



GREEN LEAGUE
Sport Alliance for the Environment

Sport & Environment Local Championship Implementation Guide

Combining sport activity and environmental actions



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Acknowledgements

This Report has been created within the Erasmus+ sport project “*Green League – sport Alliance for the Environment*”.

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Edition: Electronic

Project reference no.: 101050262 Green League-ERASMUS-SPORT-2021-SCP



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Introduction

In the mark of the Green League – Sport Alliance for the Environment – project, this implementation guide has been developed in order to give guidelines on how to organise and implement sport activities together with environmental actions.

This is a document that completes the Green League Model - and therefore the Green League approach – supporting it in its objective of creating a culture of sustainability within the sport organisations, sport professionals and sport players, implementing environmentally friendly practices and raising environmental awareness within and through sport.

Raising awareness about the importance of environmentally friendly practices in sport is of pivotal importance but also requires different methodologies, approaches and different steps.

In the Green League project specific case, each step used a different methodology and each step was fundamental for the other ones:

1. The first step was to study, gain knowledge, do research, exchange expertise and experiences and co-create, together with sport professionals, the Green League Model, a framework to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in sport, for everyone willing to pursue the project values and objectives (**participatory and collaborative approach**).

[Check the [Green League Model](#) to know how to improve the link between sport and environment]

2. The second step was to help young people and their families, amateur athletes and sport organisation, to directly immersing themselves into nature to practise sport while reflecting on the natural environment where the sport was taking place, reflecting on how sport impacts on the environment and the possibility of shifting its influence towards increasingly sustainable means (**experiential learning methodology**).

[Check the [Nature's Four Elements Sports Events – Outlines](#) to know how to organise sport events in nature and combine sport activity and environmental reflection]

3. Once set the basis and after the awareness on environment and sport have been raised, the last step was to take action, by combining sport and environmental actions, competing in small tournaments where the scoring points were allocated based on environmental and sporting achievements (**learning by playing methodology**).

Each step was preparatory to the next, and all together they are essential to create environmentally aware and respectful sports communities and to raise awareness about the importance of respecting and protecting the environment in which we live.

From this third step, the current implementation guide takes place.

The activities described in this guide draw inspiration from *plogging*, an eco-friendly trend where participants pick up litter while jogging or engaging in other outdoor sports. The idea behind plogging is to combine exercise with a positive impact on the environment. Participants jog equipped with garbage bags to collect litter they encounter on their fitness route.

The term plogging merges the Swedish word *plocka upp* (to pick up) with the English word *jogging*. The concept was pioneered by Erik Ahlström in 2016, when he began cleaning the area where he trained before moving to a new city, giving rise to this impactful trend.

Sport & Environment Local Championship Implementation Guide

About the guide

The “*Sport and environment implementation guide*” is a set of guidelines developed in order to support sport associations, sport clubs, sport organisations, as well as youth organisations, educators, trainers and stakeholders, in empowering young athletes, amateur athletes, sport clubs and young people to become actors of change for the promotion of sustainable practices in sport and through sport.

This document provides guidelines for the organisation and implementation of sport activities combined with environmental actions, including programme of sport and environmental activities that can be done and practical instructions for their delivery.

The guide also provides the description of the various ways of implementation put in place by the partners organisations across each country, highlighting the approaches taken, the challenges faced, the strengths and weaknesses observed, so as to serve as inspiration for others and provide multiple approaches users can choose from and adapt to their own countries and contexts.

This document is a starting point, beside that a resource, to allow the user to use the Green League methodology effectively. It emphasises the importance of tailoring implementation to the specific context in which activities are organised, ensuring that each adaptation aligns with local needs and conditions.

Sport & environment Local Championship

In the Green League project, the combination of sport activities together with environmental actions, has been organised in the form of *Sport & environment Local Championship*, combining **team sports' mini tournaments** and **relay races**.

The selection of these 2 types of sport activities is based on the **learning-by-playing approach**. During the Green League's Local Tournaments, sport clubs and young athletes participating in local sport and environmental competitions have the opportunity to directly learn the importance of respecting the environment, challenging each other in team competitions, and in relay races, while taking environmental actions.

While their attention is focused on winning the competitions, an **innovative hybrid scoring system** developed within the Green League project, ensures that they also learn that protecting, respecting and taking care of the environment can be fun and inspiring.

Hybrid Scoring System

The innovative hybrid scoring system foresees the allocation of points based on environmental and sporting achievements, meaning that the emphasis is not only on the sporting performance but also on the environmental actions.

This system is organised in a way where each team receives both "green points" and "sport points" and the final scores are calculated by considering both types of points.

The "**Sport Points**" depend on athletes' performance in sport; thus, the scores are allocated as usually in the chosen sport.

The "**Green Points**" depend on athletes' performance in 2 different categories of environmental activities:

- Differentiated waste collection
- Engagement for environmental awareness raising

Differentiated waste collection performance depends on the number of waste bags collected before and/or after the sport activity.

Engagement for environmental awareness raising performance depends on the number of visibility and environmental awareness raising actions done by each player.

In this way, players are spurred to take environmental actions and to raise awareness among their peers.

[More about the Hybrid Scoring System on the [Green League Model](#)]

Team Sports' mini-tournaments

The mini-tournaments are focused on team sports and environmental cleaning activities.

People divided in teams compete in a series of matches (mini-tournaments), each of which is preceded or followed by environmental actions.

The sport can be freely chosen among any team sport.

The environmental activity, as described above, can be waste collection and environmental awareness raising activities.

In this case, the **hybrid scoring system** foresees the allocation of both sport and green points.

The sport points are allocated as normally in the chosen sport.

The green points will be allocated by giving 1 point for every waste bag collected by each team before or after the sport match and 1 point for every awareness raising video-message published by each component of the team, video-messages showcasing the project's action and published on the sport club's channel they play with/for, or individual social media channels of the participants.

The final calculation is done by multiplying the sport points for the green points (or a coefficient can be defined). For teams getting 0 points in one of the two points categories, the final score will correspond to the actually scored points in the one category where points were scored.

TEAM SPORTS - Final score = Sport points * Green points

Example: Volleyball match

	RED TEAM	YELLOW TEAM
MATCH SCORE	3	2
VIDEO PUBLISHED	5	9
FILLED BAGS	2	2
FINAL SCORE	$3 * (5+2) = 21$	$2 * (9+2) = 22$

Relay races

The second type of sport activity, the relay races, are inspired by the “plogging” (go to the introduction section for more information about it).

In this case, the sport activity is already set, and the environmental activity, the waste collection, is always done before the activity, so as to use the waste bags as a symbolic baton to be passed between the players of the same team.

As for the mini-tournaments of team sports, the green points can be collected by also doing environmental awareness raising activities.

Also in this case, the green points are allocated by giving 1 point for each waste bag collected before the race, that will be then used as a symbolic baton to be passed to the team mates, and 1 point for each awareness raising video-message published by each component of the team.

The hybrid scoring system for the relay races is calculated subtracting the green points from the timing made by each team. The reduction can be defined by setting a coefficient, i.e.: 0.5 seconds for each green point.

RELAY RACES - Final score = final time of the race – (n° of bags * ½ second)

Example:

	RED TEAM	YELLOW TEAM
TIME	57 sec	56 sec
FILLED BAGS	4	1
FINAL SCORE	$57 - (4 * 0,5) = 57 - 2 = 55$	$56 - (1 * 0,5) = 55,5$

Implementation Guidelines

In this paragraph can be found instructions on how to organise and implement sport and environment actions, from the organisation phase up to the final local award ceremonies.

The organisation and implementation of sport activities combined with environmental actions, follows 4 main steps:

1. Organisation of Local Championship
2. Recruitment of participants
3. Implementation of Local Championship: Mini-tournaments of team sports & relay races
4. Final award ceremony

Organisation of Local Championships

The first step consists in the practical planning and organisation of the local championship.

In this phase, it is important to keep in mind:

- Target groups to be involved
- Team sport/s to for the mini-tournaments
- Local stakeholders to involve
- Period of implementation
- Location of the implementation
- Materials needed for both sport and environmental actions
- Sustainability

Target groups

The team sports can be open to any person and any age class, nevertheless, it is important to set a range of ages so as to have balanced teams and not too big age gaps between participants.

Deciding the target group, also supports the following decisions in terms of team sports, local stakeholders, period and location for the implementation (i.e.: if the target group chosen is high school age youngsters, you already know in which period of the year and in which time of the day they will surely not be able to participate, and so on...).

In Green League project, for the team sports' mini-tournaments, the target group is young sport players aged 13-30 years old, while for the relay races is amateur athletes 13+ years old.

Team sports

The Local Championship foresees two different types of sport activities: relay races and mini-tournaments of team sports.

In the case of mini-tournaments the sport can be freely chosen, but keeping in mind that it has to be a team sport, namely a sport involving teams consisting of many people.

The selection of the sport is fundamental in order to properly organise, promote and involve participants.

It can be possible to choose only one team sport or even multiple team sports, and so organise more than one mini-tournament; the decision is up to each organiser but it is important to keep in mind that for each team sport a mini-tournament needs to be organised and teams need to be set and for each mini-tournament there will be a final award ceremony.

The team sport can be selected according to the local community interests and needs, for example if in your country/city/community the most popular and most practiced sport is soccer, could be useful to select this team sport so as to enhance the possibility of make participants more involved in the local championship.

Otherwise, the team sport can be selected according to the sport practiced in local sport organisations you want to collaborate with or you already collaborate with.

Another important thing to be kept in mind is that together with the sport activity, there will be also the environmental action. So, when choosing the team sport, it is also advisable to think about how to implement the chosen sport and the related environmental action (more guidelines on the “location” paragraph).

Stakeholders

The involvement of local stakeholders is a crucial point, especially if you are not a sport or environmental organisation.

Involving local organisations that work in the sport and/or environmental fields can help and support for the practical organisation of the local championship, for the involvement of participants, for the implementation of the activities and for the allocation of points.

Ideally, both sport and environmental organisation should be involved so as to have support for both the sport activity and the environmental action.

In case it is not possible to involve both types or none of the two, the organisation is still possible but some steps and phases will require more efforts (more on the following paragraphs).

[More information on the chapter “[Implementation - How to organise green sports activities and events](#)” of the Green League Model]

Period

As mentioned in the “target groups” paragraph, once selected the participants to work with, the choice of the period of implementation can be tailored to the target groups’ needs.

It is always advisable to fix from the beginning the duration of the sporting activity, better to not pick-up too long periods in order to avoid drop-out of participants; at the same way, it is also advisable to not fix too short periods, to not weight too much on participants weekly agendas and also to have some time in case some of the matches are delayed for any reason.

Setting the period of implementation will also make it easier for the participants to decide whether to join the local championship or not.

When selecting the period, keep in mind that the local championship foresees at least 1 mini tournament of team sport - which foresees a series of matches, more if more than one team sport is selected, 1 tournament of relay race – which foresees a series of races, 1 award ceremony.

In Green League project, the length is set as follow:

- 2 months for the planning
- 2 months for the recruitment
- 5 months for the local championship implementation
- 1 month for the organisation and implementation of the award ceremony

Any of these major phases can last less but it is better to have more time to implement rather than not having enough time to organise and implement everything in a proper and valuable way. For example, planning and recruiting are two phases that can overlap and so last less, especially in case local sport organisations are involved in the process and so the recruitment of participants is faster and easier; but in the case there are no sport organisation involved in it, the two phases will be probably done separately and so 2 months for each of them are needed.

Finally, when choosing the period of implementation, choose it according to:

- the seasons and the weather in your country, i.e.: in south of Italy from May to September the temperatures are really high so it is better to choose to implement when they lower a bit;
- Participants’ commitments, i.e.: if you involve people younger than 18 it is better to avoid summer given that it is their holiday period

Location

The choice of the location for the implementation of the Local Championship depends on different factors.



Firstly, this choice has to be based on both the sport activity e the environmental action.

The choice of the team sports for the mini-tournaments influences the location; for example, if the team sport selected is basketball, the location for the sport part can be an indoor or outdoor place where there is basketball court; if the team sport selected is beach volley, the location can be an outdoor beach or an indoor beach volley court; if the team sport selected is “dragon boat” the location can be a river or a sea.

As can be seen from these 3 examples, the choice of the sport has consequences on the possible location. Anyway, as mentioned above, when choosing the sport and the location, it is important to keep in mind that other than the sport activity, there is also the environmental action to be implemented.

Anyway, the environmental action can be also adapted to the local situation, so the choice of the location and the sport is linked to the environmental action but at the same time this type of action can be done in different ways (see “*Implementation of Local Championship: Mini-tournaments of team sports & Relay Races*” paragraph for more information on the implementation of sport activities and environmental actions).

[More information on the chapter “[Implementation - How to organise green sports activities and events](#)” of the Green League Model]

Materials

During the local championship, given the sport activities and environmental actions to be implemented, there will be materials needed.

For the sport activity, the materials needed are the ones typically used for the chosen team sport. If the local championship sees the involvement of local sport organisation that already practice/offer the team sport selected, there will be no need of sport equipment, but if none of the local sport organisation is involved, the equipment for the selected team sport will be needed (i.e.: if the sport is volleyball there will be the need of purchasing a net, a ball, a delimitation tape, a scoreboard etc...); whilst for the relay race it depends if it is done in an athletics field or not, if so, there is no need for other equipment, otherwise a delimitation tape or chalk or anything else that can be used to delimitate starting/ending points and relay crossing points, will be needed.

For the environmental action, there is the need of purchasing some materials:

- Compostable trash bags
- Trash collection tongs (for land cleaning actions)
- Fishing nets (for sea/river cleaning actions)
- Any other cleaning tool needed (broom, dustpan, rake etc...)
- Safety gloves

Sustainability

When organising any type of event, it is important to keep these events as much sustainable as possible and try lower as much as possible the ecological and environmental footprint. In the case of the *Sport & Environment Local Championship*, the sustainability of the events is even more important.

Some tips to make events more sustainable:

- Print as little as possible and if needed use recycled paper
- Use compostable materials
- Offer food from local farmers
- Promote the use of public transportation means or car sharing
- Ask participants to bring refillable water bottles
- Select sports that have no impact on environment

[More information on the chapter “[Implementation - How to organise green sports activities and events](#)” of the Green League Model]

Recruitment of participants

Once the practical planning and organisation of the Local Championship has been completed, before starting with the implementation, the second step is the recruitment of participants.

The recruitment can be done in different ways and with different means and each of these ways and means can be used together.

As already mentioned in some previous paragraphs, the participants recruitment may differ if there are local sport and environmental organisation involved or not (see “stakeholders” paragraph).

Recruitment through involved local stakeholders

If during the practical organisation of the local championship, some local sport and/or environmental organisations adhered at the organisation of such activities, the recruitment can be facilitated by these organisations.

The involvement of local sport clubs and institutions, is functional given that they already work with sport players that can be involved in the championship, they have networks of contacts in the same field so can spread the word and invite other local organisations in participating and inviting the people they work with.

The involvement of environmental organisation can also be a support given that also in this case, these organisations can promote the initiative through their contacts and other similar organisations, they probably already work with youngsters and so can invite them and most importantly, they are interested and experienced in the topic and already work for the environment, so they are really motivated in pursuing such objectives and in involving youngsters to be sensitised in these topics.

Recruitment without involved local stakeholders

In case, for any reason, was not possible to involve local sport or environmental organisation the recruitment process may undertake other ways:

- Inviting and involving coaches and trainers as individuals; in this case, being sport professionals, they already work with young sport players and have contacts with other sport professionals and/or local sport organisations.
- Launching open calls through your organisation’s communication means, i.e.: social media, website, newsletters, direct emails, etc...
- Inviting local youth organisations and youth centres part of your organisation’s network of contacts and promote the initiative.
- Look for already existing local initiative about sport and/or environment, get in contact and promote the local championship trying to combine the two initiatives.
- Inviting local schools and organising the local championship as a competition between schools or between classes of the same school – this particular case could be very

useful given that the local championship also aims at raising awareness on environmental issues and so there is also the educational part that can also be a further motivation for schools and teachers, so promoting the learning by playing approach that is the methodology of this initiative.

- Promoting the initiative through local newspaper.
- Promoting the initiative during other events organised on the same topics or with the same target groups.

When recruiting is also important to clearly present the initiative and all the related objectives, so not present it only as a sport activity but underlining the environmental part.

Each organisation can decide how many participants to involve, but given the types of sport activities, there will be necessarily a minimum number depending on the sport.

For the mini tournament, the minimum number will correspond to the number of players for each team competing in the mini-tournament i.e.: if the selected sport is volleyball, in order to organise a mini-tournament, the minimum number of teams is 3, given that each volleyball team has to have a minimum of 5 players, the minimum number of participants to be involved in the volleyball mini-tournament will be 15.

For the relay races, the minimum number will correspond to the numbers of players for each team competing i.e.: given that the relay races foresee 4 sport players for each team, and given that for a tournament for relay races at least 3 teams are needed, the minimum number of participants to be involved in the relay races will be 12.

Nevertheless, when recruiting it is important to keep in mind that we want to sensitise as many people as we can, so the more the merrier.

In Green League project, the minimum numbers for both types of sport activities are set at:

- 40 young sport players for the mini-tournaments of team sport
- 40 amateur athletes for the environmental relay races

Implementation of Local Championship: Mini-tournaments of team sports & Relay Races

When everything is organised, it is the moment to start implement the Local Championship.

Even if everything is organised and properly planned, some practical decisions need to be done for the implementation phase:

- **Number of matches per week/day:** it is useful to already organise both team sports mini-tournaments and relay races for the entire period of implementation; giving participants a clear and already set calendar of activities helps avoiding drop-out, prevent people missing in some matches, and give a continuity to the activities, at the same way sport clubs have specific days of the week for training. It is also useful to set a maximum number of matches per day, that in this case it is advisable to be maximum 2 per day, especially given that other than the sport match there will be an environmental action and so longer lead times and greater fatigue.
- **Sport players insurances:** it is always a good idea to be prepared for any eventuality and, given the type of activities, both sport and environmental ones, can be dangerous for participants, it is always advisable to purchase sport insurances for each sport player.
- **Any necessary permit for both sport and environmental actions:** each country/city/community has its own rules and laws, so it is better to be informed about any permit needed or local laws, so as to avoid any legal problem, especially when using public spaces.
- **What to do as environmental action:** the environmental action depends on the sport and location chosen but there is also some freedom in deciding what to do; for example, even if the sport chosen is beach volley, the environmental action could consist in cleaning the beach or in collecting waste in the streets nearby or even in the sea or the shore; deciding this beforehand is important also in order to bring the correct cleaning materials. Another option, could be to ask participants what they would like to clean or to go in the location some days before to check the situation and then decide.
- **When to do the environmental action:** in the case of the relay races, the cleaning should be done before the actual race, given that the trash bag collected will be used as baton to be passed to the other team mates or even to be used as starting/ending point; in the case of the mini-tournament of team sport, the decision can be freer, so for example the collection of waste can be done before the match, after the match, in

between one match and another or even in different moments before, during and after i.e.: football matches, alternated with waste collection in specific areas.

- **Where to do the environmental action:** the environmental action can be done in the same place where the sport activity takes place, this depends if the area where the sport match takes place is a polluted area or a safe area where to do such actions (see “location” paragraph); in case it is not possible to do the environmental action in the same area of the sport match, it can be done in a nearby area. Moreover, as mentioned above, the cleaning can be done in a natural space (i.e.: lakes, rivers, woods, beaches, etc...) or in a city/urban place (i.e.: urban parks, streets, squares).
- **Food and beverages:** implementing in the same day one or two sport matches and for each sport match also an environmental action is tiring, so it is important to bring healthy snacks, fresh seasonal fruits, water and juices and offer these to participants in between the various activities.
- **Impact analysis:** it is important to reflect on the impact on the participants and make them reflect on if and what they have learnt, so it is useful to make them fill short and simple self-assessment before and the same one also after the activities, so as to compare the level of knowledge before and after.
- **Hashtags:** given that the scoring foresees both sport points and green points, and given that green points can be obtained also by doing environmental awareness raising actions, it is useful to select one or two hashtags that each participant has to use whenever he/she post something on social media as awareness raising social. So, whether it is an image, a short paragraph or a video, the use of the selected hashtags will make it easier for the facilitators and sport professionals to do the final counting of green points that at the end of the implementation phase will help determine the winning team. It is also important to select hashtags that are connected to the activities and topics (i.e.: in Green League experience the hashtags chosen are “GreenLeague” and “PlayGreen”)

Once set and organised all in detail, it is the moment to **create the teams** and let them compete in the local championship.

If the people involved are not already divided in teams, the division can be done directly by the local sport organisation involved or any other organisation involved, or can be done by coaches or facilitators. In any case, it can be nice to let each team choose the name of their teams.

Each team can have the exact number of participants needed (i.e.: volleyball - each team is only made of 5 people) but can also be useful to create teams with more participants so that if for some matches one or more players are missing for any reason, there are others from the same team that can replace him/her. If this second option is undertaken, be sure that during the matches all players have their turn to play.

During the implementation, even if the type of championship is about doing sport activity and environmental action, it is also important a **group reflection** to spur the critical thinking of youngsters, to make them reflect on the environmental issues and on the link between sport and environment, on what it is dangerous for it and what can be done to protect it. The reflection can be a starting point to introduce participants to the topics, or can also be done after the waste collection activity, so reflecting about what was collected, what are the dangers of leaving waste in the environment, what are the positive impacts of cleaning and safeguarding the environment, and so on.

Keep in mind that some players may be not well informed about the environmental issues, so a guided reflection at the beginning and/or at the end of each championship day will help raise more awareness on these topics.

[More information on different types of reflection on the [Outline of Nature's Four Elements Sports Events – Combining sport activity and environmental reflection](#)]

Final award ceremony

The last step of the Local Championship is the award ceremony.

Team sport mini-tournament is concluded and relay races are completed, so now it is the moment to discover which are the winning teams.

The first thing to do is to calculate all the scores from all the matches summing both sport points and green points (see “Hybrid scoring system” paragraph). To do so, it will be necessary to check also all the awareness raising actions done by each participant and sum all the trash bags collected, and for this, it will be useful asking the help of the local organisations or sport professionals involved, and to check all the online awareness activities that used the hashtags selected at the beginning (see “implementation” paragraph). Once all the maths has been done and so the names of the winning teams are individuated, the final award ceremony can take place.

The final ceremony is an important moment to conclude the pathway and to name the winning teams but at the same time it is also an important moment to give visibility to what they did, to raise awareness on the topics, to invite more people in replicating this type of initiative, to share resources produced and finally, to celebrate and so value the work done by facilitators, organisers, local sport and environmental organisations involved, stakeholders involved and participants.

The final award ceremony should involve all the participating organisation, participants and their families and it will be open to stakeholders and the general public.

There are different **ways of organisation and implementation of final award ceremony**; in the Green League project, the event agenda is thought as follow:

- beginning with a presentation of Green League project and the organisations involved in the project, the Green League Model together with the other resources developed and the activities implemented during the project lifetime.
- this introduction is followed by a description of the *Sport & Environment Local Championship*, its aims, how the competitions took place, what has been done and why and a presentation of the sport clubs and other actors who took part in it.
- after this, the local winning teams and athletes are presented and celebrated.
- finally, the ceremony ends with a concert and a buffet offered to the audience.

To further emphasise the participants actions and the championship values and objectives, during the event, pictures, videos and every awareness raising action done by participants can be projected and participants could tell by themselves what they did, what they gained and why it is important to organize and implement such initiatives.

Moreover, the concert and buffet moment, can also serve as a networking moment between local stakeholders and organisations.



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Go through the Green League experiences in the 5 implementing countries to take inspiration for other ways to implement the local championship.



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Local Championships: Green League experience

In this section are provided all the experiences of the implementation of the Sport & Environment Local Championship in Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Cyprus and Iceland.

In each country, the implementation was adapted to local circumstances, making each individual implementation a unique experience that can provide additional inputs and inspiration for future replications, not only in the said country but also in other ones.

In order to provide a complete picture, for each country's experience, information is given on how the local championship was implemented, the final ceremony and finally, small tips from the experiences in the individual countries.

Italy

Local Championship: Mini-tournament of team sport & Relay races

In Italy, the events were strategically scheduled from September to October, following the summer months, to avoid the intense heat that can affect participation and comfort. This scheduling allowed more extensive engagement from a range of local organisations, community groups, and sports associations, bringing considerable added value to the initiative. By involving organisations focused on both sports and environmental awareness, the events cultivated a collaborative environment that extended beyond a single season, fostering connections and cooperation that have the potential to become lasting partnerships.



The selected sports for the Italian events were basketball and soccer, two of the most popular and widely practised sports in Palermo and throughout Italy. Their popularity provided a natural draw for participants, as many local sports organisations host basketball and soccer championships during the year, generating a strong community interest.

A key focus of the events was inclusivity. Special attention was given to ensuring that young people of all abilities could participate fully in both the sports tournaments and the accompanying environmental activities. Efforts were made to create a welcoming and

accessible environment where individuals with diverse physical and cognitive abilities could engage with their peers. This approach not only enriched the experience for participants but also fostered a sense of unity, allowing young people to build mutual respect.

The clean-up sessions were designed as learning experiences, with informative talks about the impact of waste, the importance of recycling, and ways to protect local ecosystems.



Participants were encouraged to reflect on their role in preserving the environment and to take pride in making a positive impact on their neighbourhoods.

The combination of sports, environmental initiatives, and a commitment to inclusivity made these events not only promoted physical activity but also instilled values of environmental responsibility and inclusiveness, contributing to the development of consciousness among young citizens.

Final ceremony

The final ceremony in Italy was a vibrant and festive celebration, open to the entire community. Held on a Saturday morning in a public, open area, it provided the perfect opportunity to engage young people, families, and sports enthusiasts who were eager to join in the celebration. The timing allowed for maximum participation, creating an inclusive atmosphere for all involved.

The ceremony was carefully designed to align with the spirit of the entire project, and as such, numerous sports stations were set up to encourage hands-on participation. The sports showcased included table tennis, taekwondo, arm wrestling, volleyball, soccer, yoga, basketball, Nordic walking, and gymnastics for kids, offering a variety of activities that appealed to all ages and interests. These activities provided an opportunity for everyone, whether experienced athletes or first-time participants, to enjoy and explore new sports in a fun and interactive way.

In keeping with the event's theme of sustainability and growth, all young participants were given pencils that can be planted (sprout pencils). These eco-friendly gifts symbolised personal growth, as each pencil contained seeds that could be planted to grow into something new, mirroring the idea of development from a single, small seed.

The event also benefited from the involvement of many local organisations and informal groups, which were invited to join and contribute to the ceremony. This collaboration helped to broaden the event's reach and fostered a sense of unity and community. In addition, both young people and adults were encouraged to try the various sports activities, allowing everyone to be an active part of the celebration.

To enhance the festive atmosphere, a local band was invited to perform, adding music and energy to the event. A shared lunch was also provided, further promoting the sense of community and offering participants a chance to connect with one another. Overall, the final ceremony was not only a celebration of the project's success but also an enjoyable and inclusive event that brought together people of all ages and backgrounds.



Tips

- Choose a popular sport in your community.

Selecting a sport that is already popular and widely practised in your community will help engage participants more easily.

- Involve local organisations.

Partnering with local sports clubs, non-profits, and youth groups can increase the event's impact and provide logistical support. Local organisations can help promote the event, offer resources, and assist with organising activities, bringing valuable expertise and community connections. Engaging these groups strengthens community ties and promotes long-term collaboration.

- Focus on inclusivity.

Inclusive events allow people of all abilities and backgrounds to feel welcome and participate meaningfully. Ensure that activities are accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities, and consider organising adapted sports sessions. This approach not only enriches the experience but also promotes values like respect, understanding, and social cohesion.

Slovenia

Local Championship: Mini-tournament of team sport & Relay races



In organising these events, individuals with special needs were not only welcomed as participants but actively included in the planning process. The planning sessions included input from people with disabilities (PWDs) and representatives from disability-focused organisations, promoting a culture of collaboration, setting a positive example for the community and participants.

One of the featured sports at the event was Holeball, known as Neckarea in Belgium, an adapted version of volleyball specifically designed to accommodate the needs of PWDs and children. Holeball distinguishes itself from traditional volleyball by including modifications that allow individuals of various physical abilities to participate equally, removing common barriers and creating an enjoyable experience for everyone. As an integrated sport, Holeball enables PWDs, children, and youth to play together on the same team, encouraging cooperation, mutual understanding, and unity. The game's adaptability and inclusive nature made it a highlight of the event, promoting the idea that sports can be a powerful tool for bringing diverse groups together.

In addition to the sports tournaments and organised cleanup activities, a series of interactive workshops was held to deepen participant engagement. These workshops were designed not only to entertain but also to educate, inspiring young people to think critically about their impact on the environment. In one creative session, children and youth were asked to create posters to promote environmental protection. Using natural materials and recyclable waste collected during the cleanup activities, participants crafted artwork that highlighted the

importance of sustainable practices. These creative exercises allowed them to express their views artistically, transforming the waste they encountered into a visual message for change.

Furthermore, open discussions on environmental topics were organised, encouraging participants to reflect on the role they play in preserving their surroundings. Facilitated by environmental educators, these discussions covered essential topics, such as waste reduction, recycling, the importance of biodiversity, and the effects of pollution on local ecosystems. Special attention was given to practical steps that young people and families could take in their daily lives to contribute to a healthier, cleaner environment. Through these conversations, participants not only gained knowledge but were also encouraged to express their thoughts and experiences, fostering a sense of shared responsibility.

The workshops and activities, together with the inclusive sports tournaments, created a comprehensive experience that went beyond recreation. They inspired a commitment to environmental safeguarding, inclusivity, and community engagement among the young participants and their families, leaving a lasting impression that reached beyond the day of the event.

Final ceremony

The final ceremony was held after the last match. Due to unfavourable weather, the ceremony took place under the canopy of the high school, where the students had gathered. The principal also addressed the attendees, congratulating them for the commitment they took. The diplomas were given to all participants, and each team received practical prizes, to use in their daily life. A collective reward was chosen instead of individual recognition, with the aim of promoting participation and inclusion. This was especially important since participants with special needs took part in the competitions alongside other students.

A second award ceremony took place after the second relay event. As with the first ceremony, all participants were awarded certificates in recognition of their involvement.



Tips

- Bring a reusable water bottle

Encourage participants to bring their own reusable water bottles to the event to refill throughout the day. This simple action reduces plastic waste and promotes a sustainable mindset among attendees. Providing accessible refill stations at various locations within the event venue can support this initiative and serve as a reminder of the importance of reducing single-use plastics. This practice not only lessens environmental impact but also fosters a sense of responsibility and mindfulness toward daily habits that contribute to a healthier planet.

- Involve local schools

Collaborating with schools can greatly enhance the impact of an event, especially one centred on sports and environmental awareness. By involving schools, the program can reach a broader audience of young people, teachers, and families, fostering a community-wide commitment to the event's goals.

Greece

Local Championship: Mini-tournament of team sport & Relay races

An interesting and impactful feature of the relay race events organised in Greece was the integration of a cleanup activity held just before the races, specifically targeting remote and less frequented areas within the district. This choice was intentional, aiming to draw attention to locations that are often overlooked by the public, thus raising awareness about the need for environmental care in areas that don't receive regular maintenance or attention. By focusing on these hidden spots, the initiative underscored the message that environmental responsibility should extend to every corner of a community, not just popular or visible areas.



Soccer was chosen as the primary sport for the event, made possible through a collaboration with Panerythraikos FC, an important football club in Athens with a strong local following. This partnership not only elevated the event's visibility but also attracted a larger audience, as Panerythraikos FC is widely supported within the community. By teaming up with such a respected organisation, the event benefited from greater credibility and engagement, as many attendees were drawn by the opportunity to participate in an event associated with their favourite club.

The tournament itself was organised in a playoff format, where each winning team advanced to the next round. The structure was designed to build healthy competition, with both the championship match for 1st place and a consolation match for 3rd place held on the final day.

A unique aspect of this event was the expanded scoring system, which went beyond traditional goals scored on the field. In alignment with the Green League (GL) Model, teams were able to earn additional points for environmentally positive actions and to further deepen

the competition and encourage more environmentally responsible actions other ways of earning points were introduced:

- participating in open discussions: teams that took part in facilitated discussions on sustainable practices, such as the benefits of using reusable bottles over single-use plastics, recycling habits, and ways to reduce waste, received points for their engagement;
- quiz with Kahoot: after an informative session on environmental topics, teams were invited to participate in a fun and interactive Kahoot quiz focused on sustainability. Points were awarded based on each team's performance in the game, which covered topics ranging from recycling best practices to the impact of pollution and the importance of conservation.

These elements, combined with the athletic component of the tournament, made the event both educational and competitive.

The relay races also featured an adapted scoring system to promote environmental consciousness. Teams were awarded additional points for bringing in differentiated bags of waste, for example, separating recyclables from food waste. This small but impactful adjustment not only added another layer of challenge to the races but also encouraged participants to practise recycling and waste separation, even within the context of a sporting event.



By encouraging participants to act responsibly and rewarding environmentally friendly actions, the event inspired a sense of pride and achievement not only in athletic performance but also in contributing to a cleaner, healthier community. Through these creative scoring adjustments and the involvement of respected local partners, the event demonstrated how sports can serve as a powerful platform for promoting positive environmental and social change.

Final ceremony

Panerythraikos FC provided its premises for the final ceremony. In addition to the local football community, a diverse group of stakeholders from the area were also invited, resulting in an audience representing various ages, professions, and levels of involvement in sports. Among the attendees one of the popular athletes was interviewed, adding to the event's excitement and engagement.

The ceremony began with a presentation of the Green League (GL) model and its achievements, highlighting the lessons learned from organising the local tournaments. Participants were then given a guided tour of the Panerythraikos FC Academy, where they were introduced to the Academy's accomplishments and its future vision. This provided valuable insight into the broader impact of sports on the community, as well as the opportunities for young athletes in the region.

Following the presentations, all participants were awarded medals in recognition of their involvement, and the winning teams were presented with cups. The awards ceremony took place on the football field, with the audience actively participating in the festivities and cheering on the participants.

Tips

- Promote public transport and cycling for event access

Encouraging participants to use public transport or cycle to the event can significantly reduce the event's carbon footprint while promoting sustainable travel options within the community. Selecting a location that is easy to access via public transit, such as near a major bus or train stop, makes this option more appealing and feasible for attendees. Additionally, providing safe and convenient bike parking at the venue can encourage more people to consider cycling. Event organisers could even offer incentives, such as a small discount or extra points in the event's scoring system, for those who arrive via eco-friendly transportation.

- Think outside the box: use all the tools you have!

Effective event planning often requires creativity and a willingness to leverage all available resources, from local partnerships to digital tools. "Thinking outside the box" means looking beyond traditional event elements and exploring innovative ways to engage participants and amplify the event's message. Incorporating tools like Kahoot! can add an interactive, educational element that makes the experience both fun and memorable.

Cyprus

Local Championship: Mini-tournament of team sport & Relay races

The Green League tournaments in Cyprus were organised in collaboration with two key events in Nicosia, allowing young players to engage in sports while promoting environmental awareness.

Instead of a formal recruitment process, players were invited through local partners, who encouraged participants to form their own teams.

At one of the two events, young players participated in discussions focusing on the environmental impact of sports. These discussions also touched on the broader role of athletes in society, especially their influence as role models in addressing social and environmental issues. Participants reflected on how they, as young people and athletes, could positively impact their communities by promoting eco-friendly practices and advocating for environmental



responsibility. These discussions helped young people see themselves as supporters of sustainability and understand why it's important to adopt eco-friendly habits in both their daily lives and in sports.

Another important collaboration took place with a local summer school, where relay races were organised as a way to combine physical activity with environmental awareness. The races provided students with a fun, active experience while reinforcing key messages about sustainability. Through these relay events, young people learned to view sports as a platform for community engagement and environmental management, encouraging them to think about how their actions can contribute to a cleaner and healthier world.

Final ceremony

The ceremony began with opening speeches from representatives of CARDET and the Global Sports Division, who took the opportunity to highlight the success of the event, the importance of youth participation in sports, and the positive impact of the initiative on both the athletes and the local

community. These speeches set the tone for the event, emphasising the values of teamwork, sportsmanship, and personal growth.



Following the speeches, each athlete was introduced and celebrated for their involvement in the event. The presentation of the athletes was a special moment, as it allowed the audience to recognize the dedication and hard work of all participants, regardless of the outcome of the competition.

Participants were awarded sports shop vouchers, which they could use to purchase sports equipment of their choice. This thoughtful prize aimed to further support the athletes' commitment to physical activity and sports, ensuring they had the tools needed to continue pursuing their passions. In addition to the vouchers, all participants received certificates providing a lasting reminder of their achievement and the memories made throughout the event.

Tips

- Spot an Event in Your City

Identifying existing events within your community is a great way to align your activities with local interests and maximise outreach. Joining an established event, such as a local festival, community sports day, or school fair, can attract a wider audience and increase visibility for your project. Collaborating with organisers of local events also opens up opportunities for partnerships, sharing resources, and tapping into local expertise. This approach allows you to connect with people who may not typically attend a sustainability-focused event, broadening your impact and helping to spread your message to a more diverse audience.

Iceland

Local Championship: Mini-tournament of team sport & Relay races

The tournaments were organised in close partnership with Rafíþróttasamband Íslands (the eSport Association of Iceland) and held at the Sports Arena in Reykjanesbær. The events were designed to provide an enriching experience for children enrolled in summer school programs, enhancing their summer activities through a blend of indoor and outdoor facilities. By combining sports with environmental education, the tournaments offered a great experience that engaged children both physically and intellectually, fostering an atmosphere of fun, learning, and social responsibility.



In addition to traditional sports activities, the tournaments featured an educational component aimed at raising environmental awareness and promoting sustainable practices. This component was integrated into the events through interactive presentations, workshops, and engaging sessions on topics such as waste reduction, recycling, and the importance of eco-friendly habits. Participants were encouraged to consider how their actions can impact the environment and learned practical ways to make a difference, from small daily habits to broader changes in attitude toward sustainability.

The sports selected for the Icelandic tournaments included Pogo, a ball game known for encouraging agility, quick thinking, and teamwork, and basketball, a sport popular in Iceland.

Through the partnership with Rafíþróttasamband Íslands, the event was able to reach more participants.

This approach ensured that the event went beyond the typical summer school offerings, leaving a lasting impression on young attendees and empowering them to become more mindful, active, and environmentally aware members of their community.

Final ceremony

Since the activities were organised in six separate groups, award ceremonies were held at the end of each group tournament, providing an opportunity to gather parents and celebrate the achievements of the winning teams.

The Green League project and the summer tournaments were promoted during the Youth Championship Gathering, held before the final ceremony. This event attracted a wide range of stakeholders, including local community leaders, sports organisations, and representatives from various youth programs. By showcasing the success and impact of the tournaments at this larger gathering, it was possible to reach a more diverse audience and raise awareness of the Green League initiative on a broader scale.

The Youth Championship Gathering provided an excellent platform for networking, as it brought together key figures from the sports and youth development sectors. During the event, a detailed presentation was shared, highlighting the key achievements of the summer tournaments, the goals of the Green League project, and the positive outcomes it has had on participants, particularly in promoting environmental awareness and fostering inclusion.

Tips

- Involve Summer Schools

Partnering with summer schools can enhance participation and engagement. By integrating tournaments and educational activities into the summer school schedule, organisers can reach a larger number of young participants and ensure that the event becomes part of their structured activities. Summer schools provide an ideal setting for mixing fun with learning, making them perfect partners for events that aim to educate as well as entertain.

Closing remarks

The approach used in the Green League project turned out to be a winning one, which not only made it possible to play sport and at the same time reflect and act in favour of the environment, but also shortened the distance between sport and the environment, creating a bridge between the two.

Each of the experiences in the various countries turned out to be very successful, resulting in a great impact not only on the people who participated but also in the sports and environmental communities and the local communities in general.

Continuing to spread environmental awareness in a fun, competitive and educational way is of paramount importance.

Shortening the distance between sport and the environment, creating environmental awareness, promoting outdoor physical activity, educating by doing and playing, whether young people or adults, whether professional or amateur athletes, everyone has a role in society and even in their own small way, by joining together they can do great things and have great impacts.



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