



**Laureus**  
SPORT FOR  
GOOD

# SPORT FOR GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TOOLKIT

Global Climate Action  
United Nations Climate Change





# INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations, climate change is the defining issue of our time and we are at a defining moment. The scientific community reached a near-consensus on human-induced climate change in the early 2000s, and the consensus has grown since. Evidence of climate change is already apparent in the hotter global mean temperature, rising sea level, warming ocean (which is making storm activity, such as hurricanes and typhoons, more frequent and severe), extended droughts, wildfire activity, and more.

In recognition of the urgency and importance of addressing climate change across all sectors, Laureus has committed to doing its part, and has signed on to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) Sport for Climate Action Framework. This framework includes five principles:

- 1 Undertake systematic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility;
- 2 Reduce overall climate impact;

- 3 Educate for climate action;
- 4 Promote sustainable and responsible consumption; and
- 5 Advocate for climate action through communication.

As part of this commitment, Laureus will be undertaking significant efforts internally to render office operations, events, communications and executive functions more environmentally friendly. Further, and importantly, Laureus will endeavour to source and share relevant resources to assist grantee organizations with their own efforts to become more environmentally sustainable, starting with this Guide.

The opportunities enclosed in this Guide are consistent with the recommendations of the **Conference of the Parties 2015 Paris Agreement**, the **Sustainable Development Goals** (especially goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15), and the **UNFCCC Sport for Climate Action Framework**.



# SUSTAINABILITY AS A PROCESS

The notion of sustainability initially arose out of philosophical and scientific discussions about limits to growth, pressures on the environment, and the role of humankind in nature. These topics have been of interest to the scientific community since the 1800s, but it wasn't until 1972 when the word 'sustainable' was first used in the context of the future in the British book, *Blueprint for Survival*.

Sustainability is no longer a niche topic. It now transcends all aspects of social organisation: politics, economies, social interactions, resource use, and more. To act in a sustainable manner is to be responsible, forward thinking, conscientious, and self-aware. This Guide is based on an understanding of sustainability as a process, not a status. Indeed, it is unlikely that most operations in the sport sector ever reach a point of true environmental sustainability, given the highly consumptive nature of the sector and globalization of operations. Consequently, environmental sustainability is herein understood as a commitment to consistent progress toward the SDGs, with a focus on SDGs 11, 12, 13, by way of providing resources that efforts to reduce GHG

footprint, leverage its network for climate education, and engage meaningfully in the sport sector's ongoing efforts to improve environmental stewardship.

Sustainable development is based on the law of scarcity, which proposes that all resources are finite. Given this, we must meet the needs of humans now, and in the future, without exhausting our limited resources. Sustainable development is complicated and at the time of writing, it is unclear whether any community or society has found a perfect solution. What is clear, is that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to sustainable development. Communities, cities, and nations will engage in sustainable development differently, based on the resources, lifestyles, values, and expectations of the people involved.

Becoming an environmentally sustainable organisation doesn't happen overnight, it's a process. Begin with making a commitment to learn about how your organisation can do no harm to the environment (reducing waste and pollution).



# THE ENVIRONMENTAL SDGS

Several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development goals reflect the growing global commitment to environmental sustainability, however, seven stand out as specifically linked to protecting the planet. These are SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14 and SDG 15.



## SDG 6 - CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

This goal aims to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030. This includes protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems, facilitating access to water for hygienic purposes, improving the quality of water by reducing pollution and eliminating dumping, and increasing water-use efficiency. **SFD organisations can help by ensuring your operations do not pollute or contaminate the air, the land, and nearby waterways, and that you promote water efficiencies wherever possible (e.g. low-flow taps and toilets, reduce the frequency of watering the grounds, etc.) An important additional opportunity lies in informing your participants of these efforts, such that they might be inspired to adopt similar measures in their own homes.**

## SDG 7 - AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

This goal aims to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. This includes increasing the share of energy produced by renewable means, expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services. **SFD organisations can help to advance this goal by identifying opportunities to reduce energy use, securing access to green energy options, and promoting green energy options via sport sponsorships or event sponsorships for renewable energy businesses.**

## SDG 11 - SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

This goal seeks to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The primary purpose of this goal is to ensure access to safe and affordable housing, transport, and meeting spaces for all. A primary priority for providing safe housing and transport is reducing pollution and smog in cities and urban areas, improving air quality, and designing resilient cities (such as flood protections, water and energy storage, etc.) **SFD organisations can help by planting native plants (this can help clean the air and capture water to prevent flooding), cleaning up any lands you operate (e.g. by reducing use of pesticides), reducing the use of personal cars, and partnering with community organisations that are working on this goal (e.g. public transit services, community gardens, etc.)**

## SDG 12 – RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

This goal aims to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns by 2030, which includes reducing food waste, finding environmentally-friendly ways of handling chemical and toxic waste, reduce waste generation through recycling and reuse, and reducing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. **SFD organisations can help by implementing recycling and composting at their facilities, where possible, and revisiting their supply chains to ensure materials and equipment are being sourced from ethical and environmentally-friendly traders. Further, SFD organisations can partner with ‘green’ businesses and organisations to offer visibility to such firms in the form of sponsorship opportunities.**

## SDG 13 – CLIMATE ACTION

Goal 13 is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This includes integrating climate adaptation and resilience policies into national and local planning agenda, improving education about climate change, and increasing capacity to respond to climate change, especially among women, youth, and marginalized communities. **SFD organisations can help by assessing their own climate vulnerabilities (i.e. by asking whether your organisation is prepared to respond to possible climate hazards in your area) and by offering any available facilities to local authorities as possible temporary spaces for disaster relief efforts in the case of a major natural disaster (sport facilities are typically big enough to accommodate such efforts). Further, sport organisations can take climate action internally by assessing their contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions and reducing these.**

## SDG 14 – LIFE BELOW WATER

This goal aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Targets include reducing ocean pollution and cleaning up and restoring coastal areas, regulating fishing practices, improving scientific cooperation to increase knowledge of ocean health and reduce ocean acidification, and improve the economic potential for small-island nations. **SFD organisations can help by ensuring their operations do not pollute the water systems in their area, for example, by pesticide use or waste disposal.**

## SDG 15 – LIFE ON LAND

The 15th goal aims to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. This list will require significant cooperation between governments and private land owners to promote biodiversity, incentivize land protections, increase amount of conservation area, and regulate natural resource extraction. **SFD organisations can help by not building new facilities on green lands (i.e. previously undeveloped land), and by avoiding pesticide use, planting native flora, and educating participants on the importance of biodiversity.**

# GETTING STARTED

The first step in becoming a more environmentally sustainable organisation is to identify how the organisation's actions and operations impact the natural environment and to minimize that impact.

Questions to ask when determining how your organisation may be negatively impacting the environment include:

- ▶ How much waste are we producing? Can the waste be reduced, recycled, or composted?
  - ▶ Why do we produce so much waste? Could we cut down on how much we purchase or consume? What kind of packaging do our deliveries come in?
  - ▶ Where do we get our energy?
  - ▶ How much energy do we use? Are there ways to reduce our energy use?
- ▶ How much water do we use? Are there ways to reduce our water use?
  - ▶ How do people get to our facility? Are there opportunities to leverage public transit options (if safe and available) or car pooling?
  - ▶ What natural features exist on our site? (e.g. plant life, animals, river or stream, etc.) What can we do to protect the nature that exists here? (e.g. by reducing or eliminating pesticide use or by cleaning up river banks, or by planting native flora)

These questions are intended to get you started, but this list is not extensive. There are countless opportunities to reduce our environmental footprint.



# LAUNCHING A GREEN TEAM

Sustainability doesn't happen over night, nor does it happen alone. Successful sustainability initiatives require the buy-in and involvement of several stakeholders, internal and external to the organisation. A sustainability team (or 'green team') can both raise awareness in the organisation about environmental sustainability, and identify and implement strategies for sustainability.

How to get started:

- ▶ Publicly announce your organisation's commitment to environmental sustainability
- ▶ Ask athletes, coaches, staff, and volunteers if they'd like to participate in the process, and assemble a committee
- ▶ Share resources from this guide (see the last page) with the committee members
- ▶ Host a brainstorming session for the committee to come up with ideas for engaging environmental sustainability
- ▶ Examples: go paperless, switch lights to LEDs, implement recycling, run a community clean-up event
- ▶ Publish a list of goals and ideas for how to become sustainable, so all participants in the organisation can be made aware of these efforts.





# OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

## PROMOTING BIODIVERSITY

- ▶ Avoid building new sport facilities in places where there were previously green space.
- ▶ Host community clean-ups for your athletes and volunteers to clean up local parks, green spaces, river banks, etc.
- ▶ Name your team(s) after animals that are on the endangered species list to raise awareness about their needs and educate athletes and their families on how to protect endangered species in your area.

## SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

- ▶ Launch or enrich existing sustainable waste management programs.
- ▶ Implement recycling and composting at the office, at the field, in the training facilities, etc.
- ▶ Request that any suppliers you work with send deliveries with less waste (for example, ask suppliers of clothing or equipment to send shipments without each item being individually wrapped in plastic).
- ▶ Implement a safe disposal strategy for electronic products and hazardous waste (check out your local city waste management services to identify drop-off locations for hazardous waste and electronic waste).
- ▶ Reuse or upcycle equipment or furniture.
- ▶ Develop adequate signage to ensure employees, volunteers, and visitors are aware of the waste management efforts.
- ▶ Offer staff and volunteers opportunities to engage in training related to the implementation of this sustainability guidebook (examples of free and relevant online trainings are listed at the end of this document).
- ▶ Gamify these waste management initiatives: create a contest between teams or groups in your organisation whereby each group must reduce their baseline waste, energy, and water numbers by a certain percentage each season.

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNICATIONS

- ▶ Publicly announce your organisation's commitment to environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Publish a list of the immediate actions being taken by your organisation to advance the SDGs.
- ▶ Ensure all communication with partners, grant funders, sponsors, funders, etc. is consistent with this sustainability guide by avoiding unnecessary paper, flyers, mail-outs, etc.
- ▶ Develop a small 'go green' message for the bottom of staff email signatures to encourage email recipients to not print the email.



# COLLECTIVE ACTION

Sport organisations, especially sport-for-development organisations, represent an important community meeting place. Educating athletes, volunteers, staff, and fans on the opportunities to voice their concern for the environment is an important step sport-for-development organisations can take to advance climate action.

## PARTNER WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

- ▶ Align your organisation's climate efforts with local efforts to maximize the positive impact and opportunities for collaboration.
- ▶ Investigate how your efforts to advance social development in your community can also advance environmental sustainability.
- ▶ Identify organisations in your community that are working on climate action (e.g. local environmental non-profits) to find opportunities for collaboration.

## EMPOWER, EDUCATE, AND ADVOCATE

- ▶ Teach your athletes and participants how to advocate for environmental and social change.
- ▶ Host a letter-writing event wherein participants of your sport can write post-cards or letters to local authorities and local political representatives to express concern about climate change.
- ▶ Share an update on your organisation's climate efforts with local representatives so they can see what is happening in their constituencies, and perhaps lend their support to your work.
- ▶ Share resources, such as the list of Individual Action Items in this guide, with your participants, to guide their efforts.



# INDIVIDUAL ACTION

Often, people want to become more environmentally sustainable but don't know how to get started. There are many easy steps you can take in your daily routine to reduce your impact on the natural environment. It's important to remember that not all solutions will work for all people (based on where you live, what resources you can access, and your lifestyle). For instance, not all people can afford to replace lights with LEDs, and others may not be able to eat a vegan diet. So, do what works for you, and do it consistently. Every little bit helps, and every person's contribution is important.

There are widespread misconceptions about individual actions, like 'they're too expensive', 'they're too life-altering', or 'they won't do enough good, so why bother?'. Solving climate change will require a mix of individual actions, organizational efforts, and collective action to motivate politicians and leaders to adopt new climate policies. This list includes 99 ways to take action for climate change.

## SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS FOR SPORT PARTICIPANTS

- 1 Host clothing and sports equipment exchanges with friends\*
- 2 Buy second-hand clothing and sports equipment\*
- 3 Donate used clothing and sports equipment to second-hand shops
- 4 Choose sustainable transport to get to your gym, pool, field, etc.
- 5 Purchase sports drink powder in bulk, rather than individual bottles or sachets\*
- 6 Keep your post-workout shower short
- 7 Use your neighbourhood and nearby sport facilities, rather than traveling far\*
- 8 Stay on the trails and designated sporting spaces, don't trample green space that isn't meant to be walked on
- 9 Leave all spaces as clean (or cleaner) than you found them

## SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS FOR SPORTS FANS

- 10 Bring recycling bags and composting bags to your tailgate or viewing party
- 11 Do not drive to sporting events; take public transit
- 12 Get your tickets digitally, if that's an option
- 13 Skip the straws at the concessions
- 14 Choose snacks that don't come in plastic wrapping
- 15 Ask the staff at sport stadiums what sustainability measures are in place, then tell a friend
- 16 If viewing from home, watch the game with friends, instead of having multiple people watching on multiple devices

## SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS AT HOME

- 17 Repurpose plastic containers
- 18 Repurpose glass jars
- 19 Return wine and beer bottles
- 20 Limit use of hot water by keeping showers short
- 21 Use cloths instead of paper towel\*
- 22 Use LED lightbulbs instead of incandescent bulbs\*
- 23 Put on extra layers instead of turning on the heat\*
- 24 Shut the blinds and turn on a fan in the room you're using, instead of turning on the air conditioner (if it is safe to do so)\*
- 25 Open the windows to let in fresh air
- 26 Turn the lights off when you leave the room\*
- 27 Turn the lights off when daylight is sufficient\*
- 28 Unplug chargers, lights, and appliances when not in use\*
- 29 Purchase recycled toilet paper
- 30 Reduce how often you run the washing machine\*
- 31 Wash clothing in cold water\*
- 32 Hang-dry your clothes instead of using the dryer\*
- 33 If using the dryer, use dryer balls (much better than dryer sheets!)
- 34 Choose natural cleaning agents, ditch the chemical cleaning agents
- 35 Pay your bills electronically
- 36 Unsubscribe to all junk mail
- 37 Donate any housewares you no longer use

- 38 Buy second-hand housewares and furniture where possible
- 39 Pay all your bills electronically
- 40 Request digital copies of any news or magazine subscriptions, instead of print copies\*

## SUSTAINABLE CLOTHING CHOICES

- 41 Repurpose any non-recyclable clothing into rags
- 42 Buy fewer items of good quality clothing, rather than multiple items of cheaply made clothing (remember: durable is sustainable!)
- 43 Learn how to identify sustainable materials
- 44 Shop from sustainable brands
- 45 Shop from women-owned and minority-owned brands

## SUSTAINABLE EATING AND COOKING OPPORTUNITIES

- 46 Plan your meals carefully, follow instructions for portion sizes
- 47 Decide what you want before opening the refrigerator door
- 48 Compost food scraps wherever possible
- 49 Use recycled containers to store food, instead of plastic bags
- 50 Choose beeswax or parchment paper instead of plastic wrap
- 51 Freeze extra food for later (make sure it's tightly wrapped or in a container)
- 52 Reduce how often you run the dishwasher\*
- 53 Purchase only enough groceries for the next few days, so nothing goes bad
- 54 Skip the plastic bags, choose paper bags or reusable ones instead\*
- 55 Buy more produce than meats and cheeses\*
- 56 Shop at the bulk food store for dry foods, spices, and baking materials, when possible\*
- 57 Shop at the farmer's market for produce, when possible
- 58 Shop local to minimize the distance your products have to travel
- 59 Combine multiple errands into one trip
- 60 Order your food online, for delivery (this is like the public transit of grocery shopping: one car on the road, going to-and-from the grocery store, instead of many)

## SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

- 61 When possible, walk
- 62 When walking is too far, cycle
- 63 Subscribe to bike-sharing programs if you don't own a bicycle
- 64 If a bus or light rail is available, take public transit
- 65 If taking a car is necessary, car pool

## SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

- 66 If flying is necessary, purchase the carbon offsets
- 67 When flying, take your own trash off the flight (airlines typically don't recycle or compost or recycle, but you can!)
- 68 When planning a trip, consider visiting nearby destinations instead of far-away places
- 69 At hotels, if possible, share rooms
- 70 At hotels, reuse towels
- 71 At hotels, opt to not have your room cleaned each day

## SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS AT SCHOOL OR WORK

- 72 When going to school or to work, bring your own coffee (or at least your own reusable mug)
- 73 Bring your own water bottle
- 74 Use a digital calendar, rather than paper
- 75 Print fewer documents; read them online
- 76 Check the library before buying books
- 77 Purchase e-books instead of print books
- 78 Sell your used books
- 79 Use fewer notebooks
- 80 Only purchase school supplies made from recycled materials
- 81 Be conscientious of your screen time; if you don't need it, put it in 'sleep mode' so it stops consuming energy
- 82 Close the extra tabs on your web browser; especially those that will automatically upload, download, stream, or update content
- 83 Turn the brightness down on your laptop or phone
- 84 Conserve energy by turning the wifi off on your device when not in use
- 85 Build in enough time between classes to walk to your next class

- 86 Ask your professor whether the lights in the classroom are necessary, or if daylight will suffice. Join a sustainability-oriented club. If none exist, start one
- 87 Take a sustainability-oriented course. If none exists, ask a librarian for reading material
- 88 Learn about the sustainability measures being implemented by any organisations you're involved with (e.g. sports club, school or university, community organisations)

## SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- 89 Participate in community clean-ups, park clean-ups
- 90 Participate in tree planting initiatives
- 91 Participate in a community garden; if none exist in your area, start one

- 92 Volunteer for an environmental NGO
- 93 Challenge your employers to be more sustainable
- 94 Use environmentally-friendly search engines
- 95 Talk to your friends and family about climate change, and what you're doing about it
- 96 Share this list with friends and family
- 97 Hold your loved ones accountable for their environmental footprints
- 98 Commit to consistent improvement
- 99 Continue to educate yourself on sustainability initiatives (see resources on the next page!)



# RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Each link below is a free, clickable, digital resource to guide your learning and progress toward your organisation's development goals.

## LEARN ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

- ▶ Climate Change: The Science and Global Impact
- ▶ Climate Science, Risks, and Solutions: A Primer, by MIT
- ▶ United Nations Climate Change Office - E-Learning website

## LEARN ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS GLOBALLY

- ▶ United Nations Act Now campaign
- ▶ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

## LEARN ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS IN THE SPORT SECTOR

- ▶ Circular Economy in Sport webinar - Ellen MacArthur Foundation
- ▶ The Council for Responsible Sport's Guide to Hosting Radically Responsible Events
- ▶ Green Sports Alliance Paper Use Playbook
- ▶ Green Sports Alliance Greener Cleaning Playbook

## TOOLS TO HELP YOUR ORGANISATION'S SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

- ▶ Sport Club Energy Calculator - by Sport England
- ▶ Travel Emissions Calculator - by City of Eugene (this works for USA, Canada, and international events)
- ▶ Carbon Emissions Calculator - by Resurgence
- ▶ The Sport Ecology Group's Research Summaries - monthly summaries of the latest research in sport sustainability







**This toolkit was prepared by Dr. Maddy Orr and The Sport Ecology Group, in collaboration with Laureus staff.**



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