

# GUIDE TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN SPORTS EVENTS



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# — INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the guide to implementing sustainable practices in sporting events from Sportmadness. In a constantly evolving world, sustainability has become an imperative for any organisation, including sporting events. Sustainability not only benefits the environment, but it can also boost your event's image and attract sponsors and attendees committed to sustainable values.

In this guide, we'll provide you with a step-by-step approach to incorporating sustainable practices into your sporting event, from initial assessment to measuring and reporting your achievements. Each step is illustrated with concrete tips and examples to help you run your event more sustainably.



# STEPS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY IN SPORTS EVENTS: FROM EVALUATION TO ACTION

Organising a sustainable sporting event is crucial nowadays. Not only does it benefit the environment, it also improves the attendee experience and attracts sustainability-conscious sponsors. Through a series of steps, from the initial evaluation to the measurement of results, this process guides towards more sustainable decisions and less environmental impact.

## Step 1: Assessment of the current situation

Before taking action, understand the starting point:

- **Resource inventory**

Make a detailed inventory of all resources used at the event, from electricity to construction materials.

- **Residue analysis**

Examine the amount and type of waste generated in previous events to identify areas for improvement. Below we show you some of the types of analyses you can carry out:



### Residue analysis

- **Data collection from previous events**

Gather data from previous sporting events, including waste management reports, cleaning records and any other relevant information on waste generation.

- **Waste sorting**

Sorts waste into specific categories, such as paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, food, organic waste, etc. This classification will allow you to identify the main sources of waste.

- **Waste weighing**

During the event, establish waste collection points with scales to weigh the amount of waste generated in each category. This will provide you with accurate quantitative data.

- **Pattern identification**

Analyse data to identify patterns and trends. For example, which categories of waste account for the largest amount? Are there peaks in waste generation at specific times of the event?

- **Surveys and feedback from attendees**

Analyse survey responses from attendees at previous events to learn their opinions on waste management during the event and identify trends.

- **Collaboration with waste management companies**

Work closely with waste management companies that have experience in carrying out waste analysis. They can provide you with professional guidance and support to carry out this process more effectively.

- **Set clear goals**

Based on the analysis results, set specific waste reduction goals for your next sporting event, such as reducing carbon emissions by 20% or reducing water consumption by 15%.

## **Step 2. Senior management commitment**

Ensure support from above:

- **Sustainability policy**

Create a sustainability policy that supports the commitment of senior management. Establish clear and measurable objectives for the sustainability policy. These objectives must be specific and aligned with the vision and mission of the sporting event.

- **Assign resources**

Dedicate a specific budget to sustainability initiatives and ensure adequate human and financial resources.

- **Sustainability team**

Establish a sustainability team with high-level representatives to lead the initiative.

## **Step 3: Training and awareness**

Train and educate your team:

- **Sustainability training**

Provide training in sustainable practices to all staff, focusing on key topics such as waste management and energy efficiency.

- **Awareness meetings**

Host regular sustainability awareness meetings to keep everyone informed and motivated.

## **Step 4: Sustainable planning**

Integrate sustainability into planning:

- **Strategic location**

Choose a location that is easily accessible by public transportation and with ride-sharing options.

- **Efficient site plan**

Design a site plan that minimises unnecessary travel within the event, thus reducing energy consumption.

- **Renewable energy**

Consider using renewable energy sources, such as solar panels, to power the event. Below are some practical and concrete examples that can have a great impact:



## Examples of renewable energy

- **Solar panels to power facilities and equipment**

If your event is held at a fixed location, consider installing solar panels, such as stadiums or convention centers, to generate electricity from solar energy. This electricity can be used to power lights, sound systems and other energy needs.

- **Portable solar generators**

If the event is held in a temporary location or outdoors, employ portable solar generators to meet power demands. These generators are versatile and can provide clean power for things such as lighting, electronic device charging stations, and sound systems.

- **Solar charging for electronic devices**

Offer solar charging stations so attendees can recharge their electronic devices, such as mobile phones. These solar-powered stations are popular with attendees and will demonstrate your commitment to sustainability.

- **Solar Powered LED Lighting**

Use solar-powered LED lighting in key areas such as entrances, hallways and activity zones. These lights are efficient and can run on stored solar energy.

- **Solar energy rental for large events**

If your event is particularly large or requires a significant amount of power, consider renting temporary solar power systems. Specialised companies can provide high-capacity solar generators and energy storage systems to meet your needs.

## Step 5: Waste management

Optimise waste management:

- **Recycling and composting**

Implement recycling and composting programs in all event areas with clearly labeled bins.

- **Assistant Education**

Educate attendees about the importance of properly separating waste and offer incentives, such as prizes or discounts, for doing so. Additionally, if possible, involve celebrities or athletes who are sustainability advocates and who can share their personal commitment to sustainability and encourage attendees to participate.

- **Efficient management**

Establish an efficient waste management system that includes hiring recycling and composting companies.

## Step 6: Energy efficiency

Optimise energy use:

- **Energy audit**

Conduct an energy audit before the event to identify areas for improvement in energy efficiency.

- **Efficient lighting**

Use low-consumption LED lighting in all areas of the event. It is true that the initial implementation of LED lighting can have a higher cost than conventional lighting. However, this additional cost is often more than offset over time due to savings in energy consumption and maintenance. Some ways to manage costs and possibly obtain subsidies are:



### Energy efficiency

- **Long term planning**

Include the investment in LED lighting in the initial event budget as a long-term investment in energy efficiency.

- **Search for sponsors**

Look for sponsors who are interested in sustainability and who are willing to fund or subsidise the transition to LED lighting in exchange for recognition and visibility at the event.

- **Energy efficiency programs**

Investigate whether there are energy efficiency programs at the local, regional or national level that offer incentives or subsidies for the adoption of LED lighting technologies. These programs often focus on reducing energy consumption and may provide financial support.

- **Lease or rental**

In some cases, you can consider leasing or renting LED lighting equipment instead of an outright purchase, which can reduce upfront costs.

## **Step 7: Sustainable transportation**

Facilitate sustainable transportation options:

- **Public transport agreements**

Establish agreements with public transportation providers to offer special discounts to event attendees. Some of the agreements you can explore to encourage sustainable travel options are:

- Special rates or discounts
- Free transportation
- Extended hours
- Special routes
- Designated collection points

- **Infrastructure for cyclists**

Promote cycling as a sustainable transportation option. Some strategies to consider are:

Secure bicycle parking. You can use barricades or fences to separate bicycle parking areas from car parking areas.

Create temporary routes for cyclists that connect key points in the town with the event location

Promotion of cycling through promotional materials and in communications prior to the event

Repair spaces, which can be useful for cyclists who need to make minor repairs.

Road safety information, such as use of helmets, lights and appropriate signage to ensure your safety on the way to the event

Collaboration with local authorities to promote investment in permanent cycle routes in the future.

- **Incentives for shared transportation**

Offer incentives, such as free tickets or discounts, to those who use ride-hailing or carpooling.

## **Step 8: Sustainable food and plastic reduction**

Offer sustainable food and drink options:

- **Responsible suppliers**

Work closely with food and beverage suppliers that offer local, organic and ethical options.

- **Waste reduction**

Minimise food waste through practices like inventory control and donating surplus to local charities.

- **Reusable bottles**

Offer reusable bottles to attendees and provide water filling stations throughout the event.

- **Eliminate single use plastics**

Completely eliminate the use of single-use packaging and promote reusable alternatives, such as:

- Paper or cardboard packaging
- Bamboo or wooden utensils
- Compostable products made from corn starch or sugar cane.

## **Step 9: Tree planting and ecological restoration**

Offset carbon emissions:

- **Reforestation projects**

Offset carbon emissions through reforestation projects in local areas.

- **Collaboration with conservationists**

Collaborate with conservation organisations to carry out ecosystem restoration projects.

- **Volunteer participation**

Encourage volunteer participation in tree planting activities as part of the event.



## Step 10: Environmental education

Educate attendees about sustainability:

- **Accessible information**

Provide clear and accessible information to attendees about sustainable practices at the event.

- **Educational activities**

Host educational talks, interactive exhibits and workshops on sustainability during the event.

- **Games and activities**

Design interactive games and activities for children and adults that promote environmental awareness and active participation. Some games you can organise are:

- Obstacle races or recycling relay
- Play area made of wood or recycled materials

## Step 11: Measurement and reporting

Measure and communicate your achievements:

- **Measuring tools**

Use specific measurement tools to track resource consumption and emissions throughout the event.



### Measuring tools

- **Sustainable event management software**

These platforms can help you track different aspects, such as waste management, energy and water consumption, and carbon emissions.

- **Energy consumption meters**

Install these tools in key event locations, such as generators, lighting systems, and HVAC equipment.

- **Carbon balances**

They consider all sources of emissions, including transportation, energy and waste management.

- **Air quality sensors**

Ensure a healthy environment in closed spaces.

- **Waste tracking tools**

They record the amount and type of waste generated during the event.

- **Water meters**

Install these tools at key points of the event to measure consumption.

- **Traffic and transportation sensors**

They measure vehicle flow and traffic congestion. This can help you assess the impact of transportation on carbon emissions.

- **Fuel usage meters**

They monitor and control the fuel consumption of generators, vehicles or machinery used in the event.

- **Public transport tracking applications**

They help you calculate the associated carbon emissions.

- **Brightness meters**

They evaluate the efficiency of lighting in different areas of the event.

- **Detailed Reports**

Publish detailed sustainability reports that show results and progress toward established goals.

- **External Audits**

Invite external audits to verify and validate reported sustainability data.

# CONCLUSION

We have reached the end of this guide, and we hope you feel inspired and empowered to run a sustainable sporting event. Sustainability is not just a trend, but a responsibility we all share to preserve our planet for future generations.

Remember that every small step towards sustainability counts. From waste management to the use of renewable energy and environmental education, each action contributes to a more responsible and environmentally friendly event.

At Sportmadness we support you in your efforts to preserve the environment and we encourage you to tag us on Instagram and Facebook (@sportmadness) at your next sustainable event. We want to be part of your achievements and celebrate with you each step towards a greener and more responsible world.

Together, we can inspire positive change in the sporting events industry.

**Good luck on your journey towards sustainability!**



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