

Comparison of the 2022 Soccer World Cup in Qatar with the 2024 European Soccer Championship in Germany from a Sustainability Perspective

Gerd Nufer

ESB Business School, Reutlingen University, Reutlingen, Germany

Email: gerd.nufer@reutlingen-university.de

How to cite this paper: Nufer, G. (2024). Comparison of the 2022 Soccer World Cup in Qatar with the 2024 European Soccer Championship in Germany from a Sustainability Perspective. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 12, 4174-4187. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojbm.2024.126210>

Received: October 14, 2024

Accepted: November 12, 2024

Published: November 15, 2024

Copyright © 2024 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

This paper compares the sustainability claims made by soccer mega event organizers FIFA and UEFA against the realities of the 2022 Soccer World Cup in Qatar and the 2024 UEFA European Soccer Championship in Germany. The comparison reveals massive discrepancies between the two perspectives. While acknowledging efforts made in both instances, the paper concludes that Qatar primarily engaged in sports washing, using the sustainability goals outlined for the World Cup as a tool for this purpose. Also Germany, though more ambitious and successful in its sustainability efforts, still has room for improvement. Here the ambitions were set higher in order to achieve a lasting, heightened awareness of sustainability among all stakeholders in the long term.

Keywords

Sustainability Management, Sustainability Communication, Mega Sports Events, FIFA Soccer World Cup, UEFA European Soccer Championship

1. Introduction

Sustainability communication and sustainability reporting is an essential part of sustainability management, as knowledge of strengths and weaknesses makes improvements possible in the first place—also with the help and pressure of informed stakeholders. Regardless of their own ambitions, companies are increasingly being forced to deal with sustainability issues as a result of expanding legislation. In 2021, the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act was passed, which imposes human rights due diligence obligations on companies with regard to their

suppliers. In addition, the EU's Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive will require companies to expand and standardize their sustainability reporting from 2023. The principle of dual materiality applies: companies must report both on the impact of their own business on people and the environment and on the impact of sustainability aspects on the company (Schmiedeknecht & Ranisch, 2023).

In contrast, there are only recommendations and guidelines for the preparation and implementation of environmentally friendly sporting events. There are also no legal requirements and regulations for the sustainability of sporting events internationally. There are currently only explicit regulatory, legal requirements for sustainability at sporting events indirectly, via the obligation to submit a sustainability report for listed companies (Kleinschmidt, Bühler, & Nufer, 2023).

The purpose of the paper is to compare the self-images (ideal) of the mega sports events organizers FIFA and UEFA in their sustainability communication with the public perceptions (reality) of sustainability regarding the 2022 FIFA Soccer World Cup in Qatar and the 2024 UEFA European Championship in Germany.

This comparison reveals varying degrees of discrepancies between the two perspectives. The paper provides a balanced perspective, acknowledging both positive and negative aspects regarding both mega sports events. It offers recommendations for future events.

2. Principles of Sustainability Communication for Mega Sports Events

Sustainability communication characterizes a process of understanding in which the focus is on future-proof social development with the guiding principle of sustainability (Michelsen, 2007). In this process, communicators deal with the causes, arguments, alternatives for action and positions of sustainable development (Godemann & Michelsen, 2011).

Fischer (2019) distinguishes between sustainability communication in the “narrower” and “broader” sense. Sustainability communication in the narrow sense refers to the explicit thematization of sustainability, i.e. a direct discussion and active interpretation of the concept of sustainability. Sustainability communication in the broad sense also includes implicit thematization of sustainability. Although sustainability is not the focus of the communication, indirect references to central sustainability issues (e.g. climate change) are recognizable.

Dickel and Kronewald (2023) further differentiate between “communication of sustainability” and “communication about sustainability”. Communication about sustainability refers to processes in which information, interpretations and opinions on sustainability issues are exchanged and discussed. Communication can take place on many different levels, from interpersonal face-to-face interaction to mass communication. Communication of sustainability, on the other hand, is characterized by a rather one-sided sender-receiver communication in which the sender pursues a specific communication goal. The aim here is to inform and

educate decision-makers or the public about sustainability aspects or to achieve a certain level of sustainable commitment and action without a dialog taking place.

The theoretical foundation of sustainability management in sports including a detailed and up-to-date literature review can be found in [Bühler and Nufer \(2023\)](#).

In the following, the sustainability of the two mega sports events, the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and the 2024 European Soccer Championships in Germany, will be examined. Was it possible to deliver what the organizers had promised in advance? To what extent do their self-image and the public's perception of them match?

3. Analysis of the Sustainability of the 2022 FIFA Soccer World Cup in Qatar

In the run-up to the tournament, FIFA President Gianni Infantino promised that the 2022 World Cup in Qatar would be the best and most sustainable World Cup ever ([Nufer & Nufer, 2023](#)).

3.1. Self-Image of the Organizers

FIFA's vision is to use the power of soccer to open doors. This included showcasing Qatar's identity through the World Cup, connecting people through a shared celebration of soccer, intercultural understanding and new opportunities for growth and development. New benchmarks should be set in terms of long-term community use of the infrastructure, smooth operations and unparalleled services, which should have a positive impact on the organization of future World Cups and other major sporting events. In particular, the 2022 FIFA World Cup should create a sustainable and lasting legacy that contributes to both FIFA's vision and Qatar's national development goals. In other words, according to FIFA, sustainability was at the heart of the 2022 World Cup from the outset ([FIFA, 2020](#)).

In order to realize this vision, FIFA had developed a sustainability framework as the basis for its sustainability strategy for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. This sustainability framework comprised goals, commitments, material topics and strategic objectives, which are divided into five pillars (see [Figure 1](#)): Human, Social, Economic, Environmental and Governance. The framework pillars corresponded to the three dimensions of sustainability and the human, social, economic and environmental pillars of FIFA's National Vision 2030, with an additional pillar for governance ([FIFA, 2020](#); [FIFA, 2022](#)).

The five pillars of FIFA's sustainability strategy are presented below—divided into FIFA's overarching goals and its commitment to achieving these goals ([FIFA, 2020](#)).

3.1.1. Human

Goal: Develop human capital and protect workers' rights.

Commitment: FIFA commits to protect the rights and well-being of workers employed at the 2022 World Cup sites and to promote their rights in projects and supply chains directly related to the World Cup. The aim is to achieve world-class



Figure 1. The five pillars of FIFA's sustainability strategy for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Source: FIFA (2020): p. 20.

standards and practices for workers. FIFA also aims to use the unique platform of the 2022 World Cup to develop a skilled and motivated workforce and encourage young people across the region.

3.1.2. Social

Goal: Achieve an inclusive tournament experience.

Commitment: FIFA aims to make the 2022 World Cup an inclusive tournament experience that is welcoming, safe and accessible for all participants, visitors and communities in Qatar and around the world. In this way, a cultural understanding, infrastructure and services as well as relevant expertise will be left behind in the local population.

3.1.3. Economic

Goal: Catalyst for economic development.

Commitment: FIFA's ambition is to promote economic growth and diversification in Qatar and the region by linking local businesses to the value chains and innovation opportunities of the 2022 World Cup. It also aims to enable the tournament venues, along with the associated services and infrastructure, to host future events, attract new businesses and meet the needs of society.

3.1.4. Environmental

Goal: Provide world-class environmental solutions.

Commitment: FIFA is committed to hosting the 2022 World Cup in a fully carbon-neutral way and aims to set a benchmark for environmental responsibility by implementing leading standards for sustainable construction, waste and water management and low-emission solutions. This work will leave behind world-class environmental management expertise, technologies, companies and standards in Qatar and the region.

3.1.5. Governance

Goal: To set an example of good corporate governance and ethical business practices.

Commitment: FIFA takes responsibility for managing the impact of the 2022 World Cup through its own activities and those of its business relationships and value chains. FIFA creates a culture of compliance based on legal requirements and organizational guidelines and demonstrates transparency and accountability to its stakeholders in relation to its sustainability decisions and performance.

In its sustainability strategy, FIFA sets out in detail how it intends to address 20 material sustainability issues that it has prioritized and achieve its 22 defined strategic sustainability goals through a broad range of sustainability initiatives (FIFA, 2020).

3.2. External Image in the Public Perception

The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar was by far the most expensive tournament of all time. Qatar spent around 220 billion US dollars on the World Cup. Few words were used more frequently by the Qataris in their World Cup bid than “sustainability”. And after the award, FIFA also played its part in this promise. In the following, selected aspects will be used to critically examine whether these announcements could ultimately be kept (Nufer & Nufer, 2024).

3.2.1. Climate Neutrality

Qatar and FIFA declared the 2022 World Cup to be the first climate-neutral World Cup. This was to be achieved by fully offsetting all emissions through compensation projects. The event’s CO₂ emissions amounted to around 3.6 million tons, with 52% coming from travel to and from the event, 24% from new infrastructure and 20% from accommodation. Although domestic flights were not necessarily due to the short distances between the venues, numerous shuttle flights from neighboring countries were organized to compensate for the lack of accommodation in Qatar. In addition, stadiums had to be artificially cooled due to the high temperatures, which further called sustainability into question. Offsetting emissions through projects such as planting trees was criticized as ineffective, as the certificates came from a Qatari organization of questionable quality. In addition, the water consumption for watering the trees in a desert country is

problematic, as it has to be covered by energy-intensive desalination plants that produce environmentally harmful brine residues. Waste management during the World Cup involved recycling 60% of the waste and incinerating 40% to generate energy, with waste incineration releasing further greenhouse gases.

3.2.2. Human Rights

The human rights situation in Qatar is in stark contrast to Western standards. Women's rights are restricted by male guardianship, and LGBTQIA+ people are discriminated against. Over 6500 migrant workers have died since the start of the construction projects for the 2022 World Cup, many in inhumane conditions, without sufficient pay and in overcrowded accommodation. Freedom of expression and freedom of the press are severely restricted, which is reflected in Qatar's low ranking on the press freedom scale.

3.2.3. Stadiums and Infrastructure

The World Cup matches were played in eight stadiums, six of which were built especially for the tournament. These new buildings had a significant environmental impact due to the use and transportation of specialized materials. The prestige stadium 974 in Doha will be dismantled after the World Cup and rebuilt in Africa, causing further energy consumption and environmental impact. The future of the stadiums after the World Cup is still unclear, as soccer has not played a major role in Qatar to date and there is a risk that the stadiums will become "white elephants".

3.2.4. Energy Sources

Qatar has the best conditions for producing sustainable solar energy using solar panels. Nevertheless, Qatar largely relies on climate-damaging fossil fuels because oil and gas are available locally in abundance.

3.3. Conclusion: Sports Washing

Since the World Cup was awarded in 2010, Qatar has done a lot to make a name for itself in sport (Muschong, 2022): The 2015 World Handball Championships were held in Qatar, and in 2019 the World Athletics Championships were held in Doha. The calculation behind this is "sports washing" (Mittag, 2022): Qatar is trying to polish up the country's image through sports-washing. The appeal of sport is used to present the country in a positive light and to cover up undesirable developments in the country.

In Qatar, this development has been planned over several decades. The emirate began to realign its entire economic activities as early as the mid-1990s. From an orientation towards resources such as oil and gas deposits to increased tourism, conferences and sporting events. All that was missing was a particularly attention-grabbing global mega sporting event. This missing icing on the cake was the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Qatari athletes and teams play at best a minor role on the pitch. Against this backdrop, the wealthy country has already made purchases in Europe, particularly in

soccer. For example, Qatar bought the Belgian soccer club KAS Eupen. More well-known is Qatar's involvement in the top French club Paris St. Germain, where Qatari money has helped to sign world stars such as Neymar, Kylian Mbappé and Lionel Messi. Qatar has thus been shaping international soccer for years—but often plays a very controversial role. FC Bayern Munich also had close ties with Qatar—too close for many fans of the German record champions (Muschong, 2022). Qatar is thus contributing to the commercialization of sport and changing its values.

4. Analysis of the Sustainability of the 2024 European Soccer Championship in Germany

With the motto “United by Soccer—In the Heart of Europe”, UEFA and DFB focused on the social dimension of this mega sporting event. But there were also corresponding ambitions in the ecological and governance areas (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

4.1. Self-Image of the Organizers

UEFA's vision is for the tournament to become a role model for sustainable events in sport and a driving force for sustainable development in Germany and Europe. As part of this holistic approach, UEFA wants to help make UEFA EURO 2024 the most sustainable European Soccer Championship ever and, in cooperation with the DFB and the German authorities, become a role model for global events of this kind. The strategy comprises three pillars with eleven fields of action, which in turn are divided into 28 topics, 48 goals and 83 performance indicators (UEFA, 2023a).

The strategy focuses primarily on (UEFA, 2023a):

- Reducing the impact on the environment, for example in the area of waste management.
- Investing in a climate fund for projects to mitigate the unavoidable emissions associated with the tournament.
- Preventing and combating all forms of discrimination and ensuring that the rights of all people are respected and protected.
- Promoting physical activity and providing healthy food and drink options around the stadiums and venues.
- Promote solidarity in German and European society by intensifying support for grassroots soccer.
- Adoption of transparent, responsible and comprehensible conduct in the organization of the tournament.
- Sharing knowledge and best practices through continuous discussions with stakeholders.
- Innovate and collaborate with host cities, partners and other soccer stakeholders to leave a lasting legacy.

In a structured approach, the three ESG pillars (see **Figure 2**) Environment, Social and Governance are further broken down and form the basis for an action

plan, which is broken down into action areas, themes, objectives, activities and key performance indicators starting with the pillars (UEFA, 2023b).

All ESG pillars and fields of action contribute to achieving the sustainable development goals and are presented below (UEFA, 2023b).



Figure 2. Pillars and areas of action of UEFA's sustainability strategy for EURO 2024 in Germany. Source: UEFA (2023b): p. 5.

4.1.1. Environment

UEFA EURO 2024 will be organized to the highest sustainability standards. Environmental aspects are at the heart of the event organization. The organizers are aware that such a major event attracts participants and fans from all over the world and leaves a significant carbon footprint. They are therefore determined to keep the environmental impact as low as possible. They take responsibility for environmental protection, especially in the areas of climate protection and waste management, and recognize that this challenge can only be met by working together. In cooperation with all interest groups, they want to promote active action, invest in a special climate fund for German grassroots sport and raise environmental awareness among fans.

4.1.2. Social

UEFA EURO 2024 is about people and their shared passion. The tournament unites people of all ages and different backgrounds, nationalities and abilities. The organizers actively campaign against all forms of discrimination and ensure that the rights of all are respected. Diversity and inclusion will be celebrated at UEFA EURO 2024 and it will be ensured that all social groups and minorities can participate. Health and wellbeing are fundamental to sport and the tournament aims to promote healthier lifestyles and improved wellbeing through soccer activities for all ages. In addition, UEFA EURO 2024 aims to strengthen solidarity in German and European society by strengthening links with grassroots sport.

4.1.3. Governance

UEFA EURO 2024 acts transparently, responsibly and comprehensibly in all its activities. It involves the respective interest groups and discusses, among other things, risks in connection with sustainability aspects and human rights. As part of their good governance objectives, the organizers plan to organize the tournament in compliance with international human rights standards and conduct training on human rights and sustainability. The ongoing exchange of knowledge and

best practices through regular discussions with stakeholders will benefit civil society, institutions and the sports industry. Sustainability activities will be actively promoted through communication campaigns. Finally, the impact of the tournament will be assessed through an independent study.

4.2. External Image in the Public Perception

It is difficult to ascertain whether the commitment to sustainability on the part of UEFA, DFB and EURO 2024 GmbH was intrinsically motivated or a result of increasing pressure from stakeholders. The influence of previous mega sporting events that have implemented extensive sustainability goals and measures certainly also played a role in the extent of the commitment to EURO 2024 (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

4.2.1. Positive Aspects: Sustainable Successes

The motto “United by Soccer—In the Heart of Europe” was reflected in the communication about EURO 2024. This orientation, which emphasizes accessibility, inclusion and integration and actively combats racism and discrimination, came across as coherent and consistent (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

In contrast to Qatar, no new stadiums were built in Germany, which significantly reduced emissions and at the same time promoted the economic sustainability of the event. Germany largely relied on its existing infrastructure, which meant that there were no discussions about the long-term impact of new buildings. The most striking innovation was the “zoning”, i.e. the division of Germany into four areas in terms of the organization of the venues and team bases during the group phase. Training camps were no longer allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, but according to their distance from the venues, which shortened transportation routes and reduced emissions. Another environmentally friendly measure was the EMAS (Eco Management and Audit Scheme) certification of all stadiums. In addition, external stakeholders with expertise were involved in the implementation of the sustainability goals of EURO 2024 and the ten locations in advance, such as the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection and the Öko-Institut (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

The promise of a climate-neutral European Championship, which had been made at the World Cup in Qatar, was avoided by the organizers for the tournament in Germany. From an ecological point of view, every major sporting event places an additional burden on the climate. According to the Öko-Institut, around 70% of the CO₂ footprint was caused by emissions in the transport sector due to the arrival and departure of fans who came to Germany for EURO 2024 to watch the matches in the stadium or celebrate in the fan zones. Fans were encouraged to travel to the matches by train. The organizers wanted to achieve this with discounted train tickets: all fans in possession of a European Championship ticket could travel to the matches by train throughout Germany for €30, or €40 in first class. At the European Championship venues, local public transport could be used

free of charge around the match day with the stadium ticket. At the same time, the number of parking spaces at the stadiums was limited during the European Championships and the available parking tickets were expensively priced. Of the €24 parking fee per match day, €5 went to the European Championship Climate Fund. In Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Leipzig, the stadium parking lots remained completely closed. UEFA paid €25 per ton of CO₂ into the European Championship Climate Fund to compensate for the emissions that remained in the carbon footprint—a total of around €7 million, which will be distributed to climate protection projects in amateur clubs in Germany. More than 4000 clubs applied to use the money from the UEFA fund to implement sustainable projects (Mixa, Rieger, & Lerche, 2024; N.A., 2024).

A large number of smaller measures were implemented in the European Championship cities to promote the idea of sustainability (e.g. bicycle workshops, drinking water fountains or campaigns against food waste). In the fan zones, there was space for educational offers and inclusive projects that could be presented to the fans. Social sustainability was also ensured by the art and culture program that took place during the European Championships with numerous projects. The federal government supported a total of 60 individual projects in the municipalities, not just at the European Championship venues. The federal government's support program also included a Volunteer Academy. There, the 16,000 volunteers at the European Championships laid the foundations for further commitment with special offers and were able to gain further training and qualifications (N.A., 2024; Mixa, Rieger, & Lerche, 2024).

4.2.2. Negative Aspects: Need for Optimization

EURO 2024 GmbH, DFB and the host cities followed the guidelines of the UEFA sustainability goals and thus complied with the ISO 2012:2012 standard and the United Nations' sustainable development goals. This foundation gives their goals a solid basis. However, the communicative structure of EURO 2024 was in need of optimization: While the organizer communicated concrete criteria or dimensions, the host cities did not adopt these identically, but instead oriented themselves on the basic structure of the triple bottom line (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

The selection of locations was mainly based on the criterion of net seating capacity, which meant that the accessibility of the seats was neglected and the area of sustainability was only given a below-average weighting in the criteria mix. In addition, according to UEFA's own information, EURO 2024 employees traveled over 30,000 km in Germany to compile the list of hotels and training facilities. In view of the comparatively small area of Germany and the digital age, the question arises as to whether there were alternative ways of obtaining this information in a more sustainable manner (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

However, the main focus of criticism was the mobility of fans. Doubts were raised in advance as to whether the notoriously unreliable Deutsche Bahn, with its dilapidated infrastructure, was sufficiently well positioned to transport tens of

thousands of fans on a match day. After all, there were considerable differences in the implementation of the local transport concepts at the individual locations—and thus also in the possible need to catch up. In six of the ten European Championship cities, it was generally possible to travel by car and park directly at the stadium. A general ban on cars in the vicinity of the stadium would have been expedient. The demand that there should be no short-haul flights during the European Championships was also not heard (Gielisch, 2024). The exchange between the organizing GmbH and the DFB with critical environmental protection groups during the tournament was defensive and rather undesirable (Fischer, 2024a). The organizers wanted to form so-called “regional clusters” when designing the match schedule in order to minimize fans’ travel distances, at least in the preliminary round. This promise was only partially kept, with France, for example, playing its group matches in Düsseldorf, Leipzig and Dortmund. Austrian fans also commuted between Berlin and Düsseldorf (Mixa, Rieger, & Lerche, 2024).

While the ecological measures were already formulated very comprehensively and purposefully in advance, the social measures were highlighted prominently but were less detailed (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023). Many targets were not specific enough. There were often no clear indicators as to when a target had been achieved. In addition, there was a failure to make exemplary measures for individual stadiums standard. For example, Werder Bremen bans cars in the vicinity of the Weser Stadium at its Bundesliga matches (Fischer, 2024b).

4.3. Interim Conclusion: Increased Sustainability Awareness and Necessary Increase in Ambition

On the one hand, the planning of the EURO 2024 sustainability commitment showed numerous promising approaches. On the other hand, it also became clear that not all stakeholders approached the topic of sustainability with the same consistency during implementation. The planning took into account the high sustainability requirements to a large extent, but a more or less large discrepancy arose during implementation. It should be noted that UEFA did not impose any sanctions for breaches of the criteria, which raises the question of the extent to which the venues and organizers may have lacked an incentive to implement the communicated measures. Furthermore, transparent communication should create an inclusive process. This should be an approach that is also suitable for other stakeholders to monitor sustainability commitment. In addition, spectators in particular, but also the media and sponsors, could exert pressure to hold the EURO 2024 organizers accountable if they neglected sustainability measures (Pfeffel, Ratz, & Kühner, 2023).

As an interim conclusion, there are high hopes that UEFA EURO 2024 will contribute to bringing not only sporting enthusiasm but also a lasting, increased awareness of sustainability to Germany and the ten host cities. Whether these ambitions will actually be achieved in the long term remains to be seen, i.e. can only be conclusively evaluated at a later date.

In terms of policy, the focus is on ensuring that major sporting events continuously improve in terms of sustainability. Sustainability standards are developing rapidly. This requires a constant increase in ambition (Hornung, 2024).

5. Implications

In view of the enormous size of mega sporting events, the question arises as to whether such events can be made sustainable at all. A study by the University of Lausanne on the sustainability of the Olympic Games between 1992 and 2020 came to the conclusion that the overall sustainability of the Games can be rated as mediocre and has continued to decline over time (Beuthner, 2022). A similar trend applies to tournaments such as soccer World Cups or European Championships. The focus on profit creates incentives to make these competitions bigger and bigger. And the bigger these events become, the more destructive they are for the environment, the economy and society.

A future sustainable organization of such mega sports events therefore seems unrealistic. In order for such events to become sustainable, they would have to become smaller—and that contradicts the event organizers' goal of making a profit (Faix, 2022). If organizers really want to take the issue of sustainability seriously, there is no way around downsizing events in the future. However, FIFA and UEFA are taking the exact opposite approach: while the 2022 World Cup was held with 32 participants (and 64 matches), the next World Cup in 2026 in the USA, Canada and Mexico will feature 48 nations and significantly more matches. The same applies to the European Championship tournaments, which have been successively expanded over time from 4 participating nations to 8 and 16 and now 24 nations. Such bloating is counterproductive from a climate protection perspective.

A step in the right direction would be to give the issue of sustainability a greater role when awarding mega sporting events in the future. Sustainability standards must become central award criteria.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, the self-images of the organizers FIFA and UEFA (target) in their sustainability communication and the external images in public perception (actual) with regard to the sustainability of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar and the 2024 European Soccer Championship in Germany were compared. This comparison leads to discrepancies of varying degrees.

In 2022, Qatar tried to polish up the country's image through sports washing. In other words, the sustainability goals formulated for the World Cup, which were ultimately largely not achieved, were a means to an end.

In Germany in 2024, the ambitions regarding sustainability were set much higher. This made sense, as it is the only way to achieve a lasting, heightened awareness of sustainability among all stakeholders in the long term.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- Beuthner, M. (2022). *Kann Katar sein Klimaversprechen halten?* <https://www.mdr.de/wissen/fussball-weltmeisterschaft-katar-klimaneutralitaet-fifa-100.html>
- Bühler, A., & Nufer, G. (2023). *Nachhaltigkeitsmanagement in Sport und Kultur. Grundlagen-Anwendungen-Praxisbeispiele*. Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23664-0>
- Dickel, P., & Kronewald, E. (2023). Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation. In A. Bühler, & G. Nufer (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitsmanagement in Sport und Kultur. Grundlagen-Anwendungen-Praxisbeispiele* (pp. 243-265). Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23664-0.11>
- Faix, A. (2022). *Kann Katar sein Klimaversprechen halten?* <https://www.mdr.de/wissen/fussball-weltmeisterschaft-katar-klimaneutralitaet-fifa-100.html>
- FIFA (2020). *FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Sustainability Strategy*. <https://digitalhub.fifa.com/m/5adbe651c67c78a3/original/o2zbd8acyiooxyn0dwuk-pdf.pdf>
- FIFA (2022). *Nachhaltigkeit*. <https://www.fifa.com/de/social-impact/sustainability>
- Fischer, D. (2019). Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation. In E. Zemanek, & U. Kluwick (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeit interdisziplinär-Konzepte, Diskurse, Praktiken* (pp. 51-69). UTB Verlag.
- Fischer, T. (2024a). *Die Fußball-EM und das Versprechen für Nachhaltigkeit*. <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/faq-nachhaltigkeit-euro-100.html>
- Fischer, T. (2024b). *Grünes Versprechen: So nachhaltig wird die Herren-EM 2024*. https://www.haufe.de/sustainability/debatte/nachhaltigkeit-im-sport/fussball-em-2024_575768_624752.html
- Gielisch, I. (2024). *Die seltsame deutsche Rechnung von der bisher nachhaltigsten EM*. https://www.focus.de/earth/analyse/die-uefa-euro-2024-soll-die-nachhaltigste-em-aller-zeiten-sein-was-steckt-dahinter_id_260034748.html
- Godemann, J., & Michelsen, G. (2011). Sustainability Communication—An Introduction. In J. Godemann, & G. Michelsen (Eds.), *Sustainability Communication: Interdisciplinary Perspectives and Theoretical Foundation* (pp. 3-11). Springer Verlag. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-1697-1_1
- Hornung, S. (2024). *Grünes Versprechen: So nachhaltig wird die Herren-EM 2024*. https://www.haufe.de/sustainability/debatte/nachhaltigkeit-im-sport/fussball-em-2024_575768_624752.html
- Kleinschmidt, J., Bühler, A., & Nufer, G. (2023). Nachhaltige Herausforderungen im Sport- und Kulturbereich. In A. Bühler, & G. Nufer (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitsmanagement in Sport und Kultur. Grundlagen-Anwendungen-Praxisbeispiele* (pp. 269-290). Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23664-0.12>
- Michelsen, G. (2007). Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation: Verständnis-Entwicklung-Perspektiven. In G. Michelsen, & J. Godemann (Eds.), *Handbuch Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation: Grundlagen und Praxis* (pp. 25-41). Oekom Verlag.
- Mittag, J. (2022). *Personen aus Katar sitzen an zentralen Schaltstellen*. https://www.t-online.de/sport/fussball/wm/id_100061302/wm-2022-in-katar-sportwashing-mit-geld-und-geschick-die-macht-erkauft.html
- Mixa, C., Rieger, M., & Lerche, S. (2024). *Die Fußball-EM und das Versprechen für Nachhaltigkeit*. <https://www.deutschlandfunk.de/faq-nachhaltigkeit-euro-100.html>
- Muschong, M. (2022). *Personen aus Katar sitzen an zentralen Schaltstellen*.

https://www.t-online.de/sport/fussball/wm/id_100061302/wm-2022-in-katar-sportwashing-mit-geld-und-geschick-die-macht-erkauft.html

- N.A. (2024). *EURO 2024: Wie viel Nachhaltigkeit steckt in der Fußball-EM?* <https://www.enbw.com/blog/wohnen/energie-sparen/euro-2024-wie-viel-nachhaltigkeit-steckt-in-der-fussball-em>
- Nufer, G., & Nufer, G. (2023). Fallstudie FIFA Fußball-Weltmeisterschaft 2022 in Katar. In A. Bühler, & G. Nufer (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitsmanagement in Sport und Kultur. Grundlagen-Anwendungen-Praxisbeispiele* (pp. 377-393). Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23664-0.18>
- Nufer, G., & Nufer, I. (2024). The Case of the Soccer World Cup 2022 in Qatar and Sustainability: Comparison of FIFA's Plan (Target) and Public Perception (Actual). *International Journal of Business and Applied Social Science*, 10, 29-35. <https://doi.org/10.33642/ijbass.v10n1p3>
- Pffeffel, F., Ratz, M., & Kühner, C. (2023). Nachhaltigkeit von Sportgroßevents-Anspruch und Planung der EURO 2024. In T. T. Bezold, & F. Pffeffel (Eds.), *Die UEFA EURO 2024 aus sportökonomischer Perspektive. Management, Organisation und Wirkung einer Sportgroßveranstaltung* (pp. 337-362). Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23714-2.16>
- Schmiedeknecht, M. H., & Ranisch, L. (2023). Grundlagen und Instrumente des Nachhaltigkeitsmanagements. In A. Bühler, & G. Nufer (Eds.), *Nachhaltigkeitsmanagement in Sport und Kultur. Grundlagen-Anwendungen-Praxisbeispiele* (pp. 23-47). Erich Schmidt Verlag. <https://doi.org/10.37307/b.978-3-503-23664-0.02>
- UEFA (2023a). *UEFA EURO 2024 mit neuen Maßstäben in den Bereichen Umwelt, Soziales und Governance*. <https://de.uefa.com/euro2024/news/0283-1883272bf5bb-811859c44194-1000--uefa-euro-2024-mit-neuen-massstaben-in-den-bereichen-umwel>
- UEFA (2023b). *ESG Strategy*. https://editorial.uefa.com/resources/0283-187d07f19a7c-cf029e488faa-1000/uefa_euro_2024_esg_strategy.pdf