



Diary notice: 8.5.2023

## FOOTBALL'S 'OLYMPIC TORCH' VISITS MALAYSIA

From May 8 until May 15, "The Ball," Football's Olympic Torch, will be in Malaysia. The Ball is making its way around the globe from Battersea Park in London, where the first official football match was played, to Eden Park in Auckland, New Zealand, where the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup will begin on July 20, 2023.



As The Ball makes its way around the globe, it collects signatures from people who promise to support efforts to achieve gender equality and climate action. The Ball has been signed by almost 56,000 individuals worldwide since 2002. Over 30 events and workshops that promoted action on gender equality and climate change among football aficionados were put on by 57 partner groups between 2022 and 2023.

### The Ball in Malaysia

On **May 11 and 12**, The Ball and the Spirit of Football team will share their education methods on fair play, gender equality and sustainability with students at the **MAHSA University** in Kuala Lumpur. To get deeper into the topic of climate action and sustainability, the **Malaysian Youth Delegation** and **Zero Waste Malaysia** will give an input during the workshop and a representative from **German football club BVB Dortmund** will talk about their clubs sustainability strategy.

On **May 14**, the Spirit of Football team will join **Hara Makers** for a plastic upcycling session, assisting to make plastic panels from discarded single-use plastic.

On the other days, The Ball continues to meet people from different parts of the world and to collect signatures and pledges.



## Next steps

After Malaysia, The Ball will head to Jakarta and Bali, before leading workshops in Fiji and Kiribati and then moving to New Zealand and Australia for the FIFA Women's World Cup.

## Prominent Supporters

The first person to sign The Ball on its 12-month global climate action and advocacy mission was **Katie Rood**, the professional footballer who plays for Hearts FC and the New Zealand National Team had this to say: *"Everyone loves the World Cup, but if we are to be able to continue playing it in the future, we need collective and urgent climate action. The journey of The Ball across land and sea from London to New Zealand is an opportunity for football to get its environmental act in order. I am going to take action. Are you?"*

Spirit of Football's Ambassador and Liverpool F.C. manager **Jürgen Klopp** is also supporting The Ball: *"It is a ball for us all. Be part of our team. Everyone can play. Respect your teammates, your opponents and the environment. One Ball, One World."*

Do you want to be involved in the project? Follow The Ball's journey and [make your own pledge](#). To find out more about the non-profit organization Spirit of Football: <https://linktr.ee/spiritoffootball>



## Background Information

Supported by the **FIFA Foundation** and the **Swedish Postcode Foundation**, Spirit of Football developed and tested educational resources with our partners **Pledgeball** and **Football for Future** focusing on sustainability and football from March to December 2022. We have been using these resources running workshops in several countries and are rolling them out on a **gender equality, sustainability and climate action** tour with The Ball in 2023.

The Ball is being carried (and kicked) by a team of educators from Spirit of Football and our non-profit gender equality partner **Equal Playing Field** in collaboration with our football for good network partner **Common Goal**. Together we will deliver workshops and run an advocacy campaign that begins in Vietnam (March), makes its way across South East Asia (March to May) and into the Pacific (June), eventually reaching New Zealand (July) and Australia (August) in time for the 2023 FIFA World Cup. We are the official sustainability partner of **Festival 23** - the youth festival being organised by **Football United** (and Common Goal) in Sydney in August 2023.

People we meet are being asked to make personal **pledges in terms of gender equality and also for our planet** (sustainability). We are connecting to like-minded partners around the world and en route through Asia and into the Pacific to learn from them and to highlight their work at the same time.

The Ball was presented in cooperation with the United Nations **UNFCCC at COP 27** in Egypt last November: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LRHtxL5wzjl>

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