



PRESS RELEASE

The University of Thessaly at the International PROMITHEASnet 2025 Conference on Energy and Climate Change - Commitment to Sustainability and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The **University of Thessaly** participated actively in the **18th International Conference on Energy and Climate Change**, organized by the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)** and the **PROMITHEASnet Network**, held from **6 to 10 October 2025**, bringing together leading researchers, policymakers, representatives of international organizations, and academics from around the world.

On the **first day** of the Conference, a **Meeting of the UNAI SDG Hub Chairs, Co-Chairs and Vice Chairs** took place under the umbrella of the **United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)** – a global network of universities operating under the auspices of the **United Nations**, linking higher education with the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

Greece and the entirety of Greek Universities were represented by **Professor Chrysi Laspidou**, Vice Rector for Innovation, Internationalization, Collaborations and Digital Governance of the University of Thessaly, on behalf of **Professor Charalampos Billinis**, Rector of the University of Thessaly.

In her address, Professor Laspidou emphasized the crucial role of universities as **drivers of social transformation and agents of sustainable development**, noting that *“universities are not merely producers of knowledge – they are networks of collaboration that connect science, policy, and society.”*

The event brought together **UNAI SDG Hub Chairs and Co-Chairs** from around the world, including **Prof. Hettie Schönfeldt** (University of Pretoria, SDG 3), **Dr. Leena James** (Christ University, SDG 5), **Prof. Drew Franklin** (University of Auckland, SDG 8), **Prof. Mark Charlton** (De Montfort University, SDG 11), **Prof. Alpaslan Özerdem** (Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution, George Mason University, SDG 16), and **Prof. Jian Zhang** (Tsinghua University, SDG 17).

The keynote address was delivered by **Mr. Robert Skinner**, Chief of Partnerships and Global Engagement at the **United Nations Headquarters in New York**, who highlighted the importance of **global partnerships** and the **strengthening of collaboration between universities and the United Nations** in advancing the SDGs.

The Conference featured a rich program of **thematic sessions on energy transition, circular economy, sustainable cities, and climate change adaptation**, while the **official dinner of participants and ambassadors** provided an opportunity for discussions on **international academic cooperation** and the **role of universities in shaping sustainability policies**.

The participation of the **University of Thessaly** in this international forum is part of the University's **Strategic Plan to integrate the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** across all its functions – from teaching and research to governance and community engagement.

In this context, the University has launched an **open call for the establishment of its Sustainability Team**, consisting of **SDG Ambassadors** – faculty members who will mentor students and help promote the 17 SDGs within the University and the local communities of Thessaly.

The active presence of the University of Thessaly in this global event confirms its **leading role in Greek higher education** and its firm **commitment to international cooperation, sustainability, and social responsibility**.

Dates: 6-10 October 2025

Venue: Museum of History, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

More information: <http://www.promitheasnet.kepa.uoa.gr/18th-international-conference-on-energy-and-climate-change-6-10-october-2025>

