

First Football4Climate conference gathered football & environment practitioners and advocated for closer cooperation

Press Release, 16th February 2022

The non-profit organisations Pledgeball and Football4Climate hosted a conference on 2nd February 2022 with the purpose of bringing together and connecting practitioners in the field of football and environmental sustainability.

The online event, attended by over 50 participants from numerous initiatives across Europe, Africa and Asia, included short presentations from the organisations and keynote speeches calling for an exchange and knowledge sharing between the practitioners.

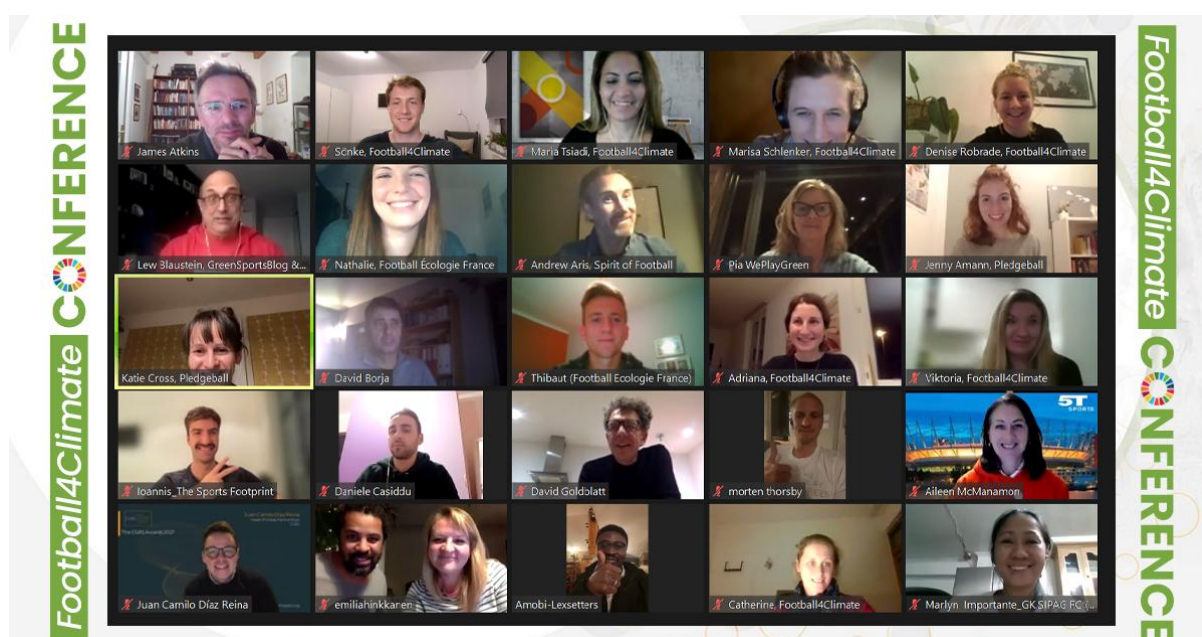
The idea of hosting this event emerged through various discussions between different groups operating at the intersection of sport, specifically football and climate action. After Pledgeball effectively collaborated with several organisations in the sector to create a [collective video campaign for COP26](#), a concrete opportunity for further exchange developed. As a result, Pledgeball and Football4Climate joined forces to host the Football4Climate Conference, inviting organisations with the same purpose, fighting climate change in and through football.

David Goldblatt, a well-known football journalist and author of the much-quoted [Playing Against the Clock](#) report, enriched the audience with an illustrative and compelling lecture on the key developments in recent years pertaining to football and the environment. His inspirational vision for football to become a key player in environmental sustainability was well received by the audience.

Pro-footballer for Sampdoria Genoa, climate activist and Founder of [We Play Green](#), **Morten Thorsby** spoke very personally about his approach, using his

platform and status as a professional footballer to raise awareness and drive change.

The main item on the agenda, the presentations of the organisations/initiatives working in this space, included the following organisations: Football for Future; Dream Fields; Green Foot Sports Academy; Spirit of Football; Football Ecologie France; 5T Sports; Planet Super League; We Play Green; SportsUganda; SipaG; Sport Positive. The initiatives and organizations spanned many facets, from sustainable sports infrastructures to educational awareness to match balls to fan initiatives.



“It is incredible to experience and see the momentum building in this space, and tonight’s meeting has left us wanting to know more”, said Katie Cross, founder of Pledgeball.

“We honestly did not expect such a great turnout, which made us all the more pleased”, said Marisa Schlenker, project manager of Football4Climate.

The organisers have planned further gatherings of an informal nature which will lead up to the **next conference on 25 May 2022**. Details on these virtual networking events will be provided soon.

Moreover, a **LinkedIn group** was established, which will continue to be used as a platform for exchange and networking. Interested organisations should contact info@football4climate.org



About Football4Climate

Football4Climate is a programme from Sport and Sustainability International (SandSI). It seeks to leverage the power of football to drive climate awareness and action amongst the wider football industry.

www.football4climate.org



About Pledgeball

Pledgeball is a research-driven charity that mobilises football fans to tackle climate change. Using the existing fixture calendar, the initiative encourages and supports fans to make sustainable lifestyle choices in support of their clubs.

www.pledgeball.org