



D2.1 State of play of greener football good practices



PLANET BALL

Led by



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INTRODUCTION

Greener football in Europe : the Role of Football in Climate and Sustainability Efforts

European societies face severe environmental challenges. Climate change has arisen as the number one global emergency that goes beyond national borders and requires immediate, yet systematic and effective, action from everyone. To address climate change, countries adopted the Paris Agreement to limit global surface temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celcius; as of February 2023, 195 members of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are parties of the agreement. At the European level, EU has set clear targets regarding climate change and adaptation. European Climate Law and European Green Deal, to mention two of the most significant legislative products, indicate the Union's target to transit its economy and society into climate-neutral by 2050 as well as to reduce greenhouse gas emmissions by at least 55% until 2030. On top of that, challenges that undermine societies' cohesion and well-being need also to be addressed in a manner that goes hand-by-hand with the environmental concerns and pays the necessary respect to human rights, leaving noone behind.

Football can definitely play a pivotal role in this effort. As per Frans Timmermans, the European Commission executive vice-president for the European Green Deal, “Football brings our continent and our planet together. To keep enjoying our favourite game, we need to win the fight against climate change, as a team.” Given that an estimated 90 million play football in Europe, the millions of fans and supporters and the sport's high popularity across all European countries, football could be a vehicle for positive change in several ways. First of all, football evidently exercises an important influence rendering it a perfect platform for raising awareness, campaigning, informing and educating the millions of involved parties. In addition, football constitutes an extensive industry by itself meaning that it should follow sustainable solutions that reduce its environmental footprint and lead by example in fields such as sustainable construction and refurbishment, waste management, green mobility, and clean energy production. Any good practice that takes place in relation to football comes with great visibility as well as good publicity and may result to a stronger and more efficient engagement of the football communities, in comparison to state-led initiatives.

In this context, the governing bodies of football seem to feel the obligation to address such concerns and adopt strategies which include socially responsible and environmentally friendly practices, in alignment with the standards that international conventions and EU legislation have set. Recognizing that the rising awareness of environmental and societal priorities needs to turn into concrete action with a particular focus on achieving tangible results, UEFA has devised an ambitious sustainability

strategy setting a series of goals to be reached by 2030 while FIFA was the first sport federation to join in 2016 the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, the objective of which is to gather sports federations, organizations, teams, athletes and fans in a concerted effort to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

UEFA's "Strength through Unity 2030" sustainability strategy is structured around 11 policies, each supported by a 2030 ambition, targets and key performance indicators (KPIs), including circular economy, sustainable events and infrastructure as well as climate and advocacy, with the aspiration to contribute to a sustainable future for the next generations of football players and fans, at international, nation and local levels. The strategy draws inspiration from internationally recognized frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, and the European Green Deal. Putting more focus on the environmental aspect of the strategy, UEFA declares its willingness to catalyse circular economy solutions, especially when it comes to product packaging, plastics, single-use items, food loss and waste, make a transitions from a "reliance on compensation to reducing emissions" internally and in its competitions having also created a Carbon Footprint calculator to be used by football organizations, deploy a sustainable events management system (SEMS) to accurately measure the environmental impact of football events, and "continue to raise the bar for European football infrastructure by setting criteria and sharing best practices for a new generation of sustainable football venues". Apart from devoting its efforts to promote sustainability within its competitions and operations, UEFA seems also to recognize the potential risk that environmental issues represent for football, including in the sustainability strategy concerns about extreme weather having already damaged football infrastructure and air pollution impairing athletes' performance. To mention just some of the 2030 aspirational targets of the strategy, emphasis could we put on the greenhouse emissions cut by 50%, the elimination of plastic use and food waste within UEFA, across UEFA events and across European football in collaboration with stakeholders, and the continuing improvement of UEFA events' sustainability index scores.

On the other hand, FIFA is also active in the fight against climate change, being committed to measure, reduce and offset the unavoidable greenhouse gas emissions related to the operations of the FIFA World Cup tournaments, which are the biggest single-sport tournaments in the world. Respective sustainability strategies have been issued for the tournaments of Brazil 2014, Russia 2018, Qatar 2022 and also for the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023. Most recently, the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Sustainability Strategy included a comprehensive set of initiatives to mitigate the tournament related emissions, including energy efficient stadiums, low emission transportation, and sustainable waste management practices. The aspiration of FIFA was to cover the whole procedural steps before, during and after the tournament, until the all the temporary facilities would have been dismantled. In comparison with UEFA's sustainability strategy, this one is more aligned with

the United Nations SDGs recognizing that the 17 Global Goals provide a common framework for public and private actors to explain how they plan to contribute to sustainable development.

Directing our attention to the national level of football operations, the issue of sustainability gains more and more ground across all Europe, a development that is also proven by the composition of Planet Ball's project consortium that is consisted of professional clubs from the Baltics (Estonia) and Scandinavia (Finland), football federations from the Balkans (Romania and Turkey), as well as a football foundation and CSOs from the mediterranean area (Greece and Spain) and the western Europe (Belgium and France). Despite the fact that sustainability concerns are a hot topic among football actors in the continent, the degree to which sustainability strategies or practices are included in their governance highly varies and indicates that for some countries these efforts are well-rooted while for others it is a relatively new topic that needs to be established and further developed. For instance, in Greece environmental and social sustainability practices among the football federation and the top-tier clubs are mostly linked to broader marketing strategies and usually there are no designated focal points to be engaged independently with sustainability. As a result, it common for sustainability activities to take place on an ad-hoc basis lacking any continuity and cohesion. In contrast, the practice of involved partners such as La Fundación Real Betis and HJK Helsinki demonstrates that initiatives which approach sustainability in an holistic way and achieve concrete results may be more rewarding and become an integral part of the overall governance of the respective football actors. It goes without saying that in parallel with activities as those presented in this study, there are initiatives that measure the sustainability performance of participating clubs, such as the Positive Sport Leagues and the Super League Sustainability Table that is also presented herein, providing a clear and cohesive view of this trend and offering useful leads to be followed from the involved actors. Another point to be underlined has to do with the social sustainability aspect that is considered as vital and equally indispensable as the environmental activities with which forms an understanding of society and the environment that can be more inclusive.

Further reading and resources:

- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)
- [UN Sports for Climate Action Framework](#)
- [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#)
- [UN Global Compact Principles](#),
- [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- [Global Reporting Initiative](#)
- [European Green Deal](#)
- [European Climate Law](#)
- [UEFA Sustainability Strategy](#)
- [UEFA Sustainable Infrastructures Guidelines](#)
- [FIFA Sustainability Strategy](#)

What is the Planet Ball project?

The project “PLANET BALL: Football as a tool for environmental education”, an ERASMUS-Sport program that is coordinated by the Think tank Sport and Citizenship (France), focuses on developing of tools for grassroots clubs and local sports stakeholders which will promote environmental awareness and educate participants in eco-responsible behaviours from an early age through sport.

- The first phase of the project, and the main objective of this handbook, is to collect good practices that have been implemented in order to identify what is missing and what could be improved in order to build a strong and comprehensive training program.
- In the second phase, the project will provide theoretical and practical awareness-raising training using a 'train the trainers' approach, with the idea that the trainees will become ambassadors of good practice in their clubs and communities.
- The third stage of the project is to support the young people, armed with their knowledge, to disseminate widely the content and results of what they have learned and worked on, intending to create a community of good practice.

Apart from Sport and Citizenship, partnership includes Organization Earth (Greece), Real Betis Balompié Foundation (Spain), Fútbol Más France (France) as well as the Romanian Football Federation (Romania), the Turkish Football Federation (Turkey), Helsinki FC (Finland), and Nõmme Kalju FC (Estonia) as implementing partners.

PLANET BALL combines football, education, and the environment in response to the urgent need for climate action and sustainable practices. By recognizing the global appeal of football, this initiative aims to drive meaningful environmental change.

Training is the core of the project. The training activities will ensure a smooth implementation of the project activities in the four implementing partners. They will involve integrating a pedagogical methodology aimed at raising awareness about environmental issues among youth participants in sports, equipping them to become true ambassadors of good practices within their communities. Beyond merely delivering training, the trained youth will be invited to act as direct ambassadors by sharing what they have learned with a broader audience during the organization of a 'Green Football Festival' in each pilot country (Estonia, Finland, Romania, Turkey).

Throughout the project, one the main objective will be to better understand the target audience, their knowledge and the social impact of our field activities, in order to showcase the benefits and importance of educating the youth to environmental issues with concrete, measurable and identifiable results.

Why did we create the handbook?

The production of this handbook is an initiative of the PLANET BALL project. It serves as a comprehensive guide for football stakeholders and civic society organizations, offering practical tools, methods, and inspirational examples to effectively integrate sustainability strategies into their governance and daily operations, as well as environmental education into their sports programming. The motivation behind the development of this handbook stems from the urgent need for the football industry, at all levels, to take action in favor of climate adaptation and environmental sustainability promotion, but also to bridge the gap between sport and environmental education, especially when it comes to youth. This study presents activities, initiatives and projects that have already been implemented in France, Greece, Romania, Spain, Estonia, Turkey and Finland. The best practices collected by the partners for this study focus on three main topics, reflecting current trends in both the football industry and civic society organizations involved in designing and implementing sports for development projects. These topics are:

- educational tools for sports actors to effectively incorporate sustainable practices into their operations;
- ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) strategies that allocate resources to promote environmental sustainability among fans, players, and staff through various activities, campaigns, and practices;
- sustainable construction interventions in the facilities used by football clubs;

How can sports play a transformative role?

- **Sustainable events:** Sports venues and events can reduce their carbon footprint and promote green practices by implementing environmentally friendly designs and operations.
- **Awareness campaigns:** By integrating environmental education into sports activities, millions of people can be reached and being properly informed about sustainability and environmentally friendly practices. This broad exposure can lead to widespread understanding and action.
- **Empowering Youth:** Integrating environmental education into sports training encourages young people to adopt sustainable behaviors but also empowers them to become advocates for change.
- **Community Building:** Sport, by its very nature, brings people together and creates strong community bonds. This collective spirit can be directed to address local environmental challenges and encourage community-wide participation in sustainability efforts.
- **Collaborative efforts:** Partnerships between sports actors and environmental civic society organizations can increase the impact of sustainability initiatives and promote a culture of environmental responsibility.

Through these strategies, sports can make a significant contribution to environmental protection and inspire future generations to lead the fight against climate change.



How PLANETBALL project contribute to the protection of the environment?

- **Addressing Climate Change:** Global temperatures have risen by 1.2°C since pre-industrial times, with serious consequences for ecosystems and human societies. As we face these escalating challenges, the need for innovative solutions becomes more urgent.
- **The Global Impact of Football:** With over 3.5 billion fans around the world, football has an incredible power to shape attitudes and behaviors. This extensive reach makes it an ideal platform for spreading environmental awareness and encouraging sustainable action.
- **Engaging Young People:** Educating young people about environmental issues is vital as they are the future citizens and leaders of our planet.

Integrating sustainable practices: Educational tools for sports professionals

1. Green Coach, FR

Title	Green Coach
Area	Sport, Environmental and Social Sustainability.
Implementing Actor	Ecoserveis
Summary (description and reason to be)	An Erasmus + project whose goal was improving good governance of the environmental impact of sport organisations. It stemmed from the idea that “there are not yet reference models at organisational level on good governance of sustainability within sports organisations, and especially focusing on how to incorporate sustainability as a cross-cutting priority in sports clubs as a governance element, beyond specific actions during sport events” (from the project description).
Target group	Sports organisations and sportspeople, families, spectators and staff
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To generate evidence on the different impacts that can be achieved by implementing specific measures in sports organisations. - To improve the environmental impact of amateur football organisations by incorporating monitoring and comparative analysis of the environmental footprint of football events and organisations. - To improve the environmental awareness of supporters, spectators and staff

<p>Number of participants involved:</p>	<p>8 participants: Ecoserveis (leader), TDM 2000 International (TDM 2000), Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (SSSA), Association des Clubs Francophones de Football (ACFF), French Football Federation (FFF), Lithuanian Grassroots Football Association (LGFA), Norwegian Football Association (NFF), Swedish Football Association (SFA)</p>
<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ecoserveis got in touch with European football federations in search of some that would be interested in implementing pilot activities to help reduce their carbon production and adopt more sustainable habits. - In the 5 partner federations, they conducted interviews and collected data, all the while elaborating the concept and methodology of the tools. - From this information and their experience, technical partners created tailored-made strategies for clubs to take concrete action against their impact on climate change. - The different tools were made accessible online in English, with the goal of reaching as many key actors as possible.
<p>Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A “GREENCOACH Tool” was created, which is an online benchmarking and monitoring system to implement sustainability plans and decrease clubs’ environmental footprint. This tool helped clubs identify the areas they had to target to reduce their carbon footprint and gave them tips on how to do so. - A “Green Team Seal” was created to complete the Green Coach Tool, to reward the commitment to sustainability made by deserving sporting organisations. - Two educational modules for different target groups, sportspersons and athletes as well as managers and staff, were also elaborated. They aimed at educating these stakeholders on sustainability in sport clubs and during sporting events. They were translated in all the partner languages. - An evidence-based study and an action plan for sports clubs to decrease their environmental footprint was published, to expand

	<p>the impact of the project. Everything was published online and presented in partner countries on different occasions.</p>
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is innovative because it tackles the day-to-day impact of managing sport activities, when most studies so far have focused only on the biggest events. - It offers concrete solutions to clubs and tailored-made diagnoses, which is a real game changer for sporting organisations that want to act but lack guidance on where to start. - The translation of most of the tools in five languages helps its dissemination to more football clubs and more generally to relevant football stakeholders.
Duration	36 months
References	<p>inicio fr - GreenCoach (greencoacherasmus.eu)</p> <p>GreenCoach Tool - GreenCoach (greencoacherasmus.eu)</p> <p>Educational Tools - GreenCoach (greencoacherasmus.eu)</p> <p>greencoacherasmus.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Green_Coach_Report_5.4-alta-OK.pdf</p>

2. "My Eco-Friendly Football Club", FR

Title	Mon Club de Football Éco-responsable
Area (e.g. Environment, sports)	Sport, Environmental and Social Sustainability
Implementing Actor	Fédération Française de Football (FFF)
Summary (description and reason to be)	In an effort to protect the diverse landscapes and biodiversity of France territory, the French Football Federation (FFF) along with Fondation du Football, the French Football Federation's foundation, have created the "Mon Club de Football Éco-responsable" guide. The guide helps amateur clubs implement concrete actions to preserve their local environment. The guide covers a wide range of topics, from waste management to transportation and natural resource preservation, promoting collective action for the planet's benefit.
Target group	Amateur Football Clubs
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educate about eco-responsible measures that can be applied inside and outside the field.
Number of participants involved:	15,000 football clubs of the FFF network
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and diffusion of the guide: a working group was created in 2020 to explore ways and solutions for amateur football to commit to an eco-responsible approach. - Bringing together club representatives, the result of this effort is the creation of a guide and a poster distributed to all amateur clubs. This practical guide contains around twenty educational sheets on various topics such as food, energy, and transportation.

Results	Unknown
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of the guide online: The guide is downloadable directly online and is therefore made available to any club wishing to invest in the subject. - Simple and pleasant to read: It is a true turnkey tool that allows any club member to easily take ownership of it.
Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty to measure its impact: no literature is available to help identify the number of clubs that downloaded or made use of the handbook.
Duration	Not provided
References	https://media.fff.fr/uploads/documents/fff_le_guide_vfinale.pdf

Driving Environmental Sustainability: ESG and CSR Strategies in Football

3. Super League Sustainability Table, GR

Title	Super League Sustainability Table
Area	Sport, Environmental and Social Sustainability
Duration	3 months
Implementing Actor	The Sports Footprint
Summary (description and reason to be)	A Greek Super League (1st tier of men's professional football) matrix that ranks professional clubs based on their environmental and social sustainability performance. This project aimed to highlight the social and environmental actions of the teams and promote healthy competition for the further improvement of society through football. It was implemented by <i>Sports Footprint</i> , a sports sustainability specialised stakeholder that provides sports actors with consultation regarding sustainability strategies and was presented publicly in 2022 in collaboration with <i>Sport24</i> , one of the most well-known Greek sports journals.
Target group	Super League's Greek professional football clubs
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploring Greek professionals football clubs' stance towards environmental and social sustainability. - Identifying their strategies and everyday practices towards environmental and social sustainability factors and rank them. - Identifying the existence of a strategic perspective regarding environmental and social sustainability that dictates involved actors' function or solely ad-hoc activities and initiatives . - Disseminating the results through a major Greek media outlet and also presenting them, among several relevant stakeholders, in the first conference in Greece about CSR and sustainability in sports that took place in 2022.
Number of participants involved:	5 (AEK FC, Asteras Tripolis FC, OFI FC, PAOK FC, Panathinaikos FC)

<p>Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sports Footprint reached out to all the top tier men’s football clubs in Greece, informing them about this initiative and inviting them to participate. - Sports Footprint sent to the 5 participating football clubs questionnaires that included questions about their strategies and practices towards specific factors of their function that have to do with environmental and social sustainability. - Sports Footprint examined and analysed the replies of each participating football club and proceeded with ranking their performance in each included section/factor (e.g., water management, social inclusion etc.).
<p>Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One environmental sustainability and one social sustainability league tables were created. Every involved football club was ranked in the designated factors with a point system and the total served to establish their standings. - The outcome was published in Sports Footprint’s official channels, it was presented in the first CSR and sustainability in sports conference in Greece and was disseminated through a major Greek sport journal.
<p>Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A truly innovative project in the Greek context which had no precedent. - A concrete methodology and approach inspired by the <i>Sport Positive Leagues</i> initiative. - Well-disseminated results that could serve as a motive for more football clubs as well as sports associations to be involved and actively support such initiatives. - Raising awareness to the Greek public, whose majority is engaged in football, about sports and sustainability.
<p>Difficulties or constraints for its implementation . Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek men’s professional football is governed by an association of clubs, the <i>Greek Super League</i>, and generally Greek Football by <i>Hellenic Football Federation</i>. Both associations were approached to support the initiative and facilitate the communication with the clubs, but neither of them participated. - Only 5 of the 14 top tier football clubs responded positively and were involved in the research. - The lack of designated staff in the clubs that serve as sustainability experts or focal points made the communications more difficult, but also the participation per se. - Whereas the study was disseminated through effective channels, neither Greek football clubs nor Greek football associations reached out to Sports Footprint for initiating another round of the project.
<p>References</p>	<p>https://www.thesportsfootprint.gr/super-league-sustainability-table/ https://www.thesportsfootprint.gr/posts/projects/new-trends-in-football-csr-sustainable-development/</p>

4. Forever Green Platform, ES

Title	Forever Green Matches
Area	Sport, Environmental and Social Sustainability
Implementing Actor	Real Betis Balompié
Summary (description and reason to be)	Since 2022, Real Betis has been organizing Forever Green Matches as part of their league games of their different teams, making them pioneers in this type of initiative. During these matches, all activities are centred around sustainability. A Forever Green Match means that everything—from the team's kit to the way fans travel to the stadium—is designed to be environmentally friendly. The club promotes sustainable mobility, organizes trash collection activities, and uses every match as an opportunity to positively impact the environment and encourage a more sustainable lifestyle
Target group	Fans, Society, Companies
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To raise awareness to the urgency for football to be less harmful to the environment. - To demonstrate that it can be so by carrying out different sustainable activities.
Number of participants involved:	Real Betis Balompié and multiple companies, associations and partners.
Activities	During the matches across various sections—men's football, women's football, and indoor football—Real Betis implements a wide range of sustainability-focused activities. These include the use of a sustainable kit inspired by environmental issues and armbands that highlight sustainable causes. The club also features sustainable goal nets and Tifos, while organizing waste collection efforts both inside and outside the stadium. Additionally, Escort Kids carry posters depicting a dystopian Seville affected by climate change, emphasizing the urgency of environmental action. Fans and players are encouraged to use reusable bottles that meet

	sustainability standards, and a Fan Zone is set up with awareness activities. The promotion of sustainable mobility ensures that fans have eco-friendly options for reaching the stadium.
Results	As the first series of sustainability matches were a success, Real Betis continued to hold them. In 2024, the third edition took place in May.
Strengths	The awareness about the importance of taking care of the environment increases. The different clubs get aware of activities that can be carried out to reduce the negative impact of football.
Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.	
Duration	1 match each year for 3 years.
References	<u>Inicio - Forever Green</u> <u>Forever Green Matches - Forever Green</u>

5. Flora's ecological footprint, EE

Title	Flora ökoloogiline jalajälg (Flora's ecological footprint)
Area	Environment, Sports
Implementing Actor	FC Flora
Summary (description and reason to be)	This Tallinn football club developed a green initiative with elements of CSR strategy directed at both fans and staff members. It stems from the observation of a problem with waste production in Estonia but broadens its approach to consider positive actions that can be easily implemented.
Target group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FC Flora fans - The local community - FC Flora staff
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the carbon footprint of football fans and of the staff of the club - Promoting easy ways to be more environmentally friendly, to make it accessible. - In addition to the reduction of one's carbon footprint, promoting the "ecological footprint" and its growth through positive green behaviour (e.g. taking part in clean-ups, planting trees, etc.) - Overall, having fans and all relevant actors realise that every action we take has consequences, so that they make conscious choices whose consequences will be beneficial to everyone.
Number of participants involved:	

<p>Activities</p>	<p>The club shared tips what they are doing to be more sustainable and encouraged fans to adopt similar behaviours.</p> <p>For instance, they've reduced the use of paper, the amount of fan products but also equipment and training gear produced, and waste (both physical and digital), by partnering with more sustainable brands and partners. Furthermore, they've put into practice positive environmental actions, such as planting trees and building nesting boxes for birds on their fields.</p> <p>They've also implemented initiatives for the public to come and sort their bio and recyclable waste, from food to batteries. Fans are encouraged to reduce their carbon footprint when coming to the club by bringing their own cutlery for example and expand their "ecological footprint" by adopting behaviours that directly benefit the environment, such as recycling, buying second hand, and planting trees / letting grass grow in their gardens.</p>
<p>Results</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The club published an article with all their tips and good practices, as well as communicated on all social media to promote it. - The waste sorting is a visible change to the landscape of the club, which helps better waste management and recycling in the community.
<p>Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is an interesting first step in putting together an environmental club strategy. - It can easily be reproduced, because they documented and published their efforts. - It takes into account the multiplicity of actors involved, targeting not only fans but their own way of functioning. - The public is often more sensitive to "entertainment" figures they like taking a stand than public authorities for instance.

<p>Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The initiative is really local, and its long-term relevance can be questioned.
<p>Duration</p>	
<p>References</p>	<p>https://fcflora.ee/flora-okoloogiline-jalajalg/</p>

6. Environmental policy of a Turkish first division club: "Climate Act" Policy, TR

Title	Environmental policy of a Turkish first division club: "Climate Act" Policy
Area	Sports, environmental Sustainability
Implementing Actor	Istanbul Başakşehir FK
Summary	For several years now, the club has been conducting an environmental policy. The aim is to promote sustainability through football, but it also aims to contribute positively to the club's brand image. Moreover, this policy is driven by UEFA's sustainable development objectives, such as UEFA Circular Economy Guidelines or UEFA's ambitious Strength through Unity program. As a result, the club has consistently emphasised its true ecological identity.
Target group	Football fans essentially.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising public awareness of climate change through a series of events, activities and campaigns. - To spread awareness amongst the European football community on climate change and environmental protection.
Number of participants involved:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It depends on the campaign.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - #GeriDönüştür for Football" (Recycle for Football) campaign in order to inform football fans about plastic and plastic-containing materials consumed in stadiums and outside of match days and their responsible consumption. Fans were able to download a guide on their smartphones and were able to recycle their plastic

	<p>waste more easily by discovering some recycling points in the stadium.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new eco-friendly packaging, used in Başakşehir store - #SÖZVER (I promise) campaign on social media about water consumption. - Provide sustainable mobility through a partnership with the popular urban mobility app Moovit. By encouraging more people to use public transport and leaving their private vehicles at home, this has made a significant impact on CO2 levels.. - In 2020, Başakşehir added a green colourway to its kit selection. Their 3rd kit was designed this way to bring people's attention to the problems of deforestation and climate change. This is part of a broader partnership agreement with a local start-up, Ecoding, which develops technological methods to increase individuals' environmental awareness. Through this collaboration and digital challenges, Başakşehir planted 10.000 seeds. - İstanbul Başakşehir FK and Real Betis joined forces to promote the climate act among their respected supporters and European fans.
Results	<p>The club has received several awards for its efforts in the environmental field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Climate Leader Award from the Bizim Dünyamız Vakfı (Our World Foundation), an NGO based in Istanbul - İstanbul Başakşehir FK was on the longlist for the More Than Football Award 2023, for its #Recycle for Football Guide. - Carbon Offset Certificate: the CO2 amount specified by İstanbul Başakşehir FK has been offset and contributed to the sustainable development projects.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A long-term environmental policy, with dedicated employees (e.g : Aslı Elif Koç Tiryaki, Sustainability Officer)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnership with various stakeholders: clubs (from the Super Lig or other championships), local company, Istanbul Başakşehir FK's Alumni of its Professional Football Management Certificate Program, foreign app... - A solid environmental policy, which had no precedent. - Raise public awareness through local issues, such as the forest fires that regularly strike the country.
<p>Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.</p>	<p>The lack of visibility of these initiatives. The club is better known for its links with the Turkish government than for its environmental efforts.</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>The environmental policy has been carried out in the past 4 years (since 2020) and will continue to do so.</p>
<p>References</p>	<p><u>Istanbul Başakşehir: Promoting Sustainability Through Football - Morethanfootball.eu</u></p> <p><u>İstanbul Başakşehir FK - European Football for Development Network (efdn.org)</u></p>

Sustainable Construction: Enhancing Football Facilities for a Greener Future

7. Implementation of Solar Panels for Clean and Renewable Energy, RO

Title	Implementation of Solar Panels for Clean and Renewable Energy
Area (e.g. Environment, sports)	Sports, Environment
Implementing Actor	FCV Farul Constanța Football Club
Summary (description and reason to be)	The implementation of solar panels for clean and renewable energy over an area of 500 square meters is an initiative by FCV Farul Constanța Football Club to reduce their carbon footprint and promote the use of renewable resources. This measure is part of the club's sustainability strategy, which aims to contribute to environmental protection and inspire other sports organisations to adopt eco-friendly practices.
Target group	Members of Farul club, including players, staff, and fans, as well as the wider community + other sports organisations
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce the club's carbon footprint by utilising renewable energy sources. - Lower energy costs through the use of solar power - Setting an example for other sports organisations in terms of sustainable practices - Raising awareness about the importance of renewable energy
Number of participants involved:	100 + participants, including club management, players, staff and sustainability experts part of the club, + community benefiting from the renewable energy from the sports facility

Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnering with “Petrom” - the largest integrated energy producer in Southeastern Europe - Installing solar panels on a 500 square meter area - Monitoring and maintaining the solar panel system - Organising workshops and seminars to educate youth members of the club about the benefits of sustainable practices
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant reduction in the club’s energy costs. - Decrease in the club’s carbon emissions. - Increased awareness and engagement within the community regarding sustainable practices - Positive publicity and enhanced reputation of the club as the most sustainable club from Romanian Leagues.
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong commitment from the club towards sustainability - Strong partnership with experienced collaborators in terms of renewable energy - Support from local community
Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need for regular maintenance and monitoring - mitigated by establishing a maintenance schedule and training staff. - Potential technical challenges during the installation process – wasn’t the case because there were experienced contractors and engineers employed for the installation.
Duration	
References	<p>https://www.farulconstanta.com/plugins/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Responsabilitate/Strategie%20sustenabilitate%20Farul%20Constanta%20-%202024%20-%20FINAL%20(3).pdf</p> <p>Sponsoring OMVPetrom.com</p>

8. Solar panels at Bolt stadium (HJK Oy's home stadion), FI

Title	Solar panels at Bolt stadium (HJK Oy's home stadion)
Area (e.g. Environment, sports)	Environment, sports
Implementing Actor	HJK Oy
Summary (description and reason to be)	HJK Oy is building solar panels in its stadion's roof in order to produce part of the electricity needed in the stadium by itself. By building the solar panels, it is estimated that it can produce 20% of all the electricity needed for the season.
Target group	HJK Oy
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Become more independent on producing electricity at the stadium. - Strengthening the club's environmental sustainability - Being the leading club in Finland in taking actions to improve sustainability.
Activities	Building the solar panels, communication
Results	20% of the energy consumption will be coming from the solar panels in the future
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthening the partnership with the company building the panels (long contract with an important partner) - Raising awareness, since HJK is the first club in Finland building solar panels - Improving club's sustainability

Difficulties or constraints for its implementation. Actions that are planned to mitigate those risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The state of the stadium itself has to be well investigated before the build up.- During the investigation, several issues came up, that had to be fixed.- The process itself is reasonably bureaucratic, and takes a lot of resources from the club.
Duration	10 year contract starting from June 2025.
References	https://www.hjk.fi/artikkelit/miehet/kumppanit/hjk-lumme-energia-aurinkovoimala-koko-kaksinkertaistuu/

CONCLUSION

This study concludes by highlighting the vital connection between environmental sustainability and sports. It's crystal-clear that sports can demonstrate an incredible potential to drive positive environmental change. As indicated by the diverse initiatives across Europe, sports serve as a platform for competition and physical activity and a powerful catalyst for environmental education and positive social change.

Throughout the document, we've explored a range of initiatives from different parts of Europe. Each one shows how football can effectively incorporate strategies of environmental sustainability, either at an educational, operational or constructional level. The aim is to inspire everyone to adopt sustainable practices and think more consciously about the impact we have on our planet.

Important Findings

Rising Commitment to Sustainable Construction in Football

Sustainable construction, as part of a broader commitment by football stakeholders to environmental protection, is gaining increasing traction. Innovative solutions, such as installing solar panels to produce clean energy, can play a crucial role in meeting the energy needs of facilities while also setting a powerful example, as these initiatives are highly visible to fans and supporter communities. Additionally, it is well-established that the energy produced by solar panels is not only cleaner but also cheaper, helping clubs that adopt this solution save valuable resources.

Holistic Sustainability Approaches Gaining Ground in Football

More and more football actors (top-tier and grassroots clubs, federations and associations) develop a holistic approach towards environmental sustainability that includes a set of different activities which educate, inform and engage participants in sustainable practices. This well-rounded strategy proves to be far more impactful than ad-hoc actions especially in terms of establishing roots in the community and strengthening the already existing bonds with fans and supporters.

Growing Interest in Sport for Development and Its Environmental Impact

There is an increased interest between governing bodies, institutions, football industry, and civic society organizations about sport for development programming, meaning that there are resources that could be deployed by the interested stakeholders for bringing positive changes through football. In addition, key-actors such as international organizations, the European Commission and the national

competent authorities recognize the positive impact that sports could have to the environment bringing attention and publicity to the undertaken projects.

Scalable and Replicable Practices for Expanding Sustainability in Football

Many of the successful practices are scalable to maximize their positive effects and replicable so they could be adapted and implemented in different contexts. Given that, actors from other regions or socioeconomic backgrounds could learn from these projects, seek for more information, and use them as blueprints to develop their own sustainability initiatives.

Challenges in Ensuring Visibility and Long-Term Sustainability of Environmental Practices in Football

Most of the concerns that accompany these best practices have to do with their visibility, continuity, and sustainability. It seems that it's not uncommon for initiatives that promote environmental sustainability in football to be obscured by the sports affairs that are usually in the limelight. Except for that, since most of these projects are relatively recent and it is yet to be proven how well-rooted really are, the participating actors express their scepticism with regards to the next steps that should be taken to ensure their projects' future sustainability and solidification as integral parts of their operations and governance.

Next steps

The PLANET BALL project demonstrates the significant role sports can play in advancing environmental awareness and action. This document underscores the importance of continuing to invest in such programs, as they bridge the gap between sports and sustainability, encouraging athletes, fans, and communities to take responsibility for protecting our planet.

Looking ahead, it is crucial to build on these achievements while addressing any challenges that arise. Ongoing monitoring, feedback, and flexibility are essential to ensure these efforts remain effective and impactful. By adhering to these principles, sports can continue to play a vital role in fostering a more sustainable world where environmental stewardship is integral to every athletic endeavour.

In conclusion, embedding environmental values into the sporting world can nurture a new generation of environmentally conscious individuals ready to lead the way toward a greener and more sustainable future. This is an exciting journey, and it is only just beginning!



PLANET BALL

planet-ball.org

Planet Ball project focuses on the development of tools for federations and local sports actors to educate youth in eco-responsible actions and to raise environmental awareness from an early age through football.



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