

Headline 6.2 Education and Communication

1. Definition

Education and communication are crucial in advancing environmental sustainability initiatives within sport organisations. By enhancing awareness, promoting engagement, and facilitating knowledge-sharing, education and communication strategies play a pivotal role in driving positive environmental change and fostering a culture of sustainability within the sports industry.

Education plays a crucial role in raising awareness and building knowledge among staff and stakeholders about environmental issues, sustainability principles, and the importance of taking action. By providing information, resources, and training opportunities, sport organisations can empower individuals within their organisation to make informed decisions and adopt sustainable practices in their daily operations and activities.

Furthermore, effective communication is vital for engaging stakeholders, fostering collaboration, and mobilizing support for sustainability initiatives. Communication efforts should be strategic, transparent, and inclusive, reaching diverse audiences across different channels and platforms. By communicating openly about sustainability goals, progress, and challenges, sport organisations can build trust, inspire confidence, and cultivate a shared sense of purpose among stakeholders.

In essence, education and communication entail a range of activities and strategies aimed at promoting environmental awareness, knowledge-sharing, behaviour change, and stakeholder engagement. This includes organising training sessions, workshops, and seminars on sustainability topics, developing educational materials and resources, implementing communication campaigns and outreach initiatives, leveraging digital and social media platforms for dissemination, and fostering dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders.

By investing in education and communication for environmental sustainability, sport organisations can create a culture of environmental stewardship, where sustainability principles are integrated into decision-making processes, operational practices, and organisational values. Ultimately, education and communication serve as catalysts for driving positive environmental change, promoting sustainability leadership, and advancing the broader goals of environmental conservation and social responsibility within the sports industry.

2. Ideal Scenario

The sport organisation establishes a robust education program and communication strategy focused on environmental sustainability. This strategy covers all stakeholders—staff, athletes, volunteers, and the broader sports community—ensuring clear objectives, engaging content, and ongoing support. By integrating these efforts into the organisational culture, the governing body fosters a deep commitment to environmental stewardship, inspiring positive change at both local and global levels.

A targeted campaign is developed and launched, featuring tailored messaging and activities designed to resonate with different stakeholder groups, including athletes, coaches, administrators, and fans. This approach ensures that each group receives relevant information that encourages sustainable practices. To maximise the campaign's impact, the organisation continuously monitors its effectiveness, collects feedback, and refines strategies as needed.

Public events serve as key opportunities to increase environmental awareness. Volunteers and participants are engaged through interactive training sessions, workshops, and on-site communication efforts that emphasise the importance of sustainability. The organisation also implements strategies to recognise and reward outstanding contributions in categories such as green commuting, green sport, and green engagement. Transparent criteria and regular reviews ensure that these awards encourage innovation and sustained commitment to environmental goals.

Achievements related to environmental sustainability are widely publicised, highlighting both organisational and individual successes. This not only enhances the organisation's reputation but also motivates others within the community to adopt sustainable practices. Lessons learned from these initiatives are shared broadly, inspiring further actions and continuous improvements across the sector.

Collaboration is a cornerstone of the organisation's approach to sustainability. By partnering with NGOs, government agencies, and industry associations, the sport governing body strengthens and expands its environmental initiatives, ensuring a broader impact. These partnerships enable the organisation to amplify its efforts, advocate for policy changes, and contribute to global sustainability goals.

3. Risks

- Limited awareness of staff, participants and further stakeholders and consequently limited ownership and responsibility in the environmental sustainability journey.
- Ineffective and inconsistent implementation of sustainability initiatives due to lack of understanding.
- Missed opportunities to engage stakeholders, foster collaboration and mobilise support for sustainability initiatives.
- Failure to communicate sustainability efforts transparently and effectively may result in reputational damage, as stakeholders may perceive the organisation as indifferent or uncommitted.
- Inadequate communication and reporting may result in non-compliance with environmental regulations, leading to legal and regulatory risks, fines, penalties, and damage to the organisation's reputation.
- Loss of credibility with stakeholders, including athletes, fans, sponsors, who increasingly expect organisations to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability.
- Greenwashing threat due to question of validity of purpose and claims.

4. Instruments and key elements

<i>Instruments</i>	<i>Key elements</i>
Education course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For staff, athletes, coaches, volunteers, members stakeholders. Develop educational materials, incl. guides, manuals, toolkits, and online resources to provide stakeholders with information, tips, best practices. Training sessions, workshops, webinars. Focus on principles, practices and initiatives; waste reduction, energy conservation, water management, sustainable procurement.
Awareness-raising campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use public events to educate volunteers and participants with training on sustainable sport practices, offering incentives like public transport use. Regularly update internal and external audiences on responsible sport initiatives to enhance transparency, set a positive example, and inspire action. Increase environmental awareness at public events through interactive training, workshops, and on-site communication efforts.
Certificates and Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and reward staff for environmentally sustainable actions and initiatives, with clear criteria and regular reviews to encourage innovation. Publicize and celebrate achievements in categories like green commuting, green sport, and green engagement.
Communication and outreach initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch communication campaigns to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, and promote environmental sustainability using platforms like social media, websites, and newsletters. Demonstrate leadership by publicly committing to sustainability goals and advocating for supportive policies. Define clear communication objectives, target groups, and key messages aligned with sustainability strategy, using KPIs to evaluate effectiveness and set expectations.

5. Good practice examples

Example “Education Course”

Organisation: International Biathlon Union (IBU)

Description: IBU Sustainability Education: In collaboration with sustainability and education experts, the IBU developed a Sustainability Education Course which is available on the IBU Academy’s E-Learning platform. With 4 hours of content, structured into three modules, the course covers various aspects of sustainability. Learners are able to begin with the basics of sustainability and advance to understanding the relevance for sport organisations and how to positively contribute. Catered to Biathlon organisations,

the course is equipped with a variety of informative and interactive texts, images, graphics, videos and podcasts. A test at the end of each module is to ensure the understanding of the content.

Further information:

<https://www.biathlonworld.com/news/ibu-launches-new-sustainability-education-course/3xZot1Xhhyhcj2uvmp130>

<https://www.biathlonworld.com/inside-ibu/development/ibu-academy-e-learning-platform>

Example “Network”

Organisation: Surfrider Foundation Europe, Confédération Européenne de Volleyball and Association des Cités et Régions pour la gestion durable des Ressources

Description: The Green Sports Hub Europe project formatted with the aim to create an EU-level hub to help the sport sector identify its needs and potential actions for a greener and more sustainable future. It is envisioned to be a support system for organisations to share knowledge and best practices to facilitate peer learning and contribute to the development of the sector. The hub understands itself as a Think and Do Tank for fostering and implementing concrete best practices in and/or through sport to preserve two fundamental human rights: the right to play and the right to a healthy environment. The hub provides a self-assessment tool to understand the impact of events and activities, a playbook with case studies, a set of recommendations for policy-makers and a European Green Sports Charter. Considered dimensions are: event management, natural environment, governance, resources management, facilities, host/venue selection.

Further information: [Green Sports Hub Europe - GreenSportsHub](#)

Example “Education Course”

Organisation: Spanish Olympic Committee

Description: The Sport Go Green – Basic Course is an introductory program designed to raise awareness among sports stakeholders and the general public about the sustainability needs of the sport sector. Supported by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, the course provides learners with fundamental knowledge of the relationship between sustainability and sport, emphasizing how sports can drive positive environmental change by greening their operations. Developed as part of the "Green Footprint Lightning on sports Activities, Management, and Events" (Green FLAME) project, coordinated by the Spanish Olympic Committee, the course aims to promote a more sustainable sports environment. It covers essential concepts of environmental sustainability, the impact of sports on the environment, and practical measures that sports organizations can implement to reduce this impact. The course is available in two levels: a basic introductory course and an advanced course for more experienced learners, offering a comprehensive understanding of how to foster sustainability within the sports industry.

Further information: [Sport Go Green – Basic Course – SportAcademy](#)

6. Steps to the next level

To level 2 ★★ “Emerging”	To level 3 ★★★ “Developing”	To level 4 ★★★★ “Established”	To level 5 ★★★★★ “Embedded”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and segment the target audience for communication and education initiatives. Assess the awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability among direct stakeholders, including participants and spectators. Establish specific objectives, goals, and a timeline for the execution of the education and communication strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead by example by making a public commitment to sustainability goals and actively engaging with policymakers. Initiate communication campaigns and outreach efforts to elevate awareness, engage stakeholders, and promote environmental sustainability through diverse channels, including social media, websites, newsletters, and press releases. Regularly share updates on responsible sport initiatives and performance with internal and external audiences to enhance transparency, set a positive example, raise awareness, and inspire action. Implement targeted communication and guidance at key decision points, such as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forge strategic partnerships with environmental organisations and experts to enhance the credibility and expertise of your campaign. Expand your educational outreach by incorporating a variety of activities such as workshops, webinars, and educational materials to empower stakeholders to actively engage in environmental sustainability. Leverage public events as opportunities to raise awareness and educate both volunteers and participants on environmental sustainability through initiatives like volunteer training courses and targeted on-site communications. Implement visual progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and launch a targeted campaign designed for various stakeholder groups, including athletes, coaches, administrators, and fans. Ensure the campaign features tailored messaging and activities for each group. Continuously monitor the impact of the campaign. Collect feedback and refine strategies to improve effectiveness. Implement strategies to increase the environmental awareness of volunteers and participants at public events. This includes organising interactive training sessions and workshops, as well as on-site communication efforts. Establish awards and certificates for outstanding contributions in

	<p>waste disposal, printing, or transportation planning, to provide immediate advice on the most sustainable choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage public events to educate and raise awareness among volunteers and participants by offering training courses on sustainable sport practices and providing incentives for sustainable actions, such as using public transport. 	<p>indicators, such as using coloured balls to track each day an employee cycles to work, and organise friendly competitions among employees to motivate and sustain eco-friendly behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customise communication strategies based on the specific channel and target audience to ensure that messages are effectively delivered and clearly understood. • Utilise your communication platforms to share your organisation's environmental sustainability initiatives and outcomes, while also acknowledging areas for potential improvement. • Regularly evaluate the success of the communication campaign using pre-defined key performance indicators to 	<p>categories such as green commuting, green sport, and green engagement. Use transparent criteria and conduct regular reviews to encourage innovation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate the results and lessons learned from initiatives to inspire further actions and improvements. • Utilise extensive publicity efforts to highlight organisational and membership achievements related to environmental sustainability. • Develop collaborations with NGOs, government agencies, and industry associations to strengthen and expand environmental sustainability initiatives.
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		<p>ensure effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuously adapt and improve the communication campaign by analysing collected data and feedback. • Publicly recognize organisations, teams, and individuals within your organisation who demonstrate exceptional commitment to environmental sustainability. • Introduce certificates or awards to acknowledge and reward staff members for demonstrating environmentally sustainable behaviour and initiatives. 	
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