

How can a **sports organization** obtain funding for **sustainability initiatives**?

Federation's **sustainability challenges** and **concerns**


 **Energy prices** and how **football can respond** to it

How is the **energy crisis** affecting **football**?

... **How can** a ban on rubber infill impact clubs and **what to do** about it

UK Government investment for **Scottish grassroots** clubs toward **Sustainability** 

From the pitch to the planet:
Football's impact on SDGs



Sports for Sustainability



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Links to Website and social media channels



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SDG Striker is a European co-funded project under the Erasmus+ programme with the aim of **implement and communicate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** to improve good governance in grassroots sports clubs and organizations, resulting in positive impacts on the surrounding communities. Over the last two years, the project has taken various actions in the three pilot countries, raising awareness about the initiatives undertaken and promoting their replication to make grassroots sports more sustainable from social, economic, and environmental perspectives.



Scotland 

Energy efficiency and energy poverty



Portugal 

Photovoltaics potential and feasibility on sports facilities



Norway 

Alternatives to conventional infill for artificial football pitches to reduce microplastic pollution



Other partners:

Coordinator



Technical partner



Technical partner



From the Pitch to the Planet: Measuring Football's Impact on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Written by:
Johannes Lindorfer,
Energy Institute at the Johannes Kepler University of Linz, Austria



Football is more than just a sport – it has the power to bring people together and drive positive change in the world. As such, it can play a significant role in helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 global goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015¹ to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all.

One of the keyways in which football can contribute to the SDGs is through its ability to raise awareness and drive action on a range of social and environmental issues. From tackling energy poverty to combatting climate change, **football has the power to engage and inspire people** in a way that few other things can.

1 • SDGs = Sustainable Development Goals

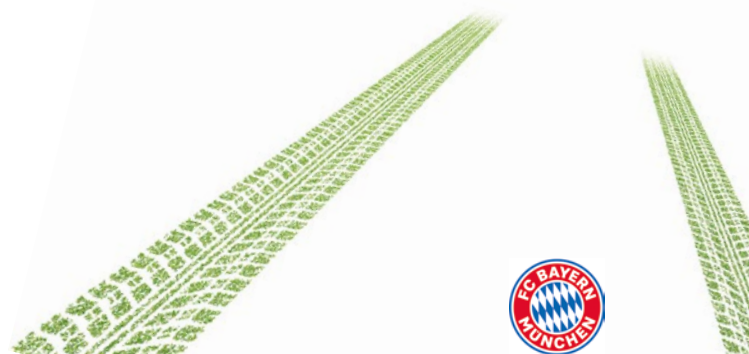
The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals set by the United Nations in 2015, to be achieved by 2030. They range from ending poverty, reducing inequality, and fighting climate change, to promoting peace and justice, and ensuring access to quality education for all. The SDGs are interconnected – meaning that progress in one area depends on progress in another.



Here are just a **few examples** of how football is already making a difference in the fight against energy poverty, the combat of climate change, and the promotion of green practices and alternatives to artificial turf:



Tackling energy poverty: Football clubs and organizations around the world are using their platforms and resources to help address energy poverty in their local communities. Football can be used as a tool for poverty alleviation through initiatives such as **youth empowerment programs and education schemes** that use football as an enjoyable way to engage with local communities. For example, in 2016, Manchester United and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the “Red Devils for Energy Access” campaign, which aims to raise awareness and funds to help provide clean and reliable energy to people living in off-grid communities around the world.



Combatting climate change: Football clubs can implement green practices such as energy-efficient lighting systems or water conservation efforts to reduce their carbon footprint and fight climate change. Football clubs and organizations are also taking steps to **reduce their own carbon emissions and promote sustainable practices** within the sport. For example, Bayern Munich, one of the most successful football clubs in the world, has committed to becoming carbon neutral by the end of the decade, with a range of initiatives including the installation of solar panels at their stadium and the use of electric vehicles for team transportation.



Promoting green practices and alternatives to artificial turf: Many football clubs and organizations are also working to promote sustainable practices within the sport, including the use of **natural grass pitches and the development of alternatives to artificial turf**. For example, the Premier League has launched the “Natural Grass Pitch Improvement Fund”, which provides funding to clubs to upgrade and maintain their natural grass pitches, while the Football Association (FA) in England has invested in research and development to explore alternative, sustainable options for artificial turf. Football can help promote environmental sustainability through its emphasis on **recycling and reducing waste**. Many clubs now have programmes in place to encourage fans to recycle their rubbish after matches. In addition, many players use environmentally friendly products such as biodegradable latex balls in an effort to be more sustainable. So, next time you hear someone say that football is ‘just

a game’, remember the important role it can play in society – from improving mental and physical health to promoting social cohesion and political empowerment.

While these are just a few examples of how football is already making a difference in the fight against energy poverty, the combat of climate change, and the promotion of green practices and alternatives to artificial turf, there is still much more that can be done.



How to measure sustainability in football?

There are several ways to measure sustainability in football (also known as soccer in some countries)

Some common metrics include:

- **Environmental impact:** This can include things like carbon emissions from stadiums and team travel, waste management, and water and energy usage.
- **Social impact:** This can include things like community engagement, player welfare, and diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- **Economic impact:** This can include things like financial stability and profitability of teams, and the economic impact of the sport on local communities.
- **Governance and Ethics:** Transparency, integrity, and human rights protection in the game.



FIFA



One way to measure and track these metrics is through **sustainability reporting**, which is a process by which organizations publicly report on their environmental, social, and economic performance.

Additionally, there are some organizations that focus specifically on the sustainability of football such as **FIFA**, **UEFA** and **Green Sports Alliance**, these organizations provide different tools to measure and track the performance of different teams, leagues and organizations and encourage them to adopt sustainable practices.

In conclusion, football has the power to drive positive change and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. From tackling energy poverty to combatting climate change and promoting sustainable practices within the sport, football has already made a difference and has the potential to do even more. By leveraging the popularity and influence of the sport, **football can inspire and engage people around the world** to take action on these critical issues and work towards a more sustainable future for all.

Are you interested in more specific recommendations watch our webinars covering hot topics by providing practical guidance:

- [Installing Solar Panels to Self-Power your Sports Facility by SDG Striker Project \(Erasmus+ Sports\)](#)
- [Energy Efficiency in Football by the SDG Striker Project \(Erasmus+ Sports\)](#)
- [Avoid Microplastic from Artificial Turf in Football by SDG Striker Project \(Erasmus+ Sports\)](#)

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Artificial turf: How can a ban on rubber infill have a negative impact? What can clubs do to be plastic free without significant drawbacks?



Written by:
Erik Loe, Norwegian Football Federation, Oslo

The recent decision by the European Union to ban the use of rubber infill in artificial football pitches has sent shockwaves through the football community. There are currently more than 40 000 artificial pitches in Europe, and **the ban will most likely have significant implications for football clubs at all levels.** We are trying to shed light on some of the consequences.

First and foremost, the ban will require many clubs to replace their existing artificial pitches with new ones that use an alternative infill material. This will be a costly undertaking for many clubs and could potentially put some at **risk of financial hardship.**

In addition to the financial implications, the ban raises concerns about the **performance**

and safety of artificial pitches. Rubber infill has been widely used for several years and has proven to be effective in replicating the playing characteristics of natural grass, making artificial grass pitches durable, weather-resistant and provide shock absorption.

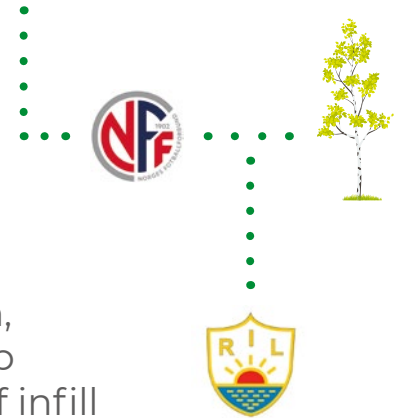
Alternative infill materials, such as cork and coconut husk, may not provide the same level of performance and could potentially lead to injuries for players. Some clubs may decide to **switch to natural grass** pitches, which could require significant investments in new infrastructure and maintenance, and heavily reduced hours of activity. Others may choose to **continue using artificial pitches** with alternative infill materials, despite the potential drawbacks.



So, the hunt for a more sustainable and durable replacement is on

Can the answer be found in the woods?

The Norwegian Football Association (NFF) is collaborating with the company GOE-production, the Kristiansand municipality, and the sports club Randesund IL to try out a completely new type of infill



Filling of Norwegian birch

In August of 2021, the **world's first artificial grass pitch with birch as infill** was established at Sukkevann, where Randesund IL belongs, in the Kristiansand municipality. Four pitches for 7vs7 are part of this trial project. One of them has the new infill, one has pure sand as infill, and the last two have rubber granules which now face the EU-ban. This way the project compares the different materials during the season.



How does it look so far

User experiences are vital in any product development. At Sukkevann the players are invited to share their experiences through an app. The players answer 15 questions, and the results will be used to further improve the product. The same app will be used on other types of courses to be able to compare different infill, during different conditions.

So far, **users are positive:** the infill doesn't get in hair, clothes or shoes, the bounce is good, and the ball follows the court better than on courts with rubber granules. It is also reported that some properties have potential for improvement. Product development is constant, and new versions are tested. One of the more advanced developments has been the rounding of the edges to improve the rotational resistance and to reduce the risk of skin injuries.

This is the key: Never stop looking for opportunities for improvement, whether it's about improving the user experience or reducing the environmental footprint.

During the coming months, in the trial-period, SINTEF will be doing an assessment of the release of dangerous substances by the infill. We do not want a future ban on birch. (SINTEF is one of Europe's largest independent research organisations with a vision that reads "Technology for a better world".)



How will birch handle season variations

We mentioned different conditions. **Football is now a year-round activity**, which means that the pitches could be in use for more than 2,500 hours a year. The pitch at Sukkevann is kept open throughout the winter and will provide useful experience on how the artificial grass surface works in winter. This is also how to find out if heavy machinery and snow ploughing damage the surface.

Kristiansand is at the southern part of Norway, where the average temperature of any month is not below -1°C. Therefore, NFF is also working with clubs and municipalities in other parts of Norway, with harder **weather conditions**, to install this new infill for trial. However, the timing must be right, either by an existing need of a new pitch or for changing the infill of existing ones, and the funding must be in place both for the new infill, and for changing it, if it proves not to be successful.

Pitches for trial (outside Kristiansand) have been identified in Bergen, (west coast), in Stokke (southwest) and in Oslo. There are positive signals from Trondheim (middle of Norway), but Norwegian FA is still looking for the right alternative further north.

Long term consequences on many levels

Regardless of the path forward, the EU-ban could have a significant negative impact on the football community. Clubs will need to carefully consider their options and make decisions that are in the best interests of their players, fans, the environment, and the social role it is playing in the local community.

One of the main **social impacts** of grassroots football is its ability to bring people together and foster a sense of belonging. In many small towns and rural areas, the local football team serves as a **community hub** where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together to support their team and socialize with their neighbours.

For many young people, participating in a grassroots football team can help them develop important life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and discipline. It can also provide a safe and positive environment for them to stay active and healthy. In other words, **sustainability is a constant dilemma**. Increase social impact or reduce environmental footprint.



"In our view, sustainability must also mean that we take care of the meeting place that football represents for almost 400,000 active football players in Norway - and for millions of players in Europe. A meeting place must be functional so that it can remain the driving force it should and can be in local communities in Norway and in Europe"

Says Alf Hansen, Director of football development department at the Norwegian FA.

Many grassroots football clubs struggle to secure adequate funding to cover their expenses and maintain their facilities. The **financial cost** of changing the artificial turfs can make it difficult for them to operate and provide the same level of support and opportunities in the future.

A solution must be found.



The development of energy prices and what options do we have in football to respond

Written by:
Johannes Lindorfer,
Energy Institute at the Johannes
Kepler University of Linz, Austria

 **ENERGIE
INSTITUT**
an der Johannes Kepler Universität Linz

Energy prices in Europe have undergone significant changes over the past months.

With regard to the pilot countries, these started from different status (basis 2021 from Eurostat) for the price structure of electricity in the SDG-Striker:

In general, **prices** have trended significantly **upwards**, although there have been fluctuations depending on various factors such as changes in government policies, economic conditions, and global energy markets influenced by global events such as sanctions, natural disasters, and geopolitical tensions.



In Portugal, the average price of electricity for households is around €0.20 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). In Spain the average price of electricity for households was around €0.20-€0.25 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).



For Scotland, the average price of electricity for households is not specified by country but in the UK it is around £0.15 per kilowatt-hour (kWh).



In Norway, the average price of electricity is one of the highest in Europe, at around €0.30 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) for households.



The price of energy in the EU depends on a range of different supply and demand conditions, including the geopolitical situation, the national energy mix, import diversification, network costs, environmental protection costs, severe weather conditions, or levels of excise and taxation.

The electricity prices for household consumers in the EU countries are illustrated in the following figure:

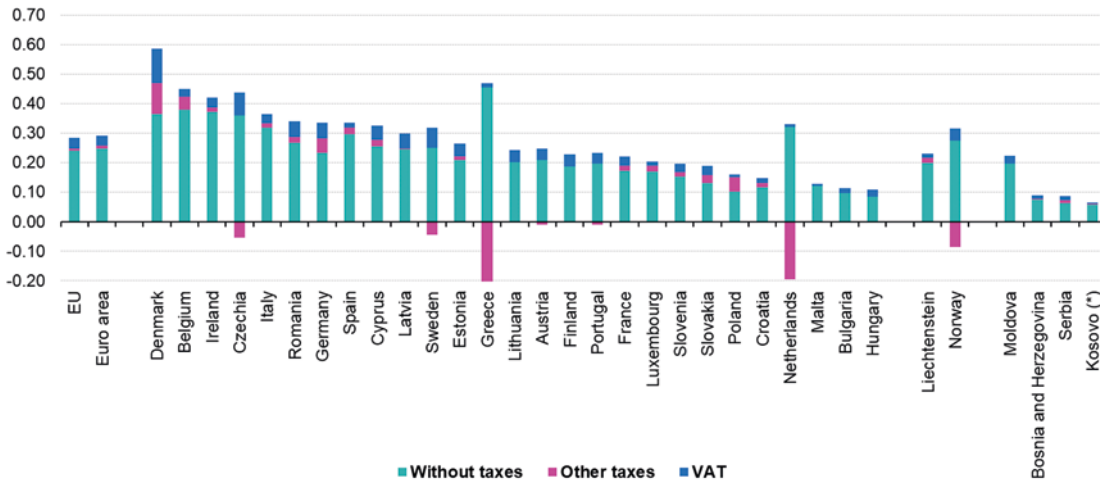


Figure: Electricity prices for household consumers, second half 2022 (€ per kWh).

Source: Eurostat

(1) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The following figure shows the percentage change in electricity prices for household consumers including all taxes and VAT from the second half of 2021 compared with the second half of 2022.

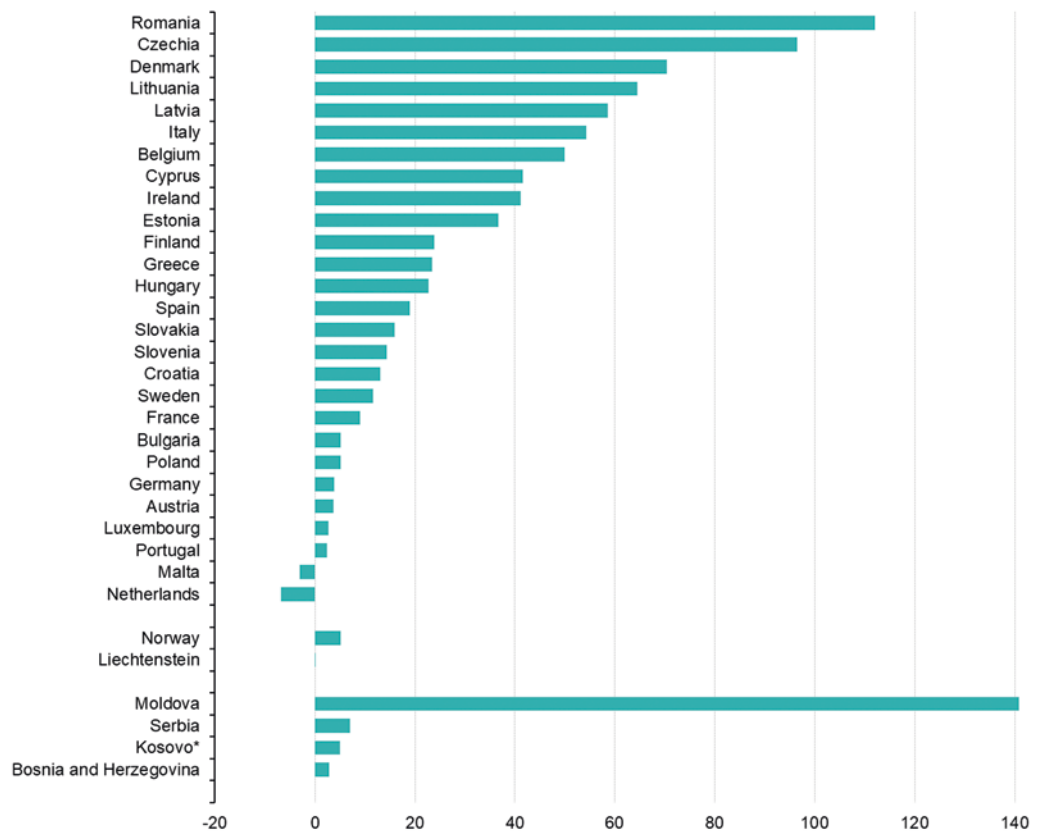


Figure: Change in electricity prices for household consumers compared with previous year's same semester, second half 2022.

Source: Eurostat Austria

(1) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

How can football clubs reduce their energy bills?

Football clubs can take several steps to reduce their energy bills. Some strategies include:



- 1 Energy efficiency measures:** This can include things like installing energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems, and appliances. Upgrading to more efficient equipment and technologies can help to reduce energy consumption and lower bills.
- 2 On-site renewable energy generation:** This can include installing solar panels on the stadium's roof or surrounding areas or installing wind turbines to generate electricity. This can provide a source of clean, renewable energy that can offset the club's consumption of fossil fuels.
- 3 Energy management systems:** This can include installing software that can monitor and control energy consumption, helping clubs to identify areas where energy is being wasted, and take steps to reduce consumption.
- 4 Behavioural change:** Educating and encouraging employees and fans to adopt more energy-efficient behaviours can have a significant impact on energy consumption and costs.
- 5 Green procurement:** Choosing to buy products and services that are more environmentally friendly can help to reduce the club's overall carbon footprint and energy consumption.
- 6 Carbon offset:** Offsetting carbon footprint by investing in projects that reduce or remove carbon emissions.
- 7 Partnerships and initiatives:** Joining initiatives and partnerships with organizations that promote sustainable practices and provide resources, support and recognition for sustainable efforts can help to further reduce energy consumption and costs.

It's worth to note that implementing some of these strategies may involve some upfront costs, but in the long run they can help to save money on energy bills and also help the club to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability.



How is the energy crisis affecting football?

The example of the Portuguese Football Federation



Written by:
Francisca Araújo
Portuguese Football Federation, Lisbon

The **energy crisis** that hit the world has a widespread impact on all sectors of activity. Since 2021, electricity and natural gas prices in Portugal (and in the rest of Europe) have been increasing, following the easing of restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and Russia's decision to suspend supply of gas to some Member States of the European Union (EU).

In this sense, football has also been majorly impacted by this **increase in costs in its activity**. Northern European countries are already thinking about alternatives such as changing the calendar of the competitions to warmer months (Example: example of a suggestion by the President of Union Berlin football club in an interview). In Italy, the use of renewable energy by football clubs has grown significantly.

In Portugal, football clubs are facing similar problems. The floodlighting of stadiums and training camps have a significant weight in the monthly energy bill. Professional clubs usually hold training sessions during the week, so they don't need or depend so much on lighting for training. But in **non-professional clubs**, changing training schedules is not feasible since it is only possible to carry out training after working hours.

Regarding the **replacement of current lighting** with LED lighting, it involves a considerable investment and financing difficulties in these times and especially after 2 years of the pandemic.

In this sense, clubs have been trying to find new ways to minimize the impact of the high energy prices with actions that involve less investment, but which are also relevant



Patricia Vincent,
CSR coordinator
at Amora FC



*Regarding the energy crisis and how it influences football clubs, namely the increase in energy costs and the impact it has on our activity, some of the **best practices** that we have implemented to reduce energy costs are: using LED lamps at the Serrado training center; reducing the use of lighting as much as possible, using it only when there are hours set aside for training and matches; regarding the lighting in the stands, only being in use when there are **official matches**; as for used gas, we are currently using gas cylinders, but we always look for the supplier with the gas bottle at the lowest price close to us; we have already asked companies to study the*



possibility of installing solar panels, however the existing trees and their shade made it impossible to place solar panels, however we will request a new study for this solution that would further reduce energy costs.

I reinforce that the Serrado training field is a Municipal facility, which is why no changes can be made at a structural level with regard to the installation of natural gas.



We have also tried to make some changes in terms of energy consumption, namely: adjust the periods of use of electrical equipment; to turn off ventilation equipment (air conditioning, for example) and electronics during periods without occupancy; replacement of light bulbs with **LED lightning** that consumes 80% less than the traditional ones and do not emit heat; reduce CO₂ emissions (a measure that will last up to 25 years); in this last

holiday season we didn't have the lighted Club's traditional Christmas tree - a measure adopted for the first time; always take advantage of sunlight: in the morning until at least 4pm we always have the curtains open; replacement of stationary computers with laptops in the club offices to reduce the energy consumption by 90%.



Margarida Ribeiro

Diretora de Comunicação Felgueiras SAD,



At Cidade do Futebol we have been working in changing some procedures to reduce our energy bill. We can describe some examples: the reduction of the general floor **lighting period**, from 08:00 to 20:00 (currently it is turned off during night shifts); the reduction of the lighting period for foyer + screens + kitchens, from 08:00 to 20:00 (currently it is turned off during night shifts); the placement of switches for each spa area, to schedule the outdoor lighting from 7:00 pm to 7:30 am (we do not recommend turning off or reducing lighting out of this time span for safety reasons); scheduling the decorative lighting to be turned off at

12am; not installing Christmas decorative lighting this last holiday season; the conduction of a session to raise awareness between the players and staff of the National Teams so that afternoon training sessions end by 5pm (during the winter period); the conduction of an awareness training initiative for our daily service, staff and providers at Cidade do Futebol to comply with good practices (security company, cleaning services, catering provider, audio-visual provider, etc.). In all the offices we set the AC equipment to automatically turn off at 6 pm (currently turning off at 8 pm).



Pedro Prudêncio
Facility Manager
Cidade do Futebol



UK Government investment opens for Scottish grassroots clubs with a view toward Sustainability



Written by:
Scottish Football
Association (SFA)

A new round of funding from the Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) on behalf of the UK Government offers Scottish grassroots clubs the ability to transform and upgrade their facilities for the benefit of local communities.

Following on from the launch at the end of last year of the Scottish FA's new four-year grassroots football strategy, [Football For All](#), grassroots clubs across the nation were given

the opportunity to apply for funding from the £2 million investment that DCMS have provided for Scottish grassroots clubs, to develop existing facilities that are accessible to their local communities.

To reflect this approach, and for the second phase of the Scottish FA Grassroots Pitch & Facilities Fund, the focus of the investment fell across **two key areas**.

MAINTAIN - projects targeting the **maintenance and enhancement** of existing football pitch facilities, resulting in increased participation and a level of quality that not only meet match, training, and recreational football, but which also ensures that the resultant facility is attractive to all participants, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or level of the game being played.



SUSTAIN - projects with a sustainability theme, where the focus will fall on **improvements to football facilities** which promote environmental, financial, and ultimately overall club sustainability. Football has a responsibility to play its part in the wider sustainability agenda. This phase of funding marks the progress that the Scottish FA has made in recognizing the importance of sustainability, in all its facets.



The Funding Streams

MAINTAIN saw investment channelled into 2 types of pitch project - synthetic and natural grass development. This broadened impact beyond solely synthetic playing surfaces, at the same time providing a much-needed funding source for natural grass pitch venues that have suffered significantly as a result of decreasing levels of investment due to wider financial pressures.

The **MAINTAIN** theme supported;

- 3G Playing Surfaces – upgrade or replacement of existing pitches, at both training (60 x 40m minimum) and full size (90 x 56m Scottish FA minimum) level.
- Natural Grass - upgrade/improvement of existing match pitches and/or training pitches/spaces.

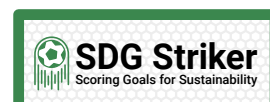
In parallel with this, the **SUSTAIN** theme considered football facility projects with environmental, financial, and ultimately club sustainability at their core, at the same time delivering real football participation and developmental impacts. Examples of projects supported within the SUSTAIN stream included;

- Floodlighting - existing system conversions to LED.
- Solar panel installation.

As an area that is currently evolving, Phase 2 projects supported through the **SUSTAIN** stream were limited to 3G floodlighting and solar panel installation – these being the 2 key areas that clubs continued to approach the Scottish FA for support.

All **SUSTAIN** projects had to be delivered by a recognised electrical contractor holding the necessary industry accreditations, e.g. SELECT Scotland and/or the new Microgeneration Certification Scheme (or MCS) accreditation, together with evidencable experience of delivering projects of the type applied for.

The **SUSTAIN** theme coincides with the Scottish FA's wider commitment to leading the way in reducing the impact that football clubs have on the environment, as outlined in the Scottish FA's [Environmental Sustainability in Scottish Football](#) plan. A means of achieving this is through guidance and support to clubs by linking in with external partners including [Zero Waste Scotland](#) and [Energy Saving Trust](#) who, through the Scottish FA's involvement in the [SDG Striker](#) programme, have provided education and ongoing assistance to enable clubs to take steps towards more sustainable practices within their clubs and facilities.



Beyond the funding streams themselves better reflecting the importance of the sustainability agenda, key environmentally focused criteria were built into the application assessment process.





Environmental Impact Criteria

Beyond the UK Govt & Scottish FA criteria, applications illustrating a commitment to meeting the following Environmental Impact Criteria were prioritised:



Recycling

The different elements of the pitch construction profile which may be recycled, those products including but not exhaustive to.

- Pre-formed/proprietary shock-pad(s)
- Performance infill products
- 3G playing surface
- Wooden or pre-formed plastic or previously recycled 'kickboards' and/or infill migration mitigation measures such as drainage filters, traps, and footwear grids.



Microplastics

Replacement surface to include an alternative bio or eco-friendly infill to rubber-based infill products (e.g., SBR, TPE, EPDM etc.) reducing ongoing risk of microplastic migration into drainage systems and on into local water courses.



Sustainability

Floodlight upgrade to LED and any other energy sustainability projects that will make a significant contribution in financial and/or environmental terms.



The £2m investment is the second round of funding being invested into Scottish grassroots football by the UK government, with £2m having already been delivered by the Scottish FA in 2021/22. This investment is part of a UK government's wider multi-year commitment to help develop grassroots facilities and increase participation across Scotland.

The latest round of funding of £2m was opened to Scottish FA Quality Mark clubs, as well as any member clubs working in partnership with their local community to deliver a range of grassroots football activities.

Clubs were able to apply for funding to make improvements to their existing facilities in three areas: 3G playing surface upgrade or replacement; Sustainability (LED improvement and solar panel installation); and natural grass improvement.

To coincide with the launch of the second phase of DCMS funding, the Scottish FA also invited expressions of interest (EOI) from clubs across Scotland for future phases of funding.



How can a sports organization obtain funding for sustainability initiatives?



Written by:

Alvaro Martinez Freile and Joris Meeuwse,
European Football for Development Network (EFDN)

The implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in sports organizations is a good opportunity to contribute to the well-being of the local communities and to be a referent in sustainability in the sports sector. Nevertheless, there are limitations, and maybe the most relevant one is the lack of economic resources. Therefore, **funding is needed!**



Here we will have a look on some of the funding opportunities available for sports clubs and foundations:



Go local!

Local funding will be the optimal solution for small sport organizations. There are a lot of opportunities at a local level and a lot of them come from **governmental funding**.

Sports organisations can look at the regional and municipal sustainability agendas to learn about the sustainability development priorities of the administration. By targeting the goals of the administration, clubs can be more appealing for local funding.

Also, clubs can look at the related ministries (sport, health, etc.) and target what they are looking for in terms of sustainable goals and related funding. Many clubs and organisations now work closely with local or national authorities to aid local communities. This method of financing is something to look out for in Europe.



Go Europe!

Clubs and sports organisations can find funding opportunities for sustainability in European institutions. Here are some examples of **European funding programs** for sustainability in sport:



Erasmus+ Mobility Calls:

- 3 per year
- Usually in February, May, and October
- Rough budget between 10.000-50.000€ depending on the organisation's size
- Allow staff or youngsters learn and study abroad

Erasmus+ Sport Programs:

- 1 per year
- Usually in March/April
- Several different types of call including Capacity Building, Collaborative Partnership, Small Collaborative Partnership, and not-for-profit Sports Events
- Rough budget between 30-60.000€ for Small Collaborative Partnerships and between 120.000-450.000€ for the other calls
- Virtually any topic within sport can be accepted

UEFA Programs:

- 1 per year
- Usually in July/August
- Football related projects of virtually any kind, albeit with a focus on children
- Rough budget of 200.000-225.000€ though can be lower for smaller projects





Relationship management is essential!



As a sports organisation, you must understand what do the funders want, and show that you can provide exactly what they are searching for. A good relationship with local authorities is a crucial aspect of local fundraising. It is also essential to **be flexible**; community needs may sometimes align with your needs as an organisation. Also, when searching for funds, it is necessary to consider all potential interested stakeholders in the community.

Always be one step ahead!



It is also crucial to **read the requirements** thoroughly to understand the funder's expectations. Some funds want specialists, so you should partner with expert organisations. Reporting is always essential, so it is vital to have reporting processes set in place before joining the project. It is also crucial to have personnel who can compile statistics and show that you can evidence the success of the programmes. Data is a crucial driver for finding partners and funders interested in your programs.

Benefits from writing an application



Searching for funds leads to additional benefits for your organisation, as it contributes to **improve the relationship** with funders, partners and other stakeholders, improving your partner network. Another positive aspect is that when an organisation writes an application, they get a better understanding of the wants and needs of the community, aligning the project with reality, and ultimately **raising the effectiveness** of the project.

Lessons learnt about writing applications



Engaging partners and sharing responsibility are also key factors to interest funders in your project. To motivate partners and funders to participate in the project, organisations must ensure that their partners' goals align with their own and that partners know what is expected from them. People are more likely to deliver quality work when there is a sense of ownership. Ultimately partners must feel like it is their project too.





How to find partners for the application



Finding partners to participate on a program depends on the type of funding. Some of them are acquired through previous relationships. Sometimes organisations must go out and look for expert stakeholders involved in projects or with specific skills. In other circumstances, geographical selection is the method for finding suitable partners with a better reach to the project's target group. You must know what your programme wants to achieve when building partnerships.



Is the approach for getting funds for sustainability projects different?



Searching funds for sustainability does not necessarily require a different approach: it is about examining the broader potential of different funding streams. For instance, organisations can reach EFDN and other sports organisations with similar sustainability values to search for funding and collaboration in sustainability projects. Another method would be ensuring financing options through more “high-end and big” founding initiatives created by big governing bodies, such as the EU.

On that line, one useful tool when searching partners is the [European Commission Funding & Tender Opportunities portal](#), which allows to search for organisations and consortiums working on specific programs, having the possibility to join for funding.



Do:

Build projects that people need. If there is no demand in your local community, it will fail. Find the needs and wants of your community and build around them.



Don't:

Don't be passive, “go for it” regarding fundraising. Clubs and sports organisations should take more initiative towards sustainability development goals, as there exist plenty of funding possibilities.



Federation's sustainability challenges and concerns and how to overcome them

The consortium of the **SDG-Striker project**: scoring goals for sustainability, met last October to assess the status of the project and define the next steps of implementation. The project aims to improve the governance of sport entities and, in response to this challenge, the consortium organised a participative dynamic in which the participating sport federations could give voice to the realities perceived by the different agents involved in the world of sport, from players, fans, families, to workers of the facilities.

The activity showed a clear concern about the climate emergency and all the environmental problems that derive from it. But also, a clear willingness to face a challenge of such

magnitude. Among the **main concerns** in the world of non-professional football, interest has been identified in:

- The **energy crisis** and how the rise in electricity prices affects the management of sports facilities.
- The need to **improve digitalisation** for a correct monitoring of consumption.
- The importance of research to **find alternatives** to artificial turf that allow the filtration of microplastics.
- The need to **improve the governance** of sports institutions as well as the will to promote equality and equity strategies.

Many of these topics were addressed throughout the project and previous editions of this magazine. During the dynamic, the importance of the sport sector in communicating sustainability issues to the millions of participants around the world was also identified, a cohesive capacity already adopted by the United Nations in the General Assembly resolution of December 2020, where it declared **sport as “a major enabler for sustainable development”**.

In this latest edition of the magazine, we want to go further and **present real voices** of different athletes, a reflection of different realities that serve as motivation to continue adding efforts towards more sustainable events and promote environmental awareness through innovative projects such as [SDG-Striker](#).

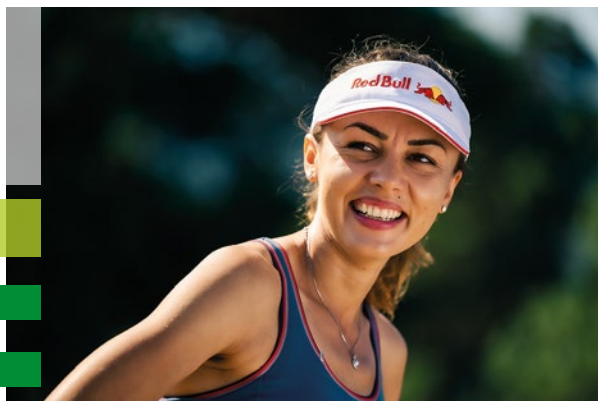
To reflect the diversity that exists within the world of sport we shared a short questionnaire with the world champion in Trail Running & Skyrunning, **Denisa Dragomir**; a tennis player at Rice University in the US, **Santiago Navarro**, and internship students from the [Union of Sports Federations of Catalonia \(UFEC\)](#).

Denisa Dragomir World champion of Trail Running & Skyrunning



Which are the main concerns of your sports field in terms of sustainability?

I am really happy to start seeing more people that speak about the climate emergency. And not only are they talking about it, they are trying to change something and take action. These people need more support from all of us. Nevertheless, we still need to work more on pushing sustainable races and reducing the footprint of any outdoor practitioner, so I think that those are the main concerns nowadays.





How is the climate emergency affecting your sector?

This year we did not have winter in my hometown. We lived in a constant springtime. In previous years, we had a lot of snow, negative temperatures. This year everything has changed. During the winter I can't train like I used to do. My body feels different. I felt weaker and I know I'm not the only one feeling like this, so the climate emergency also affects the way we understand our training and the sport itself.



Are you taking any action to mitigate it? Which one?

I think that there are many actions that we can do. The most important is that we must make people realize that the planet is being destroyed. I think that the change will come when most of the people realize that there is a big problem with the climate emergency.

So, I think that the most important action is to make people understand that we really need to change this situation and take action. I bet on it, so I used to talk about it and share the message about climate change and how to start taking action.

Santiago Navarro

Tennis player at Rice University, US.

Which are the main concerns of your sports field in terms of sustainability?

I think that in my sport, there is not a huge contributor to severe pollution however there are minor ones that need to be addressed. For example, I work in a very big gym that is always freezing cold meaning that the AC is on 24/7 at a temperature that is not necessary. Second, I practice a couple of times a day, and as a team, our water consumption is very big since we all shower at between 2-3 times a day.

How is the climate emergency affecting your sector?

I don't think that the climate emergency is affecting my sector at all because I don't feel that anything has changed because of that.

Are you taking any action to mitigate it? Which one?

I try to avoid taking long showers and stay in the shower just the necessary time.

The **internship students**, a volleyball instructor, and a basketball player, responded that sustainability is not a priority for them and therefore they do not see direct effects on their sport field. We believe, these answers are a big concern by themselves, which draw attention to the **need for and importance of continuing raising awareness about climate change**, its negative impacts and what we can do about it, from an individual to a collective level.



In addition to international efforts and initiatives, the importance of the **Erasmus+ Programme** from the **European Union** should be highlighted, through which innovative and interdisciplinary projects can be implemented to help improve the governance of sports institutions and address issues such as environmental awareness among young people.

SDG-Striker is achieving its goals not only by contributing to sustainable development in sports, but also by providing visibility to a global challenge that requires a global involvement and participation.





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Scoring Goals for Sustainability



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