Support the Campaign to get the tree-planting search engine Ecosia to be installed on Campus

What we will do

1. Promote the campaign (i.e. in Newsletters, Flyers etc.)
2. Lobby the University to install Ecosia as the default search engine
3. Approach head of schools and the IT departments directly demanding action

Background to this

1. Last year Sustainable Development Association and a few other interested students have started a campaign trying to gather some student in order to implement Ecosia as the default search engine on University computers.
2. Ecosia is an alternative search engine that plants trees from their ad revenue. They have 8 million active users and have planted 73 million trees so far. In doing this, they partner with local communities to improve their livelihoods. Additionally, they are financially and morally transparent: pay taxes and don't sell or collect their users’ data.
3. With the University's Zero by 2040 goal in mind, installing Ecosia as the default search engine on all university computers could be a fantastic tool to make the University sustainable!
4. So far we have gathered 177 likes on our Facebook campaign and planted 113 trees via our custom install link for people to use on personal devices.
5. Roughly 45 searches finance one tree, which each removes 50kg of CO2 from the air in its lifetime.
6. The energy used is offset with renewables, making the searches carbon negative! If Ecosia was as big as Google, it would offset 15% of global CO2 emissions!
7. Other Universities have already implemented it and have financed tens of thousands of trees in just a matter of months!
8. If our 40.000 students make an average of 3 searches per day and it takes 45 searches to plant a tree, we could plant 40.000*3*365/45 = 973.333 trees a year!
9. We are planning to continue to raise student awareness but also want to try to use the current buzz around the climate crisis to find a good time to bring this forward to "the higher-ups" and IT.
10. The Vet school is also already looking into installing Ecosia.
11. The department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability has developed a policy brief (CSSD Persuasive Brief Number B144723) recommending Ecosia as a default search engine for UoE.
Beliefs and motivating actions

1. We believe that in the urgency of the climate crisis we can’t ignore any potential tools that could help us mitigate catastrophic impacts.
2. Planting trees is one of the most effective ways to do so.
3. A switch that is as easy as setting a different default search engine and as a result planting thousands of trees holds huge potential.
4. Ecosia also does not collect user data, thus this would also improve information privacy on university computers.

Submitted with 20 Student Signatures by Lucie Scharre in January 2020.