

## Thirteen colleges sign global green pact

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STAFF REPORTERS

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Thirteen local universities yesterday signed the Talloires Declaration to mark World Environment Day, vowing to become model “green” universities.

The presidents of Chaoyang University of Technology, Ching Yun University, I-Shou University, National Chi Nan University, National Chung Cheng University, National Taiwan Normal University and seven other schools signed the declaration at the Ministry of Education.

“As an institution of higher education concerned with the state of the world's environment and the advancement of sustainable development, we shall strive to promote actions that will achieve a sustainable future,” the document said.

The declaration, which was launched by a group of 31 university leaders and international environmental experts from 15 nations in October 1990, is a document showing the commitment of higher education institutions in creating a sustainable environment and raising awareness of environmental protection.

After the 13 universities signed the document, Taiwan rose to fifth in the world in terms of the number of universities supporting the declaration.

The US is in first place with 99 universities, while Brazil is second with 52.

Vice Minister of Education Lu Mu-lin (呂木琳) told a press conference that signing the declaration symbolized the universities' support of its spirit and their determination to promote environmental sustainability on campus.

Wynn Calder, director of the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, said during a videoconference at the ministry that Taiwan's relationship with the association began in 2005 when a senior fellow of the association was invited to the nation as a guest speaker at a forum.

“Taiwan's efforts in promoting campus sustainability since then have been commendable,” Calder said. “Today the Ministry of Education of Taiwan is promoting the Green University program nationwide. This shows the determination of both the universities and government of Taiwan to make higher education more sustainable in all aspects.”

Meanwhile, five legislators from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) signed the Earth Charter in support of environmental sustainability in Taiwan.

Out of the legislature's 113 lawmakers, only DPP legislators Tien Chiu-chin (田秋堃), Chai Trong-rong (蔡同榮) and Huang Wei-cher (黃偉哲), and KMT legislators Daniel Hwang (黃義交) and Chiu Ching-chun (邱鏡淳) endorsed the document at the invitation of the Earth Charter, Taiwan — a local environmental group.

“I hope the charter will help people in Taiwan understand the importance of achieving a sustainable environment,” Earth Charter Initiative chairman Brendan Mackay told a press conference outside the legislature.

In related news, Taipei City Government yesterday rewarded 16 private organizations for saving 8 million kilowatt hours of electricity last year, reducing carbon emissions by more than 56,000 tonnes.

Taipei's Department of Environmental Protection also urged residents to save more energy in the summer to win prizes.

As electricity usage peaks in the summer, the department encouraged residents to participate in an energy-saving competition with prizes of up to NT\$1 million (US\$290,000).

City residents who are able to save 10 percent of the electricity they use between this month and August compared with the same period last year will be eligible for prizes, the department said.

Chiu Yi-liu (邱一流), a division chief at the department, said residents that could prove they had saved more than 10 percent on their electricity bills are encouraged to mail their bills to the department before Oct. 16. The department will then draw out 169 lucky residents who will receive cash prizes ranging from NT\$3,000 to NT\$100,000 on Nov. 11, Chiu said.

For more information, visit the Web site at [www.dep.taipei.gov.tw](http://www.dep.taipei.gov.tw) or call the Taipei Citizen's hotline at 1999 ext.7252

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