH Members' Council, who represents VSETH's (and thus students') interests in ETH committees or foundations.
- **cooperation** — we work hand-in-hand with ETH and VSETH, in a constructive manner. This is how we've made most progress in the past, and cooperation is generally seen as a more effective approach to addressing the climate crisis than conflict. That being said, conflict can sometimes be a necessary part of the process of achieving change. So if this is what you want to do, we can point you in the right direction!

Why we do what we do

We are in the midst of a climate and ecological breakdown of our own making, and our governments are not doing enough (yet?) to protect their citizens, our resources, our biodiversity, our planet, and our future. By speaking out and advocating for change, students can help to bring about the necessary policy changes and shift societal attitudes towards sustainability, both inside and outside ETH. In addition, our students are the next generation of climate advocates and decision-makers: by getting involved in the climate movement, they will become effective leaders for change and create the environment for a desirable future. We — as individuals — can impulse a change to collectively make a difference. We do this together – transform the world, create lasting change and build a better future for all.

Why ETH should be more sustainable

Some of the key reasons include:



- **environmental impact** — the climate crisis is one of the most pressing issues facing the world today, and universities have a responsibility to minimize their environmental impact and contribute to the transition to a more sustainable future. By reducing its carbon footprint and adopting more sustainable practices, ETH Zurich can play a leading role in addressing the climate crisis.

- **social responsibility** — as a leading institution of higher education, ETH Zurich has a social responsibility to be a model of sustainability and to educate the next generation of leaders about the importance of sustainability.

- **attracting top talent** — in today's competitive job market, many students and researchers are looking for institutions that prioritize sustainability. By demonstrating its commitment to sustainability, ETH Zurich can attract top talent and build a strong reputation as a leader in sustainability.

This annual report provides a comprehensive overview of our activities in 2023. For every team, you can find a description and some highlights from the past year. Have fun reading through it, and do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or remarks

EVENTS

The SSC Events Team organizes sustainability-related events, mainly targeted at students of ETH Zurich, but open to everyone. We already hosted a large variety of events – from large event series around big environmental challenges to small excursions about local nature.



The first highlight of the spring semester was, as usual, the **Sustainability Week** (*Nachhaltigkeitswoche Zürich NHWZ*). During the third week of the spring semester, students from the five universities of Zurich (ETH, UZH, ZHdK, ZHAW and PHZH) present over 40 events. Of course, the SSC events team worked hard to contribute to this large event.

In March, SSC was involved in the "**VorstandPizzaPlausch**" organisation. It consists of eating pizza and playing fun games while interacting with known and unknown engaged students at ETH. We hosted two amazing games, "the Babylon tower" and "Guess the carbon footprint". The participants had a lot of fun, while learning about sustainability. It was amazing!



We hosted a great **Mobility Week** at the beginning of May!

Through enriching discussions, we learned a lot about our individual mobility choices, carbon offsets related to air travel, our emissions, and mobility around the ETH Zurich campus. It was inspiring to gain a better understanding of the different actions we can take to move (^^) towards more sustainable mobility.

We co-hosted a **summer bar** on Polyterrasse! The sunny weather attracted a large number of people to our **warm** gathering. It was not only a good opportunity for us to spend time together, but we also improved our skills by filling beer cans and frying fries in record time. It was great fun!



During the summer break, we held a **Sustainable Travel Challenge!** Many people sent us pictures of their summer travels, actively using more sustainable means of transportation than the most traditional.

This led to some great stories and pictures! Like biking to Ascona for a conference ;)

Throughout the year, in addition of these amazing events, many other events have been organized, such as the **“foodsave Kitchen Battle”** with Foodwaste and the Sustainability Week Zurich. But also a **“Fair Trade Easter Hunt”** and an **“AI + Environment Summit”** with so many collaborators (see the poster). There's so much activity around sustainability, it's inspiring!



In the autumn semester, the big highlight was the events series **Mirror COP28**, held during the climate summit COP28 in Dubai. For this event series (the second year in a row), we collaborated with several organisations around ETH.

This year the Mirror COP events were spread throughout the whole semester, to say the least: there was an amazing diversity of events, many people mobilised for it, and a lot of interesting discussions. The Post COP event with great podium discussions and vegan fondue has been an amazing conclusion of this successful event series. We are looking forward to next year, so see you at Mirror COP29!

Development

The SSC development team focuses on making ETH more sustainable at the institutional level, through working groups with specific focuses such as mobility, education, and food. It closely works together with the VSETH HoPo team (university politics team) and other units at ETH, such as ETH Sustainability and Campus Services. Members of the development team hold several delegate positions of VSETH, which makes them the elected representative of students for their project.

Over the course of the spring semester, the SSC Development Team continued the organisation of its **working groups** on the topics of **education, Net zero, campus mobility, divestment and energy, infrastructure and biodiversity on campus**. In the working groups students come together to develop proposals and projects to incorporate sustainability in these different domains of ETH. These proposals are then brought forward to the responsible people in the ETH administration in coordination with VSETH.



Education Working Group

At the beginning of the year, the Education Group organised a workshop with representatives of the different student associations of VSETH and discussed what the student associations need to improve sustainability in the teaching of their departments. We need more **exchange** between the groups! So we created "**NAGETH**", a sustainability council that meets twice a semester. It's an opportunity for representatives of all the student associations to meet and share their current projects, discuss problems and share **knowledge and experience**. NAGETH was held twice last semester and was a great success. They discussed "How to start a sustainability committee" and "How to bring sustainability into the teaching committee".

Furthermore, the Education Team has prepared a meeting with the Rectorate for the beginning of 2024, with the goal of having a follow-up meeting to the one that took place two years ago, to define a sustainability strategy for education and discuss student involvement in it.

Strategic Planning

Two incredible students came to us with a text and an idea: "Let's adapt VSN's student recommendations for sustainability to ETH". So we started our "Net Zero" working group which evolved into the "Strategic Planning" working group. Its main project was to write the "**Vision 2030**", a document outlining the SSC's ideas and vision of ETH in 2030, including sustainability in education, student engagement and participation, food, infrastructure, mobility and finance. It contains a description of the status quo in August 2023, proposes measures and refers to inspiring examples from other universities and institutions. A few months later, the working group also wrote a feedback letter on the **ETH roadmap**, which was signed by **VSETH and AVETH**.



Tomorrow 2030

In addition to publishing this paper, we were fortunate enough to share the story of this vision in **polykum!** Be sure to check out your copy of Polykum and enjoy the writing of these editorial geniuses.

Events checklist

Next to our new cooperation with **AVETH Sustainability**, SSC strengthened the exchange with **ETH Sustainability** too. At monthly lunches the current projects, plans and possible collaborations are being discussed. At the monthly lunches, current projects, plans and possible collaborations are discussed. One of these was the **"Sustainable Events Checklist"** of ETHS, which we gave feedback on and worked out how it could be linked to VSETH events. Here you can find the published checklist: <https://bit.ly/3TwcOjl>



Infrastructure working Group

At the beginning of last year, the SSC became involved in the HIL building project. This is a new building to be built on the Hönggerberg campus, which will partly serve as the **new headquarter of VSETH**. We checked it for sustainability standards and gave feedback to the responsible group at ETH. (It will not be built as planned, but from now on the SSC will be involved in the new planning).

Since buildings account for a large part of ETH's emissions, we want to push in this direction further. Therefore, the working group "Energy, Infrastructure and Biodiversity" was re-established, which has so far been involved in the restructuring of **the Universitätsstrasse, the new HIL and several biodiversity projects on Hönggerberg**. Several enriching discussions with the administration are in store. In particular with those responsible for infrastructure at ETH!

Polymesse

Many students don't know what they want to do "later". To give them a better overview on jobs regarding sustainability topics, we work together with Polymesse and improve the diversity of the companies represented on campus. This year, we made a list of companies we would like to see at the event. But the goal in the end is to showcase sustainable alternatives and potentially give students a better idea of how they can work towards sustainability through the implementations of guidelines.



Mobility

After working with Campus Service to discuss mobility at ETH and with ETHS on air travel for ETH projects, we are now part of a task force on air travel at ETH. In 2024, at least one student will be involved in every group (regulations, incentives, carbon budget, carbon pricing) working to define ETH's rules for air travel.

Outreach



The **Outreach Team** is dedicated to building connections and partnerships with other organizations focused on sustainability, both inside and outside of ETH. It was founded in 2022 and successfully collaborates with organizations based at ETH, Zurich, Switzerland, but also but also more broadly in Europe.

Idealistic/Humane sustainability summit

We participated in the Humane Sustainability Summit in May. We had the opportunity to exchange ideas with other universities in Europe on "Student Engagement with Sustainability - Bridging the Gap between Aspiration and Action". These discussions allowed us to critically reflect on the structure and work of ETH and VSETH and to collect ideas to change the system towards more student representation.



Climathics sustainability in mathematics

We participated in a week of knowledge sharing on education, sustainability and mathematics. In addition to meeting so many great people, we are beginning to create a database to integrate sustainability considerations into mathematics learning.

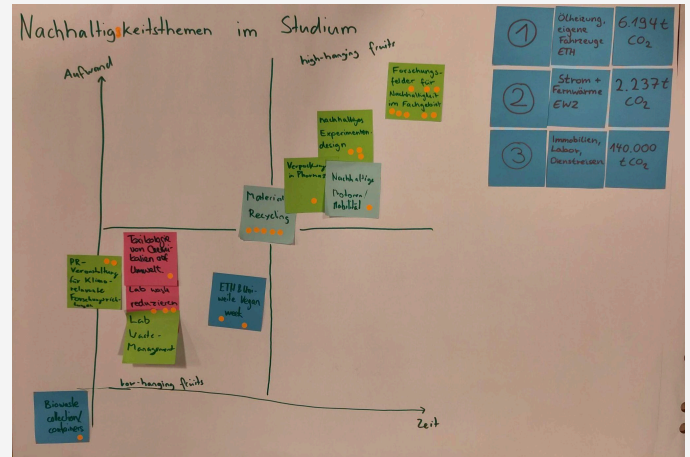


VSETH, AVETH, ETHS

We have strengthened our collaborations with the representatives of the students (VSETH), the PhD students (AVETH) and ETH (ETHS) by holding monthly come-togethers to give space to exchange, common projects and networking. The last year, especially our Feedback letter to ETH's Roadmap, showed that these collaborations are the key to achieve our goals ETH-wide.

Hopo weekend

What exactly are the three scopes? What are the main reasons for these emissions? How can we reduce them? And which of these topics are relevant for us in our lectures? We participated in the HoPo-Weekend of VSETH this semester and held a workshop focusing on these questions. The students brainstormed and prioritised their ideas in high-and-low-hanging-fruits. Different perspectives from different departments showed the mood in the student associations and were very helpful for our onwarding work in the education team.



Mirror COP collaborations

Mirror COP was a great opportunity to collaborate with many organizations. It was a great time spent with like-minded people who are eager to share their passions.

ETH Sustainability Summit & Sustainability Initiatives Zurich

In November, the SSC outreach team organized the ETH Sustainable Initiatives Summit in collaboration with ETHS. This summit proved a great success in bringing together a diverse range of initiatives by ETH students, staff and

alumni, which promoted different aspects of sustainability in academic and everyday life. Over 60 people from different sustainability initiatives presenting themselves in short pitches of 1 minute and were able to network at the following apéro. During this some more initiatives showcased their work with posters. On this note, the team created a Slack workspace "Sustainable Initiatives Zurich" for an improved network between the initiatives. This has been a great moment for our team.



Communication

The **communications team** is responsible for promoting the organization and ensuring a strong online presence to be a resource for ETH students on sustainability issues. Furthermore they help coordinating the general internal communication about projects.

SSC webpage

We have finally restarted our webpage and are continuously updating and improving it. Join us and have a look at our next events, successful projects, great team and open positions!

WELCOME! ABOUT US EVENTS JOIN US! OUTREACH DEVELOPMENT BLOG



Internal newsletter

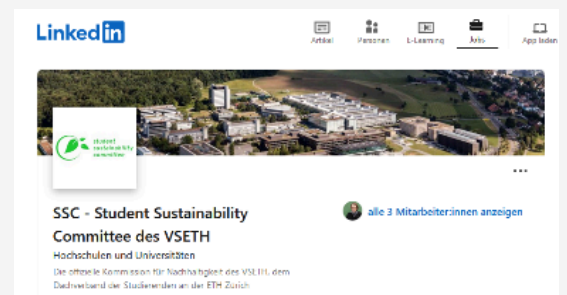
An internal newsletter was established in the beginning of last year to improve communication within SSC, avoid double work and strengthen the SSC community. It presents a good overview of the projects, events and open positions of every month and motivates our team to continue their great work.

External newsletter

The external newsletter provides updates about upcoming events, interesting opportunities for students and good climate news. By this we keep everyone in and outside of SSC updated.

Opening of our LinkedIn webpage

One goal of last year was to become more active on social media. Therefore we set up a LinkedIn profile and since our communications team is posting about our upcoming events and current projects we have. This has already been a great success.



Being part of the SSC community

Internal events

This year we were fortunate to have several new members, with new ideas and new projects. We were happy to be back on campus to get together and meet each other. Before the start of the many events organized and their associated memories, we had several dinners and get-togethers at BQM or the UFO bar. For the next year, a team will be specially in charge of the internal events. Some of the nicest events are presented here.

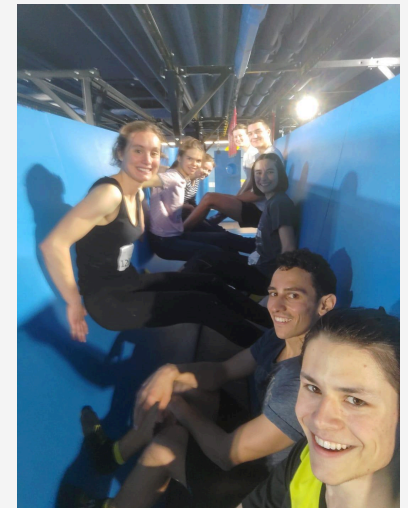


SSC Hike

In summer, we traditionally go for a hike in the beautiful Swiss nature. This summer, we took the Pizol 5 lakes hike. On a wonderful cloudy day we enjoyed the time together in the mountains, even got a hint of the first few metres of the lakes spread along our way. Even though most were covered in fog we finally found one to take a cool bath in - it didn't last long (TOO COLD :P) but it was a lot of fun!

SSC Retreat

In October the SSC retreat took place. It's the beginning of the semester, a good time to get together and discuss our ideas for the association. This day our team had a lot of fun together in the Jump House before they sat together to discuss the future projects of SSC and what we would like the association to be.



SSC barbecue

Despite the clouds and the intermittent rain, we had a really nice Recruiting BBQ in Irche last May! We didn't only welcome new members but started discussions about Mirror COP28 for autumn 2023. It was amazing to see the motivation and inspiring ideas to create this great event together! A lot of work is coming but the team is ready! Thank you all for this evening!

Board Dinner

As every year two Board Dinners have taken place again in 2023 to thank the current board for their effort. Last time all new and old board members met together in a vegetarian restaurant and enjoyed the fun evening.



SSC Skiing

This year, we went skiing together. A good opportunity to get some fresh air, look at the mountains we love so much and see those beautiful snowflakes and people from the team!

Christmas Dinner at Post COP

Last meeting of the year after a year full of events and discussions. We benefit from the Post COP, the last event organized by our team. Celebrating the huge success we enjoy vegan fondue together with these friends we have made throughout the year. The perfect time to meet all the beautiful people of our team and get motivated for a new year full of new events and achievements.





Contact

Contact us!

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Twitter: https://twitter.com/SSC_ETHZ

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sustainability.ethz>

Student Sustainability Committee (SSC)

VSETH - Verband der Studierenden an der ETH Zürich

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February 2023

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