



Sport's contribution to the European Green Deal

A sport sector playbook

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Green Sport Expert Group

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Foreword

Uniting Sport and Sustainability in Pursuit of the European Green Deal

The European Green Deal sets a bold and necessary path towards carbon neutrality by 2050, a goal that demands collective action from every sector of society. Sport is no exception. With its mass appeal across all segments of society, sport holds immense potential to spearhead awareness and drive the change towards environmental sustainability. The policies and actions of decision-makers, international and national sport federations, professional and grassroots sport clubs, the fitness sector, the sporting goods industry, the sport tourism sector, but also consumers, leisure athletes, and not least fans, have a major impact on the climate and the environment.

The commitment to this cause has seen a rising tide within the sporting world. Yet, the journey ahead remains substantial.

It is with a sense of urgency and optimism that I introduce this report, a collaborative effort by the Green Sport Expert Group, which was established under the EU Work Plan for Sport 2021-24. This group, composed of representatives from EU Member States, observers from the global sporting world, and experts from institutions such as the European Environment Agency and the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), has been instrumental in charting a sustainable course for sports under the European Green Deal.

The report proposes a comprehensive 'playbook' for integrating environmental sustainability within the European sports sector. It outlines policy recommendations designed to:

- Facilitate and promote environmental sustainability in the European sport sector,
- Provide simple, high-level guidance to policymakers at both European and Member State levels, ensuring alignment with the Green Deal objectives,
- Provide guidance on key green sport topics, spotlight pioneering initiatives, showcase best practice and point towards further resources for stakeholder in European sports.

This report is not just a compendium of guidelines; it is an invitation to action. It is a call to every stakeholder in the European sports ecosystem to play their part in realising the vision of the Green Deal. Let me highlight two key points of the report: first, for the EU Member States, it underscores the imperative for national sustainable sport strategies, and second, for sports organisations, it highlights the necessity to establish and monitor their carbon footprints.

I trust that the insights and recommendations presented herein will not only inform but also inspire action towards a more sustainable future in sports.

Together, we stand at the cusp of a significant opportunity – to marry the vigour and passion of sports with the ethos of environmental stewardship. Let us embrace this challenge with the same zeal and teamwork that sports teach us.

Iliana Ivanova

Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Executive summary

The [European Union 2021-2024 Work Plan for Sport](#)¹ established an Expert Group on ‘Green Sport’, entrusted with formulating recommendations for sustainable sport in Europe. This report aims to:

- Promote environmental sustainability in the European sport sector.
- Help define the subject of green sport in Europe: the scope of the subject and participating sectors, stakeholders, and audiences.
- Identify key sustainability opportunities and challenges for the European sport sector.
- Provide simple, high-level recommendations to help Member States align their sport sectors with the objectives of the European Green Deal.
- Make recommendations to support sport decision-makers in Member States and European and national sports bodies.
- Highlight existing relevant initiatives and provide good practice examples and further reading for European sports practitioners.

This report presents the main findings and conclusions of this Green Sport Expert Group. The recommendations are primarily addressed at European and national public authorities in charge of sport and their sport sector organisations.

Environmental sustainability in and through sport

Sport is a very big deal culturally and economically in Europe. Most of the world’s most popular sports are played in Europe, from mass participation events in state-of-the-art stadia in European cities to outdoor sport in our mountains, rivers, and seas. Europe frequently hosts many of the world’s top sporting events, from world championships to the Olympic Games. Every day, millions of Europeans participate in sporting activity or watch their favourite sports on TV, online or in person, underlining sport’s strong connection with peoples’ lives.

Considering environmental sustainability in the European sport sector, its size and diversity leads to corresponding effects on climate change, nature and environmental quality on land, water, and air. As well as the wider societal impacts of these effects, sport is increasingly affected, and having to adapt to, changing climatic and environmental conditions.

Sport depends on many other industrial sectors from transport, energy services, construction and waste management to food, hospitality, accommodation, communications, and broadcasting. Sport’s environmental impacts range from habitat destruction for the construction of new sports facilities, to material requirements for facility and equipment manufacture, to high energy usage for heating and lighting at events. However, its primary impact - on climate change - is almost always due to the travel of fans and participants.²

There are also substantial opportunities in Europe to help drive environmental sustainability *through* sport. Sport enjoys an unrivalled platform to reach huge audiences through events, broadcast, and online media. Sports stars, brands and sponsors are increasingly inspiring sustainability action with fans, followers, and consumers. More generally, sport has the opportunity to showcase green innovation and drive best practice across the many sectors it works with.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A42020Y1204%2801%29>

² The carbon footprint of fan travel is estimated to contribute to 80% of the total footprint of major sport events, as shown by report of various international competitions, including the [2018 football world cup](#), or carbon footprint calculations run by [sport clubs](#).

The context for action

The European Union aspires to be a global leader in environmental sustainability with an ambition for carbon neutrality by 2050 and climate action and environmental sustainability as cross-cutting priorities across all EU policies and programmes. The main tool to achieve this is the European Green Deal, hereafter Green Deal, a broad range of policies and regulatory initiatives that are the main driver for making the EU's economies and societies more sustainable.

Internationally, the sport movement is already stepping up to the sustainability challenge. Notable initiatives include the '*Sports for Climate Action Framework*'³ by the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) sustainability strategy, with clear climate goals of halving emissions by 2030. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are increasingly being used by organisations involved in sport.

Nonetheless, further efforts are required for the sport sector to become more environmentally sustainable and maximise its potential to inspire. This report provides a clear roadmap to achieve this in Europe.

Recommendations and guidance

The Green Sport Expert Group put forward [policy recommendations](#) for green sport in Europe that aim to:

- Facilitate and promote environmental sustainability in the European sport sector.
- Provide simple, high-level recommendations to European and Member State decision-makers to align with the Green Deal.
- Provide guidance on key green sport topics, highlight relevant initiatives and good practice examples and signpost further reading for European sports practitioners.

These recommendations cut across all Green Deal areas and are presented below:

Areas for recommended actions	EU institutions are encouraged to	Member States are encouraged to	National sport organisations are encouraged to
Governance	• Strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on sport and sustainability within and across EU institutions.	• Identify a senior staff member (e.g., from board of directors) as a Sport and Sustainability Champion. • Establish a cross-directorate or Ministry of Sport and Sustainability Working Group	• Nominate a sustainability manager.
Policy	• Encourage Member States to develop national sustainable sport strategies and report on	• Develop an environmental Sustainability Action Plan for their sport sector.	• Develop an environmental Sustainability Plan or include a Sustainability Plan within the

³ <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action>

	progress in implementing Green Sport policies	Measure the baseline carbon footprint for the activities of the sport sector.	Development Strategy for their sport. Measure the baseline carbon footprint of their organisation and their sport.
Funding	- Continue promoting and supporting existing schemes that support sport and sustainability projects, notably the Erasmus + sport programme. - Raise awareness on EU programmes that are not sport-specific but do offer opportunities for projects addressing Green Deal objectives	- Create a funding pot to support sustainability capacity building of their sport national governing bodies. - Make public funding to sport national governing bodies conditional on the delivery of sustainability objectives.	N/A
Practical support	- Continue sharing good practices at EU level (between Member States but also the sport sector), including within the appropriate fora of the next EU Work Plans for Sport - Improve the evidence-base for environmental sustainability in sport.	- Create a green sport network for their national sport governing bodies. - Develop a programme of sustainability training for national sport governing bodies staff. - Develop sustainability policy guidance for national sport governing bodies.	Provide sustainability training for their staff.
Communication / engagement	Explore opportunities to engage European athletes, federations, clubs and events in showcasing 'Green Sport', including through existing	Promote good practices and innovative partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation examples to their sport sector	Use athletes, partners, events, and media channels to engage sport audiences in green initiatives.

	initiatives such as the European Week of Sport, or the EU Green Week		
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The report also provides more detailed analysis on the particular [challenges and opportunities](#) for sport to move towards a greener path and discusses the [role of various stakeholders](#) to address environmental issues in and through sport. It also puts forward practical [guidance, resources and case studies](#) for sport practitioners addressing important topics such as sustainable sport infrastructure or sustainable sport events.

Chapter I: Green Sport in Europe: key findings and analysis⁴

1 Introduction to Green Sport in Europe



Photo by Fas Khan on Unsplash

Sport is at the heart of European culture and the European economy. According to the '*Study on the economic impact of sport through sport satellite accounts*' published by the European Commission in 2018 the share of sport-related Gross Domestic Product within the EU was 2.12 % and amounts to €279.7 billion⁵. The share of sport-related employment amounts to 2.72 % of total EU employment providing jobs for millions of people in Europe, from athletes and coaches to support staff and administrators.

⁴ This report was prepared by the Green Sport Expert Group. For more information about the composition of the Expert Group (members and observers), please consult the Register of Commission Expert Groups at: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupID=1564>

⁵ Study on the economic impact of sport through sport satellite accounts - Publications Office of the EU (europa.eu)

Sport involves other sectors including energy, transport, construction, food, hospitality and waste management and it is likely that its environmental impact is correlated with its economic success. While no EU-level study wholly documents these impacts, it seems that on a global scale, sport per se has a relatively modest carbon footprint compared to other sectors, such as energy, transport, and manufacturing⁶, but the impact of audience and athletes travelling for large sport events does represent an important environmental impact⁷. However, sport also has an opportunity to inspire sustainability action through its broad appeal across society and aspirations built on ambition, teamwork and resilience.

Most of the world's most popular sports are played in Europe, spanning a range of settings from mountains and oceans to state-of-the-art stadia in our capital cities. Europe hosts many of the world's top sporting events, such as the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024. Every day, millions of Europeans participate in sporting activity or watch their favourite sports, underlining sport's strong connection with people's lives and the platform sport has to engage and inspire the European public.

The European Union has established the **European Green Deal**, hereafter **Green Deal**⁸, charting a path to a sustainable European society and economy. **Sport's role in meeting the Green Deal's targets is two-fold.** Firstly, sport must reduce its own environmental impact to a sustainable level. Secondly, sport can inspire behaviour change on environmental issues with the sectors it influences, sports fans and wider society. The power of sport as a tool for change has been a growing phenomenon in recent years, with the International Olympic Committee, the United Nations, clubs, leagues, federations, sponsors, host cities, athletes and NGOs all recognising sport's ability to communicate in a far-reaching way.

'*Green Sport*', also known as '*sustainable sport*', '*sport and environment*' or '*eco-sport*', is a concept that refers to sports activities and events that are designed, organised, and executed with a focus on environmental sustainability⁹ and minimizing their environmental impact. In Europe, this concept has gained increasing attention in recent years, thanks to increasing levels of environmental scrutiny, legislation, and initiatives such as the Green Deal. In wider society, concepts of sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and increasing use of frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goals have impacted sport, for example, through the requirements and expectations of sport sponsors and cities which host sport events. The sport sector itself has been addressing environmental issues since at least the 1990 Rio Earth Summit and the 1994 Lillehammer Olympic Winter Games, with mega events like the Olympic Games sometimes leading the way, along with nature-dependent sports such as surfing, and conspicuously high-impact sports like motor sports.

⁶ Wilby, R. L., Orr, M., Depledge, D., Giulianotti, R., Havenith, G., Kenyon, J. A., R. Matthews, T. K., Mears, S. A., Mullan, D. J., & Taylor, L. (2023). The impacts of sport emissions on climate: Measurement, mitigation, and making a difference. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1519(1), 20-33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14925>

⁷ Triantafyllidis, S. (2018). Carbon dioxide emissions research and sustainable transportation in the sports industry. *Journal of Carbon Research*, 4, 57 and Cerezo-Estevé, Sergi & Inglés Yuba, Eduard & Seguí, Jordi & Solanellas, Francesc. (2022). The Environmental Impact of Major Sport Events (Giga, Mega and Major): A Systematic Review from 2000 to 2021. *Sustainability*. 14. 13581. 10.3390/su142013581.

⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

⁹ Environmental sustainability is defined in the GreenComp framework as follows: '*Sustainability means prioritising the needs of all life forms and of the planet by ensuring that human activity does not exceed planetary boundaries*'. https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/greencomp-european-sustainability-competence-framework_en

‘Green Sport’ initiatives in Europe can take many forms, including promoting eco-friendly transportation for spectators and athletes, reducing waste and energy consumption during events, using renewable energy sources, and implementing sustainable practices in the construction and maintenance of sports facilities.

The European Union has launched several programmes to promote ‘Green Sport’, such as the ‘Green Sports hub project’¹⁰, which aims to create a sustainable sports sector by developing and sharing best practices among sports organisations and stakeholders. Additionally, many sports organisations in Europe have developed their own sustainability strategies and policies to reduce their environmental footprint and promote eco-friendliness.

2 Sport’s relationship with environmental sustainability

2.1 Sport’s impact on climate and the environment

In the European Union the effect of sport on the environment will vary from one member state to another, and from one sporting discipline to another. However, most sports organisations and supporters would today agree that sports, with accompanying travel, energy use, construction, catering, and other activities, have significant environmental impacts and contribute to climate change.

The impact of sport on its environment is multifactorial, as one considers the environmental cost of the different components of a sport activity: food and beverages, waste production, heating and cooling, transport, light and noise pollution, and impact on wildlife. There are many sources of pollution and environmental impacts. For example, the French Agency for Ecological Transition ‘Ademe’ claims that a gathering of 5,000 people produces more than 2.5 tons of waste and uses more than 1,000 kWh of energy and 500 kg of paper¹¹.

According to preliminary calculations, the sport sector may cause annual worldwide emissions of around 350 million tCO₂e¹². Mega sport events, structured leagues, and mass participation sports can all be ‘hotspots’ of direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions. For many sports events, the opportunity for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is the highest when it comes to spectator emissions, especially travel to and from matches and tournaments¹³. For example, the EU funded ‘LIFE Tackle’ project estimated that for a professional football match¹⁴, the transportation alone accounted for 40% of the environmental footprint, of which over 70% was supporters’ travel.

Some sports, such as swimming, often depend on energy intensive infrastructures, for water and space heating as well as pumps, filters, and lighting. Reducing the energy consumption of infrastructures and ensuring their energy efficiency are key elements for change towards a more sustainable sport practice. This is particularly relevant for indoor sports where the energy consumption of facilities and arenas can represent a significant proportion of carbon emissions.

¹⁰ <https://greensportshub.eu>

¹¹ Ademe: Guide Poitou-Charentes. <https://www.sports.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-03/guide-des-co-manifestation-en-poitou-charentes-5201.pdf>

¹² Goldblatt, D. (2020). Playing against the clock. <https://www.rapidtransition.org/resources/playing-against-the-clock/>

¹³ Neuerburg, H., & Quardokus, B. (2019). Sport in Zeiten der Energiewende – Herausforderungen, Chancen und Perspektiven: Springer.

¹⁴ Football match of Real Betis, season 2018/2019, average number of fans: 43,455 per match. Source: The project LIFE Tackle: aims and key results, presentation by Tiberio Daddi, Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies for the Expert Group 5th meeting. <https://lifetackle.eu/>

Outdoor sport may also have significant associated facilities and infrastructure and can also have a more direct impact on natural areas, including coastal regions, woodlands, and mountains. The development of new facilities and resorts for sports such as golf or skiing can be in conflict with internationally important protected areas for wildlife, such as World Heritage Sites¹⁵. In a more dispersed way, the millions of recreational trips into nature each week for hiking, mountain biking, climbing and equestrian activities, for example, can have a significant effect on local environments. They also have a profound effect on the way in which participants connect with and value nature¹⁶.

Sport can make an important contribution to address these impacts, within sport and beyond. The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)¹⁷ explicitly emphasises the role of sport in achieving the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The contribution of sport to the SDGs is detailed in [UN documents](#)¹⁸ and outlined in the diagramme below. For the purpose of this report, we will focus on the SDGs more closely connected to environmental sustainability, namely SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 (circled in green in the diagramme below).



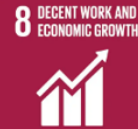
¹⁵ Dalberg Advisors (2018) Slippery slope: Protecting Pirin from unsustainable ski expansion and logging. Report for WWF <https://dalberg.com/our-ideas/slippy-slope-protecting-pirin-unsustainable-recreation-and-logging/>

¹⁶ IUCN (2022) Sports for nature https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/-s4n-framework-en-15dec-no-embargo_final.pdf

¹⁷ <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

¹⁸ See for instance UNOSP (2014) Sport and the Sustainable Development Goals. An overview outlining the contribution of sport to the SDGs. United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, or the 2017 Kazan Action plan to reach the SDGs in and through sport: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000252725>

Sport facilities and sport events can contribute to targets concerning renewable energy, energy efficiency and access to clean energy by respecting standards and recommendations in these regards. Sport infrastructures can promote organization models that adopt clean and sustainable energy use.



The growing scale of the sport industry, and its links with other sectors, offer opportunities for economic growth and decent employment. Sport programmes can foster increased employability for women, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, thus contributing to inclusive economic growth.



Sport events can have long lasting effects towards environmental sustainability on the population if they involve the population for their legacy. Sport organizations and sport events, if they adopt adequate policies and procedures, can be an opportunity for capacity building, creating jobs, and for economic, social and environmental sustainable development in general.



Sport, including sport events, can be used to celebrate and value diversity. Stakeholders in sport can promote mutual understanding and address discriminatory practices and various forms of discrimination. Sport stadia that serve as stages for human behaviour can become platforms for human rights based inclusiveness and respect for diversity.



Sport contributes to making cities and communities more inclusive. The popularity of, and positive attitude towards sport make it a suitable tool for tackling inequality in areas and populations that are difficult to reach. It can also tackle prejudice and intolerance by promoting tolerance and pro-social behaviour instead.



The incorporation of sustainability standards in the production and provision of sport products can contribute to sustainable consumption and production patterns, also involving other industries

Sport, through collaboration among a variety of involved stakeholders, can make significant contributions to combat climate change. The popularity and outreach of sport offer opportunities for awareness raising and information sharing, including sustainable development and nature-friendly lifestyles.



Sport, through educational initiatives, can provide well-researched insights into the interactions between biodiversity and the lifestyle choices by explaining the interrelatedness of food, consumption, culture and biodiversity conservation.



Sport in natural terrestrial settings can play an important role in ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems. Sport, especially outdoor sport, can incorporate safeguards, activities and messages promoting the sustainable and environmentally respectful use of terrestrial resources.



Sport can be used as a meaningful tool for the prevention of conflict and the promotion of long-lasting peace, with its ability to transcend cultures



Sport has the power to connect influential networks of diverse partners and stakeholders with a shared commitment to lasting development.

Source: Compiled by the Green Sport Expert Group, based on UN resources.

Many initiatives have now been implemented at international level. For example, the IOC increasingly requires that the Olympic Games are at the forefront of environmental sustainability in all aspects of delivering the Games¹⁹. The IOC also requires and supports host cities to leverage the Games as a catalyst for more sustainable development in the host nation and more widely through many stakeholders and broadcast and media audiences. In 2018, UN Climate Change launched the '*Sports for Climate Action*

¹⁹ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability>

*Framework' (S4CA)²⁰ which introduces five principles with the overarching goal of 'achieving a clear trajectory for the global sports community to combat climate change'.*²¹

2.2 The impact of climate change and the environment on sport

The impacts of climate change on sport are considerable on infrastructure and the scheduling and organisation of events. UN Climate Change²² underlines particularly the impacts on playing surfaces and infrastructure, due to extreme weather conditions, which lead to delays or even cancellations of sporting events. There are also structural or even existential risks on sports including winter sports and water sports that are threatened by issues including lack of snow, coastal erosion, sea level rise, flooding, water availability and water quality²³.

In addition, there are significant impacts on athletes' health and performance such as heat stress, UV exposure, exposure to allergens, exposure to air pollutants²⁴, as well as issues related to fan experience due to high temperature. Finally, as illustrated by the effects of extreme temperatures on competitors at the recent Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in 2021 or the Qatar 2022 Football World Cup, the suitability of various cities for event hosting²⁵ may be in question, with significant financial and social repercussions for sport.

Climate-associated economic risks require sport organisations to adapt. They can do this by organising and executing events that are climate-proof, creating winter sports programmes that account for the dwindling likelihood of snow, safeguarding sports facilities from drought, flooding, hail, and storms, and responding to a decline in summertime attendance owing to the heat²⁶. However, some solutions to address climate-impacted sport, such as use of artificial snow machines, increased irrigation of pitches, installation of artificial surfaces and bottled water stations for athlete hydration, can all have further negative repercussions for the environment.

The same environmental change can affect sports differently, for example, climate change can lengthen the season for activities such as mountain biking - benefiting from late snowfall and higher temperatures - whilst, at the same time, the ski industry suffers.

Overall, the relationship between the environment and sport is a complex one, with an attendant risk that seeking to address the effects of climate change may even further increase the environmental footprint of sport activities.

²⁰ <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action>

²¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Sports_for_Climate_Action_Declaration_and_Framework.pdf

²² <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange>

²³ UNFCCC, Sports for Climate Action Framework, URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Sports_for_Climate_Action_Declaration_and_Framework.pdf

²⁴ Schneider, S., Mücke, HG. Sport and climate change—how will climate change affect sport?. Ger J Exerc Sport Res (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12662-021-00786-8>.

²⁵ DeChano-Cook, L. M., & Shelley, F. M. (2017). Climate change and the future of international events: A case of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. In B. P. McCullough & T. B. Kellison (Eds.), Routledge handbook of sport and the environment (pp. 66–78). Routledge.

²⁶ Algesheimer, G. (2019). Adaptation to the consequences of climate change in sports clubs: Challenges, barriers and potentials (Anpassung an die Folgen des Klimawandels bei Sportvereinen: Herausforderungen, Hemmnisse und Potentiale). Universität Kassel.; Orr, M., & Inoue, Y. (2019). Sport versus climate: Introducing the climate vulnerability of sport organisations framework. Sport Manage Rev, 22(4), 452–463.

3 The European Policy Context

3.1 EU Sport Policy

EU policy on sport has evolved significantly since 2007 with the following milestones: 1) The 2007 '*White paper on sport*'²⁷, the first '*comprehensive initiative*' on sport by the EU; 2) Sport was included for the first time in the *Lisbon treaty*²⁸ in 2009, listed as one of the so-called '*supporting competences*' in article 6 of the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)*²⁹; 3) The Commission communication of January 2011 '*Developing the European dimension*'³⁰ in sport' and 4) the '*EU Work Plan for Sport*'³¹ which is the most important document on EU sports policy. It was adopted by the Council of the European Union, hereafter, the Council, for the first time for the period 2011-2014.

In 2017, the *Tartu Call for a Healthy Lifestyle*³² was launched at a seminar on healthy lifestyles organised during the opening of the 2017 European Week of Sport in Tartu, Estonia. It contained 15 commitments bringing together work in a range of fields, such as sport, food, health, innovation and research, to promote healthy lifestyles.

In 2022, the EU Sport Forum '*European Sport: fair, inclusive and fit for a sustainable future*' emphasised the green transition of the sport sector, in particular the promotion of sustainable sports infrastructure³³.

Furthermore, since the approval of the *EU Work Plan for Sport 2021-2024*³⁴, '*Green Sport*' has been included in the agenda as part of the priority area '*socio-economic and environmental dimensions of sport*'. This was reflected in several Council Conclusions.

The 2022 French Presidency of the Council focused on '*Sport for sustainable development and transformation*', recognising the role of sport in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. In April 2022, the Council Conclusions on '*Sport and Physical Activity: Promising Tools for Transforming Behaviour for Sustainable Development*'³⁵ highlighted the potential of sport towards environmental sustainability and calls on all sport stakeholders to reduce their impact on the environment, biodiversity, and the climate. The conclusions also aim to better valorise sport as an educational tool and one that takes sustainable development goals into account.

In November 2022, under the Czech Presidency of the Council, the '*Council Conclusions on Sustainable and Accessible Sport Infrastructure*'³⁶ were approved, highlighting:

- How sports infrastructure can contribute to the achievement of SDGs, for which cross-sectoral cooperation and multi-stakeholder dialogue will be needed.
- Why, given how sport and sport infrastructure affect and are also affected by climate change, it is key to minimise its negative impact on the environment and biodiversity and to ensure that its location adapts to climate threats.
- How in the light of the current energy crisis it is essential to adopt '*sustainable, energy efficient and low-carbon solutions and accessibility measures*' and adapt the existing sport infrastructure³⁷.

²⁷ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/white-paper-on-sport.html>

²⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12007L%2FTXT>

²⁹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E006:EN:HTML>

³⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52011DC0012>

³¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A42020Y1204%2801%29>

³² https://sport.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2021-08/ewos-tartu-call_en.pdf

³³ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/event/eu-sport-forum-2022>

³⁴ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42020Y1204\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:42020Y1204(01))

³⁵ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7764-2022-INIT/xx/pdf>

³⁶ www.consilium.europa.eu/media/60400/st15365-en22.pdf

³⁷ st15365-en22.pdf (europa.eu)

These points built on the [Council conclusions of June 2021 on Sport innovation](#)³⁸ that recognised that *'innovative sport infrastructures, and the processes for their construction and maintenance, can, among other things, provide better and safer conditions for sport and physical activity, while being more sustainable, environmentally friendly, accessible and energy efficient'*.

EU support for sport is channelled through funding and support programmes, mainly directly through [Erasmus+](#)³⁹ and [Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions \(PPPA\)](#)⁴⁰ but also indirectly through [Horizon Europe](#), the [LIFE programme](#)⁴¹, or [Cohesion Policy Funds](#)⁴² among others. Importantly all funding programmes have cross-cutting priorities at EU level, directly linking sport to the objective of *'building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe'*.

3.2 European Environmental Sustainability Policy and Legislation Relevant to the Sport Sector

The following sections present key strategies and legislation at the EU level related to environmental sustainability and sport, plus existing frameworks currently organising sustainability practices among sport stakeholders.

3.2.1 Focus on the Green Deal

To move to a fairer, healthier, and more prosperous society while ensuring a healthy planet for future generations, the Green Deal, was introduced in December 2019. This overarching framework is responsible for driving a sustainable revolution in the EU economy and society and is a cross-cutting priority across all EU policies and programmes. Among the key environmental and social issues covered are the transition to a circular economy, preservation of natural capital, fostering the innovation and financing needed, and all of this with a just transition given the magnitude of the changes.

This new growth strategy for the EU aims at carbon neutrality by 2050. Importantly, it is a key piece of the EU strategy to reach the SDGs Targets, specifically addressing 12 SDGs⁴³.

The Green Deal lists the topics and action points necessary to achieve the objectives, impacting every industry, including sports. The Green Deal and its objectives (*'Clean energy; Sustainable industry; Building and renovation; Farm to fork; Eliminating pollution; Sustainable mobility and Biodiversity'*) are the central organising principles for this framework structure.

3.2.2 Other Relevant Policies and Initiatives

Under the roadmap that is the Green Deal, other key initiatives for sustainability are expected to contribute to the transition of the sport sector. These initiatives include the [European Climate Pact](#)⁴⁴, a platform for organisations and citizens to work and learn together, to develop solutions and build networks for real change. The [European Climate Pact](#) is about promoting awareness and action in favour of the environment from all sectors, including sport.

³⁸ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021XG0604\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52021XG0604(01))

³⁹ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/funding>

⁴⁰ https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/grants/2021-2027/pilot-projects-and-preparatory-actions-pppas_en

⁴¹ https://cinea.ec.europa.eu/programmes/life_en

⁴² https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/available-budget_en

⁴³ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/international-strategies/sustainable-development-goals/eu-holistic-approach-sustainable-development_en

⁴⁴ https://climate-pact.europa.eu/index_en

The '*Fit for 55 package*'⁴⁵ refers to the EU's target of reducing net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, and covers a broad and far-reaching legislative package affecting taxation, climate, transport, and energy policies. These will entail important impacts for all sport activities generating gas emissions, including transport of athletes and fans, infrastructures and event organisation.

The '*EU Renovation Wave strategy*'⁴⁶ aims to intensify renovation efforts throughout the EU. The strategy promotes in particular renovations that reduce energy use, curb greenhouse gas emissions, increase the environmental performance of buildings and generate cost savings.

A more comprehensive overview is provided in Annex I - Relevant Policy Documents to this report, covering a broader range of existing policies and regulations.

⁴⁵ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/green-deal/fit-for-55-the-eu-plan-for-a-green-transition/>

⁴⁶ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficient-buildings/renovation-wave_en

4 Current Good Practices

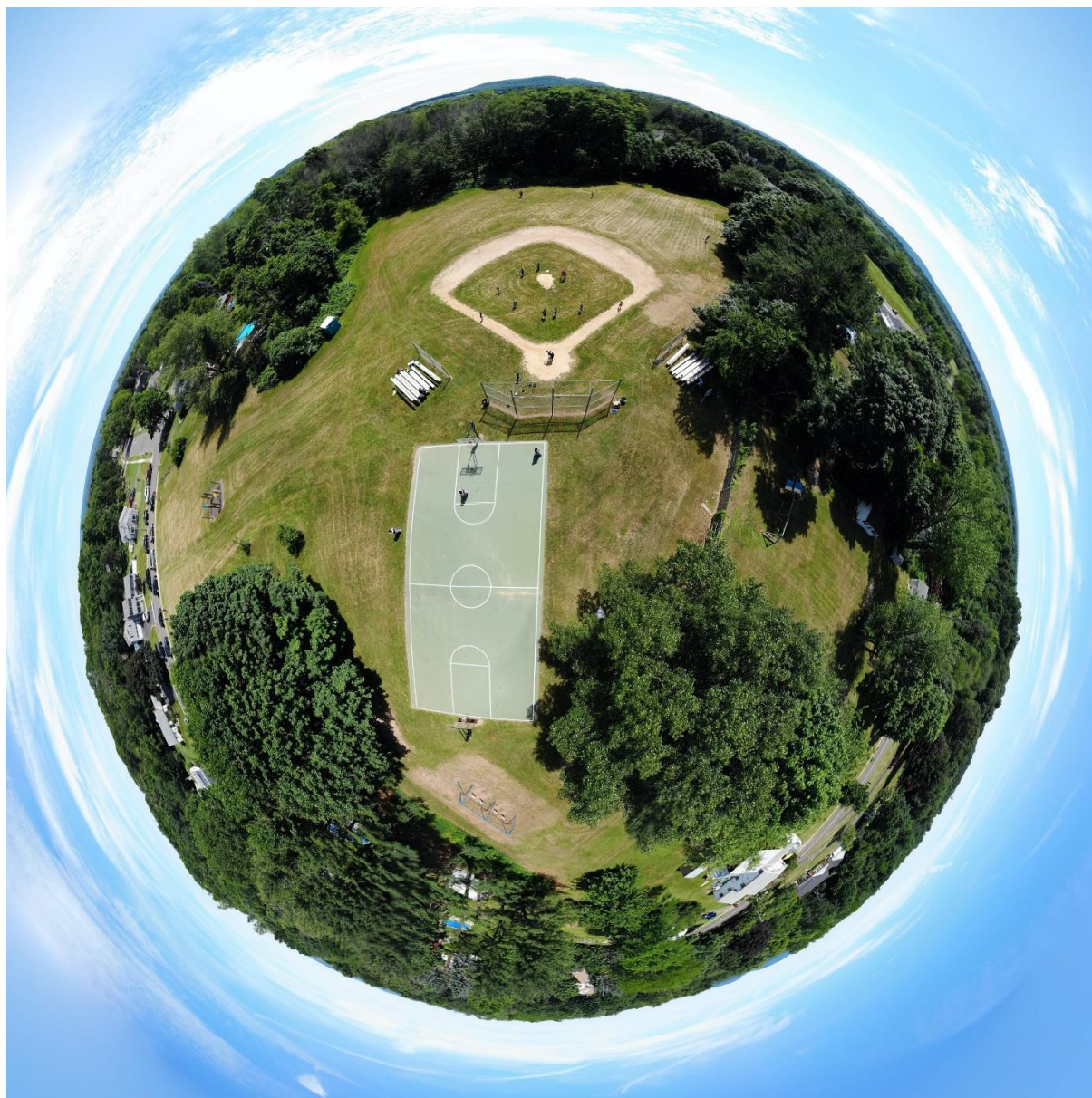


Photo by Tim Bish on Unsplash

4.1 European Green Sport Projects

Most European “*Green sport*” projects are financed by EU programmes, such as Erasmus+ and [LIFE](#).

The table below contains some of the most relevant examples of these projects.

1. ERASMUS+ funds a variety of projects in support of the sustainable practice of sports such as: the '*Green Sports Hub Europe*'⁴⁷ and '*ASAP*'⁴⁸ projects:

- The "*Green Sports Hub Europe*" project has the objective to empower European Sports Federations, smaller associations and clubs to address environmental sustainability through a European hub that provides tools, policy guidance and good practice examples. Its audiences include federations, policy makers, sports clubs and NGOs.
- *ASAP, 'As Sustainable As Possible'* was a 2020-2022 project aiming to support and promote a strategic approach to sustainability among National Olympic Committees (NOCs). Its activities resulted in the creation and adoption of 3 new sustainability strategies and in the introduction of a suite of guidance documents '*ASAP Roadmap and Toolbox*'⁴⁹ giving any sport organisation a helping hand in the development of their own sustainability strategy.

2. The LIFE programme has also funded projects such as '*LIFE Tackle*'⁵⁰

The '*LIFE Tackle project*' sought to improve the environmental management of football matches as well as the overall level of awareness and attention towards environmental issues in the football sector by involving the most important parties in the football industry, including national football associations, football clubs, stadium managers, and supporters.

Moreover, the European Commission's '*SHARE initiative*'⁵¹ aims to increase public awareness of the value of physical activity and sport for local and regional development. It has published several documents, including '*Green transition and sport at all levels*'⁵² on how to use Cohesion policy funds for green sport objectives; and '*Guidance for local clubs becoming greener*'.

4.2 Key international frameworks for environmental sustainability in sport

4.2.1 UN Sustainable Development Goals

A key international framework in relation to sustainability are the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), implemented through the '*Agenda 2030*'. The UN SDGs aim to make the world fairer through addressing environmental, social and economic development issues. Sport is a contributor to the SDGs, through its economic, social and health impacts as well as alleviating the environmental impacts associated with sport practices. More precisely, environmental sustainability in sport is linked to the following sustainable development goals: 6,7,9,11,12,13,14 and 15.

Many sport sector organisations and stakeholders from sponsors and suppliers to host cities are already using the SDGs to develop strategies and monitor progress on sustainability.

⁴⁷ https://greensportshub.eu/partnership_of_green_players/

⁴⁸ <https://www.asap-sport.com/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.asap-sport.com/results>

⁵⁰ <https://lifetackle.eu/>

⁵¹ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/initiatives/share-initiative>

⁵² <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-08/SHARE-LAB-Green-Transition-and-Sport-at-All-Levels-final.pdf>

4.2.2 IOC Sustainability Strategy

In 2016, the IOC created a sustainability strategy, built from the '*Olympic Agenda 2020*'⁵³ which included sustainability as one of its three pillars. The strategy was developed with a broad range of stakeholders and is based on the responsibilities of the IOC as an organisation, as the owner of the Olympic Games, and as the leader of the Olympic Movement. Consequently, the IOC has adopted 18 objectives that range from day-to-day operations to engaging stakeholders to be more sustainable and leading the adoption of sustainable practices in the Olympic Games. The *IOC Sustainability Strategy*⁵⁴ is aligned with the UN SDGs, and regularly publishes sustainability reports to track progress. The latest one includes new objectives and targets for 2021 – 2024 in line with the '*IOC strategic roadmap Olympic Agenda 2020+5*'.

Considering these roles and related activities, the IOC Strategy concentrates on the following five focus areas and accompanying strategic intents (examples provided).

Table 2 IOC Sustainability Strategy in a nutshell

Infrastructure and natural sites	Development of operations of indoor and outdoor sites and administrative structures E.g., sites have a net positive impact on local communities. E.g., sites conserve water resources and protect water quality.
Sourcing and resource management	Sourcing of products and services and management of material resources during their lifecycle E.g., source of products and services takes account of environmental and social impacts.
Mobility	Mobility of people and goods, locally and globally E.g., freight operations and environmentally and socially responsible travel.
Workforce	Working conditions and opportunities E.g., quality educational and skills development opportunities are offered to sport professionals.
Climate	Management of (in)direct GHG emissions and adaptation to climate change E.g., adaptation to the consequences of climate change is taken into account in planning sports facilities and events.

Source: IOC, treatment Green Sport Expert Group.

The IOC provides a wealth of guidelines, case studies and support documents to support climate action, nature conservation and other sustainable practices in sport. IOC activities are aimed at best-practice knowledge exchange between Organising Committees for the Olympic Games and at National Olympic Committees and International Sports Federations. It also runs several initiatives in favour of the environment and aims at a 50% reduction in emissions across the three scopes defined by the '*GHG protocol*'⁵⁵ with an interim

⁵³ The IOC strategic roadmap: Olympic Agenda 2020+5 <https://olympics.com/ioc/olympic-agenda-2020-plus-5>

⁵⁴ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability>

⁵⁵ <https://ghgprotocol.org/>

reduction target of 30% by 2024 through key activities such as reduction of air travel, building energy efficiency and low carbon products usage⁵⁶ IOC strategy's approach aims for the implementation of the actions to follow a clear framework of objectives and measurement criteria to drive change.

The IOC strategy's approach aims for the implementation of the actions to follow a clear framework of objectives and measurement criteria to drive change⁵⁷.

4.2.3 UN Sport for Climate Action

Aligned with the SDGs, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has created a '*Sports for Climate Action Framework*' that gives sport organisations a way to take action, evaluate their efforts, and report on their progress. Signatories are requested to commit to achieving specific climate goals of halving emissions by 2030 and aiming to achieve net-zero by 2040. More than 260 sport organisations worldwide (and around 90 based in the EU) have endorsed this framework as official signatories⁵⁸. As sports organisations are increasingly expected to reduce their carbon footprints, this framework was created to help sport organisations lessen their own impacts. The UNFCCC acknowledges that sport plays a significant role in achieving the goals associated with combating global climate change through peer-to-peer learning, the sharing of best practices, the creation of new tools, and collaboration⁵⁹.

The '*Sports for Climate Action Framework*' sets out two overarching objectives and is articulated around five principles. The targets are set by the 2030 Agenda.

Table 3: Objectives and principles of the Sport for Climate Action

O1. Achieving a clear trajectory for the global sports community to combat climate change	O2. Using sports as a unifying tool to drive climate awareness and action among global citizens
Principle 1: Undertake systematic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility	
Principle 2: Reduce overall climate impact	
Principle 3: Educate for climate action	
Principle 4: Promote sustainable and responsible consumption	
Principle 5: Advocate for climate action through communication	

Source: UNFCCC, treatment Green Sport Expert Group.

By pledging, signatories to the framework should incorporate an environmental sustainability strategy, setting out approaches to reduce their impact on the environment. Ideally, signatories incorporate the five principles into their strategies, policies, and

⁵⁶ Scopes 1, 2 and 3 are defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol: Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy. Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions. More information is available at: <https://ghgprotocol.org/>

⁵⁷ IOC Sustainability Report 2021, URL: <https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/News/2021/12/IOC-Sustainability-Report-2021.pdf>

⁵⁸ Number of signatories in June 2023, available at: <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action/participants-in-the-sports-for-climate-action-framework>

⁵⁹ Wilby, R. L., et al. (2023). The impacts of sport emissions on climate: Measurement, mitigation, and making a difference. Ann NY Acad Sci., 1519, 20– 33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14925>

procedures and communicate about them to the sports community⁶⁰. These plans are submitted to the [UNFCCC](#) for verification.

The framework offers general guidelines for signatories to follow in order to achieve the objectives and report on them. Signatories are supported by the [UNFCCC](#) which coordinates and facilitate the delivery of their actions, notably through working group sessions, and by the IOC, which provides guidelines.

Resources for signatories to the Framework include affordable and easy-to-use Life Cycle Assessment tools, standard guidance, and indicators that can be used by smaller clubs and individuals to measure their carbon footprints and monitor progress in mitigating emissions⁶¹.

4.2.4 Sports for Nature Framework

Sports for Nature is a joint initiative of the [International Union for Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\)](#), [International Olympic Committee \(IOC\)](#), [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#), Secretariat of the [Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#) and [Sails of Change](#), established the [Sports for Nature Framework](#).⁶²

Launched at the Convention on Biological Diversity COP15 in December 2022, it aims to deliver transformative, nature-positive action across sports by 2030 and beyond, enabling sports to champion nature and contribute to its protection and restoration.

The Framework strives to build on and complement existing initiatives and efforts, including the [UN Sports for Climate Action Framework](#). It aims to bring together the sports and nature conservation communities at all levels and in all regions of the world, from local clubs to global sport organisations.

Supported by the IOC and UNEP, the "[Sports for Nature: Setting a Baseline handbook](#)" provided valuable input for the establishment of the Sports for Nature Framework and insights into what sports can do to engage with nature.

The Framework goals and examples actions are provided in the following table.

Table 4: Sports for Nature in a nutshell

Protect nature and avoid damage to natural habitats and species	Commit to protecting and avoiding damage to natural habitats and species, including respecting protected areas E.g., avoid building permanent infrastructure in protected areas and other important areas for nature conservation and biodiversity, as well as temporary infrastructure in these areas if it will lead to negative impacts on nature.
Restore and regenerate nature wherever possible	Take positive action to restore and regenerate nature in and around the indoor and outdoor environments where we operate E.g., use relevant information and guidance to restore and regenerate nature, and share this with

⁶⁰UNFCCC, Sports for Climate Action Framework

https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Sports_for_Climate_Action_Declaration_and_Framework.pdf

⁶¹ Wilby, R. L., et al. (2023). The impacts of sport emissions on climate: Measurement, mitigation, and making a difference. *Ann NY Acad Sci.*, 1519, 20– 33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14925>

⁶² <https://www.iucn.org/our-work/topic/tourism-and-sport/sports-nature>

	our staff, athletes, teams and other key stakeholders.
Understand and reduce risks to nature in your supply chains	Reduce risks to nature and enable opportunities to conserve and restore nature in our supply chains, linking wherever possible to climate goals E.g., share best practice and learning within the sporting community.
Educate and inspire positive action for nature across and beyond sport	Educate and inspire greater awareness and action for nature within our sport and our wider communities and stakeholders E.g., create an engaging and wide-ranging education, communications and outreach plan that is relevant to our organisation's relationship to nature.

Source: IUCN, treatment Green Sport Expert Group.

The implementation of the actions to reach the goals is left to signatory organisations which commit to creating and carrying out action plans to support the four guiding principles and objectives of the Framework. Signatories are required to submit an annual progress report. To support signatories in their efforts, the framework offers technical assistance, tools, and training as well as opportunities for peer learning.

4.2.5 Certification for Sustainable Events

The ISO 20121 — Sustainable events⁶³ standard is a practical tool that provides a management framework and guidelines to organise events and minimise their negative social, economic, and environmental effects. It covers the supply chain for an event and provides instructions for measuring and monitoring: from establishing effective leadership, to planning, operating, and evaluating sustainability performance. It is intended for many types of organisations and sizes of event, including sport. Some of the sport events awarded with the certification include: FIA's Formula E championship⁶⁴, the Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup⁶⁵, and the Olympic Games⁶⁶.

4.2.6 International Sport Federation Sustainability Strategies

Several international and European sport federations have developed comprehensive environmental sustainability strategies and guidelines, including the UCI Sustainability Guidelines⁶⁷, World Athletics⁶⁸, World Sailing⁶⁹, FIFA Stadium Guidelines⁷⁰, FIFA Green Building Guidelines⁷¹, FIFA World Cup Sustainability Strategy⁷², UEFA Sustainable Infrastructures Guidelines⁷³ and UEFA Circular Economy Guidelines⁷⁴.

⁶³ ISO - ISO 20121 — Sustainable events

⁶⁴ Formula E maintains ISO 20121 certification for sustainable events (fiaformulae.com)

⁶⁵ Qatar 2022 becomes first FIFA World Cup™ to achieve international sustainability certification

⁶⁶ Tokyo 2020 obtains international sustainability certification ISO 20121 - Olympic News (olympics.com)

⁶⁷ <https://downloads.ctfassets.net/76117gh5x5an/69LMWN94zia8QhBJBUpnXz/a0a46c579625a5db6f7b55d816ff40c4/uci-sustainability-guidelines-en-june-2021.pdf>

⁶⁸ <https://worldathletics.org/athletics-better-world/sustainability>

⁶⁹ <https://www.sailing.org/tools/documents/SustainabilityAgenda2030-%5B23247%5D.pdf>

⁷⁰ <https://www.fifa.com/technical/stadium-guidelines>

⁷¹ <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/1bcc8f6ce4b7e7f6/original/FIFA-Green-Building-Guidelines.pdfv>

⁷² <https://publications.fifa.com/en/final-sustainability-report/sustainability-at-the-fifa-world-cup/sustainability-strategy/>

⁷³ https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/027b-168e898b309b-c76f49dada9e-1000/the_uefa_sustainable_infrastructure_guidelines.pdf

⁷⁴ https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/0279-160d72d34a04-512e2e00e7d1-1000/uefa_circular_economy_guidelines_f_b_07092022_rgb.pdf

These are particularly useful for sport federations, clubs, and organisations to take actions towards environmental sustainability within their sport and benefit from already tailored advice and guidance.

5 Analysis – key stakeholders, challenges and barriers for ‘Green sport’ in Europe



Photo by Krzysztof Kowalik on Unsplash

This section puts forward an analysis of the key characteristics of the European sport sector in relation to the Green Deal priorities. Environmental sustainability in and through sport requires working with a web of diverse actors and related sectors working with or for the sport sector. This section outlines some of the key challenges and barriers for sport to become greener, with a view to frame our recommendations around a clear needs analysis.

5.1 Green sport: mapping of interrelated sectors and stakeholders

The sport sector is remarkably diverse, ranging from huge international brands to local sport clubs, and leisure participants to large-scale events attracting millions of fans. Sport also involves several connected sectors and related areas of activities which all generate environmental impacts. This section aims to provide a clear picture of the current landscape of these interrelationships and relations between actors to locate where action is most needed. We first briefly characterise the sport sector, then try to capture the diversity of related sectors the sport sector is working with.

5.1.1 Sport sector diversity

The sport sector in Europe consists of a myriad of actors, broadly categorised around leisure and grassroots sport, organised sport, and the wider sport industry:

- 1) **Leisure and grassroots sport** – including non-competitive sport and diverse associations focusing on sport. Grassroots sport is physical leisure activity, practised regularly at non-professional level for fun, health, educational or social purposes.⁷⁵
- 2) **Organised sport**, ranging from amateur to elite levels, is generally connected to sport federations (from local to international level) and affiliated clubs, leagues and qualifying procedures.⁷⁶ The organisation of sport involves professional and amateur athletes, as well as the teams they represent, plus their fans and supporters.
- 3) **The sport industry**, which includes all upstream industries producing goods and services needed for sport (production of equipment, technology, infrastructure, architecture and construction, retail of sport goods, apparel and merchandise, communications and marketing, broadcasting, medical support, training and coaching providers, nutritionists, education and so on).⁷⁷ This includes sports venues, host cities and infrastructure providers, for example, transportation, energy services and catering as well as event organisers.

All these actors and activities contribute to sport's environmental footprint, be it in terms of producing goods, building, or maintaining facilities, providing professional services, or organising events.

5.1.2 Related sectors

The sport sector is deeply interconnected with various sectors, depending on the activities and specificities of each sport. This section aims to identify with whom the sport sector needs to work towards a greener sport sector. As noted in studies on the economic dimension of sport⁷⁸, the sector intersects with a range of other sectors both upstream and downstream.

- Upstream sectors where activities make an important contribution to sport, i.e., are required for the sport sector to function. These include inter alia the construction and maintenance of infrastructures, energy, transportation of athletes and spectators.
- Downstream sectors for which sport is an important input, such as catering and hospitality, waste, media, tourism, advertising, and so on.

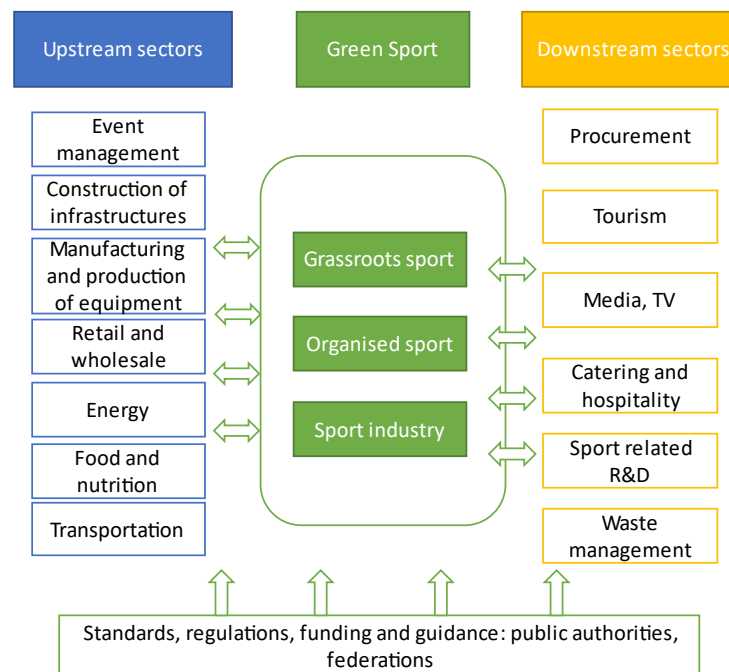
⁷⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy_documents/hlg-grassroots-final_en.pdf

⁷⁶ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d10b4b5b-e159-11ec-a534-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-258671565>

⁷⁷ <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/865ef44c-5ca1-11e8-ab41-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search>

⁷⁸ See for instance European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Sport satellite accounts – A European project : new results*, Publications Office, 2013, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/47303> and European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Study on the economic impact of sport through sport satellite accounts –*, Publications Office, 2018, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/156532>

These interrelationships are captured in the figure below:



Source: Green Sport Expert Group.

All these interrelationships should be seen in two ways: as activities generating an environmental footprint, but also as areas potentially affected by rules, regulations and norms towards a greener sport sector. As noted in [section 4.2](#), several frameworks developed by public authorities and sport federations are already taking initiatives to address environmental issues across these areas.

5.1.3 Stakeholders – from decision-makers to practitioners

The stakeholders involved in 'Green sport' reflect these interrelationships between sectors and include organisations involved in making strategic decisions in sport, as well as a broader range of stakeholders from the sport movement, plus technical partners, and suppliers.

National governments and Ministries of sport

Reflecting the diversity of sectors involved in delivering sport, a range of government departments or ministries will have a bearing on the delivery of environmental sustainability outcomes in sport including climate, environment, tourism, leisure, planning, and transport. Arguably the foremost of these is the Ministry of Sport. The role of a Ministry of Sport is generally responsible for overseeing and supporting the development of sports and physical activity within the country. Some of the key responsibilities of a Ministry of Sport toward greener practices might include:

- Developing and implementing national sport policies with a greener agenda: The Ministry of Sport is responsible for setting and enforcing policies and regulations related to sports, in which environmental sustainability should be integrated.
- Providing funding and support for sports organisations oriented toward greener practices: The Ministry of Sport often provides funding and support to sports organisations, such as national governing bodies and regional sports organisations. Funding should help them achieve their green goals and objectives.
- Supporting the development of greener sports infrastructure: The Ministry of Sport may provide funding and support for the development or renovation of sports facilities and infrastructure, such as stadiums, arenas, and training facilities.
- Public authorities such as environment agencies, land and water management bodies, sports development, public health, education, urban and regional planners,

all of whose strategies and operations should be both mindful and supportive of environmentally sustainable sport practice.

Public authorities are particularly influential in their ability to initiate and steer joint efforts across departments and ministries, enabling coordinated action across different sectors or aspects related to sports. They also have an important function in shaping the agenda and enabling the participation and effective functioning of a broad range of stakeholders across the sport sector.

National sports federations

Sport federations or national sport governing bodies are responsible for governing and promoting a particular sport within a country. They play a critical role in the development and growth of the sport, and they have a variety of responsibilities which can be linked to 'Green sport' including:

- Developing and enforcing rules and regulations: sport federations are responsible for establishing and enforcing rules and regulations for their sport, which might include rules related to 'Green sport'.
- Promoting the sport towards greener practices: sport federations work to promote their sport and increase participation at all levels, from amateur to professional, by organising events, competitions, and training programmes.
- Working with the government and other stakeholders: federations have an important cooperation function and work closely with government bodies, such as the Ministry of Sport, and with other stakeholders, such as sports broadcasters and media organisations and international federations.
- Providing technical expertise: sport federations often provide technical expertise on their sport to various organisations, such as schools and community sports clubs, to help them develop and grow their programmes.

Sport federations have an important role to play in making sport more environmentally sustainable. By promoting sustainable practices, educating stakeholders, developing environmentally friendly facilities, supporting environmental research and initiatives, and incorporating environmental sustainability into events and competitions, sport federations have a pivotal role to reduce the environmental impact of sport and promote a more sustainable future.

European and international sports federations

European and international federations also play an important role in terms of coordination and developing guidance for their national members, as well as establishing and enforcing global rules and regulations for the organisation of their sport. The abovementioned adoption of greener practices also largely applies to the organisation of international sport competitions they are responsible for. Some federations also set up capacity building, expertise support and provide funding for the development of their sport, where 'Green sport' principles can be prominently featured⁷⁹.

Decision-makers play an important role in setting the norms and regulations affecting how 'Green sport' practices are embedded in sport practices and across the sport industry.

This means their normative and agenda-setting capacities affect a broader range of sport stakeholders: athletes, clubs, spectators, sports NGOs, industry and goods sector, sports service providers and businesses, sponsors. It also has a direct impact on technical or delivery stakeholders such as architects/planners, sustainability consultants,

⁷⁹ The good practices listed in annexes include relevant examples from diverse European and international federations.

auditors/certifiers, specialist engineers (building services, lighting design, structural engineering, building physics, fire protection etc.), construction companies and contractors, facility manager. All these are relevant stakeholders towards achieving greener sport in Europe.

5.2 Challenges and Opportunities in Green Sport

The sport sector faces significant challenges in adopting the environmental sustainability measures that are crucial to ensuring the long-term health of the sector and the planet, from governance structures and variability across different types of sports to the lack of common methodologies and capacity building.

Perhaps the greatest challenges for the sector are a widespread lack of understanding of its environmental impacts, a scarceness of data and the frequent absence of any strategy or policy responses. Most sport organisations, from International to grassroots level, lack a sustainability strategy and corresponding governance structure, job responsibilities, and measuring and reporting commitments. Without these basic tools (which are usually normal practice for the financial or coaching elements of the organisation) consistent progress on sustainability will fail.

5.2.1 Environmental and technical challenges

The huge variety in sport across the many settings in which it is practiced result in corresponding complexity in its impact on the environment, as well as difficulties prioritising these impacts and the application of solutions. Sport is composed of a wide range of practices in highly varied settings, from leisure participants and amateur leagues to elite athletes and wealthy 'TV sports'. This wide variance means that different types of sports can require very different or complex approaches to environmental sustainability issues. For example, addressing the environmental impact of an elite ski event, organised by a national ski federation with support from the Ministry of Sport, may require a completely different approach to addressing the impact of the skiing holiday-makers who use the same privately-owned resort for the rest of the season and use the same publicly-funded transport network to get there. Below, we have highlighted a few of the most pressing challenges:

5.2.1.1 Events

Events lie at the heart of sport and perhaps exemplify the complexity of sport's interaction with environmental sustainability. Almost every facet of an event has an environmental impact to be considered and mitigated: from the event's timing and location, requirements for temporary or permanent buildings, transport accessibility, heating and lighting needs, catering and hospitality plans, and litter and waste collection. This topic will be dealt with more fully in Chapter II 3.3.

5.2.1.2 Infrastructure

Wherever sports take place, there are infrastructure issues and challenges to contend with, from design specifications for a new pitch to supplies of clean energy to city centre stadia, or the safe installation of showers and washrooms at a temporary waterside event. This important topic, overlapping with the events topic is dealt with in Chapter II ([section 3.2](#)).

5.2.1.3 Mobility

Most analyses of the footprint of sport operations and events identify mobility as the greatest contributor to climate impact.⁸⁰ Travel and international competition are part of

⁸⁰ Wilby, R. L., Orr, M., Depledge, D., Giulianotti, R., Havenith, G., Kenyon, J. A., Matthews, T. K. R., Mears, S. A., Mullan, D. J., & Taylor, L. (2023). The impacts of sport emissions on climate: Measurement, mitigation, and making a difference. *Ann NY Acad Sci.*, 1519, 20– 33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14925>

the DNA of sport, but the geographical organisation of leagues or of competition and qualifying schedules are normally devised in accordance with sporting or sport development priorities rather than environmental concerns. Furthermore, sport is normally reliant on existing mobility infrastructure (where it exists) with the provision of event-specific mobility solutions being challenging for all but the largest events. For many outdoor sports their top class and iconic 'arenas' (lakes, rivers, beaches, and forests) are not well connected to public transport. Finally, the largest component of sport's mobility impact is attributable to spectators. Changing fan behaviour requires careful analysis, education, and incentives, plus patience.

5.2.1.4 Winter sports

Perhaps more than any other area of sport, winter sports face an existential threat from climate change with sports like skiing and snowboarding frequently prevented from taking place in some traditional locations due to rising global temperatures. Winter sport environments (such as mountains, snow lands) are some of the world's most important destinations for sport, and at the same time half of the world's biodiversity hotspots are in mountains. Unfortunately, all around the world the fragile winter sport environments are in trouble – from climate change to loss of wildlife, erosion, pollution, and overuse by human activities. In this regard sport infrastructure and sports tourism can have significant negative impacts on mountain environments and associated communities⁸¹. However, sport is perhaps an unrivalled platform to engage and inspire athletes and tourists on sustainability and leave a positive legacy for mountain and snow lands communities.

5.2.1.5 Water sports

Sports based on natural rivers and lakes, such as rowing or canoeing are increasingly affected by issues relating to the quality and quantity of water in the places where their sport are traditionally practiced or competed. Lack of water due to drought or over abstraction is a frequent issue in summer. Increasingly intense rainfall patterns in some regions, coupled with increased run off due to urbanisation, deforestation and modern agricultural practices resulting in flooding at other times. Issues of pollution and algal blooms, affecting water quality and athletes' health, are also a regular concern. Similar issues face some coastal and ocean sports with sewage pollution and drifting rubbish affecting surfing and sailing, for example. The location of large sporting events or regular leisure or practice use in these sensitive waterside locations requires particularly careful management by event organisers.

5.2.2 Structural Challenges

5.2.2.1 Governance structures

The sport sector can partly be characterised by top-down and outdated governance structures, which can limit the ability of staff and other stakeholders to drive change. A lack of push for change from the top, and knowledgeable and supportive management can be key barriers to progress on environmental sustainability in the sector.

5.2.2.2 Low public pressure and scrutiny

Another challenge facing the sport sector in adopting environmental sustainability measures is a lack of government scrutiny and consumer pressure compared to other sectors. Unlike industries such as fashion, agriculture, energy or transportation, the sport sector has not faced high levels of regulatory or public pressure to change. This lack of external pressure can make it difficult for organisations to prioritise environmental sustainability initiatives and drive meaningful progress.

⁸¹ Dalberg Advisors (2018) Slippery slope: Protecting Pirin from unsustainable ski expansion and logging. Report for WWF <https://dalberg.com/our-ideas/slippy-slope-protecting-pirin-unsustainable-recreation-and-logging/>

5.2.2.3 Lack of operational capacity, expertise and training

The sport sector relies on low levels of paid staff and the use of volunteers, even in decision-making roles, leading to a lack of operational capacity and expertise in environmental sustainability. This can hinder the ability of organisations to successfully implement environmental sustainability initiatives without further capacity building and training.

5.2.2.4 Financing and investment models

Rights holders and sports properties and organisations are partly privately owned, deriving their income from broadcast deals, sponsorship, ticket sales and merchandise. Public funding for sports tends to be focused on sports education and elite sport development at a national level, and on facilities such as sports centres and swimming pools at a local level. Joined up approaches for long term investment addressing environmental sustainability in sport are rare.

5.2.2.5 Environmental sustainability requires the coordination of many sectors

Sports sector environmental sustainability requires changes across activities and sectors as varied as food and beverages, transport, hospitality, and retail. This makes it difficult for organisations to build a governance system addressing these aspects comprehensively to ensure an event or a practice is green.

5.2.3 Methodological challenges

5.2.3.1 Lack of common methodologies for measuring and reporting impacts

There is a lack of widely adopted common approaches and methodologies for measuring the impacts of sport activities. This makes it challenging for organisations to track their progress and stymies comparisons and collaboration, as well as making it difficult to track progress across the sports sector.

The ISO 20121 framework⁸² is increasingly used for larger events and the UNFCCC Sports for Climate Action Framework aims to move all sizes of sports organisations to robust and comparable methodologies for calculating their climate impact.

5.2.3.2 Multiplicity of tools

A sector comprising highly varied sports, operating at numerous levels in different national and regional contexts, has resulted in a multiplicity of tools, checklists, and guidance. There are several tools aimed at events of differing sizes, a number of sport-specific tools, guidance for small clubs, outdoor facilities or even boathouses, some national guidance or charters and some guidance organised by topic, such as climate change, biodiversity or procurement. Many of these resources are hard to find or have not been updated. It can be difficult for decision-makers in sport to find appropriate support matched to the specific needs of their sport, event, or national context.

5.2.4 Europe-specific challenges

5.2.4.1 Green issues threaten sport in Europe

Europe, with its wide climatic range and variety of habitats is already seeing European sport threatened by environmental issues on several fronts. Climate change and global warming are severely affecting European winter sports whilst summer temperature and rainfall negatively impact athlete welfare and pitch care. Issues relating to water quality

⁸² <https://www.iso.org/iso-20121-sustainable-events.html>

and quantity affect water and ocean-based sports from leisure use to elite events, whilst air quality is an issue for athletes competing at urban events in some European cities.

On an issue related to 'Green sport', many sports clubs, particularly at grassroots level, are facing existential threats due to the high and rising energy costs associated with running their venues and facilities, for example ice rinks and swimming pools.

5.2.4.2 Sport is not on track for the Green Deal

Environmental sustainability policy is clearly defined in Europe with clear climate and environmental targets enshrined in legislation and encapsulated in the Green Deal. Meeting these targets will require transformative, systemic, and sustained action from every sector of the European economy, including sport.

Neither comprehensive nor sampled studies providing environmental data across European sport are currently available but limited studies at national or sport-wide level⁸³ give a sense of the scale of the challenge. For example, comprehensive actions have been necessitated in the most environmentally forward-thinking signatories to the UN Sports for Climate Action framework, who have measured their carbon footprint and are now actively deploying strategies and policies to reduce their climate impact. This suggests that the wider sport sector – where science based actions on carbon or other issues are not widely reported – should be assumed to be significantly off track in delivering Green Deal objectives.

5.2.4.3 Policy and data on Green Sport are insufficient

Environmental data relating to the sport sector is largely unavailable at the European or Member State level, nor for individual sports. This includes a near absence of the baseline carbon footprint assessments that will likely constitute the first step in taking action on climate impacts. Regular measurement and reporting on environmental sustainability progress is extremely rare beyond the largest organisations and events.

There is currently no pan-European policy on Green Sport and sustainability strategies for Member State sport sectors or International, European and National Sport Federations are very rare.

5.2.4.4 Key actors lack capacity and knowledge

Many actors will need to be engaged in accelerating green sport action in Europe. Again, good data is lacking, but many (if not most) of the key publicly funded or coordinating organisations in sport, from European Federations to Member State sports ministries and national governing bodies, should currently be assumed to be lacking the knowledge, skills, and capacity to effectively devise and implement environmental sustainability programmes aligned with the Green Deal.

5.2.4.5 European green sport action is poorly coordinated and integrated

Currently, there is no permanent 'go to' place or hub at European level that provides a repository of information to support European sports organisations to take action on green sport. Where it does exist, supporting information is piecemeal, provided at a Member State level or sport by sport. Many sports clubs and events will look to the national governing body for their sport for advice. In turn, these organisations look to their International Federations and, with Olympic sports, to the IOC. Connections between

⁸³ Wilby, R. L., Orr, M., Depledge, D., Giulianotti, R., Havenith, G., Kenyon, J. A., R. Matthews, T. K., Mears, S. A., Mullan, D. J., & Taylor, L. (2023). The impacts of sport emissions on climate: Measurement, mitigation, and making a difference. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1519(1), 20-33. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.14925>

Sport-specific examples include for instance: Leslie Mabon (2023) Football and climate change: what do we know, and what is needed for an evidence-informed response?, *Climate Policy*, 23:3, 314-328, doi: 10.1080/14693062.2022.2147895

European policy makers and International Federations and the IOC are currently limited, beyond the role of European Federations, and sport's alignment with Green Deal targets is rarely, if ever, a consideration.

5.2.5 Opportunities

Sports can be a catalyst for positive action and behaviour change on green issues. Outdoor sports, in particular, connect people with nature and bring attention to the importance of protecting the natural environment that these sports, athletes and leisure participants depend on for the continued enjoyment of their sport.

5.2.5.1 Communications platform

Media

Sport has a powerful grip on broadcast and print media with many millions across Europe following their favourite sports and clubs in the back pages of newspapers and across subscription TV services (170 million subscribers in Europe)⁸⁴.

Online

This mass of loyal and engaged audiences extends even further online and across social media, with a myriad of sites dedicated to sport and with top clubs and stars enjoying some of the largest social media followings on the planet⁸⁵.

Sport can be, and increasingly is, using this unrivalled communications platform to reach people and promote environmental sustainability action.

At venues and events

Opportunities to engage sports fans are particularly strong where spectators gather in stadia or outdoor events to watch their favourite sport. The hosting club, city or region has opportunities to not only highlight environmental best practice themselves, but also to reach people through on-site messaging, information stalls or '*experiences*' and engagement campaigns.

Athletes

Athletes can have significant reach and influence in promoting environmental awareness and responsibility amongst their followers and fans. As mentioned above, they can command very large followings online. Increasingly, athletes are joining together to support environmental action, including a recent message to world leaders to take climate action at COP 26⁸⁶, and through organisations such as [Athletes of the World](https://athletesoftheworld.org/)⁸⁷ and [Protect Our Winters](https://protectourwinters.eu/)⁸⁸. Through their own social commentary, lifestyle choices and product endorsements, sports stars have great opportunities to influence positive consumer behaviour.

⁸⁴ Ampere Analysis (2021) Sport on European TV: Maximising Commercial Value. Report prepared for the European Broadcasters' Union.

⁸⁵ More than 460 million followers for Cristiano Ronaldo, for instance: <https://www.nielsen.com/fr/insights/2022/brands-are-using-data-to-score-big-with-world-cup-fans/>

⁸⁶ See for instance the call from Olympic athletes: <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/olympians-and-paralymians-call-on-world-leaders-to-work-together-to-fight-climate-change> or from Morten Thorsby, active football player who launched the "We Play Green" Foundation: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/midfielder-morten-thorsby-thinks-football-can-help-save-planet>

⁸⁷ <https://athletesoftheworld.org/>

⁸⁸ <https://protectourwinters.eu/>

Sponsors and partners

Sponsors of sport are increasingly looking for more from their sports partnerships than just an opportunity to put their brand logo on a jersey, a race car, or the side of a pitch. Nowadays, sponsors are looking for clubs, venues, federations, and athletes who share their brand values and who will work with them to showcase their green credentials and provide engagement opportunities with sports fans. In response, we are seeing sports properties looking at ideas such as environmental sustainability partner categories for their sponsors, led by the London 2012 Olympic Games⁸⁹ or more recently the 2021 Rugby League World Cup⁹⁰.

5.2.5.2 Creating a sustainable legacy

Urban regeneration

Mega sports events, such as the Olympic Games, are increasingly being seen as sport-driven sustainable regeneration projects. They can drive environmentally sustainable transformation by catalysing and influencing the development and infrastructure of host cities⁹¹ and promoting environmentally responsible behaviour through education and engagement campaigns and cutting-edge pilot programs. Opportunities exist to bring some of these approaches to bear, at a smaller scale, on regional and local sports events.

Nature restoration

Recently, sport has begun to consider not only how it can reduce its impact on the natural environment, but also how it can bring its resources to bear on restoring and improving the habitats on which it depends. Beginning with simple beach and river clean-ups, sport has moved on to creating biodiversity enhancement strategies for venues, for example, the Wimbledon Park site of the "All England Lawn Tennis Club"⁹², to the extensive restoration of post-industrial brownfield sites such as the Game Streetmekka in Viborg⁹³.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

Sport has always worked in partnership with expertise from other sectors and this phenomenon is increasingly seen in the field of environmental sustainability. Many clubs and federations see the value of partnering with expert campaign groups and NGOs to shape and implement their sustainability plans. In addition, the private sector is providing innovative services and products to help solve sport-specific environmental issues or collaborate on opportunities in the burgeoning green economy.

Innovation platform

Linked to the cross-sectoral cooperation opportunities and the changing demands of sponsors and partners, the platform of sport is in demand for companies to showcase or try out cutting edge technology. Once these innovative solutions have demonstrated to work in sport, they can be rolled out, bringing wider benefits to society. A good example of this is the transfer of engine efficiency improvements in motorsport into road vehicles,

⁸⁹ LOCOG (2012) Sustainability Report: London 2012 / London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

⁹⁰ RLWC 2021 Sustainability strategy: http://www.rlwc2021.com/uploads/docs/RLWC2021_Sustainability_Strategy.pdf

⁹¹ See for instance an overview of urban regeneration projects linked to Olympic and Paralympic games here : <https://www.apur.org/fr/nos-travaux/jo-2024-un-levier-developpement-urbain-grand-paris>

⁹² https://www.wimbledon.com/en_GB/atoz/about_aeltc.html

⁹³ See <https://game.ngo/da/game-streetmekka-viborg/> or IRDS (2023) Équipements sportifs : quelle place dans la transition écologique. <https://www.irds-idf.fr/nos-travaux/publications/equipements-sportifs-quelle-place-dans-la-transition-ecologique/>

or Formula E's role in convincing the public of the performance and reliability of electric vehicles.

Community outreach, engagement, and education

Sport has always enjoyed strong grassroots links to the communities in which it is based and from where its participants and spectators are drawn. Historically, sport's outreach into the community has focused on aspects of social sustainability on issues such as access and inclusion. More recently, sport is seeing opportunities to engage with environmental dimensions of sustainability, engaging members and supporters in local initiatives that protect their local environment or combat climate change. This includes connecting with local community groups to work on disparate projects from tree planting and habitat restoration to supporting climate and environmental education in schools⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ For instance, the '*Kilian Jornet Foundation*' in the '*Lacos project*' (<https://www.kilianjornetfoundation.org/project/lacos-project/>) combines a research project on the impact of climate change in the Pyrenean lakes with the involvement of secondary schools from the region, using live data to raise awareness of the importance of conservation.

Chapter II:

Green sport in Europe: A sport sector playbook for the European Green Deal



Photo by Ryan Searl on Unsplash

1 Introducing a sport sector playbook for Green Sport in Europe

1.1 Background

In December 2020, the Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council adopted a Resolution on a European Union Work Plan for Sport⁹⁵ for the period 2021 – 2024, in which the Council invited the European Commission to establish an Expert Group on '*Green Sport*'. This Green Sport Expert Group has been in charge of formulating recommendations for two main target audiences, namely: stakeholders of the sport sector, and public authorities in charge of sport in the Member States. Four topics, structured in four different sections, have been chosen by the Green Sport Expert Group as focus areas:

- Innovative cross-sectoral solutions.
- Sustainable sports infrastructures.
- Sustainable sport events.
- Capacity building, education, and promotion of sustainable sport practices.

1.2 Defining a playbook for European Green Sport

This document aims to describe current practice relating to environmental sustainability in the European sport sector, highlighting good practice and providing guidance on key topics.

In addition, it aims to support European and Member State decision makers with recommendations that align future practice in their sport sectors with the sustainability objectives of the Green Deal.

The document focuses guidance and recommendations on policy alignment and development in order to create a pathway for European sport to meet the goals of the Green Deal, covering issues of strategy, governance and the use of implementation frameworks. It also looks at European funding and how existing and future schemes, pilot projects and funding criteria could better support sport's alignment with the Green Deal.

The Green sport playbook also seeks to use the convening power and communications platform of European institutions to bring together key actors in sport and environmental sustainability to foster international and cross-sectoral solutions and cooperation. It examines and identifies opportunities for the vast audiences of the sport sector in Europe to communicate and engage through high profile athletes, events, mass participation activities, broadcast and social media, and club loyalty.

1.2.1 Key Audiences and Wider Stakeholders

The guidance and recommendations in this report are aimed primarily at public authorities and sport governing bodies at the EU and Member State level – these are the Key Audiences. The report should also be of interest to wider stakeholders in sport, including international sports federations, clubs, leagues, and sports practitioners at all levels. The report's Main Recommendations have been targeted at the Key Audiences whilst the Guidance and Resources for Sport Practitioners will be of value to a range of wider stakeholders.

⁹⁵ Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on the European Union Work Plan for Sport (1 January 2021-30 June 2024) 2020/C 419/01 [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:42020Y1204\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:42020Y1204(01)) .

1.2.1.1 A focus on public institutions and funding

Sports operations and events invariably involve other sectors, such as transport, hospitality and waste management. The issues of environmental sustainability in sport require an overview across sectors and the ability to foster cooperation between them. For this reason, public institutions of Member States, including ministries and government departments, as well as public-funded sports organisations, are placed at the centre of the report recommendations, aiming to provide them with the knowledge and guidance they need to lead cross-sectoral changes. We hope that Member State authorities – and to some extent International and European sport federations – can make sure that the information provided is accessible and relevant to their sports organisations, including by providing translated versions or easy-to-understand summaries.

Particularly relevant stakeholders include:

European level	Key Audiences: European Commission Directorates-General (mainly CLIMA, ENER, MOVE, REGIO, EAC), European Environment Agency, European Olympic Committees, European Sports Federations. Wider Stakeholders: European sporting rightsholders and events, European sport and sustainability NGOs.
Member State level	Key Audiences: Ministries [of sport, climate, environment] and agencies, Sport Federations, other national publicly funded sport bodies and institutions, for example, those responsible for developing sport or elite sport. Wider Stakeholders: Planners, building commissioners⁹⁶, event organisers, travel and procurement teams and communications teams in national government, local government, NGOs, and the private sector.
Other stakeholders	International Federations, International Olympic Committee, sports leagues, clubs, rightsholders, sponsors, sporting goods industry, NGOs, suppliers and contractors, plus those organising clubs, leagues, events and sports facilities at all levels and those supplying services such as energy, mobility, waste and catering.

1.2.2 Scope and Rationale of the playbook for Green Sport in Europe

1.2.2.1 Environmental sustainability In and Through Sport

The playbook for Green Sport in Europe considers the environmental sustainability of the sport sector both in terms of the impact of its own operations, and as a platform to communicate and advocate for more sustainable practices with the very large audiences it reaches sustainability *in* sport and sustainability *through* sport. Therefore, it provides guidance and recommendations for changing operational practices in sports as well as considering the ways in which sport can use its profile and communications strength to engage the community in promoting and taking environmental sustainability action in support of the Green Deal.

1.2.2.2 Organised around the Green Deal

A main objective of the playbook for Green Sport is to help European and Member State decision makers guide their sport sectors towards meeting Green Deal ambitions.

⁹⁶Building commissioners are staff that have decision-making powers regarding sport infrastructure (including about new developments or renovations).

Therefore, the recommendations and guidance in the report related to making sport green are organised around the following Green Deal categories:

- Clean energy.
- Sustainable industry.
- Building and renovation.
- Farm to fork.
- Eliminating pollution.
- Sustainable mobility.
- Biodiversity.

1.2.2.3 Builds on existing best practices

The playbook is based on a review of existing international policies, frameworks, tools and guidance available for practitioners and content prepared by the Green Sport Expert Group, our analysis of the particular challenges faced by the European sport sector and with consideration of the policy priorities and scope of activities of the European Commission. In particular, the Framework identifies two existing international frameworks as particularly relevant to the topic of green sport in Europe:

- **The International Olympic Committee Sustainability Strategy**

The IOC Sustainability Strategy is organised around five focus areas of Infrastructure and Green Sites, Sourcing and Resource Management, Mobility, Workforce and Climate. The IOC's strategy governs the hosting of Olympic Games, the regularisation of qualifying events and the operations and development of the Olympic movement. As a result, it is widely understood by International Sport Federations and is increasingly influencing development and sustainability strategies for Olympic sports at International, European and National level.

- **The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

The UN SDGs are probably the most widely recognised and used sustainability framework in the world, as explained in [section 5.2](#). Public authorities, NGOs and businesses are increasingly aligning their sustainability ambitions under their 17 interlinked goals. For the purposes of environmental sustainability in sport, the playbook for Green Sport in Europe will make reference to the following SDGs:

- Goal 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation.
- Goal 7 – Affordable and Clean Energy.
- Goal 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.
- Goal 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- Goal 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production.
- Goal 13 – Climate Action.
- Goal 14 – Life Below Water.
- Goal 15 – Life on Land.

We outline in the table below the connections between these two frameworks, the Green Deal priorities and how they relate to issues in sport:

Green Deal	IOC Sustainability Focus Area	UN Sustainable Development Goal	Relevance to sport
Clean Energy	Climate	7 Affordable and clean energy 13 Climate action	Facility, event and office heating, lighting, cooling, temporary generation and powered processes and energy usage
Sustainable Industry	Sourcing and resource management	9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure 12 Responsible consumption and production	Sporting goods industry, accommodation, merchandise, procurement, materials, re-use, recycling, circularity
Building renovation and	Infrastructure and green sites Sourcing and resource management	9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure 11 Sustainable cities and communities	Stadia and facilities construction, renovation and maintenance. Climate adaptations
Farm to fork	Sourcing and resource management	12 Responsible consumption and production	Catering, event hospitality, accommodation, sport nutrition
Eliminating pollution	Infrastructure and Green Sites Sourcing and resource management	6 Clean water and sanitation 14 Life below water 15 Life on Land	Litter prevention and waste collection, air pollution (vehicle and building emissions), water and soil pollution (preventing litter/plastics, liquid leaks, washrooms, equipment washing)
Sustainable mobility	Mobility	9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure 11 Sustainable cities and communities	Event and operational travel: mode switching, parking and storage, event location and sequencing, offsetting
Biodiversity	Infrastructure and green sites	14 Life below water 15 Life on land	Event location and timing, lighting, new facility and infrastructure location, protected areas, outdoor sport and use of and access to natural areas

1.2.3 Objectives for the sport sector playbook for the European Green Deal

This playbook seeks to provide recommendations and guidance as a starting point for Member States looking to catalyse action on environmental sustainability in their sport sectors. Recognising the wide variety of sport practices both within and between Member States and the very different national contexts sports operate in, the playbook seeks to utilise principles and approaches that can be adapted to the specific needs and contexts of different Member States. It will establish simple recommendations indicating first steps and identifies areas for further work and places where further information, guidance and resources can be found. The report's objectives are to:

- Facilitate and promote environmental sustainability in the European sport sector.
- Help define and scope the subject of green sport in Europe, including the participating sectors and stakeholders.
- Identify key sustainability issues, opportunities, and challenges for sport in Europe.
- Provide simple, high-level recommendations to European and Member State decision-makers align their sport sectors with the objectives of the Green Deal.
- Provide guidance on key green sport topics, highlight existing relevant initiatives, provide good practice examples and signpost further reading for European sports practitioners.

1.2.4 Limitations of the report

In order to develop a realistic approach, the playbook must work with the European sports sector in its current state of progress, acknowledging the following limitations:

1.2.4.1 Member States and sports vary greatly

Member States vary widely in terms of locally popular sports, progress on environmental sustainability, budgets available for sport and sustainability and the effects of geography and a changing climate. Similarly, within Member States, sports vary a great deal in their popularity, connection with the environment and interest and ability to take environmental sustainability action. Themes common to all Member States will tend to be of a general and high-level nature and this will be reflected in this initial provision of guidance.

1.2.4.2 Environmental Sustainability progress in sport needs to happen faster

The sport sector has much room for improving environmental sustainability standards, as do many other economic sectors. This report aims to prioritise simple, high-level recommendations, aiming to help the sport sectors of all Member States better understand sustainability opportunities and challenges in their sport sectors and to take steps towards sectoral alignment with the Green Deal.

1.2.4.3 Sport's environmental sustainability connections with European institutions are limited

To date, interactions between the sport sector and the European Commission on the topic of '*Green sport*' have been relatively limited, beyond a number of EU-funded pilot projects⁹⁷. The playbook for Green Sport in Europe assumes that new connections and joint initiatives between sports organisations and European institutions will need to be made in order for the playbook's objectives to be met and for the sport sector to make progress towards Green Deal goals. Moreover, the topic of '*Green Sport*' should continue to be prioritised in the next EU Work Plan for Sport 2024-2027.

⁹⁷ Including for instance projects like the green sports hub https://greensportshub.eu/partnership_of_green_players/ ; Play Green Sports <https://www.ecoserveis.net/en/playgreensports/> ; as sustainable as possible <https://www.asap-sport.com/> ; or Life Tackle <https://lifetackle.eu/> . For an overview of Erasmus+ Green Sport projects, consult the database: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects>

2 Recommendations for Sport Policy Makers in Europe

This section focuses on recommendations towards key decision-makers for the sport sector at European and national levels. These recommendations aim to set the agenda towards a greener sport sector across Europe, with the aim that this will spread good practice across a broad range of actors.



Photo by Steven Lelham on Unsplash

These top-level recommendations are high-level and holistic, and deal with issues and approaches that affect environmental sustainability as a whole. They cut across all Green Deal areas and are thus classified across types of actions on governance, policy, funding, practical support and communication and engagement.

A more focused set of recommendations and practical guidance are presented in the next chapter, focusing on four key activities of the sport sector: 1) Innovative Cross-sectoral solutions; 2) Sustainable Sport Infrastructures; 3) Sustainable Sport Events, and 4) Capacity building, education, and promotion of sustainable sport practices.

2.1 At EU level

Recommendations	Relevant for
Anchor the role of sustainable sport as an important part of the Green Deal more firmly, by mobilising the power of sport to contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals.	Governance
Strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on sport and sustainability within and across EU institutions - for example of services responsible for sport, environment,	Governance

climate action, energy, transport, and regional development ⁹⁸ .	
Keep 'Green Sport' as a priority topic on the agenda of the next European Work Plans for Sport and consider widening the topic to discuss sport and sustainability in a broader sense (environmental, economic, social dimensions, human rights, legacy, etc.).	Policy
Encourage Member States to develop national sustainable sport strategies and report on progress in implementing Green Sport policies , for instance within the proposed sustainable sport Expert Group; and continue the exchange of best practices developed by the sport movement or public authorities.	Policy
Continue promoting and supporting existing schemes that support sport and sustainability projects, notably the Erasmus + sport programme .	Policy
Raise awareness on EU programmes that are not sport-specific but do offer opportunities for projects addressing Green Deal objectives, such as Horizon Europe , the LIFE programme , the Recovery and Resilience Facility and Erasmus+ beyond its sport budget.	Policy
The ERASMUS+ programme already includes environment and climate action as one of its four horizontal priorities. It could however go further by embedding green modalities in the functioning of the programme itself. E.g., tie funding criteria for new or existing sport funding programmes to the delivery of Green Deal objectives, or include incentives for more sustainable practices (additional funding for zero-waste events, green mobility, etc...)	Funding
Provide funding for EU Member States to support the development of strategies and good governance on green sport , for instance through peer-learning activities or via education and training modules for policymakers.	Funding
Promote the outcomes of relevant Erasmus+ funded 'Green Sport' projects e.g., the OCEAN or ASAP projects; share good practices or develop policy guidance ⁹⁹ .	Practical support
Continue sharing good practices at EU level (between Member States but also the sport sector), including within the appropriate fora of the next EU Work Plans for Sport.	Practical support
Improve the evidence-base for environmental sustainability in sport. E.g., the study on harmonisation	Practical support

⁹⁸ For instance, cooperation between services working on transport, urban infrastructure and sport elaborating greener solutions for fans travel to and from sport venues could have a significant impact on the carbon footprint of sport.

⁹⁹ <https://project-ocean.eu/> and <https://www.asap-sport.com/about>

of sport statistics could look into refining categories /indicators for environmentally sustainable sport statistics.	
Explore opportunities to engage European athletes, federations, clubs and events in showcasing 'Green Sport', including through existing initiatives such as the European Week of Sport, the #BeActive campaign ¹⁰⁰ , the EU Green Week ¹⁰¹ or the New European Bauhaus Festival, and in particular: - Promote 'Green Sport' during/via the European Week of Sport or other sport events. - Consider handing out a 'Green Sport' award, similar to or as part of the #BeActive Award, to raise awareness about the sport movement's contribution to environmental sustainability.	Communication/engagement
Team up with existing environmental awareness-raising actions such as the European Climate Pact ¹⁰² or the EU Green Week , or the New European Bauhaus Festival ¹⁰³ , to ensure the sport movement is adequately involved in such initiatives. Explore opportunities to promote and exchange 'Green Sport' initiatives with the European and international sport movement.	Communication/engagement

2.2 Member States

Members States are encouraged to:

Recommendations	Relevant for
Identify a senior role (e.g., from board of directors) as a Sport and Environmental Sustainability Champion for their country (in Ministry of Sport or a National sport body) to increase leadership on environmental issues and ensure a reference person is clearly identified.	Governance
Establish a cross-directorate or Ministry of Sport and Sustainability Working Group in their country (e.g., covering the departments of Environment, Sport, Transport, Tourism)	Governance
Develop a Sustainability Action Plan for their sport sector.	Policy
Measure the baseline carbon footprint for their sport sector and establish regular reporting on sport sector sustainability data.	Policy

¹⁰⁰ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/initiatives/beactive-awards>

¹⁰¹ https://green-week.event.europa.eu/index_en

¹⁰² https://climate-pact.europa.eu/index_en

¹⁰³ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/get-involved/festival_en

Prioritise the use of existing infrastructure over new construction. The use of existing sports facilities and infrastructure should have priority over new construction in order to keep the consumption of space and resources as low as possible.	Policy
Ensure sport events are compatible with national and sport-wide sustainability policies.	Policy
Ensure events have a sustainable planning/strategy.	Policy
Consider creating a funding pot to support sustainability capacity building of their sport national governing bodies covering training, educational programmes, guidance, tools and pilot projects.	Funding
Consider making a portion of public funding to sport national governing bodies conditional on the delivery of environmental sustainability objectives.	Funding
Encourage sports organisations to adopt sustainable practices by requiring them to report on their sustainability performance and publicly disclose their sustainability practices.	Funding
Support the transition to greener and more sustainable physical activity and sport events by increasing investment in research and development of dedicated new technologies and practices.	Funding
Support the creation of a green sport network for their national sport governing bodies.	Practical support
Develop a programme of sustainability training and workshops for the staff of sport national governing body.	Practical support
Develop sustainability policy guidance for sport national governing bodies.	Practical support
Develop a sustainable sport event toolkit, template or guidance for their national sport governing bodies.	Practical support
Promote knowledge sharing and collaboration between sports organisations.	Practical support
Examine ways to support public engagement through sport , considering athlete ambassadors, high profile events, teams, leagues, broadcasters and sponsors.	Communications/engagement
Promote good practices and innovative partnerships and cross-sectoral cooperation examples to their sport sector.	Communications/engagement

In addition, policy makers can encourage the co-hosting of major sports events, such as the Olympic Games or World Cup, to reduce the environmental impact of building new sports facilities and infrastructure.

2.3 National governing bodies and national sports organisations

Recommendations	Relevant for
Identify a dedicated role with responsibility for environmental sustainability.	Governance
Develop a sustainability plan or include a sustainability plan within the Development Strategy for their sport.	Policy
Undertake or commission a simple baseline carbon footprint study for their organisation and their sport.	Policy
Look to establish sustainability training for their staff , perhaps in partnership with NGOs or universities.	Practical support
Explore opportunities to use athletes, partners, events and media channels to engage sport audiences in green sport initiatives.	Communications/ Engagement

3 Guidance and Recommendations for Sport Practitioners in Europe



Photo by Steven Abraham on Unsplash

This section puts forward a longer list of recommendations for the sport practitioners across Europe. These recommendations are based on exchanges between member States representatives and leading European and international sport organisations. These recommendations aim to provide practical guidance for all those involved across the sport movement and the wider stakeholders involved, as identified in [section 1.2.1](#).

They are structured across four main topics:

- Developing cross-sectoral synergies in sport.
- Sustainable sports infrastructures.
- Sustainable sport events.
- Capacity-building, education, training, and promotion of sustainable sport practices.

3.1 Developing cross-sectoral synergies in sport

In this chapter the focus is on how different sectors involved in sport relate to each other and can contribute to mitigating and reducing the negative impact of sport on the environment, climate, and biodiversity, by working together in an innovative manner.

To promote sustainability and consequently reduce the environmental impact in the sports sector, the development and implementation of innovative approaches, creative processes, and new technologies is essential. This type of innovation involves forward-thinking collaborations between different stakeholders (businesses, banks, athletes, mayors, ministers, young people, and other key stakeholders) to identify new opportunities for environmental sustainability that leverage the unique strengths and expertise of each sector. Additionally, sport has developed innovative solutions which are replicable in other sectors, and which could generate cross-sectoral cooperation.¹⁰⁴ This section puts forward some recommendations of areas where cross-sectoral cooperation should take place.

3.1.1 Mobility and Transport (Green Deal: Sustainable Mobility)

Mobility and transport are essential for athletes, spectators, and staff to travel to and from sports events, for hosting sport events and sport-related tourism. Its biggest impact is mainly in events, from small sized/local events where fans drive from home to the venue, to major sport events where fans fly to the venues, but daily commuting for routine practices and sport tourism also has an impact. Some sports require more transport than others, such as skiing for which practitioners tend to travel quite long distance during the winter season (a French study found 52% of the carbon footprint of skiing was car transport)¹⁰⁵.

The transport sector can work with sports stakeholders to promote sustainable transportation options. This collaboration can help reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality around sports venues in line with the Green Deal objectives which are aimed at a cleaner, greener, and smarter mobility with a focus on sustainable urban mobility and efficient multimodal transport. For more information on this point, see chapter II, [sections 3.3 and 3.4](#).

¹⁰⁴ For example, the [Carbon Fibre Project](#), a multi-sport collaboration that aims to work with sports equipment manufacturers and users on how to recover, transform and reuse carbon fibre from sporting goods components has direct implications across other sectors.

¹⁰⁵ ADEME (2022) Réalisation de bilans de gaz à effet de serre et stratégie climatique associée. Guide sectoriel filière sport, montagne et tourisme. Available at: https://librairie.ademe.fr/changement-climatique-et-energie/5418-realisation-de-bilans-de-gaz-a-effet-de-serre-et-strategie-climatique-associee.html#/44-type_de_produit-format_electronique



Photo by Markus Spiske on Unsplash

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Develop mobility plans that promote: • The use of public transport (e.g., this could be done by partnering with the local transport companies) and low-carbon vehicles with high occupancy. • Active options such as cycling and walking to access sport events or to indoor and outdoor sports venues. • Wherever possible, medium, and long-distance transport should promote the use of rail as a priority option.	Sports clubs and federations Public authorities Transport companies

3.1.2 Technology including apps and web-based resources (Green Deal: Sustainable Industry)

Technology plays a vital role in the sports sector, from live streaming of events that reduce the event's footprint while enhancing the experience for fans, to training and fitness apps that have revolutionised the practice of sport at home and training through data analysis. Technology has a role to play in supporting the measurement of the carbon impacts from sport practice. While this data would be useful to event organisers and clubs, the measurement of the impacts of sports clubs (and federations) is much more complex and would require a coordinated approach that goes beyond individual carbon emissions.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Development of apps or websites for individual users to • Encourage them to practice sport in a sustainable way. • Help participants measure and monitor their carbon impacts in terms of mobility, equipment usage, consumption etc. In this sense, policy makers and sports organisations have an important role to play in guiding the collection of data by establishing priorities, developing frameworks and common standards, supporting data collection, and providing support for data treatment.	Sports clubs Sport Federations Private companies linked to the technology sector Public authorities

3.1.3 Tourism Sector (Green Deal: Sustainable Industry)

The tourism sector plays a significant role in sports events, especially international tournaments and games to which people move to but also in cases where sport is the main or ancillary purpose of the trip. Sustainable tourism is defined by the [UN Environment Program](https://www.unep.org/)¹⁰⁶ and [UN World Tourism Organisation](https://www.unwto.org/)¹⁰⁷ as “*tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.*” Sport and leisure tourism has a number of distinct elements:

- Sports events and tournaments (See [section 3.3](#)).
- Adventure and activity tourism.
- Winter sports destinations and activities.



¹⁰⁶ <https://www.unep.org/>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.unwto.org/>

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Adventure and activity tourism • Private tourism companies can collaborate with sports stakeholders to promote sustainable tourism practices, such as using eco-friendly accommodations, low carbon travel options and reducing waste production. Thus, it can support the promotion of local culture and economic development. • Sports organisations should work with local destinations and tourism authorities on climate proof strategies. • Ensure strong collaboration and partnership between sports and activity providers, environmental management organisations and public authorities at a local and regional level. Winter sports destinations and activities Resorts will have to consider whether to provide more sustainable artificial snow at lower levels (using greener technologies) or relocate at higher levels. There are distinct disadvantages to both these solutions: • The creation of artificial snow requires vast amounts of energy and water but also often the use of additives (some of which are already banned in certain EU Member States) to create the snow and stop ice forming. Weather is a significant in the success of artificial snow making and getting the right conditions can be challenging. • Relocating to higher levels creates a significant challenge for more fragile montane habitats and the associated wildlife that has already been squeezed out of some of the lower levels. The production of artificial snow as well as the (technical) snow management have to be designed efficiently as well as environmentally and nature friendly. Re-imagine resorts to provide other sustainable solutions and alternative activities such as winter hiking, mountain biking, equestrian activities etc. as a sustainable solution in the longer term.	Resort managers Tourism marketing organisations Activity providers and associated instructors Sport clubs Public authorities

3.1.4 Food (Green Deal: Farm to Fork)

Food and nutrition are crucial for the performance of athletes and the well-being of spectators. In line with the farm to fork strategy put forward by the Green Deal, the food sector can work with sports stakeholders to promote healthy and sustainable food choices, such as plant-based options and locally sourced ingredients.

Recommendations	Relevant for:
Favour local, seasonal, and organic supply of food when organising events. Sourcing food supply from local, seasonal, lower meat, and organic agriculture for sport events is a good way to reduce the environmental impact of sports while communicating on the importance of healthy food consumption both for athletes and for the environment. Establish partnerships between sports professionals and the food sector to lessen the environmental impact of food production and encourage healthier lifestyles. Establish guidelines on food supply to incentivise better consumption. Compost food waste to reduce your carbon footprint and create a natural fertilizer.	Sports clubs Sports federations Athletes Food distribution, production, and catering companies

3.1.5 Construction (Green Deal: Building and renovation)



© Johan Cruijff Institute. Stadium powered by more than 4,200 solar panels and a wind turbine.

The construction sector is closely related to more environmentally sustainable sport practices as the building and maintenance of sports facilities have a significant impact on the environment. The design and construction of sports facilities can affect energy consumption, waste production, and carbon emissions. The use of sustainable materials, the implementation of energy-efficient systems and the installations of renewable energy sources (such as solar panels, wind turbines or geothermal systems) can reduce the environmental impact of sport facilities. Moreover, sport facilities can reduce water usage

by implementing measures to manage stormwater runoff and by using water saving technologies. For more information see chapter II, [section 3.3](#).

Recommendations	Relevant for:
Invest in sustainable construction practices and renovations of sport facilities. E.g., use of sustainable materials and practices to improve the durability and longevity of sports facilities, reducing the need for frequent renovation and construction. Use passive design strategies such as natural ventilation, daylighting, decarbonisation strategies (e.g., insulation), and shading to reduce the need for energy-intensive systems. Select a location for your sport venue that is easily accessible by public transport or that is close to a cycling lane. Adapt sports facilities to the climate (shading, greening, less surface sealing). Install water fountains to reduce the use of plastic bottles. Collect rainwater for irrigation. Set up water efficient measures in toilets and showers as well as sensors to minimise energy consumption.	Sports organisations Public authorities

3.1.6 Energy (Green Deal: Clean Energy)

Since sports activities and events can utilise a lot of energy and cause pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, the energy industry is intimately tied to more ecologically friendly sports practices. Collaboration between the sports sector and the energy sector can lead to the development and promotion of sustainable energy practices and technologies that benefit both the environment and the sports industry.

Recommendations	Relevant for:
Install renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines, or geothermal systems to power the sport facilities. This will not only reduce the carbon footprint of the building but also save money in the long run. Adopt energy-efficient systems technologies such as LED lighting, motion sensors and smart building systems can help to reduce energy consumption. Use smart technologies to better monitor and control energy consumption (heating/cooling, lighting etc.). Develop guidelines for energy management in sports facilities and events, and train sports organisations, athletes and coaches on energy consumption.	Sport organisations Public authorities



Photo by Peter Beukema on Unsplash

3.1.7 Sporting goods (Green Deal: Sustainable Industry)

Sports clubs and federations are at the core of being able to influence the sporting goods sector through the purchase of goods and products that are sustainably designed and produced. Developing partnerships between the clubs, federations and industry could significantly support principles enshrined in the circular economy and ensure longevity and transferability of goods. Sports clubs, federations and the sporting goods industry should also reflect on innovative and sustainable business models. The linear model is no longer a viable option and emphasis should be put on models such as leasing, renting, repair, refurbish and take back schemes in a circular spirit.

Recommendations	Relevant for:
Use greener sourcing and circular economy approaches: Produce or purchase equipment and goods made from sustainable and preferred materials, such as recycled plastic and fibres, natural fibres and organic cotton, or sustainably harvested wood and consider the end-of-life disposal. Whenever possible, choose durable, repairable, or reusable equipment and goods. Establish partnerships with private companies and NGOs to have a system in place for recycling equipment and to promote repair and refurbishment of equipment and goods to extend their lifespan.	Sports clubs Sports federations Industry

3.2 Sustainable Sport Infrastructure



Photo by Marcos Moraes on Unsplash

The role of infrastructure in considering the environmental impact of sport practices is crucial, as it encompasses many of sport's impacts on the environment, both positive and negative. Sport-related infrastructure (both standardised and non-standardised sport facilities) includes infrastructure for energy provision, clean and wastewater, waste collection and processing, transportation of athletes, staff, and spectators and the design of new buildings or renovation of existing ones for sport use. Decisions about whether or not to go ahead with new or upgraded facilities and infrastructure, and considerations around their design, construction or renovation are thus central topics in the delivery of a greener sport sector in Europe.

This chapter includes recommendations on:

1. **Planning for sustainable use and legacy:** this includes assessing the need for sport facilities and infrastructure using criteria that consider the environmental case, legacy use and community benefits in tandem with sports and financial considerations. Considerations around the suitability of the location and its proximity to existing infrastructure, including energy, mobility, and waste, plus accessibility by intended user groups are paramount.
2. **Design, construction, renovation, and use of materials:** This aspect focuses on principles for constructing and renovating environmentally sensitive sports facilities to minimise their climate and environmental impact. using sustainable materials, promoting low waste and circular economy practices by embedding green principles across design and procurement processes.

3.2.1 Planning for sustainable use and legacy (Green Deal: Building and renovation)

Planning for sustainable use and legacy involves a careful assessment of existing resources, including existing infrastructure. The default preference in terms of resource uses and environmental impacts is to not build, and rather re-use/renovate buildings or find another solution elsewhere¹⁰⁸. The use and legacy of infrastructure should be optimised, by exploring shared use with other sports and activities wherever possible: ensure the use can be extended beyond periodic use for sports events, for example by local businesses, schools, or community groups.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Establish the planning concept for use and legacy in accordance with sustainable goals and principles. In this sense, any new sport infrastructure of facility should: • Be sensitive to local biodiversity. Avoiding impacts on existing biodiversity by rejecting greenfield or biodiverse habitat sites, and considering impacts of light, air, soil and water pollution during construction and use. • Respect local climate, geography, and context. E.g., avoiding golf courses in arid regions, winter sport development where artificial snow will be necessary. Co-locate energy intensive facilities e.g., swimming pools etc. where excess heat can be harvested from or utilised by adjacent facilities and businesses. • Consider climate adaptation demands and be planned in accordance with anticipated changes in temperature, precipitation, and flood risk. • Ensure excellent mobility connectivity. Near sustainable transport hub (trains, buses, bikes). Near/connected to other related venues e.g., in regional, national, or international leagues. Remote and road-dependent locations should be avoided wherever possible. Ensure that the sustainable treatment of waste and reuse is practical at the proposed construction or renovation site. Either on site or through secured use of existing local infrastructure.	Building Commissioners

When designing **technical aspects of sports facilities and infrastructure**, the goal is to develop a concept for long-term operation, considering the interests of users, operators, residents, and the environment.

¹⁰⁸Aquino, Ileana and Nawari, Nawari O. (2015) "Sustainable Design Strategies for Sport Stadia," Suburban Sustainability: Vol. 3: Iss. 1, Article 3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5038/2164-0866.3.1.1020>
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/subsust/vol3/iss1/3>

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Set the technical aspects of the facility in accordance with sustainable goals and principles. In practice, the following aspects should be taken into consideration¹⁰⁹: • The principles of sustainable building should be incorporated into the planning and design process at an early stage. • Sustainability points should be incorporated into the cost-benefit calculation, considering life cycle costs in the approach used. • Planning recommendations are to be formulated that promote user-friendliness and thus facilitate structural implementation. • Common goods such as the environment, resources, health, culture, and capital should be protected. • The assessment system should be result oriented, e.g., the entire property must be assessed, thus creating a view that is as holistic as possible. • (Outdoor) sports facilities must be optimised in the long term in an integrated manner. • Dismantling, separation, and recycling after the use phase must also be considered in the planning phase. It is desirable that existing components are easy to dismantle. A waste concept must be drawn up, which contains information on waste mapping, waste avoidance, separation, and organisation of disposal.	Building Commissioners

Creating sustainable sports facilities requires **stakeholder participation in the design, planning, and maintenance of sports facilities** to ensure that they meet the needs of the community while promoting environmental sustainability.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
The authority in charge of the planning process should ensure stakeholder engagement, for example through discussion events, citizens' meetings or publications, articles, and posters on the project¹¹⁰. The stakeholders and professionals involved in the building of sports facilities require training on the design and management of low environmental impact facilities and must be actively involved in the planning process (e.g.: working groups, surveys, advisory activities by representatives, etc).	Public authorities Building Commissioners

¹⁰⁹ Katthage, J. & Thieme-Hack, M. (2017). *Sustainable Outdoor Sports Facilities : Approaches to implementing sustainable development in outdoor sports facilities*. Federal Institute of Sport Science.

¹¹⁰ Essig, N., Lindner, S. & Magdolen, S. (2017). *Leitfaden Nachhaltiger Sportstättenbau : Kriterien für den Neubau nachhaltiger Sporthallen – Kurzfassung*. Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft.

3.2.2 Design, construction, renovation and use of materials (Green Deal: Building and renovation)

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Apply general environmental sustainability principles for the design, construction, renovation, and use of materials in sport facilities and infrastructure, by: • Ensuring new or renovated infrastructure follows an energy hierarchy of demand reduction> energy efficiency> renewable power> low carbon power. • Utilising carbon footprint assessments to assess climate impacts for construction/renovation phase and in use phase for the new facility. • Ensuring low water demand during construction/renovation and particularly during use of the new facility – by reducing demand, specifying efficient technologies from taps to irrigation systems and by building in rainwater capture and grey water recycling. • Ensuring new infrastructure and facilities are biodiversity positive, through incorporation of green roofs, green walls, tree planting, mammal and insect boxes and new water bodies where possible. • Designing waste infrastructure with reference to a waste hierarchy that favours avoidance of waste, re-use and zero-waste to landfill. Appropriate waste segregation should be achieved through onsite processes or long-term local contracts.	Public authorities Building Commissioners
Communicate about existing resources dedicated to more sustainable sports facilities. To help those in charge of planning the construction of sports facilities, there are sports-specific guidelines and information service but also general instruments available to help guide the implementation of sustainable sports venues. This report provides some indicative resources in Annex V - Capacity-building, Education and Promotion Resources.	Public authorities
Integrate environmental sustainability aspects in the tendering process and selection of companies. By including sustainability aspects in the tendering process, the ecological and social building quality of the sports facility can be increased, since the building process decisions are not made solely on economic grounds. The consideration of sustainability aspects in the selection of companies serves the goal of improving the quality of construction, promoting, and maintaining jobs in the region and enforcing environmental and social standards in the construction process of the sports facility. The impacts of the construction of a sports facility must be minimised, and at the same time the health of all those involved, and residents must be protected, as there are direct impacts on the environment and the neighbourhood	Building commissioners

during this phase. The basis for a sustainable construction site process must already be defined in the tender and bidding documents and must be verified by quality measurements. In this context, the following construction site processes must be considered when building a sustainable sports hall: • Low-waste/noise/dust construction site. • Environmental and soil protection on the construction site. • Quality assurance of the construction work.	
Use an assessment system to ensure the construction of the sport facility respects the environment. For many municipalities, clubs and private investors, the construction of a new indoor or outdoor sports facility is a lengthy planning process, which can take several years, from the initial idea to the commissioning of the sports facility, and until all planning-relevant and cost issues have been resolved. The use of an assessment system can help optimise sports facilities in terms of users, surroundings, environment, and financial situation, and promote sustainability. There are typically seven aspects to consider when building an indoor or outdoor sports facility. They can be used as indicators to assess or guide the construction of a new facility. • Ecological quality: Environmental impact, life cycle assessment (LCA), energy (renewable, non-renewable), materials, water, land, waste, recycling, etc. • Economic quality: Economic efficiency, life cycle costs (LCC), third-party use, etc. • Sociocultural and functional quality: Comfort (thermal, acoustic, visual), health, indoor air quality, users, accessibility, space efficiency, conversion capacity, safety, accessibility, user influence, cycling comfort, architecture and design, regional and cultural criteria, innovation, etc. • Technical properties: Fire protection, durability, ease of cleaning, weather and environmental resistance, technical building equipment, building envelope, dismantling etc. • Process quality: Planning process, preliminary planning, integral planning, tendering, construction site procedures, commissioning, operation, etc. • Location quality: Micro-site, transport links, neighbourhood, building regulations, possibilities for expansion, land consumption, biodiversity, user-specific facilities, etc. • Sports functional quality: Implementation of sports facility development planning, competition and training areas, multi-purpose facilities, infrastructure, development, media facilities, users (athletes, spectators) etc. The system considers the interests of various groups (i.e., pedestrians, fans), balancing sometimes conflicting criteria such as noise reduction, accessibility, and vegetation management. By supplementing the criteria with tools such as selection matrices and standard planning, a fully-fledged	Building Commissioners

evaluation instrument is created to ensure the balanced and long-term operation of a sports facility.	
Follow specific guidance for outdoor facilities. The fundamental principle behind any facility developments for outdoor adventure sports should be that they should minimise the impacts in an area rather than increase them and should be about the management of people within the environment. The guiding principles for outdoor facilities that are environmentally sustainable include minimising impacts on the environment, using sustainable design and construction techniques, considering critical components such as slope gradient, alignment, drainage, and substrate type, and conducting ecological impact surveys. Efforts should be made to optimise and enhance biodiversity, and outdoor sports organisations should be in close contact with local and regional authorities to encourage investments in green infrastructure that also supports sport and physical activity in natural settings. For example, the creation of buffer zones with associated trails along river corridors and on the edges of agricultural land has the potential to have very positive rather than negative impacts and provide connectivity corridors for both people and wildlife. New facilities should be built to recognised sustainable standards, and older facilities should be refurbished with sustainable and energy-efficient upgrades. Management of facilities should be undertaken to reduce environmental impacts, including promoting low energy and minimal water consumption, and teaching clients to be efficient in the use of resources. Outdoor sports are often connected to tourist infrastructure including hotels and other accommodation, restaurants, and transport systems. Outdoor sports can help to foster more sustainable tourist solutions and thus sustainable, reduced infrastructure-driven, good mobility concepts that have a focus on ecology and culture should be explored, such as demonstrated by examples such as Alpine Pearls¹¹¹.	Building Commissioners
Consider the entire life cycle of materials and weigh the different solutions against their environmental impact and foreseen uses. For efficient use of resources, facility commissioners should adopt an approach comparing the life cycle assessment of different products. By focusing on the entire life cycle of sports facility, the right materials can be selected in the early planning process and taken into account for the entire life cycle of a sports facility: • Production (extraction of raw materials, processing and transport), construction, use and of life.	Building commissioners

¹¹¹ <https://www.alpine-pearls.com/>

Currently, however, the life cycle in its entirety does not play a decisive role in the planning of sports facilities. While, for example, the building phase is used to calculate the costs, the energy assessment is based only on the use phase. In the interests of efficient use of resources, however, this view should be abandoned, and the entire life cycle analysed.	
Use materials and construction methods that have the least impacts on the environment and adapted to the lifespan of facilities. The use of materials is an important consideration when building sustainable sports facilities. Sustainable materials, such as recycled steel, wood, and concrete, can be used to reduce the environmental impact of construction. These materials can also reduce the amount of waste generated during the construction process and have a lower carbon footprint. Additionally, the use of sustainable building practices, such as green roofs and rainwater harvesting systems, can also help reduce the environmental and climate impact of sports infrastructure. The choice of building materials and construction methods has a decisive influence on the lifespan of sports facilities and should be made accordingly. Where possible, nature-based solutions should be prioritised. Furthermore, the use of raw materials should be reduced as far as possible or renewable raw materials should be selected. For this purpose, construction methods with low resource consumption must be selected.	Building Commissioners
Gather relevant environmental sustainability documentation about constructed and renovated infrastructure. A cross-cutting good practice is the collection of sustainability-related documentation in the form of a building handbook. This ensures the long-term knowledge of the analyses and concepts used when building a specific facility.	Building Commissioners
Make use of technological tools to reduce energy consumption. Sports facilities can be quite energy intensive (e.g., water, heating, cooling). The replacement of outdated and energy inefficient power/heating plants is a priority: technological solutions on the market already allow a significant reduction in consumption. For the energetic balancing and optimisation of indoor sports facilities and for the creation of energy performance certificates, numerous software programmes are available today to analyse the energetic quality and building physics issues already during the planning stage. Different scenarios with different building and system parameters can be mapped. Digital twin solutions also enable to test various scenarios to optimise the energy consumption of sports facilities.¹¹²	Building commissioners

¹¹² Essig, N., Lindner, S. & Magdolen, S. (2017). *Leitfaden Nachhaltiger Sportstättenbau : Kriterien für den Neubau nachhaltiger Sporthallen – Kurzfassung*. Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft.

3.3 Sustainable Sport Events



Photo by Ashley de Lotz on Unsplash

Every year, thousands of sporting events take place. The spectrum of events is very diverse. It ranges from local club tournaments to European and World Championships to Olympic Games. Events take place outdoors in nature and indoors in sport facilities, in winter and in summer, with a few hundred spectators up to hundreds of thousands and more.

Sporting events have an effect on nature and the environment, the negative impacts of which must be avoided or reduced. At the same time, sporting events offer an opportunity to raise people's awareness and engagement with environmental issues. For many sports organisations, the events that they organise or promote will constitute the largest part of their overall environmental impact as well as their greatest opportunity to engage with stakeholders and fans on environmental sustainability issues.

Environmental sustainability aspects can generally be applied at all levels of sporting events and in all phases of an event (from application and implementation to post-event follow-up). Especially for smaller events, it is not always necessary to cover all aspects comprehensively if this is not possible for reasons of time, personnel, and resources. However, **it is worthwhile to focus on the issues that have the greatest impact on nature and the environment** - without losing sight of the social and economic aspects. Taking the first effective steps and making a start is crucial.

This chapter lists recommendations developed for event organisers. Furthermore, concrete fields of action and possible measures in the context of environmentally sustainable sporting events are presented briefly and in an overview. While the list may not be

comprehensive, it provides a guide to the main priorities for an event manager aiming to organise a more sustainable sport event.

3.3.1 Planning your event calendar (Green Deal: Sustainable Mobility)

Events may comprise the largest component of your environmental impact. Before looking at the details of planning a sustainable event, it is worth reviewing your organisation's event strategy overall to make sure that drivers such as qualification requirements, sport development objectives and revenue-raising goals are sufficiently balanced with environmental considerations. Questions to ask include:

- Could your organisation's sport development and income goals be met with fewer events? Are all your events necessary or could some events be consolidated or piggy-backed with others?
- With respect to other connected events in your sport, are the locations and sequencing of your events designed to minimise travel for competitors and spectators across the sporting calendar? For example, avoiding zig zagging across countries or regions.
- Do the date, season and location scheduling of your events facilitate minimising environmental impacts? For example, requiring less use of air conditioning or snow machines, less soil erosion or compaction, avoidance of breeding seasons or migratory routes.

3.3.2 Planning the event itself (Green Deal: Sustainable Mobility)

Event organisers should ensure sustainability management is a transversal principle of event organisation by considering both strategic principles and technical considerations. These recommendations are structured in a practical step-by-step approach.



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Recommendations for event organisers

Embedding environmental sustainability in event governance

Ensure that there is a designated role within your event team with responsibility for sustainability at your event. Responsibilities and structures should be clarified from the beginning with one person responsible for controlling environmentally sensitive operations and reducing their impacts. Ideally, request that there is a designated sustainability contact for your suppliers and partners at the event.

Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability

Creating an environmental sustainability plan for your event. In principle, even the smallest of events should have some form of plan. Your event plan should align with your organisation's sustainability strategy.

Consulting stakeholders and local communities

Engage local communities: Engage with local communities and stakeholders to ensure that the temporary sports infrastructure meets their needs and promotes environmental sustainability. This may include consulting with local environmental organisations and hosting community events to raise awareness about sustainable sports practices.

Considering the location of the event

Select a location and schedule an event to limit environmental impact. Venue facilities and location are key considerations. Ideally, the venue should be in an easily accessible location, with good public transportation links. Additionally, the venue should be located in an area where environmental impacts are less likely, such as an urban setting or open space designated for sport use, rather than on a site that requires clearing of natural areas or construction of temporary facilities. The frequency and timing of events should take into account the impact on the local community and environment.

Prioritising existing infrastructure over new construction

The use of existing sports facilities and infrastructure should have priority. Temporary, demountable sports buildings can also be useful to reduce the environmental impact of sports facilities. For more information, see [section 3.3.2](#)

Establishing green event procurement and supplier protocols

When entering into contract with economic partners for the organisation of major sport event, it is important to ensure the use of environmental sustainability criteria. Environmental performance against contracts should be measurable and aligned with the event sustainability plan.

Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact. The first step to limiting the impacts of sports event is to measure the impacts of the different activities, this can be done by using measurement frameworks and tools. A number of tools and measurement systems are provided in [Annex V](#) Annex V - Capacity-building, Education and Promotion Resources.

The following **technical considerations** should be taken up to ensure the event is as sustainable as possible. These are best supported by measuring the impact of event activities and the effectiveness of steps taken to mitigate them. On this basis, it is then possible for event organisers to establish to what extent change is needed to reach their environmental objectives.

Recommendations for sport event organisers

Measure and reduce the carbon footprint of your event, in line with Green Deal objective of Clean Energy and Sustainable Industry:

Use a carbon footprint tool ([see](#) Examples from Member States) to estimate the baseline carbon footprint of your event. If possible, use the tool to model the climate impact of important decisions such as venue location and transport provision. Ensure data is collected during your event to update the model and improve decision-making at future editions and other events you run.

Use an energy hierarchy to reduce energy consumption: Use an energy hierarchy such as demand avoidance> demand reduction> energy efficiency> renewable power> low carbon power to govern decisions about the use of energy intensive processes and equipment relating to your event, for example temporary power generators.

Replace fossil fuel-powered equipment with electric or solar-powered alternatives and reduce energy consumption by implementing energy efficiency measures such as the use of LED temporary lighting.

Use low-carbon equipment options.

Finally, if it's not possible to avoid, reduce, or replace the use of certain resources, **the last step is to offset the impact of their use and consider compensation**. This could involve measures such as investing in renewable energy projects to offset the carbon emissions from energy use or supporting conservation projects.

Avoid building new facilities for ad hoc events and consider the whole lifecycle of any temporary infrastructure, in line with Green Deal objective of building and renovation.

The use of existing permanent facilities should be prioritised over building temporary event facilities in almost all cases. New temporary facilities must be sustainable in their fabrication, use, legacy use and eventual disposal.

While most guidelines on planning and construction apply, there are specific considerations when building these facilities:

- Minimise the environmental impact during the construction and dismantling of temporary sports infrastructure.
- Implement a waste management plan that outlines how waste will be managed during the construction and dismantling of temporary sports infrastructure. This should include recycling and reuse plans for materials and equipment.
- Prioritise the use of sustainable materials such as recycled materials, natural materials, and materials that can be easily disassembled and reused.
- Incorporate sustainable energy solutions into temporary sports infrastructure, such as solar power, to reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption.
- Incorporate water saving devices into temporary building specifications from taps to irrigation systems and by building in rainwater capture and grey water recycling.

Ensuring short journeys and green transport options are the default choice for your event will make a huge difference to your event's carbon footprint, in line with the Green Deal objective of Sustainable Mobility:

Spectator travel

- Encourage attendees to use sustainable transportation options such as public transport, carpool, cycling, or walking, by providing incentives and information on transportation options.
- Include low environmental impact transport systems for last mile mobility, for example the sharing of electric cars, motorcycles bicycles or scooters.
- Travel choices can be supported by the development of dedicated apps that facilitate users to plan their mobility, making green options the easy choice.

Athletes travel

- Consider solutions that reduce competitors' travels may include more local and regional qualification events, rather than a series of international or pan-Euro events. These approaches not only reduce the carbon footprint of the event but also promote local talent and community engagement. A more localised event can reduce costs and increase accessibility and inclusivity with reduced barriers to participation.
- Switch to electric (or hybrid) vehicles for transportation within the event site (also to mitigate noise pollution), such as for staff or athletes.

Organiser travel

- Ensure that the event organiser's travel policy requires only the minimum necessary number of event staff to travel to the event.
- Stipulate that train travel and public transport should be taken rather than plane or private car use.

Ensure sport event infrastructure and facilities are biodiversity positive, through incorporation of green roofs, green walls, tree planting, mammal and insect boxes and new water bodies where possible, in line with the Green Deal objective of biodiversity. This also entails limiting the impact of events on biodiversity.

- Work with local conservation organisations to identify and protect sensitive natural habitats that may be impacted by the event.
- Minimise noise and light pollution that can negatively impact wildlife and their habitats.

As a minimum, sports events must aim to restore any habitats or green areas that have been affected by an event back to their original state, addressing issues such as damage to

vegetation and erosion or compaction of soil. Beyond this, event organisers should be encouraged to leave a positive biodiversity legacy from their event.

This should always be done in partnership with local experts with opportunities to engage local communities.

Consider all angles to reduce waste and other pollution sources, in line with the Green Deal objective of eliminating pollution. Event organisers should:

- **Choose sustainable merchandise:** fair-trade products, recycled materials and organically produced textiles can be a good solution.
- **Prioritise renting and leasing options and the reuse of materials** (E.g.: banners and roll ups from previous editions).
- **Optimise waste management:**
 - Include the 5R method to reduce waste that focuses on: Refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle and return to earth.

- Ensure proper waste management and separate waste as much as possible by installing clearly labelled recycling bins throughout the venue and encourage attendees to properly dispose of waste.
 - Minimise littering by using reusable cups, plates, and utensils instead of disposable items. For example, charge for the container of the drinks and return the amount when it is returned.
 - Waste infrastructure should be designed with reference to a waste hierarchy that favours avoidance of waste, re-use and zero-waste to landfill. Appropriate waste segregation should be achieved through onsite processes or long-term local contracts.¹¹³
 - Avoid the need for certain resources such as single use plastics by encouraging participants to bring their own water bottles and/or by installing water fountains. Replace single-use plastics with compostable or reusable alternatives, or paper-based marketing materials with digital alternatives.
- **Limit the impact of events on air quality:** Monitor air quality before, during, and after the event to identify potential issues and take corrective action if necessary.
 - **Limit the impact of events on water use and quality.**
 - Implement water-efficient measures to reduce consumption and install rain harvesting infrastructure to capture rainwater and use it for non-potable purposes. Reuse water for irrigation, cleaning, and other non-potable purposes.
 - Track the water usage and identify areas where water consumption can be reduced.
 - **Use local and seasonal food offerings, in line with the Green Deal: Farm to Fork objective.**
 - When choosing catering, attention should be paid to sustainability aspects such as organic, regional, seasonal and low-meat products. Food bank managing system should be considered to limit the waste of food. Minimum packaging weight is the best option. Composting should be the last option but should be considered.
 - The use of local suppliers and the offer of local recipes can have both a positive environmental and social impact on the area's economy. In the phases of stipulation of supply contracts, it could be useful to assign extra points to certified restaurateurs who apply environmental management schemes.

Special considerations for planning outdoor events. There are 3 fundamental steps to managing outdoor events in natural areas:

- **Planning and research into the nature of the area.** How many participants will you have? Where will they come from? How will you manage them? And, which impact will this have on the environment?
- **Development and management of the event itself** to include route choice, waste management and stewarding.
- **Restoration and review** – it is essential that there is minimal impact from your event and in fact it is recommended that you go beyond minimising impact but seek to enhance the biodiversity or quality of the habitat when the event is finished.

Moreover, the organisers of sporting events must be aware that the law, in most countries, requires restitution for the damage caused to the environment. **Expenses derived from risk control or compensation of the carbon footprint should be included within the budget of the event.**

¹¹³ IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions: a user-friendly framework for the verification, design and scaling up of NbS: first edition.

3.4 Capacity building, education, and promotion of sustainable sport practices



© Picture by eyesfoto on iStock photo

As noted in [chapter I \(section 2\)](#), environmentally sustainable sport practices have a bearing on both the sport sector itself as well as influencing the large audiences sport commands across society. To better understand how to develop and promote environmentally sustainable practices in and through the sport sector, the chapter identifies three levels of knowledge development and dissemination to help sports organisations capabilities to deliver green outcomes.

- The first level is **capacity building**, which involves acquiring and developing skills and practices within European sport organisations, by committing appropriate structures and resources to foster a culture of environmental sustainability.
- The second level is **education and training** – a central element of capacity building. This involves building sustainability knowledge and developing specific skills across various sport stakeholders to enable them to become agents of change in their respective groups. ‘Multiplier’ roles such as trainers, coaches, sustainability experts, and senior managers are key agents of change.
- The third level is **promotion**. This involves raising awareness and communicating environmental sustainability and climate action issues to individuals in the wider society, from athletes and sport practitioners to spectators, students, children, and parents. Sport’s communication channels include significant broadcast and media platforms, including social media, as well as relationships with sponsors, suppliers, host cities and public authorities.

Overall, sustainable sport practices can play a crucial role in transmitting the values and principles of environmental sustainability to a wider audience. By developing and promoting these practices at different levels, from international to local, sport stakeholders and policy makers can contribute local solutions for global environmental problems.

3.4.1 Capacity building (all Green Deal objectives)

Collaboration across sectors and borders is crucial to fostering innovation, creating learning, and sharing opportunities in capacity building.

Sport organisations may be familiar with addressing social and economic issues within their communities, but may lack the structures, knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to address environmental and climate topics. Before they can promote environmentally sustainable sport practices, they must first acquire the necessary skills and knowledge and establish the right systems and structures within their organisations.

Sport events provide a particular opportunity for organisers to leave a positive legacy by increasing the capacity of their workforce and volunteers in environmental sustainability and equipping staff, volunteers, collaborators, and contractors with the necessary skills to deliver events in a sustainable way.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Embed capacity-building activities for ‘Green Sport’ across existing funding schemes. This can entail: • Providing financial support and expertise to sport organisations for: ◦ Enabling sports organisations to develop and implement environmental sustainability strategies, governance structures, designated roles, and monitoring and reporting processes. ◦ Increasing the general knowledge of all staff, volunteers and stakeholders in environmental sustainability and climate action. • Providing training programmes for designated staff to develop required levels of environmental sustainability knowledge, skills, and practices. • Ensuring there is a budget to put processes in place that address the most pressing structural environmental sustainability issues in their organisations, such as the footprint of their facilities and the impact of their events. • Promoting the Erasmus+ programme as a whole (not only sport-related calls) where sport organisations can find (financial) support for their capacity building activities in the area of environmental sustainability, for example, staff education and training. • Within the Erasmus+ KA1¹¹⁴ calls for proposals (open to sport from 2023 onwards) environmental sustainability and climate action should be key topics for organisations to	Public Funding Bodies

¹¹⁴<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-1/key-action-1-learning-mobility-of-individuals>

collaborate on and receive support for organisational capacity building. • Providing corresponding information/instructions to National Erasmus+ agencies so that they can pass on this information to the sport sector at local/regional/national levels. • Encouraging cross-sectoral cooperation in sport, for example, organising network groups or cluster meetings on 'Green Sport', where representatives from European sports organisations exchange experiences and good practices. Alternatively, expanding the 'capacity building programme' model developed in the framework of the 'SHARE initiative'¹¹⁵ towards initiatives focusing on green sport.	
Develop capacity-building schemes around environmental sustainability • Develop and promote training programmes, for example, in cooperation with national environmental agencies and NGOs, drawing on their experience in this space where they have worked for many years. Encourage partnerships between the sport sector and education sector, including universities, schools, and education specialists to develop ways of raising awareness and building knowledge, skills, and expertise on environmental and climate change issues in sport.	National and regional authorities such as ministries and sports development bodies
Set up partnerships and support schemes to facilitate capacity-building European and National sport federations can notably: • Partner with NGOs, universities, and other specialists (individuals and institutions) to provide capacity building on environmental sustainability and sport to the staff, volunteers, and stakeholders as well as elected officials. • Guide and mentor, their member organisations on topics including governance, management and training, development of manuals and guidelines, and one-on-one guidance. National sports development organisations and ministries of sport should also provide support to grassroots organisations. Explore the possibility to appoint a dedicated individual or structure responsible for carrying out environmental strategies and programmes.	Sport organisations, notably European and national sport federations

¹¹⁵ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/initiatives/share-initiative>

3.4.2 Education and training on sustainable sport practices (all green deal objectives)

Education towards a culture of environmental sustainability in the sports sector will be essential if sport is to respond sufficiently to global environmental and climate emergencies. Education and training on environmentally sustainable sport practice is vital for sport decision-makers and also 'multipliers': those who engage with large parts of the sport community, including coaches, educators, trainers and event managers and communications and community liaison staff who could play a crucial role in spreading the culture of sustainable sports practice.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Provide funding and access to resources for certified education and training programmes in environmental sustainability and climate action. This can entail: • Providing webinars and training for the sports sector in sustainability and climate action in collaboration with environment ministries and departments and similar. • Developing and promoting relevant national level accredited training courses (Continuing Professional Development, CPD) for officials, staff, and volunteers in the sports sector. • Creating links with universities and colleges working in the field of environmental sustainability to the sports sector at national level. • Creating connections between sports organisations and schools and youth services for informal education on environmental sustainability. A good example of this is the development of national level 'youth labs' as part of the '<i>Healthy Lifestyles for All initiative</i>¹¹⁶ to ensure that sports are effectively hearing from and communicating to young people.	Public authorities
Embed training schemes and education at all levels European and national umbrella sport organisations should: • Support national federations and clubs with education and training opportunities, ideally with financial support. • Integrate the topic of environmental sustainability in all the management-training programmes. • Ensure that sport 'multiplier' roles such as coaches, leaders, instructors, and communications staff have environmental sustainability and climate action as part of their programmes or syllabus. • Provide general environmental sustainability education and communications on key green topics	Sport organisations, notably European and national sport federations

¹¹⁶ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/news/healthylifestyle4all-youth-ideas-labs-unveil-their-proposals>

to all officials, staff, and volunteers in the organisation, for example during on-boarding or induction processes.	
Partner up with universities and training providers to develop integrated skills development curricula Public authorities, European and national umbrella sport organisations should: • Provide students from relevant university faculties for example, environmental management, with traineeship opportunities and work together on environmental sustainability training for sports staff. • Partner with Universities to integrate environmental sustainability in the curricula of university programmes focusing on sport studies, particularly the courses on sport management and governance.	Public authorities Sport organisations, notably European and national sport federations

3.4.3 Promotion of sustainable sport practices (all green deal objectives)

The sports community has a responsibility to defend the environment and to adopt sustainable policies and actions. The global reach of sporting events also offers a significant opportunity to communicate on environmental sustainability issues, promote green practices and engage large audiences in campaigning or taking action on sport-related environmental topics.

When organising sporting activities, it is important to consider the benefits of promoting greener behaviours and send a message to participants, broadcast and online audiences, and spectators about the commitment of sport organisations towards sustainability and climate change.

Recommendations	Stakeholders involved
Promote clear communication towards greener practice by showcasing good practice in the field. • Recognise good practice, perhaps using a flag or other accreditation approach, for sports organisations implementing Green Deal objectives in their projects. • Make the most of existing initiatives with important communities, including for instance the European Climate Pact. • Consider an 'Earth Day' or something similar as part of the European Week of Sport (more than 13 million participants in 2022) or other similar large scale sport events at various scale.	Public authorities
• Like the #BeActive Awards the EU Sport Unit could develop a #BeGreen Award. • Set up a climate action pledge to carry out initiatives, activities or campaigns to promote sport and physical activity that encourages sustainable healthy lifestyles for all.	Public authorities

• Showcase examples of good practice to other sports and sectors, through events, seminars, and online resources like case studies.	
Leverage the power of sport to raise awareness on climate change and encourage greener behaviours. • Use existing competitions to reward sustainable behaviour and motivate fans to greener actions. • Have one sustainability go-to person in each sport organisation for internal and external coordination, be it a staff member or volunteers for smaller structures. • Work with famous athletes to communicate to a broad audience on sustainability and climate action. Support athletes who are leading by example and work with them to develop awareness-raising campaigns. • Nonetheless, the promotion of sustainable sport practices must be transparent and credible as stakeholders are more conscious than ever of greenwashing actions.	Sport organisations. European and national sport federations.
Communicate about environmental sustainability issues and actions to spectators. Spectators are usually drawn to interclub or international competitions managed by the clubs or federations. There are significant opportunities to influence spectators in terms of mobility and transport, goods, and services as well as through direct communication on environmental sustainability issues. Minimising waste at spectator events through promotion of the circular economy is a significant opportunity and was showcased at the UEFA Euro 2016 in France when the '<i>Foot for Food</i>'¹¹⁷ initiative delivered the message that food surpluses were redistributed to social NGO's. Advice for event organisers is dealt with in more detail in chapter II, section 3.3.	Event organisers
Collaborate to create common messages about environmental impacts that can be included in brand messaging. Sport clubs and federations are at the core of being able to influence the sporting goods sector through the purchase of goods and products. Having mechanisms in place to influence public and private purchasing practices toward more sustainable goods with a low carbon footprint could have a 'game changing' impact on sport practices through Green Public Procurements for example.	Sport clubs Sports Federations Industry
Similarly, many sport sponsors are keen to showcase their green credentials at the sports events they sponsor. Sports federations and clubs should look to their sponsors and partners to help provide financial support for their green initiatives and to help engage spectators and other	Sport clubs Sports Federations Industry

¹¹⁷https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/0253-0d7b1a31b1cf-1518e481b134-1000/cp_-_foot_for_food.pdf

stakeholders through jointly developed campaigns, marketing activations and communications.	
Encourage athletes to be environmental advocates Athletes are often seen as the role models for up-and-coming players and for spectators and fans. They are usually affiliated to a club or federation. There are increasing numbers of athletes who are actively campaigning for climate change and sustainability issues. Federations and clubs need to encourage athletes to be the voice of the planet and to harness their media and fan appeal around environmental issues. There are some good examples such as: • Athletes of the World¹¹⁸. • Ellen Macarthur Foundation.¹¹⁹ • Hannah Mills' big plastic pledge. • Killian Jornet Foundation.¹²⁰ • We Play Green.¹²¹ For more information see Annex V	Sport clubs. Sports Federations Industry

Simple Guidelines for successful green communications and campaigns (whilst avoiding greenwashing)

Many sports organisations are put off communicating on environmental sustainability issues as they feel they have not made enough progress themselves to be credible on the issue and fear being accused of greenwashing.

These concerns can be addressed and mitigated by ensuring some simple steps are taken:

- **Make sure your green communications are strategic and linked to your publicly available sustainability strategy.** Proactive, planned communications are less risky than reactive ones where you 'jump on a bandwagon'.
- **Don't over claim** – make sure you can back up claims about your initiatives or successes with facts (ideally verified by a credible third party – see point below)
- **Joining a respected initiative, such as UN's Sport for Climate Action**, or using a recognised charter or framework like ISO, are a great way to be sure you're on solid ground. Plus, you may be able to get the validating organisation to boost your communications through their channels.
- **Make sure you're tackling your high impact issues.** If your sport is powerboat racing, for example, then boasting about your office paper recycling scheme won't cut it on its own!
- **Be transparent and try to paint a complete picture.** Provide information on the evidence and information sources used for carbon footprint calculations, for instance. If you are at the start of your sustainability journey, then say so. Be honest about where you have room for improvement and what you're not (yet) doing well.
- **Be authentic.** Ideally make your communications and campaigns local to your organisation and relevant to your key audiences such as spectators, sponsors, and partners. Try to involve your community in your initiative for greater authenticity and greater impact.

¹¹⁸ <https://athletesoftheworld.org/>

¹¹⁹ <https://ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/>

¹²⁰ <https://www.kilianjornetfoundation.org/>

¹²¹ <https://weplaygreen.com/>

Annexes

Annex I - Relevant Policy Documents

Document	Description	Relevance for sport sector
European Green Deal Investment Plan (also referred to as Sustainable Europe Investment Plan (SEIP)) ¹²²	Financial pillar of the Green Deal. It aims to mobilise public and private financial resources to support around €1 trillion in green investment.	The investments can cover green investments in the sport sector, although it is not specifically mentioned within the regulations of the investment plan.
Just transition mechanism ¹²³	Under the SEIP, it ensures that EU transition to climate neutral policies is fair. Provides targeted support in the most affected regions, to alleviate the socio-economic impact of the transition.	The Just Transition Mechanism will support the transition of EU countries and particularly regions, which have a key role in addressing the sport sector.
European Climate Pact ¹²⁴	To reach the objectives of the Green Deal, the European Commission launched the European Climate Pact : a platform for organisations and citizens to work and learn together, to develop solutions and build networks for real change. The European Climate Pact is about promoting awareness and action in favour of the environment.	The European Climate Pact is an important awareness-raising and communication action that puts forward ambassadors and pledges from all sectors, including the sport sector.
Climate Adaptation Strategy ¹²⁵	The Commission pushes for the active inclusion of climate resilience issues in all pertinent policy areas. With three cross-cutting priorities: integrating adaptation into macro-fiscal policy, nature-based solutions for adaptation,	This effort also translates into sport, which would for example benefit from and participate in the collection and sharing of data on the Climate-ADAPT platform . ¹²⁷

¹²² The European Green Deal Investment Plan and JTM explained (europa.eu)

¹²³ The Just Transition Mechanism (europa.eu)

¹²⁴ European Climate Pact (europa.eu)

¹²⁵ Under the Green Deal, the Member States aim at reaching climate neutrality by 2050. The European Climate Law[1], adopted in 2021, make this goal legally binding. The same year, the European Commission established a new EU plan for climate change adaptation. https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/adaptation-climate-change/eu-adaptation-strategy_en

¹²⁷ <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/>

	and local adaptation action, it assists the continued development and execution of adaptation strategies and plans at all levels of governance. ¹²⁶	
New European Bauhaus ¹²⁸	The New European Bauhaus initiative is a creative and interdisciplinary initiative that connects the European Green Deal to our living spaces and experiences. brings citizens, experts, businesses, and institutions together to reimagine sustainable living.	The New European Bauhaus Compass in particular, will provide a guiding framework for sustainability in the area of sport, notably for infrastructure.
Biodiversity Strategy 2030 ¹²⁹	Comprehensive, ambitious, long-term plan for protecting nature and reversing the degradation of ecosystems. i.e., strict protection for areas of very high biodiversity and climate value	The promotion of healthy ecosystems, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions will be systematically integrated into urban planning, including the design of public spaces and infrastructures.
Farm to Fork strategy ¹³⁰	Lays down a new approach to ensure that agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, and the food value chain contribute appropriately to the objective for a climate neutral Union in 2050.	The strategy is a call to promote sustainable food consumption. This typically applies to the sport sector for sport events, food offered at office canteens, training centres, and athletes' nutrition.
New Circular Economy Action Plan ¹³¹	It targets how products are designed, promotes circular economy processes, encourages sustainable consumption, and aims to ensure that waste is prevented, and the resources used are kept in the EU economy for as long as possible.	Promote circular economy solutions for multiple applications related to sport (e.g., equipment, clothes, kits, merchandising, waste management).

¹²⁶ https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/adaptation-climate-change/eu-adaptation-strategy_en

¹²⁸ https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/index_en

¹²⁹ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/policy-documents/eu-biodiversity-strategy-for-2030-1>

¹³⁰ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en

¹³¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1583933814386&uri=COM:2020:98:FIN>

Zero pollution strategy and action plan ¹³²	Provides a compass to mainstream pollution prevention in all relevant EU policies, to step up implementation of the relevant EU legislation and to identify possible gaps. It includes targets on air, water, soil, and noise pollutions as well as waste generation and biodiversity.	Contribution of sports to reducing soil, air and water pollution by reducing plastic usage, waste generation, promoting zero pollution and by funding green infrastructures. Relevant for cross-sectoral solutions and city events.
Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy ¹³³	Aims to reduce emissions from cars, aviation, and maritime sectors, mostly through carbon pricing.	Most of the carbon emissions of sport events are due to mobility and transport. This will impact the use of cars and require public transport infrastructures to venues.
EU Renovation Wave ¹³⁴	The renovation wave strategy aims to intensify renovation efforts throughout the EU. The strategy promotes in particular renovations that reduce energy use, curb greenhouse gas emissions, increase the environmental performance of buildings and generate cost savings.	Relevant for renovation of sports infrastructures.
Examples of Regulations and Directives affecting sport sector		
REACH regulation ¹³⁵	The Regulation on the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH) is the main EU law to protect human health and the environment from the risks that can be posed by chemicals.	All-weather sports pitches that use plastic or rubber granules as infill material, which may contain potentially harmful chemicals including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), metals and phthalates. They may also release volatile and semi-volatile organic hydrocarbons (VOCs and SVOCs). The REACH Regulation and its annexes regulate the concentration of such substances. ¹³⁶ Additional substances known as PFAS chemicals, as well as lead and plant protection products can

¹³² https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/zero-pollution-action-plan_en

¹³³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0789>

¹³⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0662>

¹³⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02006R1907-20221217>

¹³⁶ <https://echa.europa.eu/hot-topics/granules-mulches-on-pitches-playgrounds>

		also affect sport pitches and equipment.
Regulation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products ¹³⁷	It sets new requirements to make products more durable, reliable, reusable, upgradable, reparable, easier to maintain, refurbish and recycle, and energy and resource efficient.	Sports products are not yet sufficiently repaired or recycled.
Fit for 55 Package ¹³⁸	Set of new legislations aimed at reaching Europe's objectives. The main areas of actions include the climate, transport, energy and taxation sectors.	The legislation regarding the energy performance of buildings which will apply to sports buildings¹³⁹. The Regulation setting new CO2 emission standards for cars and vans¹⁴⁰, meaning from 2035 it will no longer be possible to place cars or vans with an internal combustion engine on the market in the EU, may affect transport to and from sport venues and events.

Source: European Commission, treatment by the Green Sport Expert group.

¹³⁷https://commission.europa.eu/energy-climate-change-environment/standards-tools-and-labels/products-labelling-rules-and-requirements/sustainable-products/ecodesign-sustainable-products-regulation_en

¹³⁸ https://commission.europa.eu/document/19903c51-aaea-4c6d-a9c9-760f724a561b_en

¹³⁹<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/10/25/fit-for-55-council-agrees-on-stricter-rules-for-energy-performance-of-buildings/>

¹⁴⁰<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/10/27/first-fit-for-55-proposal-agreed-the-eu-strengthens-targets-for-co2-emissions-for-new-cars-and-vans/>

Annex II - Developing cross-sectoral synergies in sport

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
10 good principles for outdoor sports in protected areas by European Network of Outdoor Sports (ENOS)¹⁴¹ and the EUROPARC Federation¹⁴²	The European Network of Outdoor Sports and EUROPARC Federation jointly produced 10 principles for responsible use of protected areas. These Principles aim to promote good conduct among outdoor sports practitioners.	Tourism sector
Alpine Pearls¹⁴³	A good example of more sustainable resorts. The principle of the Alpine Pearls is to provide innovative tourism destinations and associated packages that protect the environment and reduce climate impact.	Tourism sector
Eurobarometer 525 on sport and physical activity¹⁴⁴	The Special Eurobarometer survey n° 525 on Sport and Physical Activity, which was carried out between 19 April and 16 May 2022 in the 27 EU Member States focuses on: 1) Frequency and levels of engagement in sport and other physical activity; 2) Where citizens engage in sport and other physical activity; 3) Understanding motivations and barriers to sport participation; 4) support for sport participation in citizen's local area; 5) Volunteering in sport; 6) Covid-19 and physical activity; 7) Sport and physical activity and environment; 8) Gender equality in sport and physical activity.	Health
FIFA Women's World Cup 2023¹⁴⁵	Applies a sustainable procurement policy and sourcing code for all procurement, licensing and sponsorship processes across the competition to protect people's rights and well-being, reduce environmental impact and promote sustainable economic development in supply chains. Enable women led, First Nations and Māori local and regional businesses to become event suppliers and prioritise local and regional sourcing.	Food

¹⁴¹ <https://www.outdoor-sports-network.eu/>

¹⁴² <https://www.europarc.org/>

¹⁴³ <https://www.alpine-pearls.com/fr/>

¹⁴⁴ <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2668>

¹⁴⁵ <https://www.fifa.com/social-impact/sustainability/fifa-wwc-2023-sustainability-strategy>

Forest Green Rovers ¹⁴⁶	UK's club known for being the first vegan football club in the world. They avoid single-use packaging in their catering outlets - replaced single-use sachets with refillable pump dispensers- and have cut plastic out in other areas. All cleaning materials are produced on site and use refillable bottles.	Food
Italy - Sport and Health	Since 2021, 'Sport and Health', the operational structure of the Department of Sport, has been focusing on the topic of training in the field of green and sustainable sport, by organising seminars dedicated to the concept of environmental sustainability with the aim of offering the fundamental knowledge, technical and operational tools, and finally experiences and good practices to act concretely in the direction of sustainability in sport. On 23 November 2022, the structure organised a seminar open to all, but in particular to sports managers, directors, technicians and athletes from FSN, DSA, EPS, Sport in Uniform, environmental and sports researchers, sports consultants, sports councillors and officials, and students. The aim of the seminar was to synthesize the research on the ecology of sport, so that sports enthusiasts, insiders, researchers, and practitioners have access to information. The seminar examined the sustainable management of events, both large and small, such as local events.	Health
Manual of good environmental practices in sport by IDJ Portugal	Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Sport. ¹⁴⁷ The manual addresses the ten key areas in the approach of an event or sports infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable development and suggests indicators that may allow monitoring the performance of an event or sports infrastructure, mainly in environmental terms.	Mobility and transport
Protect our winters	The association Protect our winters ¹⁴⁸ brings together athletes, scientists, creatives, and business leaders to	Tourism sector

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.fgr.co.uk/>

¹⁴⁷ https://pned.ipdj.gov.pt/documents/61051/77314/manual_web_eng.pdf/f36566ef-790f-a7df-bd29-f117b24e496a?t=1615999121680

¹⁴⁸ <https://protectourwinters.eu/>

	protect outdoor places from climate change, and to achieve carbon neutrality.	
Recycled Carbon fibre project of World Sailing	The project Recycled Carbon fibre project of World Sailing ¹⁴⁹ is a multi-sport collaboration with the aim of engaging with equipment end users. Working with World Sailing and the International Biathlon Union, supported by Wilson Sporting Goods, the alliance includes International Tennis Federation (ITF) and Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) as well as sports equipment manufacturers Starboard, SCOTT Sports and OneWay, who are collaborating to support an innovative and disruptive programme based on the reuse of carbon components within the sports sector.	Technology
Study published by Montagne Verte on the carbon footprint of ski trips	The study ¹⁵⁰ that analyses the impact of ski trips concludes that 57% of your carbon cost will be generated by travel to resort.	Mobility and transport
Surfrider Foundation	The Surfrider Foundation ¹⁵¹ launched a campaign called “Voice for the Ocean” with the aim of amplifying citizen’s voice to the highest European level to place ocean protection at the hearth of European’s political debate.	Tourism sector
UEFA EURO 2016 “Foot for Food” initiative	The Foot for Food initiative ¹⁵² to minimise food waste. It aimed to limit the losses linked to the sale of food around the stadiums. Throughout the competition, volunteers were present at 10 sites in 9 cities during 51 matches to collect surplus food.	Food
World Rowing and WWF	World Rowing has partnered with WWF ¹⁵³ as part of a strategic alliance. The objective of the initiative is to raise awareness about the many issues relating to Clean Water.	Tourism sector

¹⁴⁹ <https://worldsailingtrust.org/planet/carbon-fibre-circular-demonstration-project>

¹⁵⁰ <https://montagneverte.org/en/category/change/>

¹⁵¹ <https://surfrider.eu/>

¹⁵² https://www.uefa.com/MultimediaFiles/Download/uefaorg/General/02/42/47/58/2424758_DOWNLOAD.pdf

¹⁵³ <https://worldrowing.com/responsibility/environment/wwf-alliance/>

Annex III - Sustainable Sports Infrastructure

Examples from Member States¹⁵⁴

This section includes examples provided by different Member States in the field of sustainable infrastructures as well as examples from International organisations.

Initiative/Country	Description	Relevant for
Belgium – key resources on sustainable sport infrastructures	Belgium, Flanders Circular economy and sport infrastructures.¹⁵⁵ Circular Flanders is the hub and the inspiration for the Flemish circular economy. It is a partnership of governments, companies, civil society, and the knowledge community that will take action together. Belgium, French Speaking Community (General administration of Sport – ADEPS) Wallonie Call for proposals: «Energy renovation of sports infrastructure». The objective of the call is to minimise the environmental impact of sport infrastructure in line with the following guidelines¹⁵⁶ Brussels Sportcircular.brussels (Toolbox)¹⁵⁷ The Sport Circular project offers solutions and tools for sports facilities and local authorities wishing to integrate the circular economy into their projects. Association des établissements sportifs: Eco-energetic good practices information campaign.¹⁵⁸ This non-exhaustive list of best practices include simple steps to take (but which you may already be implementing), requiring little or no investment, to reduce energy expenditure in sports facilities.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials

¹⁵⁴ Some examples or projects may feature more than once in the different annexes because they may cover more than one aspect.

¹⁵⁵ <https://bouwen.vlaanderen-circulair.be/en>

¹⁵⁶ <https://infrastructures.wallonie.be/files/PDF/POUVOIR%20LOCAL/4-INFRASTRUCTURES-LOCALES/1%201%20Infrasports/Lignes%20directrices-AP-Renov-energ%c3%a9tique%20infrasp%20sportives.pdf>

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.sportcircular.be/>

¹⁵⁸ <https://www.aes-asbl.be/documentations/bonnes-pratiques-ecoenergetiques/>

Estonia Incentivise sustainable sport facility and structural parts.	These examples give insights into how the country has been supporting sport practices amid changes of seasons and warmer winters. To have conditions to practice football and other sports all year around, the government of Estonia decided to create a support measure to construct football pitches and indoor football domes with artificial turfs. The artificial turf must be reusable, as confirmed by an impartial test report accompanying the tender. Finally, the construction of the football pitch / indoor football dome must respect fundamental principles of the high-quality living environment. In order to have all around Estonia Regional Recreational Sports Centres¹⁵⁹ which offer high quality services to the people, an application round was created. Due to warm winters, the artificial snow production is very important to have conditions for skiing. With this support measure, several regional recreational sports centres have changed their lighting into more eco-friendly LED-systems and renovated their artificial snow production systems into more eco-friendly systems which produce the snow straight to the tracks instead of piling it up and then covering the track while using heavy machinery.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
France - Charter of 15 environmentally responsible commitments.	Peer Learning activity on environmental performance of sport facilities – summary of discussions and recommendations for the European Commission from the French Ministry of Sport. Compendium of experiences: Charter of 15 environmentally responsible commitments.¹⁶⁰ The purpose of the Charter of 15 Environmentally Responsible Commitments of Major Event Organisers and	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials

¹⁵⁹ <https://kul.ee/en/sports-and-exercise/sports-management/financing>

¹⁶⁰ <https://www.sports.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-01/t-l-charger-le-recueil-d-initiatives-des-signataires-organismes-et-gestionnaires-d-equipements-en-anglais--3280.pdf>

	Managers of Large-scale Sports Facilities and Venues is to instil those positive actions through which environmental issues are fully integrated into the organisation and management of sporting events, facilities and venues.	
Germany – key resources on sustainable sports facilities	"Peer Learning Activity" on sustainable sports facilities – September 2021, Munich.¹⁶¹ The peer-learning activity focused on four key topics: 1) Sustainable sports facilities; 2) Energy and Resource Efficiency; 3) Innovative Trends and 4) Sustainable infrastructures for sporting events. The keynote presentations on these four topics are available on the YouTube channel¹⁶² of the Federal Institute of Sport Science. Guidelines for Sustainable Sports Facility Construction The Publication outlines the principles, guidelines and advantages of sustainable sports hall construction, offers guidance and clarifies relevant planning principles. Social benefits of standardised and competition-oriented outdoor sports facilities.¹⁶³ The aim of the dissertation is to develop indicators on a functional sport level for assessing sustainability and to identify the social benefits of existing outdoor sports facilities.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
Italy: Esosport and	Esosport Recycle your shoes Repave your way – 2009. ¹⁶⁴ devised by Eso società Benefit ¹⁶⁵ in cooperation with the	Design, construction,

¹⁶¹https://www.bisp.de/SharedDocs/Kurzmeldungen/DE/Nachrichten/2021/NachberichtPeerLearningActivity.html;jsessionid=C63C2E9081F2445F994D0792AFA69AF8.1_cid371

¹⁶² <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvElxVwYnDsIBBaMJ3hNsoQ>

¹⁶³ <https://mediatum.ub.tum.de/?id=1657740>

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.esosport.it/chi-siamo>

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.eso.it/>

Milan Cortina 2026 Foundation	Gogreen Onlus Association.¹⁶⁶ The aim of the project is the valorisation of sports material through its recycling. Running shoes, inner tubes and tennis balls are collected and turned into new raw material for the creation of children's playgrounds with shockproof flooring and athletics tracks. In 2021, the Milan Cortina 2026 Foundation¹⁶⁷ announced that it had joined the UNFCCC, Sports for Climate Action Framework. Existing infrastructures in the clusters spread across Lombardy, Veneto, and Trentino Alto-Adige that will host events and competitions will be upgraded and made safe. These renovations are aimed at limiting the construction of new infrastructure to a minimum: only 8 per cent of the used venues will be built from scratch.¹⁶⁸	renovation and use of materials
The Netherlands – key resources	De Groene Club / The Green club¹⁶⁹ A sustainable programme for Dutch grassroots football clubs. Johan Crujff ArenA¹⁷⁰ Living lab to innovate¹⁷¹ Johan Crujff ArenA generates its own energy with an amount of 4200 solar panels on the roof. The 3-megawatt energy-storage system at the Johan Crujff ArenA is the largest energy storage system using second-life and new electric vehicle batteries in a commercial building in Europe. The Johan Crujff ArenA itself has set the local ambition to generate more energy than it consumes for its operations, for example using its local energy storage.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
Portugal Rehabilitate existing sport facilities	In 2023 Portugal created the 'Rehabilitation of Sport Facilities Programme'. Its main goal, in 2023, is	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.gogreenonlus.com/>

¹⁶⁷ <https://milanocortina2026.olympics.com/fr/fondation-milano-cortina-2026/>

¹⁶⁸ <https://milanocortina2026.olympics.com/it/news-giochi-olimpici-invernali/milano-cortina-2026-sostenibilita/>

¹⁶⁹ <https://www.degroeneclub.nl/>

¹⁷⁰ <https://www.johancrujffarena.nl/en/making-an-impact-together/duurzaamheid/>

¹⁷¹ <https://www.johancrujffarenainnovation.nl/home/>

	to promote the financing of interventions that promote the increase in the energy efficiency of sports facilities at the service of the population, which strengthen the use of renewable energies under self-consumption and lead to the effective reduction of energy consumption, such as indoor and outdoor lightening systems and installation of thermic solar panels.	Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
Portugal - key resources	Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Sport¹⁷² The manual addresses the ten key areas in the approach of an event or sports infrastructure, in order to promote sustainable development and suggests indicators that may allow monitoring the performance of an event or sports infrastructure, mainly in environmental terms. Recommendations for Reduction of Energy and Water Consumption in Sports Facilities The publication includes 20 recommendations for reducing energy and water consumption in sports facilities.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials

¹⁷²https://pned.ipdj.gov.pt/documents/61051/77314/manual_web_eng.pdf/f36566ef-790f-a7df-bd29-f117b24e496a?t=1615999121680

Resources from International and European organisations

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)¹⁷³ published the Sport and Biodiversity¹⁷⁴ guide. The publication analyses the significant impacts that sport can have on biodiversity, through the construction and use of sports venues and the staging of sporting events. This guide is designed to help decision makers understand these potential impacts, and to present options for mitigating them, as well as for maximising opportunities to use sport as a way to promote and enhance biodiversity conservation.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
International Olympic Committee (IOC) Sustainability Strategy	The IOC Sustainability Strategy¹⁷⁵ covers infrastructure and natural resources. Among its strategic intents for 2030 it includes: use of existing infrastructure and temporary (temporary and demountable venues are used where no longer term venue need exists or can be justified; If built infrastructure is viable and has a minimal environmental footprint; sites have a net positive impact on local communities, respect protected areas and conserve water resources and protect water quality.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Sustainable Infrastructures Guidelines	UEFA Sustainable Infrastructures Guidelines¹⁷⁶ UEFA developed a set of guidelines offering innovative solutions and principles, for infrastructures building and refurbishing. It aims to develop an interactive platform for knowledge sharing and best practices exchange that will be constantly updated and upgraded.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁷³ <https://www.iucn.org/>

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.iucn.org/resources/publication/sport-and-biodiversity>

¹⁷⁵ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability>

¹⁷⁶ https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/027b-168e898b309b-c76f49dada9e-1000/the_uefa_sustainable_infrastructure_guidelines.pdf

EU-funded projects

This section includes additional examples from different European Countries. The selected projects have been financed with European regional development funds, more specifically the [European Regional Development Fund](#) and the [INTERREG Europe](#) programme, as well as the [HORIZON 2020](#) programme.

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
Adventure-Tourism Centre of Kiviõli Estonia	The Adventure-Tourism Centre of Kivioli ¹⁷⁷ in the industrial North-Eastern area of Estonia is a sport infrastructure developed on the highest artificial hill in the Baltic States (which was created from the residue from processing of oil shale). The project contributed to the overall restructuring and diversifying of the regional economy in Ida-Viru County and helped position Estonia as an international adventure tourism destination. Ever since the completion of the centre, the attractiveness of the region skyrocketed, with 30,000 – 50,000 national and international tourists that visited the area annually. It offers activities such as oil shale mining, fire-fighting academy, traffic campus, high-quality adventure trail on poles, summer snowtube track with escalator lifts, disc golf tracks, bicycle pump track and downhill trails, watercrafts, etc. EU Funding programme: ERDF 2014-2020	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
EUROCYCLO project Belgium, France	The EUROCYCLO project ¹⁷⁸ aims to develop a discovery bike route across Europe by rendering available missing sections of bike paths or by extending cross-border bike node networks. This comprehensive project will create a tourist experience on bike routes in the midst of diverse environments: sea, countryside, city, lakes, and canals. EU Funding programme: ERDF - Interreg 2014-2020	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁷⁷ <https://seikluskeskus.ee/en/activity/adventure/>

¹⁷⁸ <https://www.eurocyclo.eu/>

GREENFOOT Project	The GREENFOOT project¹⁷⁹ offers a path for both the general public and stakeholders to engage in climate action. Engagement occurs through both football and crowdfunding campaigns, allowing casual fans, die-hard fans, environmentalists, football managers, stadium owners, and more, to have a say in how their teams, stadiums, and communities can contribute to the energy transition and the fight against climate change. EUROCROWD, one of the projects' partner, published a report on Crowdfunding For Sustainable Energy Transition of Football Stadiums and Sports Buildings In Europe¹⁸⁰, building on data collected throughout the GREENFOOT project. EU Funding programme: Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
LAST MILE project - Sustainable mobility for the last mile in tourism regions	The LAST MILE project¹⁸¹ aims to find innovative, flexible solutions for sustainable regional mobility systems. It wants to offer visitors the possibility to travel the 'last mile' of their travel chain sustainably and, at the same time, provide alternatives to car use for residents on their daily trips. It aims as well to transfer best practices and innovative approaches to regional policies. The 6 regional project partners have elaborated a set of regional reports analysing their territories in relation to the status-quo of sustainable mobility, flexible transport, and tourist activity.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁷⁹ <https://greenfoot-project.com/>

¹⁸⁰ <https://eurocrowd.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Crowdfunding-For-Sustainable-Energy-Transition-of-Football-Stadiums-and-Sports-Buildings-In-Europe.pdf>

¹⁸¹ <https://projects2014-2020.interregeurope.eu/lastmile/>

	Examples of good practices from the Best Practices Analysis report are the FGC train with stops on demand from Lleida to La Pobla de Segur (ES), BalticBike (ET), etc. EU Funding programme: ERDF – Interreg 2014-2020	
P.H.A.R.O.S. - Playground harbour and research of sustainability ¹⁸² Italy	The project tested and implemented integrated coastal zone management tools in Liguria (Italy) that should improve the environmental management of high-impact activities such as golf clubs and harbours. Best practices for harbours and golf courses operators have been developed. For tourist harbours, this involved the issues of quality of water, waste management, and energy savings. For golf courses, the issues were management of greens, water and energy savings, waste management and protection of biodiversity. EU Funding programme: LIFE programme (LIFE04 ENV/IT/000437)	Planning for sustainable use and legacy
Rehabilitation, equipment of the sports hall and flooring, extension of the sports hall annex at the "Bethlen Gábor" high school in Odorheiu Secuiesc¹⁸³ Romania	The investments are aimed at increasing the possibility offered to students of the Bethlen Gábor school in Odorheiu Secuiesc to carry out their sports lessons, or gymnastics, in a modern, adequately equipped hall, as well as supporting other extra-curricular sports activities - such as dance, martial arts or team games, simultaneously with the construction of a modern annex to the building and the setting up of a library, where students will be able to study in peace, after school, having the necessary resources. EU Funding programme: ERDF 2014-2020	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
Renovation of the Leutkirch im Allgäu sport hall	This project aims to use cost-effective and large-format serially prefabricated timber-frame elements made from locally sourced, renewable silver fir for	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁸² <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/2398>

¹⁸³ <https://www.vub.be/en/services-vub-campus-in-etterbeek-and-jette/living-campus-walk-green-walk-vub-campus/sustainable-swimming-pool-vub-campus>

Germany	the energetic renovation of building envelopes. By collecting basic data on the existing building stock, industrial prefabrication with high precision under consistent external conditions is made possible. This creates economically attractive alternatives for modernizing buildings with renewable materials. The on-site construction time can be exceptionally short, thus having minimal impact on the surrounding environment. EU Funding programme: ERDF 201-2020	Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
Sustainable Universiteit (VUB) pool¹⁸⁴ Vrije Brussel swimming Belgium	Together with public and private contributors (incl. ERDF), the VUB built the most sustainable swimming pool in the region. Good facilities, extensive opening hours, and democratic fees make this a popular, accessible swimming pool. The VUB swimming pool is a model of social innovation and sustainability. In late 2016, it won the <i>Be.Exemplary</i> award, which recognised it as 1 of the 10 innovative and ambitious energy-saving exemplary buildings in Brussels. EU Funding programme: ERDF 2014-2020	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials
Vuokatti Campus Finland	The Vuokatti Campus¹⁸⁵ is an area for leisure, work and study in the Kainuu region, Finland. The Vuokatti Campus creates an attractive environment that combines top-level sport training and studying in top facilities. For example, many national cross-country skiing teams practise in Vuokatti. Additionally, the Vuokatti Campus enables business and research around sport. This environment of outdoor sport as well as nature tourism makes the Kainuu region more valuable. EU Funding programme: ERDF, Interreg 2014-2020	Planning for sustainable use and legacy

¹⁸⁴ <https://www.vub.be/en/services-vub-campus-in-etterbeek-and-jette/living-campus-walk-green-walk-vub-campus/sustainable-swimming-pool-vub-campus>

¹⁸⁵ <https://vuokattisport.fi/en/olympic-training-center/vuokatti-sport-test-center/>

More project examples financed under the theme “Greener, carbon free Europe” on low carbon economy, climate change adaptation and risk prevention and environment protection and resource efficiency can be found in the [Kohesio website](https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/)¹⁸⁶. Managed by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, Kohesio is a comprehensive knowledge database that offers easy and transparent access to up-to-date information on projects and beneficiaries co-funded by EU Cohesion policy.

EU initiatives: The SHARE Initiative

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
SHARE initiative	The main goal of the SHARE initiative¹⁸⁷ is to raise awareness on the role of sport and physical activity in the context of regional and local development. SHARE aims to raise sport's profile in European, national, regional and local policy agendas. The SHARE initiative brings together public authorities, sport organisations, universities, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and business support organisations across Europe who are engaged in highlighting sport's importance for regional development. The SHARE initiative core experts and stakeholders have worked together to produce several research papers exploring various ways in which sport and physical activity can contribute to the future objectives of the EU Cohesion Policy.	Planning for sustainable use and legacy Design, construction, renovation and use of materials

¹⁸⁶ <https://kohesio.ec.europa.eu/en/>

¹⁸⁷ <https://sport.ec.europa.eu/policies/sport-and-economy/share-initiative>

Annex IV - Sports Event Resources

Examples from Member States

This section includes previously mentioned examples as well as additional examples from different European Countries proposed by members of the Expert Group.

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
Belgium/UCI	UCI ROAD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2021: SUSTAINABILITY REPORT¹⁸⁸ The 2021 Union cyclist international (UCI) Road World Championships decided to make sustainability one of the core values of Flanders 2021, alongside innovation and a state-of-the art culture. During this year's edition, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) partnered with Deloitte to calculate for the very first time the full CO2 footprint of the event, and to create a sustainability report, encompassing key learnings and recommendations on environmental, social and governance factors.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
Finland	Ekokompassi¹⁸⁹ is a domestic environmental system suitable for all industries, which offers the advantages of a high-quality standard tailored to SME operators. Ekokompassi is an industry-independent environmental system based on the international ISO 14001 standard¹⁹⁰. With the support of our experts, the organisation builds an environmental program with goals and measures to reduce environmental impacts and add a positive footprint to its operating environment. The environmental program is externally audited, and the company is awarded an environmental certificate. The environmental program is tailored to the organisation's own needs, and it supports the continuous development of the business.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact

¹⁸⁸ https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/be/Documents/uci_report_2021.pdf

¹⁸⁹ <https://ekokompassi.fi/briefly-in-english/>

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html>

	It has notably been used for the organisation of the Vuokatti European Youth Olympic Festival 2022.	
France	Optimouv ¹⁹¹ is a tool aiming to reduce the distance travelled by sports clubs and players without impacting the occurrence of sports events. The application generates possible scenarios for the organisations of sport events and potential places that minimise participants' needs to take transports.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
	The purpose of the Charter of 15 ¹⁹² Environmentally Responsible Commitments of Major Event Organisers and Managers of Large-scale Sports Facilities and Venues is to instil positive actions focusing on environmental protection through which environmental issues are fully integrated into the organisation and management of sporting events, facilities and venues. Jointly created by the WWF, the Ministry of Sport and sporting organisations, this Charter defines 15 shared, quantified targets establishing a new standard for environmental responsibility. See also updated charter from December 2022: https://www.sports.gouv.fr/media/1511/download	Planning the event itself Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
	The Charter 15 commitments ¹⁹³ is a collective tool that standardizes sport organisations' environmental and social ambitions. The environmentally responsible organisers of major international sporting events, undertake to make every effort to achieve the following 15 objectives for which the organisation is responsible, throughout the whole process: at their setting up, during the events, and at their dismantling (but not including the construction of facilities).	Planning the event itself Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Germany	Green Champions 2.0 online portal ¹⁹⁴	Planning the event itself

¹⁹¹ <https://www.optimouv.net/>

¹⁹² <https://www.sports.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-01/t-l-charger-le-recueil-d-initiatives-des-signataires-organismes-et-gestionnaires-d-equipements-en-anglais--3280.pdf>

¹⁹³ <http://www.wvc2020.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Sus-Dev-Charter-WVC2020.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.wvc2020.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Sus-Dev-Charter-WVC2020.pdf>

	Bilingual (German and English) online tool to help sport event's organisers to integrate sustainability in their events by detailing a wide variety of best and useful practices, examples of sustainably organised events and tailor-made recommended actions. (It is currently being revised and supplemented by a broader sustainability approach. Release planned for summer 2024.)	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Italy	Race for sustainability¹⁹⁵ On 2 March 2023, the Istituto per il Credito Sportivo launches the race for sustainability through the implementation of the DELTA platform for ESG investments. The Delta platform will be used to provide a measure of return on investment by measuring the environmental, social and governance (ESG) sustainability criteria of Credito Sportivo's policies. This is a step forward in the evolution of a Bank for the sustainable development of the country through the support of sport and culture. In this context, the most important synergy will be with the Association of Italian Savings Banks (Acri). In prospect, Ics and Acri signed an agreement in February to co-finance sustainable projects aimed at promoting social inclusion and combating inequality through sport and infrastructure.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact Establishing green procurement
	Manual for Sustainable sport event¹⁹⁶ Already in 2012, the UISP focused its activities on the theme of environmental protection and sustainability by producing the Manual for Sustainable Sporting Events in the context of the competition 'Buone pratiche di sostenibilità in con...corso' (Good Sustainability Practices in con...course) promoted by the UISP Regional Committee of Emilia Romagna. This handbook presents the main ecological, economic and ethical-social alternatives to be preferred, throughout	Planning the event itself Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.creditosportivo.it/senza-categoria/piattaforma-delta-credito-sportivo/>

¹⁹⁶ https://www.uisp.it/vela2/files/principale/uisp_manuale_eventi_sportivi_sostenibili.pdf

	the organisation of an event, in order to reduce impacts and at the same time increase positive spin-offs towards the main stakeholders (UISP members, local communities, venues, local administrations, etc.).	
	Designing sustainable sport events¹⁹⁷ In 2021, the Rector of the Politecnico di Torino Guido Saracco and Romy Gai, legal representative of AWE International Group PLC, signed an agreement with the aim of researching and designing major sporting events that meet energy sustainability and recyclability standards. The five-year agreement provides for the development of joint research, innovation and training activities in the area of organising world-class sporting events and consultancy in the sports industry with a focus on the principles of energy sustainability and the circular economy.	Planning the event itself Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Netherlands	Green Deal Circular Festivals (GDCF)¹⁹⁸ The Green Deal Circular Festivals (GDCF) supports 'green growth' by stimulating sustainable innovation. It aims to develop and implement a sustainable model for circular festivals, create a circular festival roadmap, share knowledge and best practices, develop and implement a monitoring tool, and inspire other festivals and organisations. GDCF Toolbox¹⁹⁹ A toolbox offering practical solutions from the field around 6 themes: Energy, Food & Drinks, Plastics, Resource Efficiency, Travel & Transportation and Water, has been developed.	Planning the event itself Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.sporteconomy.it/accordo-tra-politecnico-di-torino-e-awe-international-group-per-eventi-sportivi-a-impatto-zero/>

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.circularfestivals.nl/default.aspx>

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.circularfestivals.nl/toolbox/default.aspx>

Examples from International and European organisations

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA)	Introductory Guide for Sustainable Events²⁰⁰ The FIA published this manual to provide technical support and guidance to event organisers on how to identify simple and clear actions for improving the sustainability performance of events. FIA also prepared internal guidance on Sustainable Event Guide and a Code of conduct for FIA suppliers of accommodation and conference services.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)	FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 sustainability strategy²⁰¹ The sustainability strategy for the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, that will be held in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand, cover actions over the key topics of accessibility, safeguarding, human rights, workers' rights, gender equality, health, climate action, waste minimisation, green buildings, and procurement. It accounts for the global and local context of the Cup and aligns with FIFA's long standing sustainability framework and ambitions, and with the social, economic, and environmental priorities in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Waste management Establishing green procurement and supplier protocols
	FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 Sustainability Strategy²⁰² The Sustainability Strategy of the Women's World Cup 2019 was centred around nine topics: diversity, health, access for all, human resources, biodiversity, waste management, climate change, Responsible Procurement, Boosting local development. It notably emphasized the importance to prevent environmental harms rather than cure it	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability

²⁰⁰ https://www.knaf.nl/images/2020/V3-Guide_for_Sustainable_Events.pdf

²⁰¹ <https://www.fifa.com/social-impact/sustainability/fifa-wwc-2023-sustainability-strategy>

²⁰² <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/34aaa8b282d684e6/original/r2sks010xbbqhhobnkq1-pdf.pdf>

	and to tap in the local know-how and boost the economy of the host country.	
	Study on the environmental and socio-economic impact of the FIFA Women's World Cup France 2019²⁰³ This study provides stakeholders and the public with a detailed account of FIFA Women's World Cup 2019's actions and the impact stemming from the combined efforts along with the Host Cities in three fields put forward a competition as respectful as possible for the economy, the environment and social matters. The study looks at the carbon footprint and at the indirect and direct economic contribution of the Cup to GDP (€284 million overall), in each concerned region, and the measures taken to mitigate its negative impacts, allowing to understand the legacy left by the Cup.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
	Requirement for all official venues to obtain sustainable certification²⁰⁴ FIFA requires since 2012 all of FIFA World Cup™ stadiums to be designed and built following sustainable building standards in order to minimise resource requirements as well as any negative environmental impacts from construction and operation of tournament sites. The venues, which are assessed using the Global Sustainability Assessment System (GSAS), must meet the minimum certification standards design & build, renovation, construction management and operation, to achieve sustainable certification.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
International Olympic Committee (IOC)	Sustainability Essentials²⁰⁵ A series of practical guides for sports organisations to navigate the complexities of sustainability and develop effective sustainability programmes. Part of this series of guides is the Plastic Game Plan for Sport²⁰⁶, a toolkit to help sport organisers to create a plastic plan	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Waste management

²⁰³ <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/632b185247ced45a/original/I1gppgwfk8frtxs9av4f-pdf.pdf>

²⁰⁴ <https://www.fifa.com/technical/stadium-guidelines>

²⁰⁵ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability/essentials>

²⁰⁶ <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/IOC/What-We-Do/celebrate-olympic-games/Sustainability/Plastic-game-plan-for-sport-guide.pdf>

	and to work with suppliers, athletes and fans to reduce, reuse and recycle. The Sustainable sourcing in sport²⁰⁷ guide is intended to help organisations adopt more sustainable sourcing practices and make responsible choices when buying goods and services.	Establishing green procurement and supplier protocols
International Olympic Committee (IOC)	IOC Sustainability Report 2021²⁰⁸ & 2018 The IOC Sustainability Reports track the IOC progress towards achieving its sustainability strategy which is framed around five interconnected areas of focus i.e., climate, workforce, mobility, sourcing and resource management, and infrastructure and natural sites.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
	Paris 2024 Climate Ambitions²⁰⁹ The key levers of the Paris 2024 environmental strategy are mastering climate impact and environmental impact, privileging a circular economy and building resilience. These principles are applied to every activity carried on to organise the Games, e.g., energy, transportation, food, digital activities generated, etc. Paris 2024 ambitions are to emit less than half than previous games and become neutral by 2024. This will be achieved by anticipating emissions and conceiving a low-carbon game, reducing further emissions in other sector (food, transport, construction), setting two offsetting local and international programmes to generate a positive impact on climate, and lastly by sharing knowledge, methodologies, tools, etc... to mobilise the sport community in making the sports sector responsible.	

²⁰⁷ https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/IOC/What-We-Do/celebrate-olympic-games/Sustainability/sustainability-essentials/SUSTAINABILITY-ESSENTIALS-ISSUE-3-final.pdf?_ga=2.120131083.222796918.1682503884-233309390.1682503884

²⁰⁸ https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Documents/News/2021/12/IOC-Sustainability-Report-2021.pdf?&_ga=2.45147047.222796918.1682503884-233309390.1682503884

²⁰⁹ <https://press.paris2024.org/videos/georgina-grenon-director-of-environmental-excellence-on-environmental-challenges-2ea4-7578a.html?lang=en>

International Organisation for Standardization (ISO)	ISO 14001 standards for organisations ²¹⁰ The ISO 14001 is a set of standards that provides a framework that a company or organisation can follow to set up an effective environmental management system.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)	Sport and Biodiversity Guide²¹¹ The IUCN designed this guide to help decision makers understand the impact of the construction and use of sports venues and the staging of sporting events on biodiversity, and how they could mitigate this impact and use instead sport as a way to promote and enhance biodiversity conservation.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
	IUCN Publication Sports and urban biodiversity²¹² This guide shows how sports events and the sites and infrastructure used to host them can help enhance nature in urban settings. It aims to help local authorities, clubs, event organisers and sports federations to deliver sports events that meet the needs of people and nature too.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
	Mitigating biodiversity impacts of sports events ²¹³ These guidelines provide all the parties involved in the organisation of sports events with an overview of the issues and risks. They also offer help on how to make informed choices in avoiding harmful impacts and achieving positive outcomes. The guidelines stress that biodiversity should be considered through every phase of the event lifecycle, from planning through to delivery.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability

²¹⁰ <https://www.iso.org/iso-14001-environmental-management.html>

²¹¹ <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2018-001-En.pdf>

²¹² <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49127>

²¹³ <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2020-007-En.pdf>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	OECD guidelines for global events²¹⁴ The OECD ²¹⁵ issued a set of recommendations on how to design and execute global events that generate long-term benefits. Alongside, it provides a Global Events Toolkit which turns the OECD Recommendation into practice, including concrete guidance to local and national governments, event organisers and hosts.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games	The Paris 2024 Guide for responsible events²¹⁶ (Available in FR; EN available soon) This guide has been developed to provide practical recommendations for the organisations of socially and environmentally responsible events. It provides tips and good practices on how to lay a solid foundation for the organisation of the event, choose the right venue, privilege low-carbon transportation, make sure the event is accessible to all, minimise the footprint of catering and hospitality, communicate in an eco-friendly way, minimise waste and raise awareness.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
	Report Sustainability and Legacy (FR; EN available soon) The purpose of this report is to present the progress made in implementing the sustainability and legacy strategies of the Games, and to accurately and transparently describe the progress made in relation to the set ambitions.	
	Climate Coach²¹⁷ Paris 2024 has created a dedicated "climate coach" for sports events, designed to help its employees reduce their personal and professional carbon footprint. It describes the strategy for sustainability and long-term positive	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact

²¹⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/global-events-recommendation.htm>

²¹⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/about/>

²¹⁶ <https://medias.paris2024.org/uploads/2021/10/PARIS-2024-211001-GUIDE-EVENEMENTS-RESPONSABLES-fr.pdf>

²¹⁷ <https://www.coachclimateevenements.org/>

	impact of the 2024 games, and its implementation. Carbon tracking software Toovalu The French start-up Toovalu has developed its "own tracking software operational", a tool that allows tracking of carbon emissions and that has been used for that purpose by the Paris 2024 organising committee. A carbon allowance (budget) is defined in advance considering estimated unavoidable carbon emissions. The Toovalu helps Paris 2024 track its carbon emissions in order to ensure that the emissions do not exceed the predefined carbon budget.	Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI)	UCI Sustainability Guidelines Directives de durabilité de l'UCI²¹⁸ These guidelines provide simple, practical and essential information on key aspects of sustainability for National Federations, event organisers, teams, and other cycling stakeholders to start developing effective sustainability programmes - including detailed checklists to deliver sustainable events.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability
Union of European Football Associations (UEFA)	UEFA Circular Economy Guidelines The UEFA Circular Economy Guidelines constitute a practical idea to football event organisers and stakeholders in the circular economy. The actual guide focuses on waste management and provides a 4R framework (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover) in the Food&Beverage industry, with the objective to achieve zero plastic and food waste within UEFA and at UEFA events. It will be expanded to cover more extensively Energy and Water, Apparel and Football Equipment, and Event Materials.	Waste management
	Sustainability event management checklist The UEFA is currently preparing a Sustainability event management checklist, that will be part of its sustainability strategy, and to be ready and tested for the Euro2024.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability

²¹⁸ <https://fr.uci.org/durabilite/2aT8Ri5QQ2Nr67iwrEN8K4>

EU-Funded projects

This section includes an additional example from the [LIFE programme](#), the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action.

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
ECOMASS - Eco-Efficient Mass Event EMS manual ²¹⁹	The Helsinki University of Technology, along with the organising committee of the 2005 World Athletics Championship hosted in Helsinki, created the first environmental programme in the history of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), called the programme ECOMass, from 'Eco-Efficient Major (or Mass) Event'. The programme looked to simultaneously reduce the environmental burden of the games and cut costs by promoting green energy, reduced CO2 emissions and waste management strategies. EU Funding programme: LIFE Programme.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact
LIFE TACKLE - Teaming-up for A Conscious Kick for the Legacy of Environment	LIFE TACKLE, a project implemented between 2018 and 2021 by the Institute of Management of Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna has been awarded, together with UEFA and additional 7 international partners, aims at improving the environmental management of football matches and the overall level of awareness and attention toward environmental issues in the football sector, engaging its most relevant stakeholders – National Football Associations, Football Clubs, Stadiums managers and Supporters. EU Funding programme: LIFE Programme.	Developing an event strategy including environmental sustainability Using measurement-based approaches to minimise impact Consulting stakeholders and local communities

²¹⁹ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/2428>

Annex V - Capacity-building, Education and Promotion Resources

Examples from Member States

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
French Speaking Community – General Administration of Sport (ADEPS) of Belgium	Innovative business models of the circular economy applied to amateur sport in the Brussels Capital Region Sportcircular.brussels ²²⁰ promotes the adoption of Eco-energetic good practices ²²¹ through tailored advice, support and the provision of specific expertise. The initiative was the Winner of the "ADEPS 2022 Thesis Prize" ²²² . It also developed a Toolbox ²²³ including 180 short notes to use in green sport management or green infrastructure projects. The initiative also launched an Information campaign towards sport clubs and associations (Association of Sports Establishments).	Capacity-building, promotion and engagement
Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français CNOSE ²²⁴ France	Social Responsibility of Sport Organisations Platform for sport federations and sport clubs (self-evaluation and tips for concrete measures and activities)	Capacity-building
Czech Olympic Committee + 5 NOCs	ASAP – As Sustainable As Possible - Project The project was based on an effective mentor-mentee cooperation between NOCs, which have more experience with sustainability and those, which are at the beginning of their journey. One of the project outputs is a guide on how to organise an "Introduction to Sustainability" ²²⁵ training for staff of a sport organisation.	Capacity-building
Energy and Water Agency, Sport	Leading sport organisations to higher energy efficiency' scheme ²²⁶	Capacity-building

²²⁰ <https://www.sportcircular.be/>

²²¹ <https://www.aes-asbl.be/documentations/bonnes-pratiques-ecoenergetiques/>

²²² <https://www.sport-adepts.be/index.php?id=prix-memoire-tfe>

²²³ <https://www.sportcircular.be/tool-box/>

²²⁴ <https://cnosf.franceolympique.com/cnosf/>

²²⁵ <https://www.asap-sport.com/results>

²²⁶ <https://energywateragency.gov.mt/new-scheme-for-sports-organisations-to-increase-energy-efficiency-launched/>

Malta	Led by the Energy and Water Agency together with SportMalta, this scheme aims to increase energy efficiency in sport organisation. It provides assistance to sport organisations in the form of financial grants, of up to €50,000 per organisation to implement changes or introduce new energy saving appliances, intelligent lighting, and other actions that would result in at least 20% energy savings. 40 sports organisations benefitted from the €1 million allocated for the installation of energy-efficient systems. This project will be saving around 340 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually. The 40 clubs were able to implement more than 60 projects encompassing light installations, heat pumps, appliances, and pumping equipment, amongst others.	
German football league Bundesliga Germany	Adopting sustainability criteria for licensing regulations²²⁷ The Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2 have become the first major professional football leagues to include binding sustainability guidelines in their licensing regulations. A multistage implementation model is envisaged. The Minimum Criteria approved apply to three areas: "club management and organisation", "environment and resources" and "stakeholder groups". In future, the clubs will be obliged to provide evidence of a sustainability strategy and an environmental strategy, for instance. Other obligations include annual measurements of water consumption, wastewater production and energy consumption, as well as a mobility and traffic analysis. In addition, all clubs must prove that they have a code of conduct for all employees, clearly distance themselves from all kinds of discrimination, and commit to equality, diversity and inclusion.	Capacity-building

²²⁷ <https://www.euractiv.com/section/health-consumers/news/sustainability-core-requirement-for-german-bundesliga/>

Portuguese Institute for Sport and Youth Portugal	Manual of Good Environmental Practices in Sport - Environmental Ethics²²⁸ This environmental ethics manual identifies the environmental issues that arise because of the impact of sports on the natural environment, while justifying why sport and environment are a winning combination. It introduces sustainable approaches to the organisation of sports events and infrastructures building and suggest indicators that would allow measuring the performance of an event or sports infrastructure, mainly in environmental terms.	Capacity-building
	Flag of Ethics²²⁹ The <i>Bandeira da Ética</i> or Flag of Ethics is a certification that recognizes ethical values and good practices in the Sports sector i.e., clubs, associations, etc. It considers good practices in various fields such as environmental ethics, social inclusion, gender equality, etc.	Promotion and Communication
Slovak Olympic and Sport Committee Slovakia	Webinars of the Olympic Values Education Programme (OVEP) Program for 2021²³⁰ The Slovak Olympic and Sport Committee has been organising a series of webinars about topic related to Olympic Values for teachers in which they integrated environmental sustainability. They cooperate with an NGO called Planet lover. They notably recommend sport organisations to work with specialist institutions and NGOs and create joint initiatives and projects.	Capacity-building
SEO/BirdLife, Ecoembes Spain	Project 'LIBERA, united against garbage'²³¹ Within the Green Sport Flag project, a subproject, the Proyecto Libera, was born to stop the consequences of garbage abandoned in natural spaces, garbage, in the different Spanish ecosystems. The	Communication, promotion and engagement

²²⁸ https://pned.ipdj.gov.pt/documents/61051/77314/manual_web_eng.pdf/f36566ef-790f-a7df-bd29-f117b24e496a?t=1615999121680

²²⁹ https://pned.ipdj.gov.pt/documents/61051/77314/manual_web_eng.pdf/f36566ef-790f-a7df-bd29-f117b24e496a?t=1615999121680

²³⁰ <https://www.asap-sport.com/news/olympic-values-education-programme-in-slovakia-promotes-sustainability-in-sport>

²³¹ <https://proyectolibera.org/>

	objective of this initiative is to raise awareness and mobilize the public to keep natural spaces free of waste so that we can, in this way, release much more life in favor of biodiversity, with the following means: - o ECO-AMBASSADORS Program - o ECO-VOLUNTEERS Program - o ACTIVATIONS in sport events - o "GREEN SPORT FLAG" badge for sport events and Sport Federations - o Communication plan	
Spanish Sports Association (ADESP) Spain	Green Sport Flag project²³² A label to identify the sports competitions committed to the environment. Green Sport Flag is the action plan of the Spanish Sports Association (ADESP) to promote environmental sustainability by raising awareness and sensitizing society through sport.	Communication, promotion and engagement
English Football League (EFL), GreenCode UK ²³³	EFL Green Clubs²³⁴ The EFL joined forces with GreenCode – the environmental accreditation scheme from environmentalist Dale Vince and the team who have helped Forest Green Rovers become recognised by the United Nations and FIFA as the world's greenest football club, to implement EFL Green Clubs, a League wide scheme that will help support Clubs across the country to improve their environmental practices and operations. With the aim of sharing that expertise across its 72 members, EFL Green Clubs comprises an accreditation scheme that assesses clubs environmental rating and offers steps for continual improvement. After an initial assessment of operations, clubs are given bespoke guidance and practical advice on how to implement change in their environmental operations. As all EFL clubs will be at different stages of their environmental journey, when club operations are at the required level for a full audit, they will be put forward to	Communication, promotion and engagement Capacity-building

²³² <http://www.greensportflag.com/>

²³³ Although the UK is no longer part of the Union, the example has been included because of its potential interest to readers.

²³⁴ <https://www.efl.com/about-the-efl/green-clubs/>

	become GreenCode accredited, which is the ultimate goal.	
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Examples from International and European organisations

The sport movement is actively championing environmental sustainability through sport. We present below some examples of good practices for environmental sustainability from sport federations:

Organisation(s)	Description	Relevant for
Athletes for the Earth ²³⁵	Campaign by Earth Day Network to profile Olympic and professional athletes as spokespeople for Earth Day and to increase environmental awareness and activism, with a focus on climate action.	Communication and engagement
Fédération Internationale de football association FIFA	Training Programmes FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ - Launch of an online open course on Sustainability and Major Sport Events in partnership with the Josoor Institute and the Hamad Bin Khalifa University. Over 3000 students have enrolled across more than 95 countries. FIFA Football for Schools (F4S)²³⁶ A programme run by FIFA, in collaboration with UNESCO, which aims to contribute to the education, development and empowerment of around 700 million children around the globe. The programme has been designed to promote targeted life skills and competencies through football and contribute to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Currently FIFA is updating the programme to also raise awareness on climate change and climate action. FIFA has been working for years together with UNFCCC on climate change. Most recently, at the COP26 in Glasgow, FIFA has renewed its committed to the UNFCCC Sports for Climate Action Framework. As a signatory of the framework, FIFA has committed to reduce its emissions by 50% until 2030, become climate neutral until 2040, and use the global reach of football to raise awareness on climate change and climate action. As part of this commitment FIFA is planning to use also the F4S programme as one of the tools to raise awareness on the topic among school children.	Capacity-building Promotion

²³⁵ <https://www.earthday.org/campaign/athletes-for-the-earth/>

²³⁶ <https://footballforschools.fifa.com/en/>

	Carried out numerous campaigns on social and environmental issues and worked with former and current athletes to amplify the key messages. Topics addressed by those included tobacco, healthy living, climate change, domestic violence as well as awareness raising messages to help protect the individual and reduce the spread of COVID.	Communication and engagement
Green Code ²³⁷	GreenCode is a global green accreditation scheme which is accessible to all organisations. The GreenCode Standards have been in operation across multiple industries for over 25 years, including in football. It recently launched an accreditation partnership with the Irish Football league (and all clubs), based on an approach that has been developed over many years which has developed the world's greenest football club, Forest Green Rovers.	Communication and engagement
International Olympic Committee IOC	Sustainability Essentials²³⁸ A series of practical guides on various aspects of sustainability, including climate action, sustainability management, or sourcing.	Capacity-building
International Olympic Committee IOC	Olympic Movement Sustainability Case Studies²³⁹ The case studies showcase the best practices of National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and International Sports Federations (IFs) illustrating how they are actively contributing towards a more sustainable world. They form part of a strategic support system made available to the Olympic Movement through the IOC Sustainability Strategy. Each case study is aligned with one or more of the IOC's five sustainability focus areas: infrastructure & natural sites; sourcing & resource management; mobility; workforce; and climate as well as the SDGs.	Capacity-building
OPES, ENGSO, Logos Basket, RHA	BAGS – Be Active for Greener Sport²⁴⁰ BAGS promotes a behavioural change, by raising awareness on the topic and building the capacity of sport clubs and organisations to put in place sustainable measures when organising trainings, competitions, and events. The connection between sport and environment will also serve as an attractor for volunteers, passionate for this	Capacity-building

²³⁷ <https://www.greenknightstudios.com/work/greencode/>

²³⁸ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability/essentials>

²³⁹ <https://olympics.com/ioc/sustainability/ioc-as-leader-of-the-olympic-movement/case-studies>

²⁴⁰ <https://international.opesitalia.it/projects/bags/>

	topic and who are not sport field members or who have left sport fields for several reasons. Based on the toolkit of Play Green.	
The European Healthy Stadia Network Healthy Stadia Network²⁴¹	Active Mobility Guidance - How to promote walking and cycling to sports venues This guidance is designed to support colleagues across Europe in stadium operations, events, transport and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) roles with the knowledge and tools to increase provision for walking and cycling to sports venues. The guidance establishes the public health, environmental, and logistical rationales for promoting active mobility, how to take a collaborative approach with key stakeholders, and the infrastructure needed to facilitate walking and cycling for both fans and staff. The guidance also explores how walking and cycling can work with public transport as part of a comprehensive sustainable transport strategy and provides case studies and monitoring and evaluation tools to assess the impact of engaging in the active mobility agenda.	Capacity-building
International Rafting Federation²⁴²	The IRF contributes to the portal which is a free online platform dedicated to sport and sustainable practices. Created to collate sport's sustainable efforts onto one single platform, this portal features a vast array of resources to inform, educate and inspire.	Promotion
Sail GP Impact League²⁴³	Tracks the positive actions the participants make to reduce their overall carbon footprint. SailGP's Impact League has a set of sustainability criteria - social and environmental - to operate against with each team awarded points based on its fulfilment of these criteria. The criteria range from pioneering new technologies focusing on clean energy solutions and removing all single-use plastics, to diversity and inclusion and using the team's voice for good.	Communication and engagement
The European Network of Outdoor Sports²⁴⁴	Developed a policy position paper on the European Green Deal that encompasses a series of recommendations, actions, and commitments for the outdoor sports sector.	Communication and engagement

²⁴¹ <https://healthystadia.eu/healthy-stadia-concept/>

²⁴² <https://www.internationalrafting.com/>

²⁴³ <https://sailgp.com/general/purpose/impact-league/>

²⁴⁴ <https://www.outdoor-sports-network.eu/>

Trails are Common Ground ²⁴⁵	A coalition of people, businesses, and advocacy groups working together to create a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for anyone who steps, rides or rolls onto any trail, anywhere. Their approach leaves behind finger-wagging, blaming, and shaming in favour of resources that help people become better trail citizens and give communities and agencies tools to manage and improve their trails.	Promotion
Union of European Football Associations UEFA	The EU Green Deal Campaign In 2021 UEFA and the European Commission launched a three-year joint communications campaign which highlights UEFA's support to the EC in helping to raise public awareness about Europe's climate and energy priorities. As part of the campaign - a commitment to support the flagship initiative EU Green Deal - a series of half-time TV adverts is being broadcast all over Europe across three seasons from 21/22 up to 23/24. The adverts are supported by in-game pitch-side LED boarding messages. The second instalment of the campaign was launched in October 2022 and promotes EU messages on saving energy and encourages people to take everyday steps to help tackle climate change and face the energy crisis in Europe. Titled "Energy Saving Fans", the TV spot has been shown during the 2022-2023 season across UEFA's pan-European men's and women's club and national team competitions, including the UEFA Men's Champions League and UEFA Women's Champions League. The joint TV campaign fulfils a key objective of UEFA's commitment to the European Climate Pact, which invites citizens, communities and organisations to help the European Union achieve the Green Deal and Europe's transition to an economy with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The campaign is a key milestone in the implementation of the Arrangement for Cooperation between UEFA and the European Commission which reaffirms UEFA's commitment to support EU societal priorities, as well as to promote integrity in sport and the European Sport Model.	Communication and engagement

²⁴⁵ <https://trailsarecommonground.org/about/>

Athletes-led initiatives

The popularity of top athletes, their growing awareness of climate emergency and their role in championing greener behaviours can be very effective to promote the objectives of the European green deal. Some Athletes-led initiatives are detailed below:

Athlete	Project/Initiative	Relevant for
Ellen Macarthur	The Ellen Macarthur Foundation is charity committed to creating a circular economy, which is designed to eliminate waste and pollution, circulate products and materials (at their highest value), and regenerate nature.	Communication and engagement
Theresa Zbell	Fundación ECOMAR ²⁴⁶ Non-profit organisation founded in 1999 by Theresa Zbell, the only Spanish woman to have won two Olympic Games. Encourage young people to practice a healthy lifestyle through water sports and to commit themselves to caring for the planet on a daily basis through activities such as coastal clean-ups.	Promotion
Hannah Mills	The Big Plastic pledge has been founded by Hannah Mills, an Olympic gold and silver medallist, a sailor and an IOC sustainability ambassador. The pledge seeks to unite all Olympic and professional athletes around the globe around this topic and use their influence to drive positive changes towards environmental sustainability and eliminate plastic waste. The Pledge calls on signatories to follow nine key steps to limit plastic use – or as many as possible.	Communication and engagement
Kilian Jornet	The Kilian Jornet Foundation ²⁴⁷ is developing various initiatives on the preservation of the mountain environment, including: Education projects in partnership with schools and universities, such as the Athlete Climate Academy to empower other athletes to take action, and research projects capturing the impact of climate change on mountains (World Glacier Monitoring Service) The Green Trail Concept with the development of an EU sustainability certification system. The Foundation also offers simple and applicable tips to reduce its environmental footprint both in mountain sport and in daily habits	Communication and engagement, training and capacity-building
Martin Helseth	Be a friend of nature ²⁴⁸ . The Norwegian Olympic rower and EU Climate Ambassador collected seven tonnes of waste over a summer and urges fellow athletes and his fans to take care of rubbish responsibly.	Communication and engagement

²⁴⁶ <https://fundacionecomar.org/>

²⁴⁷ <https://www.kilianjornetfoundation.org/>

²⁴⁸ <https://olympics.com/athlete365/voice/be-a-friend-to-nature/>

	He issued a challenge where he encouraged people to donate a small amount of money for every kilo of rubbish collected (through freediving) I would take a picture of it and encourage people to donate a small amount of money. The crowdfunding campaign really took off, and Martin ended up collecting seven tonnes of plastic waste. This led to the development of regular Sunday clean-ups in different places around Oslo.	
Morten Thorsby	Morten Thorsby launched We play green²⁴⁹ in 2020 to link the world's most followed sport (football) to the world's most pressing issue (climate change) and support the "Green Shift". Ambassador role of football players, leveraging on their important reach to raise awareness about climate change and encourage a broad number of fans to take action towards the green shifts. We Play Green set up a mentoring scheme (Player Program) to provide players with the training, coaching, sustainability education, and support they need to become confident leaders off the pitch. With 16 prominent men and women players actively supporting the cause, the organisation is steadily growing. Morten Thorsby is also an ambassador in Germany for the European Climate Pact.	Communication and engagement, capacity-building
Nico Rosberg	Former Formula 1 top athlete, Nico Rosberg started a second career on environmental sustainability and founded the GREENTECH festival²⁵⁰, a global platform for innovative and pioneering green technologies. He champions and invests in green tech solutions such as e-mobility and set up the Rosberg x racing team that competes in Extreme E, the first motorsport series focused entirely on climate protection, social and environmental causes.	Communication and engagement

²⁴⁹ <https://weplaygreen.com/>

²⁵⁰ <https://greentechfestival.com/>

EU-funded projects

Initiative	Description	Relevant for
Bike Route of Friendship and Health – Porecanka (IT, SL, HR)²⁵¹	The Route of Health and Friendship is the main green route in Istria. The shared objective of the “<i>Parenzana</i>” project was to develop a common tourism infrastructure which can serve principally as a cycling path; however, it can be used also for running, roller-skating and walking. Other important objectives of the project area: development and organisation of integrated tourism offer, development of sporting, cultural and leisure activities, joint management of tourist visits, tourist information and marketing of cultural events. Information of target groups will definitely improve and progress in tourism and indirectly in the economy will be achieved. Funding programme: The Neighbourhood Programme Slovenia-Hungary-Croatia 2004-2006, European Commission.	Promotion and communication
European Mobility Week: 2019 theme Safe Walking and Cycling	In 2019, the <i>EUROPEAN MOBILITY WEEK</i> theme was “<i>Safe Walking and Cycling</i>” with the slogan “<i>Walk with us</i>”. The campaign put the spotlight on safe walking and cycling and the benefits it can have for health, the environment, and personal finances. Funding programme: Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) and Cycling, European Commission.	Promotion and communication
La Rioja Bike Mountain Route	MTB circuit and centre Moncalvillo were developed through an ERDF project in La Rioja region in Spain, which aimed to improve the general health conditions of its habitants, while respecting and not changing the original environment. The project developed a network of twenty routes (250 km) connecting nine municipalities. Each route has specific information (overview, distance, altitude etc.) and signalise different levels of difficulty: green routes (easy), blue (easy), red (difficult) and black (very difficult). Thanks to the project routes, local businesses have grown alongside	Promotion and communication

²⁵¹ <https://www.parenzana.net/en>

	them, such as washing and bicycles repairing kits in sport centres, showers, and bike rental services. Funding programme: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).	
OCEAN (Olympic Committees of Europe Approaching Carbon Neutrality) project.	Project²⁵² aiming to educate "Climate Action Officers" of 18 European National Olympic Committees so that they can measure the carbon footprint of their organisations (with the help of a carbon footprint measuring tool developed in the framework of the project) and create carbon reduction plans. Funding programme: Erasmus +.	Communication and engagement
OPEN (Oulu Parks – Enjoying Nature) (Oulu, FI)	This OPEN project, which formed a unity project with the AIR project, focused on providing quality natural outdoor environments for the citizens of Oulu, aiming to activate people to spend time in the outdoors and to engage in regular physical activity in green spaces. Communicated as a form of preventive medicine Oulu strives to replicate the model across Finland. The Oulu Parks Concept brings together different types of sites in the region in a green continuum, from large park-like nature sites in the city centre to the National Parks in wilderness, regardless of the site owner. Funding programme: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).	Promotion and communication
SforAE - Sport for All and the Environment	The idea behind the "Sport for All and the Environment" (SforAE) project is to raise awareness of the benefits of implementing green behaviour in sport for all. Its goal is environmental education related to sport and the promotion of sport in a safe and clean environment. The main task is also to inform that physical activity keeps humanity in a good and healthy shape and extends the lives of individuals. On the other hand, saving natural resources is crucial for maintaining a clean environment and in good condition for the next generations. This parallelism is the basis of the SforAE project. The SforAE project	Communication and engagement

²⁵² <https://project-ocean.eu/>

	involves partners from 4 Central and Eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Latvia, Poland and Slovakia). The SforAE project, among other activities, published a Green Guidelines and a Best Practices reports in the Sport Sector. Funding programme: Erasmus+ Programme.	
SPORTOUT - Making Sports Clubs Stronger Outdoors – Organising Healthy and Sustainable Sports Activities in Nature (Germany)	The SPORTOUT project enables sports clubs to offer health-oriented sports activities "outdoors". At the same time, the project explores solutions for the lack of sports infrastructure or the limited use of indoor spaces for sports, e.g., due to a pandemic. Outdoor sports activities in public parks, forests, meadows, and waters have become even more popular. However, experts see a growing risk that the greater number of nature users and their sometimes careless behaviour can lead to damage in sensitive natural areas and thus also to conflicts with environmentalists and landowners. The project will demonstrate, through 5 pilot projects, how sports activities in nature can respect and incorporate other interests. As well as raising awareness on the interconnections of biodiversity, climate and human health. Funding programme: PPPA-SPORT-2021-GRASSROOTS-INNOVATION.	Promotion, communication and engagement
Sustainable Lake Constance - Sustainable Bodensee - Protection of water with nautical environmental techniques²⁵³	The project "Sustainable Lake Constance - Water Protection through Environmental Technologies in Navigation" intended to maintain the drinking water quality by an effective reduction of the emissions caused by shipping and its related activities. The project aimed to contribute to an environmental oriented development of the shipping for the sustainable use of the Lake Constance by raising the environmental awareness amongst shippers and promoting the testing and use of modern environmental technologies in navigation. Funding programme: LIFE Programme.	Communication and engagement

²⁵³ <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/life/publicWebsite/project/details/1213>

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