

Brazil promises 'greenest World Cup'

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Inside view of the Beira Rio stadium in Porto Alegre, Brazil, pictured on January 31, 2014

Brazil announced a package of pollution-cutting measures aimed at making this year's World Cup more environmentally friendly, ranging from an emissions-trading scheme to a "green passport" smart-phone application.

"We want to score green goals," Environment Minister Izabella Teixeira said at a press conference on Tuesday, announcing the initiative.

The World Cup and other major sports events generally leave giant carbon footprints.

Building stadiums and infrastructure, flying in teams and fans, and hosting the games themselves all emit large amounts of Earth-warming [greenhouse gases](#) such as CO₂.

Teixeira said this year's World Cup, which runs from June 12 to July 13, is expected to directly add 59,000 tonnes of carbon to the atmosphere.

When indirect emissions linked to the tournament are included, the total rises to 1.4 million tonnes—just under half the footprint attributed to the London Olympics in 2012.

The government has launched a program to offset that pollution by asking companies to give carbon credits in exchange for the right to advertise themselves as official "green seal" World Cup sponsors.

The government has already offset 115,000 tonnes of emissions through such donations of carbon credits—a tradable permit to emit a certain amount of greenhouse gases.

"The Cup will open having offset 100 percent of its direct emissions," said Teixeira, vowing to continue working for "the greatest possible mitigation" of tournament-related CO₂ before the end of the year.

Together with the United Nations Environment Program, the government also launched a project called "green passport" to encourage football fans to practice environmentally sustainable tourism.

About 600,000 foreigners and 3.1 million Brazilian tourists are expected to descend on the 12 host cities.

Anticipating that many will want to explore the country between matches, the project proposes environmentally friendly travel itineraries from each host city, complete with a cell phone app.

Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bundchen is the project's official spokeswoman.

Teixeira said this World Cup is the first where all host stadiums will have LEED certification—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a sustainability seal of approval.

Other programs announced Tuesday aim to train garbage collectors on recycling and set up stalls to sell locally produced organic food in host cities.

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