

Imperial College Union
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IZI 2: You Thought You Could Just Leave ICU On Read?

Author: Julia Mitra, Ethics & Environment Officer

Seconders: Anson To, Deputy President of Welfare
Charlene Tai, President, Environmental Society
Matthew Scholand, Environmental Technology Course Representative
Iris Wang, Secretary, Environmental Society; Ethics & Environment Network (26/27)
Garrison Baker, Ethics & Environment Network (current and 26/27)

Decisions: To approve

Union Notes

1. This Union Council unanimously passed the motion [“Zeroing in on the Imperial Zero Index”](#) in its December session. To summarise:
 - a. The Imperial Zero Index¹ (IZI) is the current guiding policy for partnerships and investment in fossil fuel companies (FFCs). Engagements with BP, Equinor, ExxonMobil, Petronas, Shell, and TotalEnergies have all been approved by the IZI assessment this year.
 - b. Union influence over this policy consists of one member (Union President) on the Socially Responsible Investment Engagement Monitoring Panel (SRIEMP), which is presented with the results of IZI assessments. Members do not vote on decisions but unanimously approve that the IZI methodology was carried out accurately. In previous years, this seat was held by an elected student leader – the Deputy President Finance and Services (DPFS).² The DPFS role was removed by the ICU Democracy Review 2025. In this year (25-26), to replace the DPFS, one additional student member on the SRIEMP was appointed by the Panel.
 - c. IZI policy development and assessments are conducted by the Socially Responsible Investment Working Group (SRI WG), membership of the working group includes the Students’ Union President.¹⁹
 - d. The ICU Principles of Socially Responsible Engagement discourages relationships with any third parties directly involved in *“production of fossil fuels; strong affiliations with producers of fossil fuels; and production of significant greenhouse gas emissions with no strategy for Net Zero.”*¹⁸
 - e. Council took the stance that: *The lack of transparency in the calculation process of the IZI contradicts the values of Imperial College^{3,4} and the ICU⁵ and makes understanding of and engagement with the policy inaccessible to the Imperial student and staff body.*²⁰
 - f. Council mandated the Union President to: *take the position at the January 2026 session of the SRIEMP, and in future dealings with the university, that:*
 - i. *The thresholds and calculations used in the IZI 2025 Assessment should be released on the IZI website immediately for full transparency.*
 - ii. *Imperial College should begin the disengagement process with TotalEnergies under the exceptional circumstance of its false claims being exposed, as it no longer passes the “Gateway” metric.*⁶
 - g. Council mandated the Officer Trustees to: *develop a written submission to the Relationship Review Committee* (RRC) Chair, in coordination with relevant Imperial stakeholders, experts, and the Ethics & Environment Network. This should detail*

*In “Zeroing in on the Zero Index”, this was erroneously written as the Research and Relations Council

recommendations/asks to strengthen the Gateway and other metrics, including the integration of a social justice and human impact category.

2. The Secondary Consultation is the annual forum where the SRIEMP considers additional information from companies and finalises IZI assessment results into recommendations for disengagement from any screened-out companies⁷.
 - a. At the January 2026 Secondary Consultation, the Union President raised the resolves from [“Zeroing in on the Imperial Zero Index”](#) to the SRIEMP.
 - b. Since that meeting, there has been no further communication from the IZI Panel despite a follow up email by the Union President.
 - c. As per the IZI Operational Guide, a further “Lessons Learned” review is set to take place in June 2026, in which a review of strengths, weaknesses, and proposed amendments will be reviewed by the SRIEMP.⁷
3. The Imperial College London and Imperial College Union Partnership Agreement⁸ states:
 - a. *“Imperial College recognises the Union as the sole representative body for the students of the College.”* (1.2), and the Union’s charitable objectives include *“being the recognised representative channel between students and Imperial College”* (1.4.ii)
 - b. *“The Union and the College commit to the principles outlined in the Relationship Agreement developed by UUK, NUS and CUC, (amongst others). These principles are as follows:*
 - i. *Strategic Partnership - spirit of partnership between the College and the Union informing the strategic direction of both parties and informing service agreements.*
 - iv. *Openness & Trust - Full, open, regular communication on relevant issues, in particular issues likely to have an impact on the other party, the student population and/or other joint stakeholders.*
 - vii. *Accountability - Acknowledgement by the College that the Union is a major stakeholder and sole body representing the student voice.”* (2.1)
 - c. *“The College shall consult students meaningfully in the development of its strategic plans through engagement with the union”* (3.2)
4. There has been active student and staff engagement concerning Imperial College’s relationships with FFCs since at least 2014,¹³ and multiple student groups (Imperial Climate Action, Imperial+, Environmental Society) have been active in campaigning on this topic in recent academic years.^{14,15,16}
5. The Paris Agreement aims to *“hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.”*⁹ The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has since emphasised the need to adhere to <1.5°C warming in order to achieve the objectives outlined in the Paris agreement.¹⁰
6. No proposed pathways which align with 1.5-2°C warming allow for the implementation of new fossil fuels projects. This has been the consensus of internationally recognised authorities on climate change, namely the IPCC¹⁰, International Energy Agency¹¹, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹², for a number of years.
7. An update on the IZI Framework should be published in the week coming 25th May, which is before the deadline to submit this Union Council paper. Relevant updates will be provided to Union Council on the 26th May to aid and inform discussions.

Union Believes

1. The IZI is an important document informing the strategic direction of Imperial College with significant impact on sustainability and the welfare of the student body, which this Council represents. Imperial College Union therefore has a right to meaningful consultation on IZI assessments and policy development as specified in the Partnership Agreement.
2. The lack of response to the issues raised by the Union President in January with the mandate of the Council, and therefore of the student body, makes it clear that the current membership of the SRIEMP does not constitute meaningful consultation on the development of the College's strategic plans on FFC partnerships.
 - a. Meaningful consultation will be defined by the opportunity to tangibly influence the policy and thus can practically act on mandates from the student body and promote student welfare.
 - b. Meaningful consultation on the IZI and its strategic direction also requires student involvement within development of the methodology, not just on assessment results.
3. Removing the student representation previously provided by the DPFS and substituting the seat by a panel-appointed student violates the Union's role as the sole representative of the student body⁸ (See Union Notes 3a).
4. By permitting engagement with FFCs currently engaged in new fossil fuel extraction projects, the IZI cannot be aligned with the Paris Agreement (1.5-2°C warming) as claimed.

Union Resolves

1. To request and campaign for practically meaningful consultation on the development of the IZI and its use in assessing partnerships. This should consist of:
 - a. Improved representation on the SRIEMP and IZI Panel, by membership of another officer trustee and/or an Ethics & Environment Network member.
 - b. Termly updates to Union Council on IZI policy decisions and meeting proceedings from the Union President, and/or any other ICU officers on the panel(s). This should also be an opportunity for Council to provide feedback and/or review the progress IZI-related Union Council Mandates.
 - c. Steps toward improvement in ICU representation in these panels and processes should be addressed at the Lessons Learned review, and implemented by the first session of the SRI Working Group and SRIEMP in academic year 2026/2027.
2. To request ICU access to the IZI calculation methods and threshold values, which would provide adequate transparency of College practices, and allow ICU officers to provide informed influence on this policy by the start of the 2026/2027 assessment cycle.
 - a. This does not require publishing of any data which ICU officers cannot already access (e.g. metrics sourced from CDP), but rather only requests transparency of how data is used by the SRI Working Group and SRIEMP to inform scoring and decision making.
3. To mandate that the Union President raise Resolves (1) and (2) at the 2026 Lessons Learned review, with updates presented at Union Council in June. If by the 9th June 2026, these resolves are not met, we will consider an escalation of campaign strategy, inclusive but not limited to direct action.

4. To mandate the Union President to raise the above resolves at University Council, challenging the lack of response and transparency from the College, and to request meaningful consultation on the IZI policymaking process.
5. To mandate the Union President and Ethics & Environment Officers (or any other involved officers) to provide termly updates to Council on progress with the above resolves until they are met.
6. To invite an IZI panel member to Union Council, to inform on progress with the strategic direction of the IZI and receive student feedback.
7. To take the stance that Imperial College should work towards adopting the same policy as the Union, to explicitly exclude FFCs from investments and engagements. As a first step, they should not renew partnerships with any FFCs engaged in exploration or new fossil fuel projects by the 2027/2028 academic year.

References

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3. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/values/behaviours-framework/>
4. <https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/about-us/what-we-do#values-and-mission>
5. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media-access/internal/?folder=administration-and-support-services/planning/internal&filename=IZI-2025-Methodology-02-04-25.pdf>
6. <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media-access/internal/?folder=administration-and-support-services/planning/internal&filename=IZI-2025-Operational-guide.pdf>
7. [https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/ICU & Imperial Partnership Agreement \(Nov 21\).pdf](https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/sites/default/files/ICU & Imperial Partnership Agreement (Nov 21).pdf)
8. https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVII-7-d&chapter=27&clang=en
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11. http://dwtyzx6upklss.cloudfront.net/Uploads/u/r/l/2025_tnzp_cop30_report_605206.pdf
12. According to a timeline developed by Imperial Climate Action; the handle @FossilFree_ has been active since 2014, campaigning against investment and partnerships with FFCs.
13. <https://felixonline.co.uk/articles/2014-2-7-an-open-letter-to-the-president-of-imperial-college-london/>
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