In the spring of 2007 Green Mountain College signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) and formally began the journey toward climate neutrality. The Campus Sustainability completed GMC’s first greenhouse gas inventory (GHG) in September 2007 and updated in August 2009. This provided baseline data for the Climate Action Plan. GMC outlined short-term (2011), mid-term (2020) and long-term (2050) goals for emissions reductions and publically committed to reducing its carbon footprint by more than 50 percent within four years and achieving climate neutrality by 2011. Between 2007 and 2009, we reduced our carbon emissions per student by 19.18 percent. During that time we increased our student headcount by 14 percent, grew online enrollments and continued to increase the energy efficiency of our facilities.

**Short Term Goals (2011)**

- Emissions will be dramatically reduced by the College’s conversion to a 400 horsepower, combined heat and power (CHP) biomass facility, which will shift 85 percent of current fuel oil usage to biomass and burn an estimated 4,397 tons of woodchips annually. This will reduce consumption of fuel oil used for space and water heating from 230,000 gallons to an estimated 40,700 gallons per year, necessary only on the coldest days of the year. This ambitious shift from fossil fuels to a renewable fuel source should reduce scope one emissions from 2007 levels of 3,420 MT to 546 MT.
- The new facility will also produce an estimated 400,000 kWh of electricity per year, reducing scope two emissions from 2007 levels of 1,064 MT CO₂e to 878 MT CO₂e.
- Improvements in the GMC fleet fuel efficiency and the implementation of a transportation demand management system will reduce emissions related to transportation.
**Mid Term Goals (2020)**
- A comprehensive thermal and electrical energy audit will identify & prioritize next steps in GHG emissions reductions.
- As old infrastructure is upgraded, new technology will be explored as an educational tool.
- A 200 kW solar photovoltaic system has been discussed as a possible means of expanding use of renewable, locally produced electricity.
- Interactive data streaming will likely expand to include water, heat and electricity usage in most campus buildings. This will inform infrastructure development and help restructure personal consumption patterns.

**Long Term Goals (2050)**
- GMC envisions producing all of its energy on site using regionally sourced renewable fuels, having a climate neutral campus fleet, and reducing emissions from air travel by 80 percent.
- The campus will serve as a laboratory for experimenting with renewable energy systems and sustainable social and economic systems. As achievements are made on the GMC campus, they will radiate out into the wider Poultney community, learning from and influencing the behavioral norms governing life in rural Vermont in a post-petroleum age.

Based on reductions from the emissions mitigation strategies mentioned above, Green Mountain College’s emissions are projected to be 2,795 MT by FY 2011. Thus, the College will purchase carbon offsets to cover these emissions until further reductions can be made. The projected price range is estimated between $10/MT and $30/MT in 2011 depending on the quality of the carbon offsets. This would result in a total carbon offset cost of between $28,000 and $84,000 in 2011.

Green Mountain College consistently works to incorporate active, experiential and inquiry-based learning into the educational process, as is illustrated by contributions to this plan. Ten classes were involved with its research and design, and GMC academic and co-curricular programming are critical to the success of climate neutrality related initiatives.

The Campus Sustainability Council will oversee the implementation of all aspects of the climate action plan and communicate the findings directly to the president’s cabinet. The Green Mountain College campus community will continue to build capacity to advance sustainability initiatives at multiple levels within the institution, through a curriculum that engages operational goals, staff training, and community wide initiatives that promote behavioral change and awareness of the goals and strategies for climate neutrality.