

Olympic Committees of Europe Approaching Carbon Neutrality



for Climate
Action Officers

PEDAGOGICAL GUIDE

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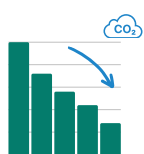


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INTRODUCTION

About the OCEAN Project

The OCEAN Project aims to empower National Olympic Committees (NOC) to acquire relevant knowledge to measure their carbon footprint and define tailored carbon reduction strategies in order to reduce their carbon emissions and strengthen good governance in the field of climate action.

OCEAN addresses the challenge of climate change by recognising that the Olympic movement has a “duty to actively contribute to global sustainability”. Sport is not spared of the impact of climate change and at the same time, sport plays an active role in its acceleration through their operations and events. The need for concrete measures is pressing as are the demands for climate action.

Pedagogical Manual

OCEAN provided the participating NOCs with a training course for "Climate Action Officers" (i.e. the person in charge of steering the organisation’s sustainability transition). This manual remains as its legacy, offering the contents of the training to all interested readers to help understand basic climate change ideas, the job of Climate Action Officers, and how to make practical plans

Who is this Manual for?

This manual is for people in any sport organisation, who are Climate Action Officers or have similar roles in their organisation. It is also useful for those who are training to become Climate Action Officers or colleagues who want to learn more about climate action.

What you will learn from this Manual

Look out for these numbers throughout the manual, to find the relevant content.

1

NAVIGATING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR ROLE AS CLIMATE ACTION OFFICER

2

UNDERSTANDING YOUR IMPACT AND MEASURING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

3

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BASELINE AND CREATING YOUR CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY

4

COMMUNICATING YOUR EFFORTS AND SUCCESSES

GLOSSARY

Carbon footprint	The total amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere as result of human activities, expressed in equivalent tons of CO ₂ .
Carbon neutral	CO ₂ emissions are fully compensated by CO ₂ reductions or removals.
Carbon equivalent	A unit used to compare the impact of different greenhouse gases based on their global warming potential, expressed as the amount of CO ₂ with the same warming effect.
Carbon offsets	Credits used to compensate for emissions by funding projects that reduce or remove an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide, such as reforestation or renewable energy.
Climate	The long-term average of weather patterns in a specific area, typically measured over 30 years, including temperature, precipitation, and wind.
Climate change	Long-term shifts in temperature, precipitation, and other atmospheric conditions, often attributed to human activities, such as burning fossil fuels.
Climate neutral	An actor's activities result in no net effect on the climate system.
Climate positive	Greenhouse gas removals exceeds actors' emissions.
Compensation	Actions taken to balance or offset emissions, typically by investing in projects that reduce or capture greenhouse gases, such as carbon offsets.
Emissions	Intended or unintended releases of gases, particles, or substances to the atmosphere.
Emission factors (EFs)	Values used to estimate the amount of greenhouse gases produced per unit of activity. Typically for GHGs, EFs are expressed as the mass of a gas per unit of the emissions-producing activity or material input.
Fossil fuel	Carbon-based fuels from fossil hydrocarbon deposits, including coal, oil, and natural gas, releasing GHGs when burned.
Global warming	The long-term rise in Earth's average surface temperature, primarily caused by human activities like burning fossil fuels, usually measured over a 30-year period, typically compared to pre-industrial levels unless otherwise specified.
Global warming potential (GWP)	An index, used to convert the level of emissions of various greenhouse gases to carbon dioxide equivalents to compare the relative radiative forcing of different gases without directly calculating the changes in atmospheric concentrations.

GLOSSARY

Greenhouse effect	The process by which GHGs trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere, resulting in planetary warming. Higher concentrations of these gases contribute to an increase in global temperatures.
Greenhouse gases (GHG)	Any gas that absorbs and emits infrared radiation in the atmosphere, affecting the earth's temperature. Greenhouse gases include, but are not limited to, water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO ₂), methane (CH ₄), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), ozone (O ₃), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF ₆).
Net Zero	Greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removals.
Offsetting	Actions taken to compensate for emissions by funding projects that reduce or capture an equivalent amount of greenhouse gases, like tree planting or renewable energy.
Sustainability	A dynamic process that guarantees the persistence of natural and human systems in an equitable manner.
Tonnes CO₂ Equivalent/year	Measures the total amount of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ e) emissions produced by an organisation, entity, or process over the course of one year. It is used to assess the overall carbon footprint of an entity for a given year.
Tonnes CO₂ Equivalent/FTE/year	Measures the amount of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions produced per full-time equivalent employee over the course of one year. It is used to assess the carbon footprint relative to the workforce size, providing a per capita perspective of emissions within an organisation.

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NAVIGATING THE RESPONSABILITIES OF A CLIMATE ACTION OFFICER

Objective of the section Familiarising with the job of the Climate Action Officer and how to effectively involve internal and external stakeholders.

Keyword Role and responsibility, stakeholder involvement and management, communication.
Key topic

What you will have learned

- You understand the role and competencies of the Climate Action Officer.
- You understand how it can be established and practiced in the organisation.
- You can identify internal and external stakeholders.
- You know tools and methods for internal communication and staff engagement.
- You have strategies to create leadership buy-in.

Being a Climate Action Officer

The Climate Action Officer will be responsible for implementing and coordinating climate action initiatives within the organisation. They will work closely with stakeholders to develop and execute strategies to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability in the organisation's operations and activities.

Key responsibilities:

- 1 Conduct assessments to measure the organisation's carbon footprint and identify areas for improvement.
- 2 Develop and implement climate action plans in alignment with the organisation's sustainability goals and objectives.
- 3 Collaborate with internal departments and external partners to integrate sustainability principles into the organisation's operations, activities and events.
- 4 Provide training and education on climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to the organisation's staff, athletes, and stakeholders.

- 5 Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of climate action initiatives and make recommendations for improvement.
- 6 Stay informed about climate-related policies, regulations, and best practices, and ensure compliance with relevant standards.
- 7 Prepare reports and presentations on climate action progress and achievements for internal and external stakeholders.

This position offers exciting opportunity to drive positive environmental change within the sport organisation and contribute to the broader sustainability goals of the sports movement.

The Climate Action Officer is at the forefront of the organisation's transition, yet a role that often has to be established first in the organisation. While some organisations have the capacity to hire a staff member dedicated 100% to sustainability activities, for most cases, the CAO has other tasks.

Meet some of your peers!



Luiza Złotkowska
Head of the Development Office,
National Olympic Committee of Poland

Is this your main job?

No, this is not my main job. I am the Head of the Development Office, and my primary responsibility is managing various innovative projects and collaborating with external partners. Being the Climate Action Officer is just one of my additional roles.

What is your role as Climate Action Officer of the NOC?

My role as the Climate Action Officer of the NOC involves creating a sustainability policy for the organization, implementing it, evaluating its progress, and encouraging both the organization and its employees to prioritize climate care.



Ante Ćosić

EU Funds and International Cooperation Manager,
National Olympic Committee of Croatia

Is this your main job?

My primary role at the Croatian Olympic Committee is EU Funds and International Cooperation Manager. However, I effectively perform my duties as Climate Action Officer (CAO) alongside my regular responsibilities, focusing on sustainability and CO₂ footprint reduction.

What is your role as Climate Action Officer of the NOC?

As Climate Action Officer, my primary task is to develop a strategy for reducing our CO₂ footprint at the Croatian Olympic Committee. Additionally, I gather information to support the CO₂ footprint calculations and ensure the implementation of measures that will help us meet our sustainability goals.



Sofia Macedo

Marketing Manager, Brand and CSR,
National Olympic Committee of Portugal

Is this your main job?

In my committee I'm part of the marketing department as a brand manager, so I manage sustainability in parallel with marketing. This allows us to optimise our human resources and boost synergies between the two areas.

What is your role as Climate Action Officer of the NOC?

My role as Climate Action Officer is to ensure that climate and environmental sustainability issues are always on our agenda. To do this, I try to acquire the necessary knowledge to continue implementing our Sustainability Plan: carbon footprint measurement, reduction measures, compensation initiatives and involve the protagonists of the Olympic movement in Portugal, such as athletes, federations and Olympic partners.

ACTIVITIES

Take a few minutes to brainstorm on your own about the expectations and requirements of a Climate Action Officer: What is my role? What is expected from me? Who do I need to deal with?

Keep that list next to you while going through this section.

Empowering your team: strategies for staff engagement

Engaging your colleagues is crucial to the success of carbon reduction efforts.

You cannot do it all on your own! This implies actively convincing, educating and involving employees in the process and ensuring they are committed to the cause.

Prerequisites for a successful staff engagement

- Clearly defined values, particularly in the area of sustainability, are essential.
- Maintaining integrity and consistency between these values and actions.
- Transparency and internal communications and common understanding of the set actions.
- Leadership support! Leaders must lead by example, demonstrating their commitment to sustainability through words and action.

Basic principles for a successful staff engagement on climate and sustainability

1 ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING

Organise trainings for employees on the basics of climate change (why we need to act) and on concrete actions (what we can do and how).

Distribute educational materials that inspire action.

Foster Peer-to-Peer Learning to drive staff engagement.

Integrate climate education into existing employee programmes and onboarding.

1

OWNERSHIP =
EMPOWERMENT



2

2 ENHANCE OWNERSHIP

Make sure that staff are involved in all the steps of the organisation's climate action.

Create opportunities to get employee input in a continuous manner.

Make staff involvement structural.

Provide funding and sufficient workforce.

Identify the "friends of sustainability" in your organisation and make them climate ambassadors.

Celebrate success and recognise achievements.

3

3 ENHANCE INVOLVEMENT

Introduce competitions and make it fun.

Make it visible and use visual "nudges".

ACTIVITIES

Here are a few concrete examples of what you can implement in your organisation to train employees, support positive actions and embed sustainability in all activities of your organisation.

Education and Training

- Climate action/sustainability seminars/workshops.
- Away days, for staff but also leadership/management. This helps staff to apply what they learnt in their work, e.g. by creating policies in an area on which they focused in the training.
- Continuous education and training activities.
- Monthly “Lunch and Learn” with external experts.
- Dedicated 5-10min on sustainability activities during team meetings.
- Regular sustainability-related movie screenings.
- Dedicated (small) budget to allow staff to attend conferences, seminars or online trainings.
- Staff-led climate windows/short presentations about what they have learnt in any sustainability-related training outside of the organisation.
- Mentoring schemes.

Human Resources

- Employee handbook: Add a section on climate/sustainability to your organisation’s employee handbook and/or make it part of the onboarding process when new staff members join your organisation.
- Add climate action-related provisions into the job description.
- Encourage staff volunteering in sport but also in other sectors – e.g. X free days a year for each staff member.

Incentivising “Green Behaviour”

- Green commuting incentives – e.g. reward programme (collecting points) for leaving the car at home and taking bike/public transport instead; financial support for purchasing public transport tickets/passes, bike-leasing programmes.
- Bonus scheme to reward “green behaviour”.

Social and Environmental Activities

- Identify NGOs active in sectors of your interest and/or in the vicinity of your headquarters and explore possibilities for cooperation: staff volunteering, job shadowing, participation to concrete activities (e.g. clean-ups).
- Organise teambuilding activities linked to the cause.
- Organise specific activities on International Days (e.g. with commercial partners) relevant to the environment – World Water Day, Earth Day, International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.



Source: NOC of Denmark

NOC of Denmark

A group of employees took part in a national waste collection event and spent an hour picking up litter around the Danish House of Sports. They collected 62 kilos of waste in that period.



Source: NOC of Kosovo

NOC of Kosovo

Celebrating World Sports and Environment Day, the NOC of Kosovo organised a **Climate Fresh workshop** and a tree-planting activity for school children and the local community.



Source: NOC of Romania

NOC of Romania

The NOC of Romania organised a cycling workshop for its staff members. Shared bicycles were purchased for staff to use on a daily-basis, and a workshop on maintaining your bicycle in good use was given.



Source: NOC of Bosnia and Herzegovina

NOC of Bosnia and Herzegovina

During European Week of Sport, NOC Bosnia and Herzegovina raised awareness about Sports, Olympic values, and Climate change. Furthermore, they held workshops on climate change at the Little Singing City Festival focused on ecology.

Embarking and empowering your leaders

No major changes can happen without a clear commitment from the leadership. Leadership support goes beyond theoretical commitment. Showing support and proving it with concrete actions is key. Here are a few tools to help you to convince and equip your leaders to show the way for a sustainable transition of your organisation.

Basic Principles for a successful leadership commitment on climate action

ALIGN YOUR OBJECTIVES WITH THE ORGANISATION'S GOALS

Consider your organisation's strategic documents and highlight the alignment of climate initiatives with the organisation's strategic goals.

1

BUILD A BUSINESS CASE: SHOWCASE ADVANTAGES OF CLIMATE ACTION FOR THE ORGANISATION

Finances: demonstrate how sustainability can lead to cost savings (e.g. energy efficiency).

Reputation: reminder of expectations from different stakeholders (e.g. general public, athletes).

Enhanced reputation and credibility that sustainable practices can bring.

3

TRIGGER THE SPORT COMPETITOR IN YOUR LEADERS

Data-driven insights and successful examples from other sport organisations can provide compelling evidence to gain leadership's support.

PROPOSE CONCRETE ACTIONS

Come up with a plan of quick wins, i.e. actions that can be implemented easily and without costs.

Establish a clear roadmap for actions in the short-medium term including goals, timelines and measures, on the basis of which discussions can be held with leaders.

4

The CLOSE Framework

A big part of the work is concerning shifting mindsets and creating ownership throughout the value chain of the organisation.

The aim is to go from altruism to practicality (sustainability strategies have to be practical, effective, and financially sustainable to have a long-lasting, positive impact.) and from being environmental consumers (with little effect on the overall climate picture) to sustainability creators (how can we influence society through our value chain.

One way to do this is the **CLOSE Framework**.

The CLOSE framework focuses on enhancing organisational communication and strategic decision-making through five key components:

C	Clarity	Creating a clear vision, mission, values and connecting it to the purpose.
L	Laser-sharp focus	Identify and remove distractions to focus on what you can control.
O	Overcoming Obstacles	Turning obstacles into opportunities by building resilience.
S	Shifting for Growth	Apply a decision-making framework to either diversify, pivot or let go when encountering a challenge.
E	Executive Capacities	Applying a coach approach with neutral presence, listening, backtracking, and questioning.

It is important to open the right communication channels and build successful relationships to create buy-in, motivation and momentum and spark internal motivation for successful program implementation.

ACTIVITIES

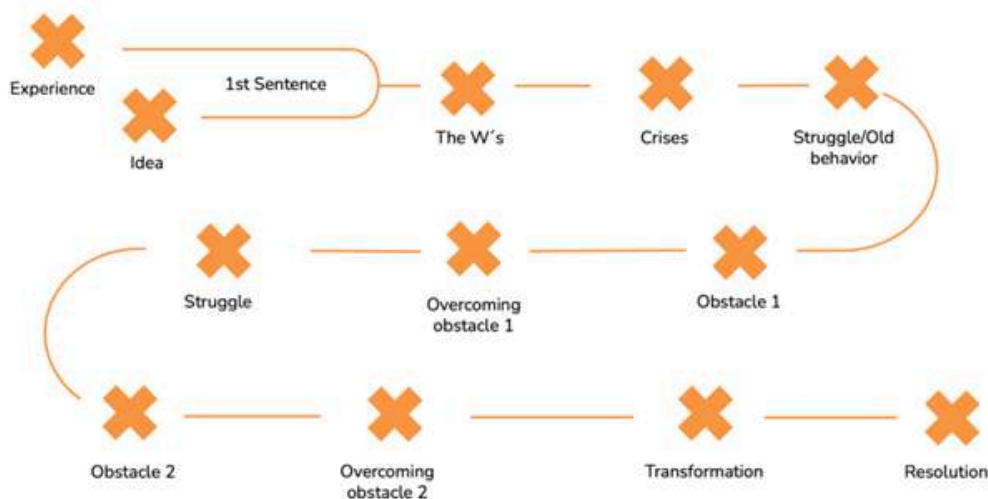
Crafting Your Sustainability Pitch

With all the information provided in the previous section, you are now equipped to develop a compelling sustainability pitch. Your task is to write tailored pitches for three distinct target groups: colleagues, leadership, and broader stakeholders. Each pitch should address the specific interests and concerns of the respective audience.

- Colleagues: Focus on how sustainability initiatives can benefit their daily work environment, improve team morale, and contribute to a healthier workplace.
- Leadership: Highlight the strategic advantages, including cost savings, compliance with regulations, and the long-term sustainability of the organisation.
- Stakeholders: Emphasize the broader impact on the community, environmental benefits, and how sustainable practices align with the organisation's mission and values.

Remember to tailor your message to resonate with each group's unique priorities and perspectives. This activity will train you for occasions when you will have to convince someone of the importance of acting for the sustainability of your organisation.

Sustainability pitch - example



Moving from CRISES (of climate change), through the STRUGGLE, and reaching RESOLUTION.

The Business Case for Sustainability in the Olympic Movement

Sport organisations can also apply the triple Bottom Line Framework – a business concept where organisations measure their social and environmental impact in addition to its financial performance, rather than solely focusing on generating profit, or the standard bottom line.

This approach emphasizes the importance of taking into account the broader effects an organization has on the community and the planet, promoting a more holistic view of success.

The components of a sustainable sport business and the Olympic Movement:



Environmental stewardship

- Engaging in environmentally friendly behaviors
- Providing solutions to environmental challenges
- Limiting the affects of adverse human activities



Societal impact - building opportunities through sport

- The influence of sport on society through purpose
- Responsible toward all stakeholders



Economic value - creating positive opportunities through partnerships

How to define the business case:

- 1 Define the opportunity and engage stakeholders
- 2 Create value by connecting to organisation value chain
- 3 Understand and communicate business impact
- 4 Propose a specific path forward and implementation plan

ACTIVITIES

Map your stakeholders with the RINGS Stakeholders Mapping Tool



The RINGS Stakeholders Mapping Tool helps users manage stakeholder engagement by identifying key players relevant to their project, whether it's focused on green sport, event bids, or social inclusion. It guides users in identifying stakeholders and visualizes their power and influence on an interactive grid, offering insights into alignment with project goals. The tool then generates a personalized action plan to help teams approach and influence stakeholders effectively. This makes strategic decision-making easier and more targeted.

Start your stakeholder mapping here: [Rings - EOC EU Office \(eurolympic.org\)](https://eurolympic.org/Rings)



KEY LESSONS

- Stakeholders, both internal and external, are crucial to strategic collaboration.
- Effective communication requires understanding your audience and crafting messages that resonate.
- National Olympic Committee/sport federations/clubs staff play a vital role in the journey towards carbon neutrality, requiring enhanced involvement and ownership.
- Leadership is a decisive factor for success, with tailored messaging and a strong business case driving meaningful progress.



UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT AND MEASURING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT

Objective of the section Providing the foundations, mechanisms and reasoning to start the journey towards carbon neutrality.

Keyword Climate change, UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, EU and
Key topic Climate Action, Leadership Commitment, Pledge to Change

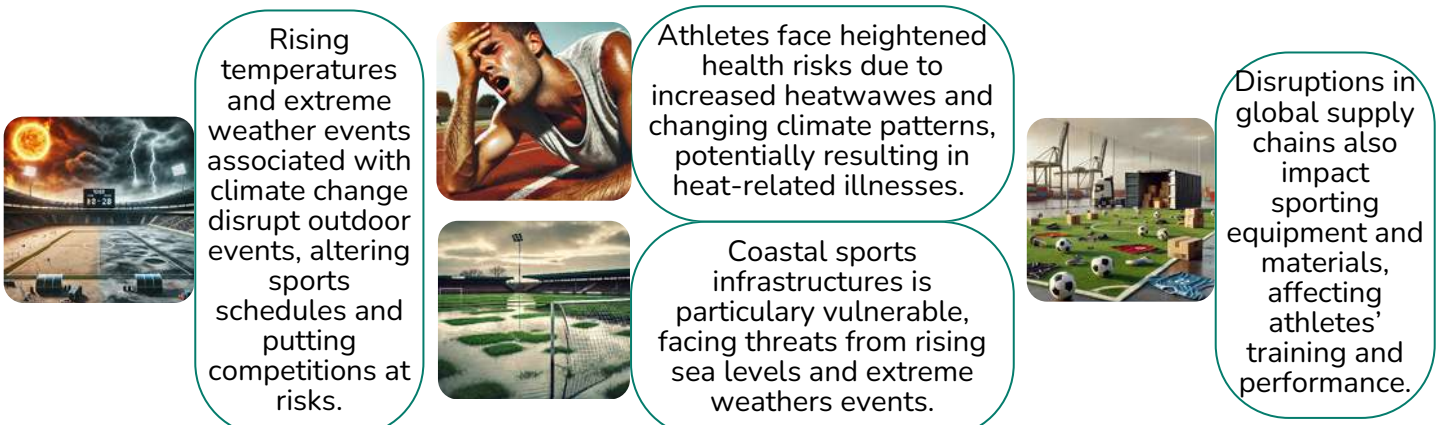
What you will have learned

- You understand the underlying mechanisms causing climate change.
- You understand the impact of climate change on sport and can identify the impact for your sports.
- You have arguments for sports responsibility to act and reduce its carbon footprint.
- You are aware of existing global frameworks.
- You are familiar with a strategic approach and its main steps.
- You understand the main steps of the carbon reduction process.

The fundamentals of Climate Change and Sport

The Climate Challenge: Understanding Climate Change's Impact on Sports

Sport is confronted by a global challenge as a result of climate change, with far-reaching consequences. To safeguard the future of sports, effective adaptation and mitigation strategies are imperative in the face of these diverse climate-related challenges. Sport organisations need to find ways to adapt to these changes, manage the risks posed by the impact of climate change and become more resilient.



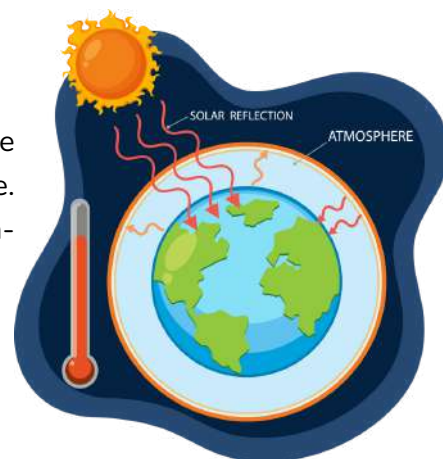
Source: Artificial Intelligence. (2024). *Climate change effects on sports* [AI-generated images]

Understanding the Mechanisms: Breaking Down Climate Change

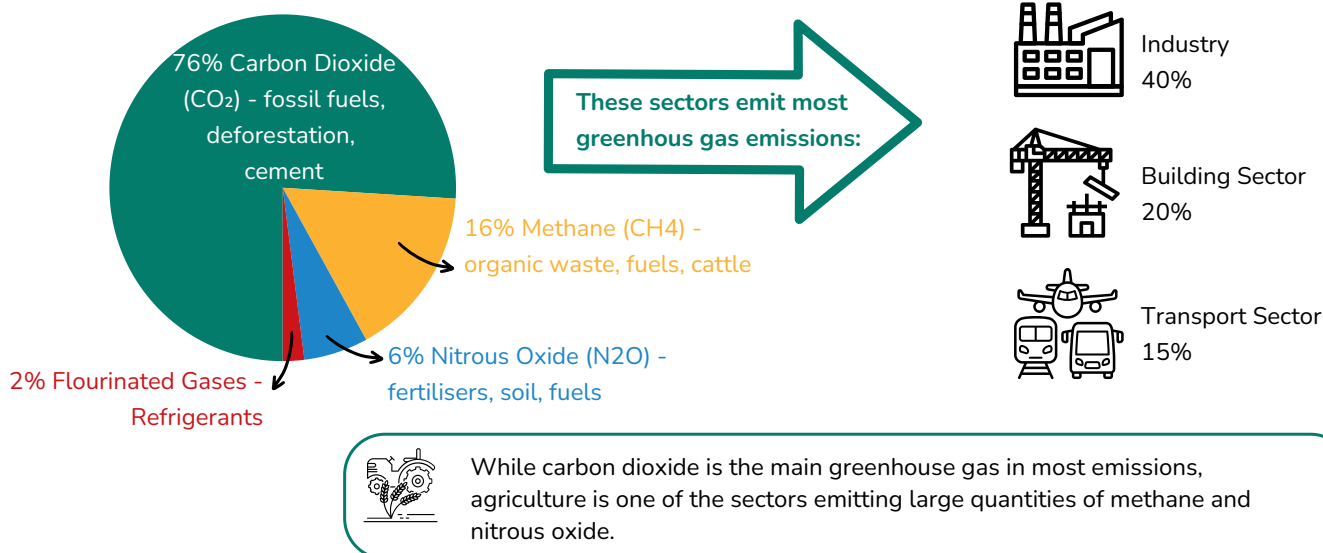
Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These manifest themselves, for instance, in receding glaciers, rising water temperatures and melting ice sheets that cause cyclones, river flooding, and loss of biodiversity eventually leading to droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, and famines to armed conflicts. Climate change is to a large extent a product of human activities, and in particular burning fossil fuels (e.g. coal, oil, gas) to conduct our activities.

One phenomenon contributing to climate change is the greenhouse gas effect, which acts as a “blanket” heating up the atmosphere. There are natural causes for it to occur but there is also a human-enhanced greenhouse effect.

Find below the major greenhouse gases and note the share in human-caused emissions.



Major Greenhouse Gases



ACTIVITIES

Climate Fresk workshop

[Check out the Climate Fresk](#), a great workshop you can attend or organise in-house to understand climate change from its causes to its effects in a participatory group activity, allowing you and your colleagues to take ownership of the subject. It will allow you and your colleagues to have an open and positive conversation about climate solutions.

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Rising to the Challenge: Why Sports Must Engage in Climate Action

Sports' Contribution to Climate Change

Sport is a human activity that also contributes to climate change. The global sport sector ([Playing Against the Clock](#)) is estimated to emit around 30 million tons of CO₂ per year, and even this is considered an underestimation. Even accounting for sport being less carbon-intensive as other economic sectors, it relies heavily on aviation, which indeed is a carbon-intensive sector.

Pressing for Change: External Pressure for Sports to Lead on Climate

Sport has a responsibility to act and do their outmost to reduce their negative impact on climate. And is experiencing growing external pressure to do so.



Stakeholders:

Athletes: Advocacy and Action



Athletes can be key advocates for sustainability in sports.

They can inspire action by engaging with sports organisations, creating initiatives, and leading movements focused on environmental sustainability.

Public Authorities: Policy and Enforcement



Public authorities should prioritize sustainability as a top political agenda, expecting compliance from all sports organisations. They can offer support through funding opportunities but may also impose sanctions for non-compliance.

NGOs: Partners and Advocates



NGOs play a critical role as partners, advocates, and catalysts for change, helping to initiate sustainability efforts within the sports sector.

Sponsors: Purpose-Led Engagement



Purpose-driven sponsorships yield better results. Building deeper relationships with commercial partners through joint sustainability projects goes beyond traditional sponsorships, making a strong business case for sponsors' involvement.

Media: Integrating Climate into Sports Coverage



The climate debate is increasingly becoming part of sports coverage. Sports broadcasters are committing to initiatives like the Sport for Climate Action Framework, integrating sustainability into their programming.

Citizens: Fans and Participants



Sports fans, who are also active citizens, often support environmental initiatives. They have rising expectations for brands, teams, and athletes to align with their values and demand a clear sustainability strategy from the sports world.

European and Global Frameworks

In the pursuit of global sustainability, several key international frameworks and agreements have been established to guide and support efforts across various sectors, including sport, to address climate change, promote sustainable development, and ensure a balanced approach to environmental, social, and economic progress



The United Nations adopted the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** in 2015 as a global call to action to end poverty, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that by 2030 all people live in peace and prosperity. The 17 SDGs are interconnected; they acknowledge that decisions made in one area will have an impact on other areas and that development must strike a balance between environmental, social, and economic sustainability.



The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** is an international treaty, signed in 1992 by 154 states, which aims to prevent "dangerous human interference with the climate system" and to stabilise atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases. Its objective is to "stabilise GHG concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, in a time frame which allows ecosystems to adapt naturally and enables sustainable development".



The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. IPCC's primary task is to prepare reports that evaluate our current understanding of climate change. These consist of methodological reports, special reports, as well as evaluation reports.



European Green Deal is the roadmap for the EU to conduct its sustainable transition. Even though sport is not explicitly targeted, it is still impacted through policies, legislation and initiatives in other sectors, and expected to contribute to the climate objective. Instruments of the EU include legislation and policies (e.g. Fit for 55 package). Funding opportunities to make sport more sustainable also exist: European Structural and Investment Funds, LIFE, Horizon, etc.



The **UN Sport for Climate Action Framework** is a climate action implemented by the UN for the sport movement. The objectives of this initiative are to support and guide sports actors in accomplishing international climate change goals, as decided by the COP21 agreement in Paris and to use sports as a unifying instrument to federate and create unity among global citizens for climate action. Through sharing best practices, lessons learned, creating new tools, and working together on areas of shared interest, the Sports for Climate Action Framework will give sports organisations a platform where members can pursue climate action in a consistent and mutually supportive manner. **Join the Framework!**

The Target of the signatories of the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework is to commit to achieving specific climate goals: **-50% emissions by 2030** and aiming to **achieve net-zero by 2040**.

To join the initiative, organisations are invited to join the [Sports for Climate Action](#) and integrate the principles into strategies, policies, and procedures, as well as mainstream them within the sports community:

- 1 Undertake systematic efforts to promote greater environmental responsibility.
- 2 Reduce overall climate impact.
- 3 Educate for climate action.
- 4 Promote sustainable and responsible consumption.
- 5 Advocate for climate action through communication.

Current Olympic Movement signatories (January 2024): 31 IFs, 34 NOCs, 5 NOCs associations (ANOC, Centro Caribe Sport, ODESUR, CANOC, EOC).

Starting with numbers: Sports' Carbon Footprint Assessment

Measuring your organisation's carbon footprint

Measuring is the first step to identify the effects of your operations on climate and the environment. A measurement sets a baseline to track progress and to set reduction objectives and simultaneously holds you accountable and transparent.

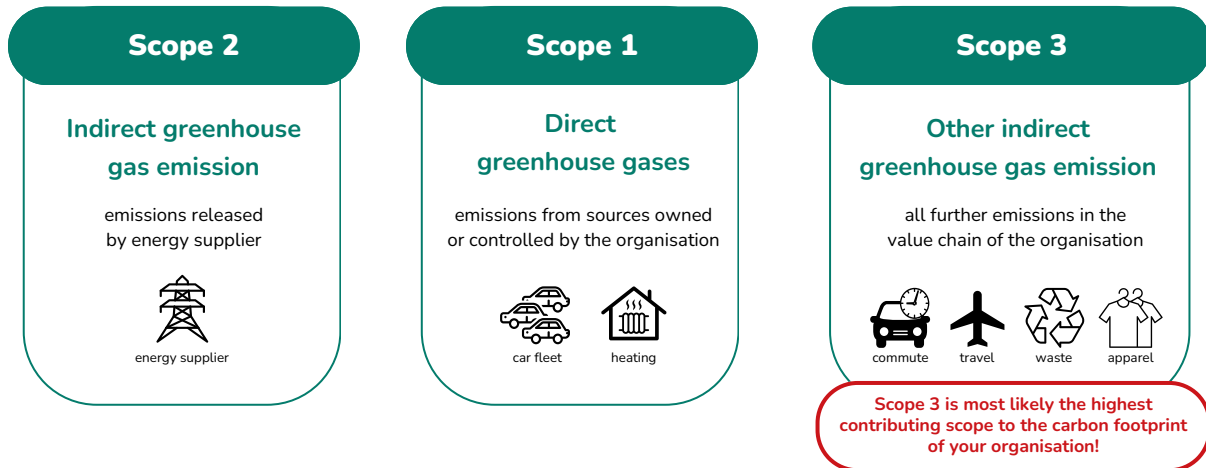
Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint specifically quantifies the amount of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide, directly and indirectly associated with an individual, organisation, product, or activity. It primarily focuses on the contribution to climate change.


The carbon footprint is composed of various elements that collectively quantify the greenhouse gas emissions associated with a particular entity, activity, product, or organisation. However, our focus here is the footprint of an **organisation**. The [Greenhouse Gas Protocol](#) can help identify what to account for.

Standardising carbon calculations: The Greenhouse Gas Protocol

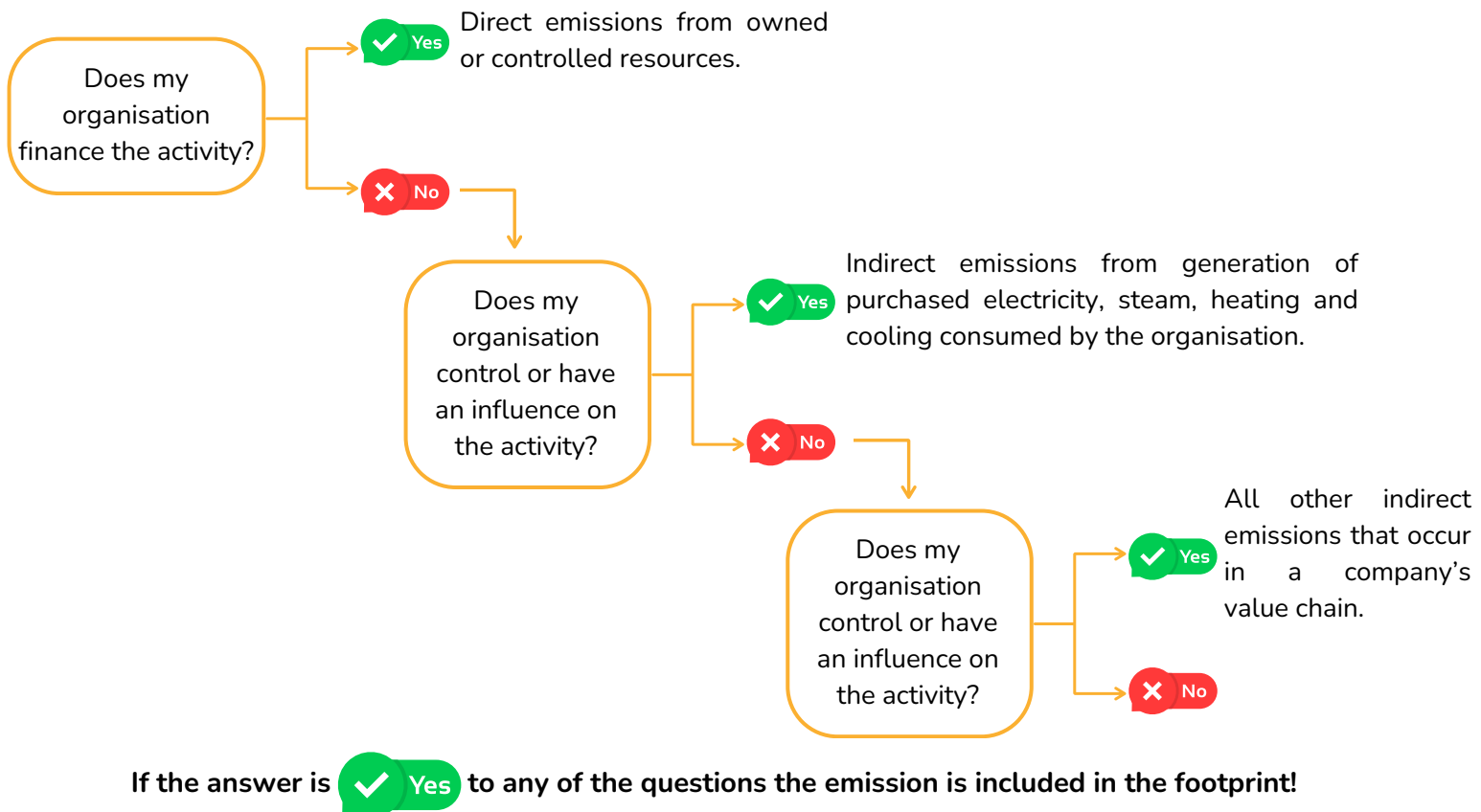
This protocol provides the most widely used greenhouse gas accounting standards. According to this standard, greenhouse gas emissions can be classified in 3 scopes:



Tracking Data for the footprint calculation

 But is there a simpler way to determine which activities need to be included in my organisation's carbon footprint?

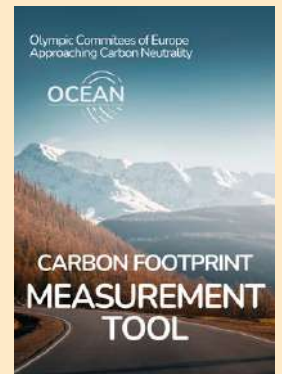
To define the operations that constitute the organisation and identify the direct and indirect emissions, it is possible to use this hierarchy of 3 questions when trying to determine if something has to be accounted for in your carbon footprint. This hierarchy of questions was used to determine the scope of the measurement of the 18 NOCs of the OCEAN Project.



ACTIVITIES

The OCEAN Carbon footprint measurement tool

The OCEAN Carbon Footprint Measurement Tool is tailor-made by and for sport organisations, available online and free of use. The tool allows NOCs, international/continental/national federations and sport organisations of all kinds to calculate the carbon footprint of its daily operations and events. Following the measurement, you can visualise your organisation's baseline and identify areas for improvement to set targeted reduction goals.



 **Measure your organisation's carbon footprint with the OCEAN Tool [here](#).**



KEY LESSONS

- The situation is urgent, with a narrowing window for action, but there remains an opportunity to make a difference.
- Climate change is already impacting sport, necessitating adaptation, risk management, and resilience-building to secure the future.
- Sport contributes to climate change, making it essential to reduce the organisation's negative environmental impact.
- Sport is a powerful enabler of sustainable development, providing a platform to advocate for climate action and drive positive change.
- The UN Sports for Climate Action Framework offers clear, science-based targets that organisations should commit to.
- Existing efforts within the sports sector provide a foundation to build on through collaboration with other organisations.
- Global and national policies are increasingly affecting sport organisations, requiring adaptation to access new funding and stay ahead.
- Stakeholders are demanding more climate action from sport organisations, presenting opportunities for purpose-driven partnerships.
- The OCEAN Carbon Footprint Measurement Tool provides a tailored solution for measuring and managing carbon footprints in sport organisations.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR BASELINE AND CREATING YOUR REDUCTION STRATEGY

Objective of the section Start taking action by setting the right objectives for the carbon reduction strategy and creating the strategy as well as concrete action plan. Transport and Procurement are major sources of emissions for most sport organisations, therefore a focus is put on these two areas.

Keyword Carbon reduction strategy, relevant actions, travel policy, carbon budget,
Key topic sustainable procurement

What you will have learned You can interpret your carbon footprint and identify the main reduction areas.
You can define relevant and realistic objectives for your carbon reduction strategy in the framework of the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework.
You know relevant actions and how to prioritise them to achieve your objectives.
You understand the main steps of the carbon reduction process.
You create and implement your organisation's carbon reduction strategy.

Understanding and interpreting your carbon footprint

What does the overall result tell me?

A carbon footprint is the total amount of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂), emitted directly and indirectly by an individual, organisation, event, or product over a specific period. It encompasses emissions from various activities, including energy consumption, transportation, manufacturing, and waste disposal.

The total carbon footprint is usually expressed in metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e), which allows for the comparison of the climate impact of different greenhouse gases as a single figure.

Identifying key emission sources

In this section, we will explore the different emission categories. When generating the carbon footprint, you will see the impact of the three scopes, as defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.



Let's recall:

Scope 1: Direct emissions from owned or controlled sources



Scope 2: Indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity



Scope 3: Other indirect emissions that occur in a company's value chain



Scope 3 emissions are likely to be the most significant, though Scope 1 may also present considerable opportunities for reduction.

QUICK TIPS



- If you do not enter any data for one year in the carbon footprint calculator because it was not collected but you start collecting and entering the data for the following years, your carbon footprint will inevitably rise. A big carbon footprint baseline is not a burden but a neutral analysis of your impact, and an opportunity for impact!
- Take your time to thoroughly analyse and interpret your own carbon footprint result.

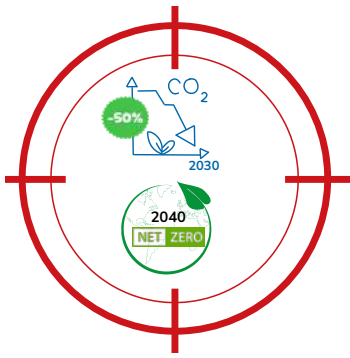
Define relevant and realistic objectives for the carbon reduction strategy

Define relevant and realistic objectives for the carbon reduction strategy

The UN Sport for Climate Action Framework provides a great orientation to define the objectives for the carbon reduction strategy.



Let's recall: A framework that brings together sport organisations, however big or small, through working groups to learn from each other, make collective decisions and push the entire industry's ambition, at speed and scale. It builds a concrete and ambitious plan of action and helps sport organisations around the world throughout their carbon journey. Its objectives are to achieve a clear path for the global sports community to combat climate change and use sports as a unifying tool to drive climate awareness and action among global citizens. Through sharing best practices, lessons learned, creating new tools, and working together on areas of shared interest, the [Sports for Climate Action Framework](#) will give sports organisations a platform where [members](#) can pursue climate action in a consistent and mutually supportive manner.



The **target of the signatories** of the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework is to commit to achieving specific the climate goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by **2030** and aiming to achieve **net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040**.

- Targets to be inclusive of scopes 1,2, and 3 (provided that data is available to sufficiently measure)
- Where scope 3 represents 40% or more of the total emissions generated, the target should be reflective of that.

How to set objectives for the Carbon Reduction Strategy

SET OBJECTIVES FOR THE CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY - ALIGN WITH GLOBAL GOALS:

Establish the primary objective to reduce CO₂ emissions in line with the Paris Agreement, targeting a **50% reduction by 2030**.



1

2

CALCULATE EMISSIONS TO BE "SAVED"

Conduct a Baseline assessment: Measure the current carbon footprint, including Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3 emissions.



Identify Key Emission sources: Determine which areas, activities, or departments contribute most to emissions.



Calculate Reduction Target: Based on the baseline assessment, calculate the total emissions that need to be saved to achieve the 50% reduction goal.



3 ALLOCATE "BUDGETS" TO DIFFERENT AREAS/SCOPES/ ACTIVITIES/DEPARTMENTS

Define Resource Allocation: Distribute the reduction targets across various departments, activities, or projects to ensure comprehensive coverage of emissions.



Set Specific Targets: Assign specific CO₂ reduction targets or "budgets" for each area based on their emissions contribution and potential for reduction.

ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS



Leverage Influence: Use the organisation's influence to encourage stakeholders, including suppliers, customers, and the community, to take meaningful climate action.

COMPENSATE FOR RESIDUAL EMISSIONS - IDENTIFY RESIDUAL EMISSIONS

Only after defining reduction measures, calculate the remaining emissions that cannot be eliminated and consider to compensate for these, which may include investing in carbon offset projects.



4

Communicate Goals: Share the carbon reduction strategy and objectives with stakeholders to foster collaboration and promote shared responsibility.

Incentivize Action: Consider offering incentives or support to stakeholders who actively engage in carbon reduction efforts.

5

Moving from Objectives to Actions

Hierarchy of Measures

When identifying measures for reducing carbon emissions and achieving your targets, it is useful to follow a hierarchy that prioritises the most effective actions first.

REDUCE DEMAND

Lower the overall consumption and demand. This could be by implementing energy savings measures and promoting behavioural change to reduce unnecessary usage of resources.

1

2



INCREASE EFFICIENCY

Use energy and resources more efficiently to reduce the amount needed for the same output.

This could be by upgrading to more efficient equipment.

SUBSTITUTE FOSSILS

Replace fossil fuels with renewable and less carbon-intensive energy sources. Try switching to renewable energy sources and promote electric or hybrid vehicle fleets

3

COMPENSATE THE REMAINDER



Offset the remaining emissions that cannot be eliminated through reduction, efficiency, or substitution.

4

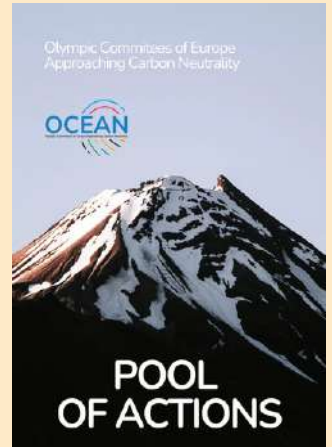
ACTIVITIES

Get inspired by the OCEAN Pool of Actions

The measurement of your sport organisation's carbon footprint is only the beginning of the process. After understanding your organisation's impact and getting inspiration from other organisations, the next step is to adopt your own reduction strategy.

Measuring your organisation's footprint only has an impact if followed by the development of a reduction strategy.

The Pool of Actions is an extensive list of 100+ measures and good practices examples to reduce your organisation's carbon footprint. Draw inspiration from these measures and include them in your carbon footprint reduction strategy.



Below are a few examples of what can be found in the Pool of Actions:



Purchase of energy-efficient appliances

- Practicability: Medium
- Costs: High
- Possible impact: Medium



Incentives for spectators to use public transport

- Practicability: Medium
- Costs: Low
- Possible impact: High



Reduced use of packaging

- Practicability: High
- Cost: Low
- Possible impact: High



Reduction of business trips (online meetings)

- Practicability: High
- Costs: Low
- Possible impact: High



High share of vegetarian options in meals

- Practicability: Medium
- Costs: Low
- Possible impact: High



Browse through the 100 measures to insert in your organisation's carbon footprint [here](#).

ACTIVITIES

Climate Action Challenge

With this background knowledge, think about 2-3 Actions you can do in the next 2-3 months to reduce your organisation's impact on climate change.






Make a pledge and revisit it in after 2 months.

Creating your Carbon Footprint Reduction Strategy

The purpose of a carbon reduction strategy is to systematically lower greenhouse gas emissions, demonstrating the organisation's commitment to sustainability while ensuring compliance with local and international climate regulations. By reducing emissions, organisations can mitigate risks associated with climate change, achieve cost savings through improved efficiency, enhance their reputation, and drive innovation, ultimately positioning themselves for long-term success in a low-carbon economy.

How to structure your Strategy

A well-structured carbon reduction strategy is essential for effectively addressing climate change and achieving sustainability goals. Here are the key components that should be included:

 <p>Stakeholder Engagement</p>	<p>Identify and involve relevant stakeholders both inside and outside your organisation. This includes employees from various departments, suppliers, customers, and community partners to foster collaboration and shared ownership of the strategy.</p>
 <p>Commitment Rationale</p>	<p>Clearly articulate the reasons for adopting the carbon reduction strategy. Consider motivations such as environmental responsibility, regulatory compliance, risk management, cost savings, and alignment with your organisation's core values.</p>
 <p>Baseline Assessment</p>	<p>Outline the methodology for assessing your current carbon footprint, including data collection processes and tools used. Establish baseline values for emissions across all three scopes (Scope 1, Scope 2, and Scope 3) to measure progress effectively.</p>
 <p>Defined Objectives</p>	<p>Set clear long-term and short-term goals for carbon reduction. This should include general targets as well as specific objectives for identified priority areas that present the greatest opportunity for emissions reductions.</p>
 <p>Concrete Action Measures</p>	<p>Detail specific actions to achieve the outlined objectives, including timelines for implementation, assigned responsibilities, estimated costs, and anticipated effectiveness. This will ensure accountability and facilitate tracking progress throughout the strategy's execution.</p>

By incorporating these essential items into your carbon reduction strategy, you will create a comprehensive framework that enables meaningful progress toward sustainability goals.



Focus on two main emission areas

Transport (business travel, travel to events, staff commuting)

Transport policy = a set of guidelines and procedures established by an organisation to manage and regulate business-related travel of the organisation. It outlines rules for booking transportation, accommodations, reimbursement procedures and acceptable expenses.

It is relevant for National Olympic Committees to consider travel, especially air travel as it is often a significant source of carbon emissions for sport organisations. Sport organisations typically engage in frequent domestic and international travel for competitions, meetings, and events, making this a key area for potential carbon footprint reduction.



ACTIVITIES

Assessing current travel practices

Begin by **collecting comprehensive travel data**, including flights, train journeys, car rentals, and hotel stays. This can be gathered via booking systems, expense reports and financial data, carbon footprint data, etc.

Questions to ask: Why employees are travelling, who is responsible for booking travel, how travel arrangements are made, what approvals are needed, and how travel can be minimized overall.

Review existing travel policies to ensure compliance among staff and to check for any financial limits on travel expenditures.

Conducting employee surveys can provide valuable insights into travel preferences and the awareness of sustainable travel options.

Identify key areas for improvement, as it allows organisations to pinpoint specific actions that can be taken to reduce travel-related emissions and enhance sustainability.

Questions to consider when drafting a travel policy:

- **Scope of Policy:** Who will the travel policy apply to within the organisation?
- **Flight Approval Requirements:** Are there specific flight bookings that require senior approval?
- **Class Restrictions for Air Travel:** Are there any restrictions on business and first-class flights?
- **Transportation Guidelines by Distance and Needs:** Does the policy outline guidelines for choosing modes of transport based on travel distance or the need to transport equipment?
- **Low Carbon Travel Prioritization:** Does the policy prioritize low carbon transportation options, such as preferring rail travel over flying or public transit over driving?
- **Airport Transit Options:** Is public transportation prioritized when traveling to or from the airport?
- **Environmentally Responsible Accommodation:** Are hotels and accommodations chosen based on strong environmental practices or certifications?

Guiding Principles for your travel policy could be:

	Promote Virtual Meetings	Utilize virtual meeting technology to replace the need for physical travel, reducing the carbon footprint associated with in-person meetings.
	Prioritise Rail Travel	Where feasible, use high-speed trains instead of flights, especially for short to mid-range distances.
	Reduce Flight Frequency	Limit the number of travelers per trip by considering if fewer people can attend, and consolidate multiple meetings or events into a single trip to avoid separate out-and-back travel.
	Encourage Economy Class Flights	Opt for economy class over business or first class, as it significantly reduces carbon emissions.
	Choose Direct Flights	When flights are necessary, prioritize direct routes to minimize fuel consumption and streamline travel for convenience.
	Inform and Educate on Carbon Impact	Raise awareness among travellers by providing information on the environmental impact of air travel and the carbon footprint of each trip.
	Promote Sustainable Travel Options	Encourage eco-friendly practices, such as using electric vehicles, selecting accommodations with strong environmental practices, and offering incentives for green commuting to and from the NOC premises.
	Incorporate Sustainability into Events	Design travel policies that ensure events hosted by the committee prioritize sustainable travel, including eco-friendly transport options for athletes and streamlined logistics for large delegations.
	Support Green Commuting	Promote green commuting options, such as electric vehicle fleets, bike parking, charging stations, and flexible remote working agreements for staff and volunteers.

Stakeholders to include:



Executive Leadership: The leadership team needs to be involved in setting strategic goals, approving the policy, and ensuring it aligns with the overall mission of the NOC, including sustainability objectives.



Logistics and Travel Coordinators: These individuals manage bookings, travel plans, and partnerships with airlines, hotels, and transportation providers. Their input is essential for operationalising the policy and negotiating with vendors for sustainable travel options.



Athletes and coaches: The people who travel most often and are the core business of the NOC – athletes, coaches, and technical staff – must be consulted. Their travels should not be reduced but they can provide insights into practicalities and comfort of sustainable travel, as well as any concerns regarding schedules or performance impacts.



Finance Department: The financial teams play a key role in setting budgets for travel, managing reimbursements, and assessing cost-effective sustainable options.



Event organisers and Delegation Managers: Individuals responsible for coordinating national and international events must understand the travel policy to ensure it is followed, especially when sending teams abroad for events like the Olympics or World Championships.



Sustainability/Environment Officers: Lead in developing the policy to ensure it aligns with carbon reduction goals.



External Partners and Sponsors: Involving partners and sponsors, especially those who may help finance travel or have sustainability goals of their own, ensures that they support the policy and can help promote green practices.

Travel that might be harder to change or influence:

In your strategy, take into account those hard spots for which reduction will be more complicated to achieve. Focus on small actions that still can be implemented to lower the impact, and on all actions around these hard spots.

- **International Competitions and Major Events:** Travel to high-profile competitions, like the Olympic Games, World Championships, or continental qualifiers, can be difficult to change. These events are often held in distant locations, and athletes must travel to participate, but alternative modes of transportation do exist!
- **Long-Distance Air Travel:** For organisations located in remote regions or countries far from event locations, long-distance air travel may be unavoidable. Reducing or replacing air travel with more sustainable options, such as trains, may not always be practical for intercontinental travel.

- **Athlete Training Camps and Preparation:** Teams often travel to specific locations for high-altitude or specialized training camps. These trips are integral to athlete performance, and changing them could impact training quality. It may also be harder to consolidate or minimize these trips without affecting preparation.
- **Sponsorship and Partnership Commitments:** Some travel may be tied to contractual obligations with sponsors or partners, which might be harder to change or negotiate in the short term.
- **Last-Minute Travel:** In some cases, unforeseen travel (e.g., urgent meetings, unexpected qualifiers) may limit the NOC's ability to follow its sustainable travel guidelines, making flexibility in the policy crucial.
- **Cultural and Diplomatic Obligations:** Certain events may require the presence of leadership or delegation representatives for cultural, diplomatic, or ceremonial reasons, such as attendance at international conferences, sports congresses, or ceremonial functions. Reducing or altering this travel may be sensitive and harder to influence.

How you can still try to address these challenges?

SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES

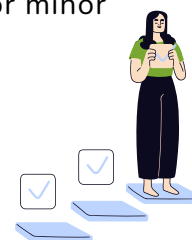
Where air travel is essential and no low-impact alternatives exist, encourage economy class class (lower emissions per passenger) and prioritize direct flights, as they are more efficient.



FLEXIBILITY AND PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

Start with smaller, easier-to-implement changes and expand the policy over time.

For example, prioritize sustainability for domestic trips or minor events first.



USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Encourage virtual meetings and hybrid attendance to reduce the need for face-to-face gatherings.



SPOTLIGHT ACTION

CO₂ budget for travels

Based on the identified target levels aligned with the Paris Agreement and targets set out in the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework, a CO₂ budget for all activity areas, especially travel can be allocated. The goal should then be to stay within the given budget for the activities planned. The organisation tracks the actual emissions from travel against the budget.

A CO₂ budget sets clear goals for reducing travel-related emissions, helping sport organisations manage their carbon footprint, contribute to global sustainability targets, and align with environmental goals like the Paris Agreement. It promotes responsible travel choices, such as opting for trains or video conferencing, and can lead to cost savings by minimising unnecessary trips. By demonstrating a commitment to sustainability, sport organisations improve relations with stakeholders and enhance their reputation. Additionally, a CO₂ budget fosters innovation in travel planning, ensures compliance with environmental regulations, and provides transparency for tracking and reporting emissions.



ACTIVITIES

Activity Travel Budget

Group your collected travel data by departments or teams and calculate a 30% reduction for each group. Forecast next year's travel needs, ensuring they align with the reduced budget, and identify areas for cost adjustments if needed. Use an Excel sheet to monitor expenses and track adherence to the travel budget throughout the year.

Procurement (sponsorship, textiles, events, material usage)

What is Sustainable Sourcing?

Sustainable Sourcing refers to the practice of meeting an organisation's procurement needs while simultaneously generating positive environmental, social, ethical, and economic impacts. It involves sourcing goods and services from suppliers, licensees, or partners in a way that minimises harm and promotes sustainability across the entire supply chain.



Why is Sustainable Sourcing Important?

Sustainable sourcing offers numerous benefits, including better risk management, informed decision-making, and opportunities to enhance marketing and reputation. It contributes to the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), lowers costs by reducing emissions and waste, and boosts competitiveness. Additionally, organisations face increasing pressure from stakeholders—such as consumers, governments, civil society, investors, and the sports sector—to adopt sustainable practices, making it more crucial than ever.

Procurement's Environmental Impact

Procurement practices can have a significant environmental impact across various areas, including carbon emissions, deforestation, resource depletion, pollution, and energy consumption. The way goods and services are sourced and acquired can contribute to substantial environmental degradation.



Carbon Emissions: Global supply chains often produce high carbon emissions due to transportation and manufacturing processes.



Deforestation: The sourcing of raw materials like timber and palm oil can lead to large-scale deforestation, contributing to biodiversity loss.



Resource Depletion: Excessive extraction of minerals and fossil fuels depletes natural resources, impacting ecosystems and future availability.



Pollution: Manufacturing processes can generate hazardous waste and lead to water and air pollution, damaging local environments.



Energy Consumption: Many suppliers depend on non-renewable energy sources, which increases carbon footprints and contributes to climate change.

Key Challenges in Sustainable Procurement

- **Lack of Data:** Many organisations struggle to access reliable information on the sustainability of their supply chains, making it difficult to assess environmental and social impacts.
- **Limited Transparency and Traceability:** Supply chains are often complex and opaque, hindering the ability to track the origins of materials and ensure sustainable practices.
- **Insufficient Resources and Expertise:** Many organisations, as well as their suppliers, lack the necessary resources and expertise to implement sustainable procurement practices effectively.
- **Difficulty Influencing Supply Chain Mitigation Efforts:** It can be challenging for organisations to influence suppliers' actions, especially when dealing with global or long-distance supply chains.
- **Limited Availability of Mitigation Solutions:** Effective solutions to reduce environmental impacts in certain sectors or regions are often scarce, limiting opportunities for improvement.






ACTIVITIES

Identifying Procurement Hotspots

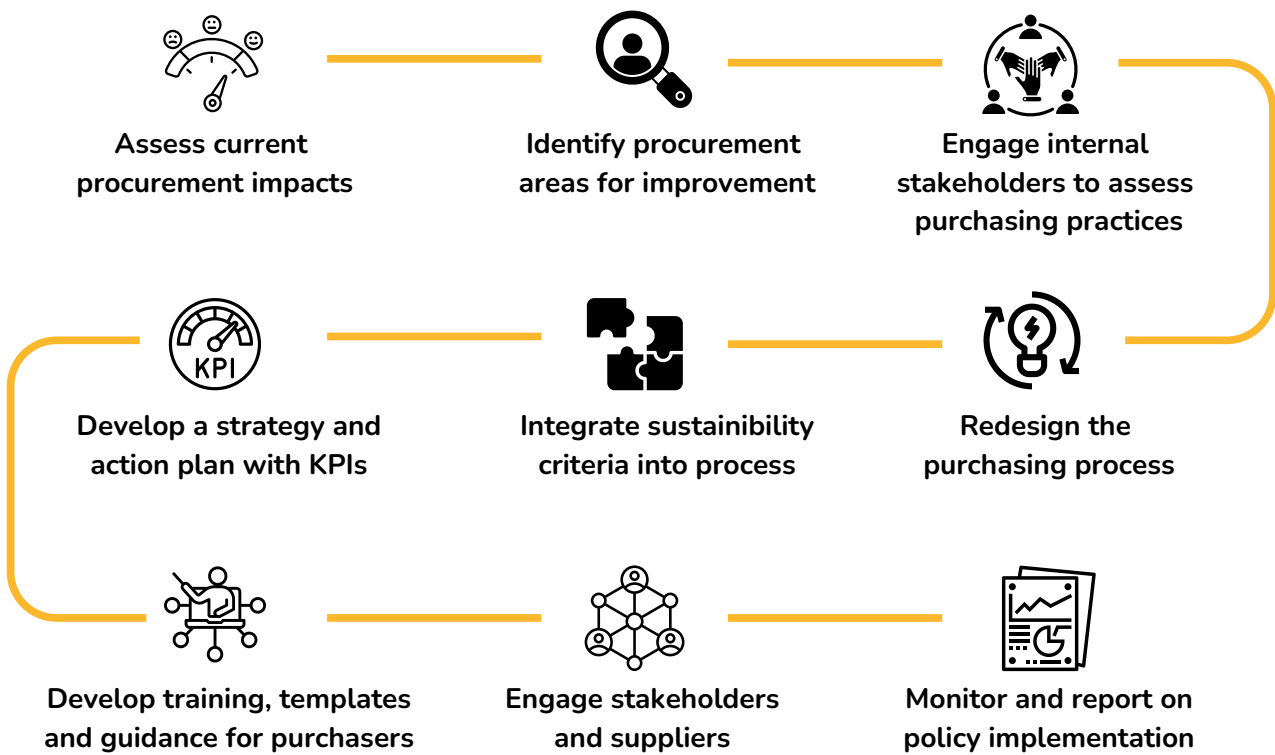
Identify your organisation's priority procurement categories (e.g., textiles) and connect them to specific environmental and social risks and opportunities. Consider the top three sources of emissions within your procurement categories, their impact on the environment and people, and the barriers to change within their national context.

Sustainable procurement principles emphasise responsible decision-making when sourcing goods and services, considering their full lifecycle. These questions help align procurement with environmental, social, and economic sustainability goals.

Five essential questions to ask yourself when sourcing goods and services:

-  Is it required?
-  Where does it come from and who has made it?
-  What is it made of?
-  What is it packaged in?
-  What will happen to it afterwards?

Steps for Implementing a Sustainable Sourcing Strategy



Additional Considerations: Ensure leadership commitment, align with sustainability goals, set clear priorities, and identify sourcing requirements. Develop a comprehensive plan addressing communication, roles and responsibilities, resources, and governance for effective execution.

With these considerations we can move towards a circular economy which promotes a fundamental change in how we produce and consume goods, moving away from the traditional linear model of take, make, and waste. Instead, it encourages practices that minimize the extraction of raw materials, reduce plastic waste and food waste, cut down greenhouse gas emissions, lessen our impact on biodiversity, and lower water and energy consumption. By keeping products, materials, and resources in use for as long as possible, the circular economy aims to create a more sustainable system that benefits both the environment and society.



In conclusion, the world of sport possesses potential to drive change in sustainable procurement practices. By leveraging its influence, the sports sector can set an example for others to follow, demonstrating the benefits of sustainability in supply chains. However, to fully realize this potential, it is essential to raise awareness, build capacity, and provide the necessary support to overcome existing challenges.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning - Are you on the right track?

Monitoring, evaluation and learning are essential to implementing a carbon reduction strategy and are also required for UN Sport for Climate Action Framework signatories. Robust monitoring and evaluation demonstrate your organisation's commitment to climate action, fostering trust with stakeholders like athletes, sponsors, and the public.

Monitoring also helps track emissions, assess the effectiveness of reduction measures, and identify high-impact areas, enabling targeted strategies that improve efficiency and reduce costs. Reporting your progress strengthens your organisation's reputation, positions it as a leader in the sports sector, and attracts new sponsors and partnerships.

What is MEL?



Monitoring = A continuous process of assessing the progress of a project or initiative. It involves regularly reviewing progress toward objectives and goals, enabling timely adjustments and supporting effective day-to-day management. This can be tracking specific numbers or developments in % against a baseline.



Evaluation = A deeper, periodic analysis that complements ongoing monitoring. It assesses the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of a project or initiative at a specific point in time. This answers more contextual questions such as "Has the carbon reduction strategy done what it said it would do?"



Learning = Effective monitoring and evaluation generate valuable insights that can improve program design, enhance fundraising strategies, and contribute to knowledge sharing across the sector.

How does MEL help the organisation?



Effective Reporting: Enables clear and reliable updates to key stakeholders on progress toward strategic goals while meeting operational and compliance requirements.



Impact-Driven Learning: Provides insights to enhance and scale initiatives by focusing on their impact on the people and communities they aim to support.

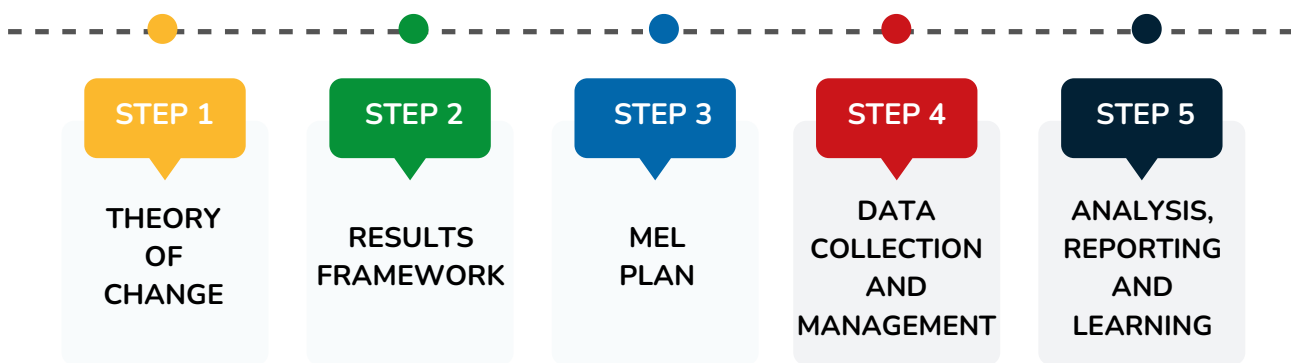


Compelling Outputs: Produces robust reports and actionable learning that strengthen fundraising efforts and communications strategies.



Accountability and Transparency: Reinforces your organisation's commitment to data-driven practices, positioning it as a credible and responsible leader that shares best practices with the wider sector.

The process of effective MEL



STEP 1: THEORY OF CHANGE

A strategic tool used to map out how a project or program leads to its intended impact within the broader context of the system it operates in. It helps identify the steps needed to achieve the desired outcomes and examines the assumptions underlying those steps. While the specific format and terminology can vary, all theories of change focus on creating a clear pathway from actions to impacts.

- **Guides Monitoring and Evaluation:** It provides a structured framework for defining what success looks like and identifying key indicators to measure progress effectively.
- **Clarifies Assumptions:** By exploring the assumptions behind a project's approach, it helps ensure that MEL activities address potential gaps and risks.
- **Improves Decision-Making:** A well-articulated theory of change helps organisations adjust strategies based on evidence gathered through monitoring and evaluation.
- **Strengthens Learning:** It promotes a deeper understanding of how and why certain approaches work, fostering high-quality learning for future programming and sector-wide improvements.

STEP 2: RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Adding Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the theory of change.



- This is a structured table or an additional column in your carbon reduction strategy that outlines how the various elements will be measured. It specifies the indicators, which describe the data to be collected.
- It ensures consistency in measurement and enabling effective communication of progress both internally and externally.



How to choose KPIs? Check out to IOC Olympism 365 Indicator Bank - a catalogue of indicators to measure short- and long-term impact of social development initiatives.

STEP 3: MEL PLAN

Putting the framework into action.

- Here you will specify what data collection methods to use, the data collection tools, the sample as well as who is running the MEL and a project plan detailing when and how data will be collected, analysed and reported.



Important: Make sure you don't collect data for the sake of data but that the data collected can actually help you assess your project/strategy/initiative.



- **Ethical Considerations:** Ensure MEL processes prevent harm, prioritise participation, obtain informed consent, respect respondents' time and expertise, avoid bias, comply with data protection laws, and safeguard confidentiality and anonymity.

STEP 4: DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT



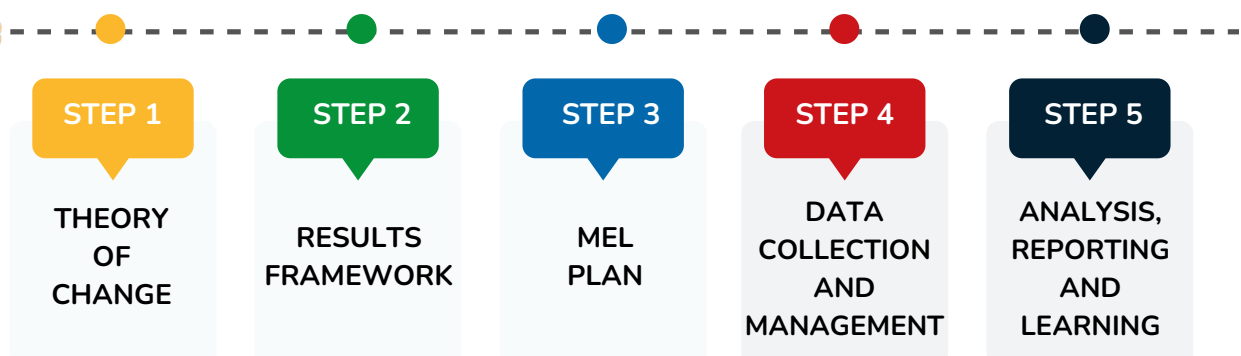
Providing training for staff and volunteers in data collection and analysis is essential to ensure ethical practices and maintain high data quality.



Store data securely using software that supports analysis and allows easy extraction for further evaluation.

STEP 5: ANALYSIS, REPORTING AND LEARNING

- Effective MEL requires strong processes for analysing both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Analysing data generates insights that can improve activities and provide evidence for decision-making, such as during meetings.
- Create compelling reports to effectively communicate findings with funders and stakeholders.





KEY LESSONS

- Reading and interpreting a carbon footprint is a key skill for understanding environmental impact.
- Key areas for carbon reduction need to be identified to effectively address emissions.
- Relevant and realistic objectives for carbon reduction should be defined, aligned with the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework.
- Targeted actions for carbon reduction can be developed using resources like the OCEAN Pool of Actions.
- Understanding the main steps of the carbon reduction process lays the foundation for a successful strategy.
- Creating and implementing an effective carbon reduction strategy is essential for long-term impact.
- Specific tools, such as a carbon budget, travel policy, and procurement strategy, support carbon reduction efforts.
- Robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes are essential for driving impact, improving programme effectiveness, and demonstrating accountability.



WORKING WITH THE RIGHT PARTNERS AND COMMUNICATING ABOUT YOUR EFFORTS AND SUCCESSES

Objective of the section

Effective collaboration and communication are essential for achieving meaningful impact in sustainability initiatives.

Keyword Key topic

External communication, outreach, public engagement

What you will have learned

You know how to identify the right partners and channels for external communication.
You know your audience and what messages will reach them best.
You know how to engage and communicate with external stakeholders.
You know that external communication is best delivered strategically with a timeline.

Spreading the Message: Effective Climate Action Communication and Engagement Strategies

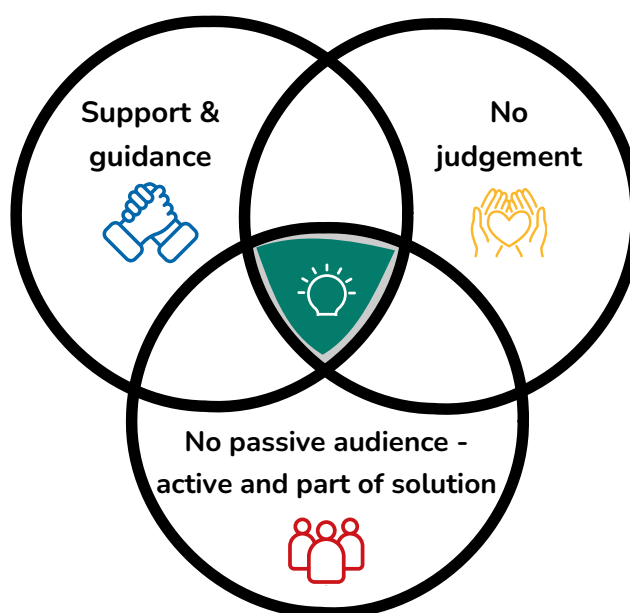
Introduction

On a daily basis, especially the digital world is bombarding everyone with misinformation and disinformation, which represents a pollution of the information ecosystem that threatens human progress. Therefore, it is important that we do not contribute to this but offer effective communication to make sure our stakeholders hear what they need to, and that our message is understood correctly.

Climate communication should entail positive messaging that is inclusive of empowering narratives and solutions. It should present actionable knowledge that showcases what people can actually do whilst being relevant and making people understand how they might be affected. Lastly, it is important to present inspiring and innovative action that shows how everyone can act in a more sustainable way.

Goals of communication: Good and effective communication, both internally and externally, ensures better involvement of staff and leadership in climate/sustainability activities, enables efficient transfer of information, builds, and strengthens partnerships and cooperation with stakeholders and increases credibility and trust.

EMPOWER YOUR AUDIENCE



Source: Touchline Earth – Matthew Campelli, OCEAN Module 2

The start of good communication

Creating a successful content and communications strategy starts with empathy - understanding your audience, their perspectives, and what resonates with them. This involves looking at your messaging through their eyes, considering where they are coming from, and identifying what will effectively reach them. Empathy, combined with sincerity, creates the foundation for persuasive communication.

Basic Principles for a reliable and efficient communication on your organisation's commitment



Act first, then communicate

Otherwise, you will risk appearing dishonest to your audience



Choose the right message for the right audience



Use strong positive visuals.

Think locally

Engage local athletes and personalities in your campaigns, refer to local sustainability activities and to how your organisation supports local initiatives.



Use multiple communication channels

Sustainability touches all areas of your work (be it your office, transport to work, athletes' gear or sport event you work on). Be sure that your activities are seen and heard on all communication channels, not just in specific sections about sustainability.



Show, do not (only) tell



Lie or try to hide the truth

No organisation is perfect when it comes to sustainability and people understand that. People will better relate to your messages if you tell the full story and show the full picture. Honesty and transparency are key words here.



Pretend that one activity can save the world

Each activity has its positive impact, but try not to overstate its importance. Otherwise, you may risk your credibility later.



Copy to the letter what someone else is doing

While it is great to be inspired by others, it is equally important to relate to the local context. Your projects and sustainability communications will have a greater impact.



Overdo it

Most people are interested in sport for its performance/competition aspects. Therefore, especially in external communications, keep these aspects in focus while you add sustainability-related information to them.



Speak like a scientist

Instead, try to connect to the "feel good" aspect of communications.

The audience groups

These are the groups that you may reach with your communication efforts. It is important to know them, in order to tailor the communication and make the messages relevant to them.



Athletes:

- Showcase the impact of climate change on their ability to train/compete/do their job.
- Demonstrate the link between purpose and marketability.
- Stress their ability to use their platform for a cause they care about – and potential to make an impact.
- Be empathic about their concerns around hypocrisy and lack of knowledge and give them 100% backing and training.



Suppliers:

- Explain, in concrete terms, your sustainability goals and what you expect .
- Ask your supplier to identify their own climate challenges and support them – particularly if they're small.
- Make carbon reporting and reduction a contractual obligation.
- Potentially develop a scoring system to incentivise suppliers.
- Develop a procurement code of conduct or practical guide.



Journalists:

- Can you help them pitch this story to their editor? Make it more than just about climate.
- Is there a genuine human story (preferably from an athlete)?
- Watch/read the publication you want to pitch to. What is their style and how do they present content?
- Can this story work in a multi-platform format? Can you help them shape this?
- Stress the link between sport and climate change.

ACTIVITIES

Creating audience personas

A critical step is identifying and describing your target audience by developing “audience personas”. This includes gathering contextual information about their interests, challenges, and motivations. For example, if you are promoting a carbon reduction plan, think about how this aligns with the audience’s priorities and why they should care.

Key questions include:

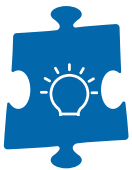
- Will the content address a pain point for them?
- Will it provide a significant opportunity or benefit?

For leadership-focused messaging, it’s essential to frame climate action as a core business priority. Highlight pain points, such as how climate change impacts sports, and opportunities, such as the business potential in adopting sustainable practices. By linking these points, you can position sustainability as integral to their operations and goals.

Crafting effective messages



Utility: How can the information be helpful to your audience? For example, addressing the inconvenience of giving up a car for public transportation by offering solutions like discounts, alternative travel options, or productivity tips during commutes.



Inspiration: Use storytelling to forge connections. This could include surprising discoveries or a hero’s journey narrative that demonstrates the transformation possible through sustainable actions.

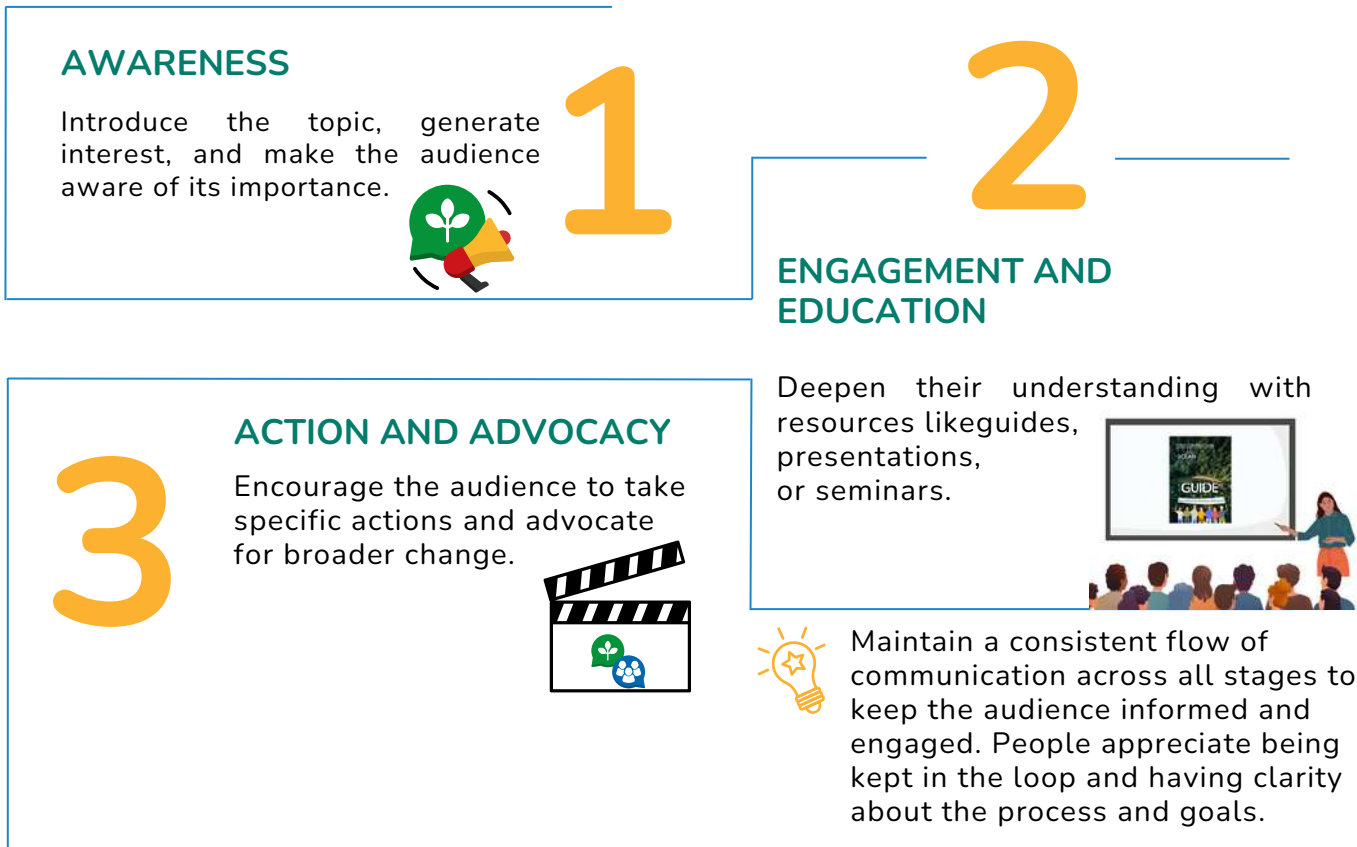


Empowerment: Avoid judgmental tones. Instead, explain the “why,” provide accessible resources, and equip your audience with the tools to act.

Establishing your communication plan



Once the audience and messages are clear, consider the medium, timing, and format. A content plan typically unfolds in three stages:



Defining an audience, key messages, relevant communication channel. Apply this method to all your stakeholder groups!

	AUDIENCE	Finance team
	OBJECTIVES	Secure € for carbon reduction project
	MESSAGES	Cost of carbon, Increased regulation, Risk mitigation, Return on investment
	CHANNELS	Team meeting, Presentation, Business case document
	OTHER RESOURCES	Accountability for Sustainability resources, External proposal/pitch support
	WHAT I KNOW	Our organisational budget for sustainability has not increased for three years
	WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW	Why that budget has not increased, and how I can make the case

ACTIVITIES

Establishing a communication plan

You have calculated your organisation's footprint and have started a carbon footprint reduction plan. It is now time to think about how to communicate on your actions. Create your communication plan, following the three phases:

1. Awareness
2. Engagement and Education
3. Action and Advocacy

Consider the audience, the most impactful channels, the relevant messages and map out the timeline.

Engaging your partners and stakeholders for Success








Identifying the right partners and leading with purpose across the entire value chain of your organisation is crucial for the success of any activity. By understanding how to cultivate relationships and collaborate effectively, you can ensure the success of your climate action initiatives and make a meaningful impact in your organisation and beyond.

Building meaningful partnerships begins with aligning shared values and establishing a common vision for sustainability. Engaging stakeholders through open dialogue and collaborative planning not only fosters trust but also creates opportunities for innovative approaches to addressing climate challenges. By leveraging the unique strengths of each partner, your organisation can amplify its impact and drive collective progress toward achieving sustainability goals.



ACTIVITIES

Consider your organisation's partnerships – which ones positively/negatively impact your organisation's reputation? Are there possibilities to create partnerships based on your sustainability efforts?

BENEFITS OF HAVING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS FOR YOUR SPORT ORGANISATION	RISKS OF HAVING NON-SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS FOR YOUR SPORT ORGANISATION
 Better economic stability	 Reputational damage
 Brand reputation	 Regulatory consequences if lack of compliance with sustainability goals
 Fans and members commitment	 Loss of fans and members commitment
 Respect of global goals	
<p>Leverage points in the value chain IOC/NOC, Employees/athletes/fans, suppliers/service providers, venues/logistics/infrastructure, sponsors/partners/marketing/promotion, government/public organisations</p>	



KEY LESSONS

- Tailor messages by understanding your audience’s perspectives, challenges, and motivations.
- Focus on empowering solutions, inspiring stories, and clear actions audiences can take.
- Plan communication in stages: awareness, education, and action - while maintaining consistent updates.
- Align with stakeholders’ goals, provide support, and prioritise sustainable partnerships to mitigate risks.
- Craft messages that are practical, emotionally engaging, and enable audiences to take meaningful actions.



CREDITS

This Guide is the written transcription of the Training Course for Climate Action Officers, which was conducted over five training modules, both online and in-person. The Training Course was coordinated by the European Olympic Committees EU Office and the International Olympic Committee.

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