



# TACKLE



## Good practice identified during action A1

**Number/code:** OM/E15

**Title:** ENGAGE FANS IN WASTE COLLECTION OPERATIONS

**Guidelines section:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Operational management
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Context of the event</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Event</i>
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Stadium management</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Procurement</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Mobility and logistics</i>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Description**

1)The White Sox “Hit for the Cycle” Recycle program utilizes fans to assist in collecting as many plastic cups as possible. In addition to the collection of cups during a bowl sweep by a crew of stadium workers, fans are challenged to collect plastic cups from the seating area. Cups are brought to a designated area where they are exchanged for tickets which can be redeemed for prizes. The program uses public announcements to advertise to fans over the big screen, and players encourage patrons to “Pitch In” while explaining the program. U.S. Cellular Field estimates an over 50% recovery rate of plastic cups and bottles.

2) Since 2015, the National Hockey League and its Clubs have engaged fans during Green Week in March. This week shines a spotlight on the impactful environmental work the Clubs are doing at their arenas and in the community. The League is continuing to develop ways to engage fans on sustainability through the help of the Clubs and athletes as it expands Green Week to Green Month in 2018. During the 2018 NHL Green Month teams activated in a variety of ways. The Detroit Redwings worked with their local energy partner to purchase renewable energy for all their home games during Green Month. The Florida Panthers hold a Panther Conservation Night during Green Month to raise awareness about the team’s namesake.

3) The Green Sports Alliance drafted a guide to developing marketing campaigns that influence fans to increase sustainability-related behaviors at home, work and play. They presented a series of case studies, such as CU Athletics of the University of Colorado<sup>11</sup>, that is increasing its leadership in sports sustainability through several new programs encouraging environmentally friendly behaviors among fans. One of these programs involves PepsiCo and its “Bring Your Bottle Back to Life” campaign, which aims at engaging fans in recycling plastic bottles and cans and features CU-Boulder apparel made from recycled plastic fibers. The t-shirts are tossed into the stands after every Buffs touchdown during football games and every Buffs three-pointer during basketball games. A

<sup>11</sup> <https://greensportsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FanEngagementPlaybook2018-06-27FINAL.pdf> (pp. 37-38)

video also plays during every game encouraging fans to recycle their plastic bottles and telling them about the “Bring Your Bottle Back to Life” program.

It was recognized that fans are more inclined to recycle at games and in their daily lives if they can clearly see the results<sup>2</sup>. Instead of simply telling fans what was recyclable and where to recycle, Pepsi and the Buffs wanted to show that by recycling, new life could be given to materials. Their goal was not only to increase recycling rates, but to create a connection in fans’ minds between the act of recycling and the result of recycling.

### **Environmental benefits**

The environmental benefits of this practice are diverse although difficult to measure. The most immediate benefit relates to fans environmental awareness raising that triggers their behaviour change also in their private lives. Another environmental benefit relates to the actual improvement of waste recycling, particularly of plastic bottles and cans.

For example, throughout the 6 years of the campaign “Bring Your Bottle Back to Life” during football and basketball seasons, the total amount of bottles and cans recycled in stadium increased year-over-year. In football, the total diversion rate for Folsom Field has gone from 72.2% in 2011 to 89% in 2016. In basketball, the average game-day diversion rate for Coors Event Center has gone from 60.5% in the 2011/12 season to 83% in the 2016/17 season.

Fan engagement for sustainability activities like this campaign are useful in influencing new “users” of the behavior (those who generally don’t recycle), but in general in order to be effective, in-game sponsored promotional sustainability initiatives need to actively engage fans and be consistently present throughout the season to be noticed and remembered and have therefore a long-term effect.

### **An example from the pilot test performed at the Roi Baudouin Stadium in Brussels (Belgium): incentivizing fans to collect single-use plastic cups in exchange for a free beverage.**

In this pilot test that took place during the game Belgium-Cyprus on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the stadium offered a free beer worth €2.5 for every ten single-use plastic cups collected by fans and returned at the bar. Through this pilot, 674 beers were given for free thanks to the stakeholder Bevers & Bevers who offered them. This was a great incentive for fans to get engaged and take part of the plastics recycling operations at the stadium. In economic terms, the involvement of a stakeholder was very important; the company’s effort was paid-off thanks to acquired visibility and good public reputation.

Fans showed motivation and willingness to take their single-use plastic cups and glasses back to the bar. Even if this was a one-time practice, which was intended to be then replaced by the practice on reusable cups (see OM/E18), this pilot test obtained good results in terms of environmental impact: it ended with 6740 single-use cups collected through the temporary scheme, which equals 24.2 kg of single-use plastics sent to an appropriate treatment facility. In particular, this translated into the following CO<sub>2</sub>eq savings due to the diversion of these polypropylene cups from incineration to recycling:

AMOUNT DIVERTED	EMMISSION SAVED BY AVOIDING INCINERATION	EMISSION LOST BY AVOIDING INCINERATION	EMISSION SAVED BY RECYCLING	TOTAL
24.2 kg	72.2 kgCO <sub>2</sub> eq	2.83 kgCO <sub>2</sub> eq	74.1 kgCO <sub>2</sub> eq	143.44 kgCO <sub>2</sub> eq

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.colorado.edu/today/2015/09/08/cu-athletics-expands-sports-sustainability-programs>

### **Economic benefits**

The recycling campaign that involves fans allows to reduce costs related to the collection and disposal of waste, but these costs are hard to quantify and depend on different factors.

### **Applicability and replicability potential**

The practice can be easily replicated in every stadium.

### **Source**

UEFA - Playing for Our Planet (p.52)

EPA - A Guide to Recycling at Sports Venues

Green Sports Alliance – Fans Engagement