



Sport for All and the Environment

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GREEN GUIDELINES

How to conduct
a sustainable sport event

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The team / The idea

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The idea of "Sport for All and the Environment" (SforAE) Project is raising an awareness about the benefits from ecological behaviours in sport for all. Its aim is an environmental education through sport and sport promotion in safe and clean environment. The principal is to share the message that physical activity keeps mankind in a good and healthy shape and extends the individuals lives, when saving the natural resources is key to keep the environment beautiful and in a good condition for the next generations. This parallelism is the base for the SforAE Project. It includes 4 partners from 4 countries:

- Asociácia športu pre všetkých Slovenskej republiky (Slovak Sport for All Association from Slovakia)
- Česká asociace Sport pro všechny, z. s. (Czech Association Sport for All from Czech Republic)
- Fundacja na rzecz Odzysku Opakowań Alumiiniowych RECAL (Foundation for Recovery of Aluminium Packaging RECAL from Poland)
- Latvijas Sporta federāciju padome (Latvian Sports Federations Council from Latvia)

Apart from education, the aim is to establish strong cooperation between partners to create a synergic effect for them. The project involves the exchange of experiences and the joint development of guidelines for ecologically sustainable sports events. It also includes organization of 4 flagship events (one in each Project country) and support with promotional materials in a form of free of charge canned isotonic drinks for about 120 different sport events. The events must be organized sustainable for environment, including collection and recycling of empty cans. Isotonic drinks were produced and donated by Krynica Vitamin, a producer of non-alcoholic and low-alcoholic beverages on behalf of brands and retail chains.

Introduction

The most important challenges facing sport event organizers are of course the concern for a high level of sports competition and the care for the efficient course of preparations and the event itself. The list of contemporary expectations posed before sport events is definitely broader and this publication is an attempt to inspire people responsible for their course, assuming a smaller impact on the environment. Take note that many of proposed actions are not costly or even doesn't cause any additional expenses.

The authors of this publication during its preparation acted with the idea that many sports disciplines to actively cultivate require a healthy and clean environment. For practical reasons, different thematic areas have been distinguished to facilitate the reader's movement within a clear division. It is worth remembering that during the preparation for your sport event, even the partial implementation of our recommendations will favourably reduce the impact on the environment. In the case of their use, remember to communicate it to the participants and the fans in a legible way. If it is clearly noticeable then surely your effort will be appreciated!

Recycling

In practice, every, even the smallest sport event has to face the fact of waste production and the problem of littering. Remember that the best waste is one that is not produced. However, when deciding to provide participants with different products/materials, think about ordering things that are easy to recycle (see chapter: „Green” orders on page 7), to exclude the worst option – waste landfilling. While preparing this chapter, we acted according to the rules: “Leave the place as you found it” and “What you brought you should also take home”. Encourage participants to recycle all of the waste (that has been produced during the event) until the end of the event to minimise the risk of polluting other areas. Possible activities related to the reduction of waste generated during the event and its recycling.

- When purchasing materials for your event, make sure that all ordered goods packed in unavoidable packaging are recyclable. Preferable permanent materials easily and infinitely recyclable.
- Request recycle bins from the venue to encourage waste separation at source and reduce waste to landfill.
- Include participants in the waste reduction process by promoting environmental awareness and informing them about recycling programs available.
- Ensure that any waste is separated at the source for future recycling. Provide visible bins. Make sure that wastes are separately collected all the time.
- If deposit system is introduced in your country, make sure to follow its rules (e.g. not crushing the packaging and return them undamaged so that bar code EAN or QR code is readable).



- Use appropriate recycling bins in all areas, located in central locations, easily accessible and clearly marked.
- Use social media to encourage and promote participants who will support environmental activities (e.g. photo stand instead of giving out small awards, which can quickly become waste).
- Give purchasing priority to recyclable and post-consumer recycled products. Weight of packaging is important too.
- Minimize paper use and maximize the reuse of any informational material handouts.
- Instead of leaflets, you can place a QR code in a visible place so that participants have access to important information.
- Specify the number of participants in the event before printing the documents to avoid creating a surplus.
- Pay attention to emptying toilets and saving paper towels.

Practical example: For a proper realization Partners of the SforAE Project offer a canned isotonic drinks, for sport events participants. The cans are provided for free but only to those who will use delivered bags and containers to organize selective collection of empty aluminium cans. We also provide promotional banners encouraging recycling. Aluminium cans collected during all supported events are extremely easy in recycling and all of collected cans must be transferred to recycling what in case of aluminium is possible infinitely and without losing the quality. It's called: Permanent material.

Food wasting

The topic of producing waste described in the previous section also includes a special issue that we decided to discuss separately due to its large impact on the environment. The problem of wasting food is a huge challenge also facing the organizer of a sport event. Do not forget that the packaging is responsible only for a small part of the "environmental footprint" of the entire product. By far the largest impact on the environment is the content of the packaging, and especially this concerns food, which requires not only huge space but also huge energy consumption devoted to cultivation, acquisition, preparation and of course, transportation.

Recommended ways to reduce food damage and waste:

- Look for environmentally friendly and locally manufactured products. Whenever possible, food should be organic, locally sourced and composed of seasonal ingredients. Also make sure that your products are sourced from sustainably managed sources.
- Minimize food waste by preparing or ordering the necessary amount and by establishing cooperation with food banks and eventually with composting entities. Provide recycling and composting bins in convenient locations.
- Procure food with recyclable and light-weight packaging.
- Make sure that recycling bins and waste bins are located close to the food dispensing points.
- Consider which way of serving food is associated with the least amount of waste – buffet, sit-down, à la carte.
- Use the right amount of food and water for participants – different for adults and children, different in the hot and cold season, different for many types of physical activity.
- Make sure to have available variety of food options suitable to different dietary needs (e.g. vegan and vegetarian) and without chemical substances as usually it is more environmentally friendly.
- Even if you are not responsible for the food during the event (external entities are providing food) you can influence others to implement the above recommendations. You can even prepare special rules for external/internal food providers (with additional rules like no serving of dishes in plastic).

Practical example: When organizing a sport event, check the possible transfer of food and drinks (with a short shelf life) to people in need, for example to a food bank located in your area. It is worth checking the possibility in advance to be prepared to implement the idea if necessary. Composting a food is its permanent loss, so treat this option as a finality.

Transport

It is difficult to imagine even a smaller sport event whose participants do not use transport. It concerns not only sportsmen, but also equipment and fans. Traveling to smaller or larger distances is part of many sports disciplines, often representing their character. The preparation and organization of a sport event also requires quick and effective transport. That is why we devoted special attention to this issue and you will find the largest number of examples that we decided to share.

Possible activities related to the transport and mobility:

- When organizing an event, a low-carbon means of transport should be used.
- Choose the venue of the event to be easy to reach by public transport.
- Encourage attendees to walk or use alternative transportation to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution. Indicate other routes leading to the event, such as bicycle paths – encouraging people to come by bike, rollerblades or scooters.
- For all unavoidable vehicular travel, encourage car-pooling. Promote it e.g. via social media. You can also prepare a special tool for this (or use existing one).
- Offer available public transport services. Ask your municipality to cooperate in minimising pollution by allowing participants to use transportation free of charge.
- Use low emission shuttle vehicles, bicycles, hybrid cars, etc.
- Choose sustainable and socially responsible accommodation close to sport events.
- Air travel has the highest carbon footprint and if possible, an alternative should be considered.
- Rail and bus travels are associated with lower emission of harmful compounds and as the terminals are centrally located, it reduces the further need for taxi transfers.
- People interested in the event should be informed about available public transport connections by sharing maps and routes of bus or metro lines. It is also necessary to provide convenient transport for disabled people.
- Joining several people on a shared car journey should be encouraged for participants.
- Providing parking spaces should involve the least possible interference with the natural environment. Parking spaces should not be allocated to areas covered with grass or other vegetation, even in places outside the protected areas.
- In areas where wild animals live, we should move only along designated paths, and if necessary, it is worth separating and securing such areas.
- Provide special award for travellers by most green way (coming by bike/walk).
- Offer bike parking place inside your event (bikes can go inside, cars don't).
- Provide information about limitation of cars for sponsors/providers (only 1 car for a company is allowed) and parking spaces only for cars with the maximum number of passengers.
- On the on-line registration ask participants about what kind of transportation they want to use for coming.
- Try to use in the car as much space as possible during transporting goods (as full car as possible but safe).

Practical example: The average car, while burning every litre of petrol, generates about 2.5 kg of carbon dioxide (CO₂), while about 3 kg of CO₂ burns diesel fuel. In the case of cars powered by gas engines, the emission is "only" about 1.5 kg of CO₂ for each burnt litre of autogas.

Co-sharing

The changing and emerging business models give us the opportunity to make many different choices. An increasingly popular model of conscious consumption in Europe is the joint or temporary use of highly specialized goods or services. You do not need to buy, for example, a time measurement system so that participants in your sport event get to know their exact results.

The issue concerns the possibility of limiting the environmental impact of many individuals by co-operating or using a rental of various products.

- For example, limiting long hours of car transport to other means of transport combined with car rental near the venue.
- Rental or co-sharing of various types of equipment/goods/tools.
- Try to use the existing infrastructure and resources.
- Try to use many times commercial materials and banners (you can put every time the different logo like a sticker/label).



Practical example: For a proper realization SforAE Project the Partners decide to co-operate with well-known and pan-European Every Can Counts campaign. It provides a ready to use guideline for not only different graphic materials but strongly help us in case of collection empty aluminium cans distributed to sport events participants with isotonic drinks (provided free of charge by Krynica Vitamin).

"Green" orders

The subject of "green" public procurement is an issue that can be applied not only in public administration. More and more companies and organizations decide to take into account ecological aspects when choosing from a variety of goods or services.

A proposal of various pro-environmental criteria that can be used in the implementation of a public procurement.

- Make sure your communication is consistent with your sustainability message by avoiding unnecessary paper, flyers, mail-outs, etc.
- Use the products/goods from recycled materials and easy to recycle.
- Also in toilets and for printing you can use recycled paper.



Practical example: We used in SforAE Project aluminium cans to distribute isotonic drinks because we know that's a permanent material and 75% of ever produced aluminium is still in use in different applications. By ordering products made of permanent materials you can be sure that some of them are produced from recycled material and can be easily recycled without losing quality.

Volunteering

Volunteers are often very valuable support for the event, and volunteering itself means real commitment to the project and supporting its goals. Therefore, it is one of the most important elements of "green" events.

Proposals to involve people who are not related to the project to activities for recycling (e.g.: parents and friends of event participants or observers).

- Encourage viewers and accompanying people to help you with different tasks that can be easily transferred to others, e.g.: organizational services, garbage collection, distribute information, preparation of refreshments, etc.
- Use locals for volunteering, giving them work, making them motivated.

- Involve more people, e.g. using slogans on banners: “don’t leave the granny at home”, “bring one more person with you”.
- Local schools can be interested in volunteering as usually they have a teacher responsible for these activities.

Practical example: Some companies run employee volunteering programs, which means that by cooperating with one entity, you can acquire several or even several dozen volunteers at once.

Energy

The subject of energy touches every, even the smallest area of our functioning. Remember that in practice it is not possible to conduct a sport event without energy. However, you can always find areas where you want to reduce energy consumption.

Solutions leading to reduction of energy consumption or the use of renewable energy sources.

- Check whether the venue can provide for the use of natural lighting and ventilation.
- When lights need to be used ensure that they are energy efficient.
- Minimize the registration form or use electronic registration.
- Buy green power for the event if available in the area.
- If your event is outside, ask the city or community hosting it what are their waste and energy reduction policies.
- In case of using fire in an open space: making the necessary security measures.
- Provide the solar batteries for laptops or mobile phones. Maybe you can organize free of charge car charging station.
- Choose the proper size of the generator if it is necessary.
- Try to use alternative energy on the event. You can even recover energy e.g. from bicycles.
- Organize the event during daytime.

Practical example: When deciding on the location of your sport event, check the possibility of using "passive" architectural solutions. Remember that the most energy-efficient one can turn out to be an outdoor event.

Water

There are many sports disciplines that cannot be practiced without good quality water. On the other hand, there are supply problems in many regions. Make sure that your sport event rationally uses such a valuable resource as water, especially drinking water.

Reduce the negative impact on water by:

- Rational use of water and the elimination of water waste.
- Encourage delegates to save water by providing notices in bathrooms at the event venue.
- Offer suggestions on how to reduce water consumption.
- Provide proper size of the water portion.
- If it is possible, no chemicals should get into the water during the event (sun lotion, heating creams).
- In case of an event related to water, pay attention to the significance of the place, its richness, and methods of saving water. Take care of fishing areas.
- Check the water system if it is not leaking.
- Don't throw anything into the water.
- Use rainwater for certain applications.

Practical example: We offer high quality, canned non-carbonated isotonic drinks to SforAE Project participants. The drink keeps participants hydrated, and the small size of the can (250 ml) ensures that the drink is drunk all at once, which reduces wasted drinks.

Noise

In many cases, supporters are not able to hold back their emotions venting them through the noise. Formulating our recommendations in this area, we were guided by the need to not disturb the environment with noise in an excessive way, especially in areas of valuable nature.

Examples of ways to reduce noise emitted to the environment.

- Think of noise level you will create. Ensure that participants are aware of the impact of noise on the environment and know how to reduce it.
- Don't use fireworks.
- Near the Nature Places use smaller pots of noise instead of one giant sound combo.
- Try to create "quite times" (or lower music periods) during the event.
- Finish the event early in the day to ensure a quiet evening.
- Make people aware of their own noise with an informational campaign presenting some practical examples of how loud events can be and what are the environmental impacts.

Practical example: Usually, we operate in the range of 40–70 dB of the sound level, the level of 90 dB corresponds to intense street traffic, and 140 dB corresponds to the start of a fighter aircraft. Recommended by the WHO (World Health Organization) maximum level is 50 dB of noise in the environment during the day.

Air quality

Air, like water, is one of the elements used in certain sports. Unfortunately, in some places/periods its quality leaves much to be desired.

Solutions to reduce the emission of pollutants into the air during the organization and duration of the event as well as to ensure high quality indoor air (mainly fresh air):

- Only materials that do not contain or emit bio accumulative and/or toxic substances should be used for indoor fittings and construction materials.
- Request rooms with windows that open for ventilation and natural lighting.
- Try to use fresh air as much as is possible.
- Try to choose/use passive buildings.
- Try to avoid diesel power generators as they are heavy polluters.
- Create special smoking areas if it is necessary.

Practical example: In the area of the entire European Union, measuring stations operate to check the quality of the air around us. Their results are usually available online. Check the air quality around your sport event and inform participants and fans about it.

Carbon footprint and offset

"Carbon footprint" is a relatively complex method that allows you to measure the impact of your sport event from the perspective of CO₂ emissions. Remember that this is an advanced tool, however, regardless of whether you try to measure it, you can always think about environmental compensation.

Ways of measuring and reducing the carbon dioxide emissions associated with the organization of the event. What you cannot reduce must try to compensate.

- Check whether the venue can provide an option to offset the CO₂ emissions of the event by purchasing renewable energy.



- Calculate the carbon footprint of the event. Your calculation should include as much as you can anticipate (transport of materials, staff and equipment, electricity used during the event, etc.).
- Purchase renewable energy certificates to offset emissions associated with the event.
- After the event, leave the venue and the surrounding green areas in the condition they were in before the event.
- Use environment-friendly equipment (sport and other).
- As a part of the offset you can distribute tree seedlings as an award to have participants plant them at home.
- Promote the ecological approach.

Practical example: Try to compensate of carbon dioxide impact generated by your sport event. Idea to plant a tree is so simple but you can think about reduction of energy in a different space and relocate consumption of energy by your event. The Zero-emission standard is a recommended goal.

Certifications

It is mainly about various sports certificates. There are also specialist certification systems for green events. British BSI 8901 standard does not apply directly to sport events, but in a comprehensive way allows the assessment of the event in environmental terms.

- Use the solutions available under the "Public domain". Without the need to incur financial expenses, you are able to use images, maps and other free solutions that have been developed as a public good.

Practical example: "ABOVE THE BAR®" Qualification System primarily aims at developing the professional level of leisure sport and other events, guaranteeing proper quality in order to ensure that participants attending the events spend their free time under well-organized conditions: so that the "ABOVE THE BAR®" qualification is the guarantee of high quality for them.



Other

We know that the recommendations we offer do not exhaust the list of solutions that can be used during your sport event. During the workshop preparing these recommendations, we made a few more examples that elude the division proposed on the previous pages of the publication. Let us finally share with you some suggestions that we hope will complement the previously outlined model of a modern and environmentally sustainable sport event.

- The general rule is to use as few resources as possible.
- Introduction of educational elements: products teaching about environmental consciousness or raising awareness.
- Show the “green” way of thinking => also through playful and creative ways which can help to engage kids.
- For administrative services: fewer plastic sleeves, print documents on both sides of the page to reduce usage of paper, turning off devices, etc.
- Emphasizing positive effects and benefits of being “green” (a negative campaign is not efficient).
- When you have promotional gifts: think about something useful.
- If possible use online activities, e.g. social media promotion, QR codes for scanning and reaching information.
- Think about your own measurements of “being green” and monitoring your event’s impact on the environment.
- You can ask for municipal support, because both of you have common goal: to preserve the municipal area and keep it environmentally clean.

Practical example: Quizzes and games can be organized in connection with environment protection. During SforAE Project realization we are going to use games related to recycling and consultation for residents about selective collection rules.

Summary

The examples presented in this guide are intended to be a source of ideas for you to organize an event that will have a smaller negative impact on the environment. However remember that “Rome wasn’t built in a day” and we do not have to introduce all recommendations immediately (although this is warm welcome). Therefore, think about what elements are possible to implement during your next event. For the next, improve your “green” activities and expand them with new ones. Gradually, most of our proposals will certainly be implemented. And additionally, by switching to “green” thinking, you will certainly come across other, equally promising ideas for environmental protection. As you can see being eco-friendly doesn’t mean increased event costs, but having innovative solution that in long term or short term can even minimise the costs.

Disclaimers

This publication was prepared jointly by Partners of “Sport for All and Environment” Project (SforAE) co-financed by “Erasmus+ Sport” Small Collaborative Partnership (reference number: 622949-EPP-1-2020-1-PL-SPO-SSCP). It reflects only the author's view and the Agency and the Commission are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contains.



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