



**GUIDELINES FOR SMALL SPORT
ORGANISATION'S SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY SYSTEM AND
PRACTICAL ACTIONS**

Sustainability - goal for small sport organisations (GOAL2S)

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OVERVIEW

For quite some time sustainability was a foreign concept in the world of sport and just a decade ago it was still considered rather exotic by many in the industry. That is thankfully no longer the case today. The European Union is a leader in tackling climate change and in promoting the circular economy. Sport certainly has a part to play in this. Sport is an integral part in the lives of millions of Europeans and that, at its best, sport promotes physical and mental well-being, is educational and promotes key social values, brings communities together, is a large, fast-growing economic sector, and contributes to growth and jobs. As sport's social and economic influence rapidly increases and spreads across Europe, it is important for federations, leagues, clubs and grassroots programmes to evaluate and understand the impact that they have, looking at three key pillars: governance, social and environment.

Climate change and environmental challenges are at the centre of public attention and at the top of policy makers' agendas across the world. Sport is not only an activity, nor simply entertainment; it is also an industry that is substantial and growing – as is its environmental footprint. When it comes to sustainability, we should live by the Olympic ideal of Pierre de Coubertin that participating is everything. And if sport contributes to strengthening this sustainability, we can all be winners.

The Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth includes a focus on climate change and social inclusion. With more information available about climate change and major sports events' impact on the environment, it is increasingly clear that sport must take a proactive role in addressing its environmental impact and footprint.

In its most recent EU Work Plan for Sport, the European Commission, together with Member States and stakeholders, has developed recommendations on major sport events, focusing on legacy aspects and social, economic and environmental sustainability. Fans traveling to one European Cup match can generate almost 5,600 tons of carbon dioxide, according to the World Economic Forum. But now, many sports are taking a closer look at how to be more responsible. Tokyo's 2021 Olympic Games are a leading example of organizers prioritizing sustainability in their planning. For example, builders will use locally sourced wood to construct the athletes' village, and hydrogen fuel cells will power the event vehicles. Organizers plan to generate solar power onsite and recycle 99 percent of everything used during the event. With the exception of drinking water, they'll use recycled rainwater for all Olympic water needs. Paris is

hoping to be even more sustainable during its turn to host the 2024 Olympic Games. All these great examples rally shows that sport is really moving in the right direction towards sustainability - environmental, economic and social prosperity. Nonetheless it's also true to say that all these examples have a level of expertise and resource in the field of sustainability that makes such a coherent tactic possible – a rarity in the sports sector.

Without that level of expertise, it's easy for sports organisations to make the mistake of devising general goals and ambitions, like 'the aim of becoming more environmentally aware' or 'committing to taking a stand on gender equality', without deciding and articulating the necessary action steps needed to achieve those targets. What is more, sports sector manages a vast number of sport events which is organized in the small scale done by relatively small organizations ranging from professional that attract large numbers (to particular area and population) of participants and spectators in regional or village sports halls, local playing fields, neighbourhood swimming pools, and everything in between. In addition, many sports arrange events which use non-specific local facilities, green spaces, roads, and the urban environment on an occasional basis (e.g. triathlon, cycling road races).

Thus, the intention of the proposed project: Sustainability - goal for small sport organisations (hereinafter – GOAL2S) is through the networking and identification and sharing of good practices to create the foundation of the Small Sport organisation's Sustainable development advisory System (hereinafter - 4S) in Lithuania and Latvia, where sustainability in sport subject has only now started to develop.

The potential impact of project after it will be ended:

- ✓ Local and regional sport governing bodies and sport clubs - will benefit in the near future from the GOAL2S project. Prepared theoretical framework of small sport organisation's sustainable development advisory system will help to create the right environment for sustainability promotion and implementation, including an appropriate legal and financial framework and a tailor-made approach respecting differences between organisations. In the project consortium existing sport organizations will start to apply guidelines of small sport organization's sustainable development advisory system which will be created during the project for the creation of their own strategy and plans with foreseen milestones towards sustainable growth and expansion in their organization and show themselves as a case study. In these developed guidelines will be tested in practical usage

and will help to answer more questions to project consortium and local and regional sport governing bodies and sport clubs.

The potential impact of project at local, regional, national and/or European level:

- ✓ Local, regional level - it was essential to raise awareness on the sustainability development and implementation in small sport related NGO's in each partner country. It was an objective to use GOAL2S project results and outcomes, to present and raise awareness on the topic of the sustainability for the small sport related NGO's and success stories to society, in order to coherent development of sport sector.
- ✓ National level - intention of the partners was to reach new contacts through network and to spread the small sport organisation's sustainable development advisory system on a national scale to promote the small sport related NGO's and to attract policy makers attention to this subject for potential assistance and guidance;
- ✓ European level - GOAL2S project keeps pace with sport organizations and European institutions which supports European sport policies towards the promotion the applications on the topic of the sustainability in particular for small sport related NGO's in sport industry. This project could assist in foster synergy with and between local, regional, national and international policies in sport, as well as, to encourage new expansion opportunities.

The guidelines on sustainable development for the 4S at their core is essentially practically oriented. It describe the most important complexes of problems and demonstrate appropriate actions towards an environmental, economic and social growth for the local sport organisations.

INTRODUCTION

While for the small sporting organisation's primary goal is to develop and grow their sport and contribute to the community, these organisations are also aware of economic, social and environmental factors that impact on their responsibilities to the public.

The purpose of this document is to provide information on environmental issues currently facing sporting organisations and clubs within it and to equip them with the tools and skills necessary to reduce their environmental impact.

The intended audience for this document is smaller, local sporting clubs and organisations through to the owners or managers of sporting facilities and complexes. Despite this, the concepts covered and tools provided will be relevant to a broad range of organisations, and as such can still be used as a reference tool by sporting organisations of many types and sizes.

KNOW YOUR LOCAL RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS

Get started on your sustainability journey by familiarising yourself with environmental legislations and regulations. Environmental laws play a huge part in protecting humans, animals, resources, and habitats. Without these laws, there would be no regulations concerning pollution, contamination, hunting, or even response to disasters. Environmental law looks at all the factors that pertain to an economy and its production and industry to assess its impact on the environment and to propose regulations that will reduce environmental harm. It is mostly considered with regulations and treaty agreements between countries, corporations, and public interest initiatives that promote the conservation of natural resources and enhance energy efficiency.

Sport and recreation events often impact on the built and natural environment and are therefore constrained by environmental law. If your club is not compliant you could face penalties such as fines.

Sport clubs should consider:

- **Trespass:** Sport and recreation participants may intentionally or accidentally use land without permission from the land owner. Entering land without permission is a legal wrongdoing called "Trespass". Sports such as Orienteering need extensive amounts of public or private land and permission must be achieved.
- **Noise Pollution:** Sport facilities, whether indoor or outdoor, are commonly located within residential areas and are subject to laws on noise pollution. Particularly, there are restrictions on noise from 10:00pm to 8:00am in residential areas. Noise may emanate from participants, sport implements being used, crowd cheering, and cars and traffic exiting.
- **Light Pollution:** In addition to noise restrictions, sport organisations must comply with light pollution regulations. The spill of light from floodlit sport grounds at night can be a significant problem in residential areas. However, innovation in floodlight design has reduced the escape of light away from the sporting arena.
- **Use of Roads:** Sport and recreation events frequently utilise roads or cause disruption to roads. In particular, fun runs, marathons or half-marathons, and cycling road races will necessitate the involvement of police to ensure the safety of participants. Large scale events will also require the involvement of police to direct traffic while event goes arrive or leave.

HOW SPORTS CLUBS CAN CONTRIBUTE IN PRACTICE

The process of improving your sport club's sustainability involves four-steps:

1. Commit – Make a visible commitment to sustainability within your organisation.
2. Plan – Assess what actions are available to you and develop an action plan.
3. Do – Work towards implementing the actions listed on your action plan.
4. Review – Check your progress regularly to ensure you are on track and respond as necessary.

Commit

Before you begin the environmental sustainability journey, you should make a commitment to sustainability within your sport club. This will ensure all stakeholders are aware of what you are trying to achieve and can help you get there.

Your commitment to sustainability can be a broad vision or mission statement, a pledge or a more detailed strategy or policy. It can be an internal document only or can be made publicly available. For maximum impact, you may be interested in making a media release regarding your commitment.

Consider developing a 'Green Committee' or creating a new role for a Sustainability officer on an existing committee to ensure that environmental considerations are included in the ongoing management of your organisation.

If you choose to develop a sustainability policy, you should include:

- A discussion of your commitment to sustainability.
- A statement of your goals or objectives.
- A discussion of the key areas such as climate change, energy, waste, water and biodiversity and their relevance to your organisation.

Plan

Once you have made your commitment, start planning what activities you can do to improve your sustainability profile and reduce your environmental footprint.

To help you with planning these activities a list of options have been provided on the following pages. When you have decided what actions you want to implement, you should document these in your action plan.

Your action plan is the list of all activities you want to implement to improve your sustainability. It provides details of how you will undertake your activities, who will be responsible for doing it and when it should be done by.

Don't forget to plan how you will report on your progress. Reporting is an important part of sharing the sustainability message and you should give consideration to how you would like to share the outcomes of your journey with your broader stakeholders. Give consideration to how you promoted your commitment to sustainability and ensure that the same stakeholders are kept informed of your progress and achievements. Some options to consider are updates in regular newsletters, incorporating an environmental section in your annual report or briefing stakeholders at key events such as award ceremonies.

Do

When it comes to improving environmental sustainability, there are a vast number of things you may choose to do. They can vary in ease to implement and the time and money required to do so. To assist with your planning, a list of options has been provided for the key themes. They have been broken down into three categories:

- ✓ Do it now: An action that is free or cheap that can be done now (typically revolves around behavioural change).
- ✓ Do it soon: May require some minimal investment or change to process/infrastructure but will result in an environmental benefit.
- ✓ Do it later: May require further research and more significant investment but has the potential for greater returns.

Review

Once you have started implementing your action plan, you should review it regularly to check your progress. If you assigned a Sustainability officer or Green Committee during Step 1, ensure they schedule regular reviews to check the status of the action plan. Consider monthly checks for the 'do it now' items with longer checks on 'do it soon' and 'do it later' options.

Remember, you not only want to check that you have done what you said you would but that the change is also doing what you hoped it would (e.g. if you were going to install dual flush toilets check your water bills to ensure there is a reduction in how much water you are using).

Much of the sustainability journey revolves around the concept of continuous improvement. As you review your performance and have realised some of the goals you hoped to achieve, you should also give consideration to what the next step is. While you may start the journey with small actions, you should supplement these incrementally to ensure your organisation is continuously improving its sustainability.

FOLLOW AN ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIPS

Gas and electricity prices have increased substantially over the last years, and, unlike households, businesses aren't protected by a price cap. Sports clubs have thus felt the impact of soaring energy costs.

So sport clubs have to turn to the experts in the first instance to help you identify areas where your club can improve its sustainability.

As a starting point, sport clubs have to use existing energy calculators to build up an image of how much club is spending, which will help to identify the key areas where there are need to reduce. It'll also help identify if current tariff is the most suitable for club's needs.

Sport clubs should consider:

- **Business energy comparison:** By comparing business energy prices, you'll ensure your sports club gets the best deal possible. If you have 12 months or less on your energy contract, you can shop around and lock in a more competitive rate for the future. Even reducing your rate by a couple of cents a unit will save your business thousands in the long run.
- **Embrace renewable energy sources:** By installing solar panels, you'll make considerable savings in the long term. By installing solar panels, sport clubs will typically recoup their investment within 3-4 years. Solar panels are much lower in price than 15 years ago, and the technology is better, meaning they last up to 30 years, so these can be a great long term investment that helps your finances and the environment.
- **Insulate your sport club's facilities correctly:** By properly insulating your facilities, you can combat volatile energy rates. It's a long term strategy but will help significantly reduce the energy needed to heat your sports club facility. A properly insulated building will require much less energy to heat during the winter. During the winter, energy consumption typically soars for poorly insulated properties, vastly increasing the cost of

energy. Insulate your facility with high-quality material, and you'll see a huge decrease in energy wastage.

- Educate your staff members on energy efficiency: Educating your staff on the importance of switching computers off or turning lights off when they're in use will save your business money on energy bills in the long run. It's also a great way to reduce your carbon footprint if your staff are environmentally conscious.
- Use eco mode: Make use of eco mode if your sport club has a dishwasher or a boiler. It takes a little longer but uses far less electricity, reducing your energy usage and increasing overall energy efficiency – a win-win.
- Replace your boiler with a heat pump: Most properties' boilers burn natural gas to power the central heating. If you compare business gas prices, you'll notice that gas is more expensive than ever. There is an alternative. Heat pumps use the outside air to generate heat and only use a small amount of electricity. It's perfect if you generate your own electricity through solar panels as it won't cost you anything extra and is 100 per cent renewable.
- Install a smart meter: By installing a smart meter, your sport club immediately benefits from this. The first benefit is that you'll be paying accurate bills with no estimated consumption. Secondly, you can monitor your energy usage daily, enabling you to spot anomalies in your energy usage. You can then act fast to rectify any problems.
- Install timers: Smart timers are a valuable asset to your sport club. You can use these on anything from your facility's industrial printers to the lights in the sports hall. Use these timers to stop your electrical equipment from going on standby mode when no one is around on evenings and weekends. Standby uses a considerable amount of energy while doing absolutely nothing. Using timers for lighting or sensors will turn off lights when they're not in use and save a lot of energy, especially when lighting a room with no one in.

TOOLS TO BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE SPORT CLUB

Implementation of sport club's sustainable policy

With the green movement, sport clubs have put together a Sustainability Policy to show how they are doing their part in making sustainability a core mission within their organization. Putting together a Sustainability Policy is a good idea and it will not only help you focus on what you can do to make your club more 'green' but can bring to mind some of the ways that your company has been wasteful in the past.

Sustainability is the capability to equitably meet the vital human needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by preserving and protecting the area's ecosystems and natural resources. The concept of sustainability describes a condition in which human use of natural resources, required for the continuation of life, is in balance with nature's ability to replenish them.

So sport clubs should consider these tips:

- Look at each of the processes within your sport club and find ways that they can be altered to incorporate sustainability practices with minimal effect on the process itself.
- Look at your facilities and find ways that you can eliminate wastefulness.
- What about your clubs use of electricity, or water? Are you being wasteful?
- How about how your employees are getting to and from work every day?

An example of a Sport Club sustainability policy

X Sport Club recognises that ... sport is a sport that brings people and communities together with our natural environment. We recognise the importance of maintaining our environment so that our members and the local community, both now and in the future, can continue to enjoy this great sport.

X Sport Club is committed to environmental sustainability through the following principles:

- ✓ Minimal impact – we will seek to minimise our impact on the environment by using water and energy efficient technologies, implementing effective recycling and waste management initiatives and reducing (and where appropriate offsetting) our carbon emissions.
- ✓ Environmental protection – we will ensure our activities have no adverse effect on the natural environment and we will encourage others to care for and protect it.

- ✓ Education – We will work with our members, staff, suppliers and other stakeholders to educate them on environmental and social issues and assist them where possible with making positive changes.
- ✓ Sustainable procurement – we will seek to work with suppliers who have their own sustainability values embedded in their products and services and look for innovative ways to reduce our environmental impact throughout the supply chain.
- ✓ Continual improvement – we will regularly measure our environmental impact (emissions, water and waste), seeking to reduce our impact on a per member, year on year.

An example of a Sport Club sustainable procurement policy

X Sport Club Sustainable Procurement Policy

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this policy is to minimise negative environmental impacts of the *X Sport Club* activities by ensuring products and services are purchased that:

- ✓ Conserve natural resources, materials and energy;
- ✓ Maximise recyclability and recycled content;
- ✓ Reduce toxicity to our natural environment.

POLICY

X Sport Club commits to:

- 1) Procure environmentally preferable products and services where criteria have been established by governmental or other widely recognized authorities (e.g. Energy Star, Water Efficiency Labeling Scheme).
- 2) Integrate environmental factors into all buying decisions. For example:
 - a. Replacing disposables with reusables or recyclables;
 - b. Supporting eco-labeling practices by buying products bearing such labels in preference to others, where they are available and provide value for money.
- 3) Taking into account life cycle costs and benefits.
- 4) Evaluating the environmental performance of vendors in providing products and services.
- 5) Raise staff awareness on the environmental issues affecting procurement by providing relevant information and training.

- 6) Encourage suppliers and contractors to offer environmentally preferable products and services at competitive prices.
- 7) Encourage providers of services to consider environmental impacts of service delivery.
- 8) Comply with all environmental legislative and regulatory requirements in the procurement of products and services.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as requiring a product be purchased where it does not perform adequately for its intended use; is not available at a reasonable price or within a reasonable time frame.

RESPONSIBILITY

All *X Sport Club* members shall identify and purchase the most environmentally responsible products and services that are available for the intended purpose and that meet the performance requirements. Factors that should be considered when determining environmentally preferable products or services include, but are not limited to:

- 1) The proportion of virgin material to recycled material used in the product.
- 2) Recyclability of product at its end of life.
- 3) The volume of packaging.
- 4) The product's energy and water consumption.
- 5) Toxicity reduction or elimination.
- 6) The use of forestry certified wood products only.
- 7) Ongoing durability and maintenance requirements.
- 8) Ultimate disposal of the product.

Execution of the sport club sustainability action plan

A sustainability action plan is created by sport club to detail how it will achieve sustainability goals over time, particularly if ambitious targets have been set such as achieving net zero by a specific time frame. It is usually a static document that details a 2–5-year timeline of objectives, although this period is at the organization's discretion.

Before sport club can start taking meaningful actions to make thiiir business more environmentally and socially responsible, it's important to have the paperwork in place so that you can be confident that the steps you take are always leading you in the right direction.

Before you start your action plan, it can be a great idea to ask staff for their sustainability improvement ideas. Whether you put an opinion box in staff rooms, or ask directly your employees for suggestions, getting ideas it will really help to secure your project's success.

It will make staff feel more involved in the changes that need to be made, and you'll find that many of the best ideas can come from the people who do their particular tasks on a daily basis.

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Commit to Sustainability:

Action	How	Who	When
•			
•			

Reduce Energy Consumption:

Action	How	Who	When
Do it now			
•			
•			
Do it soon			
•			
•			
Do it later			
•			
•			

Reduce Waste:

Action	How	Who	When
Do it now			
•			
•			
Do it soon			

•			
•			
Do it later			
•			
•			

Reduce Water Consumption:

Action	How	Who	When
Do it now			
•			
•			
Do it soon			
•			
•			
Do it later			
•			
•			

Protect our Biodiversity:

Action	How	Who	When
Do it now			
•			
•			
Do it soon			
•			
•			
Do it later			
•			
•			

Report on Progress:

Action	How	Who	When
•			
•			

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Small, local sport clubs must become sustainable in order to survive, maintaining their long-standing reputation as a valuable community asset. They must continue to offer services at a competitive price point so members renew their fees and visitors stay loyal to the club.

Know relevant legislation - Get started on your sustainability journey by familiarising yourself with environmental legislations and regulations. If your club is not compliant you could face penalties such as fines.

Follow an energy efficiency tips - Turn to the experts in the first instance to help you identify areas where your club can improve its sustainability. As a starting point, use energy calculators to build up an image of how much your club's spending, which will help you to identify the key areas where you need to reduce your bills. It'll also help identify if your current tariff is the most suitable for your club's needs.

Consider eco-friendly alternatives - Solar panels can greatly reduce your club's carbon footprint, and can generate around 20% return on investment. They are a low maintenance way to convert sunlight into energy, which can reduce your utility bills by up to 90%. LED lighting is another easy way to increase energy efficiency. LED lighting lasts much longer than traditional lighting, meaning it's easier to maintain. The higher lumen output per watt means LED lights turn about 70% of their energy into light, so there's less energy waste too. Avoid single use plastic where possible, instead using paper straws and reusable cups/mugs. Installing bottle refill points at your venue could encourage people to bring their own bottles, rather than buying plastic bottled water each time.

Take advantage of Government Schemes – Sports clubs must participate in the governmental programs which support renewable energy, carbon foot print mitigations and social inclusion.

Inspire your members - Making environmentally friendly schemes such as recycling an everyday occurrence at your club will inspire your members to get into a routine at home, too.

Run fundraisers - If environmentally friendly measures are too costly to put in place, consider making fundraising activities a fun way to get your members and wider members of the community involved. Encourage staff or volunteers to take part in challenges such as sporting / endurance events.

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