

Climate Shift: Why Women's Sports and Climate Change Are Inseparable

When we think of sports, we think of teamwork, passion, and pride. When we think of climate change, we think of wildfires, floods, and rising temperatures. But increasingly, the two forces of sport and climate are colliding. It is felt every time discussions arise over the construction of new Olympic venues or when competitions are postponed due to extreme heat/rain/cold [insert phenomena here]. And nowhere is that collision more inspiring and more overlooked than in women's sports.

Women Athletes Are Already on the Front Lines

From marathon runners training through wildfire smoke to soccer players facing extreme heat on turf fields, female athletes, especially those in grassroots or underfunded programs, are navigating climate risks daily. Many women's teams don't have access to modern, state-of-the-art facilities, meaning they are directly exposed to poor environmental conditions. For women's teams throughout the world, climate change isn't an arguable issue. It's a daily reality.

Underfunded and Overexposed

Despite exponentially increasing viewership and cultural relevance, women's sports continue to receive less institutional support. That includes infrastructure such as stadiums, transportation, and equipment that would allow them to adapt to climate pressures. Without the backing major men's leagues receive, women's teams must be more agile, more local, and more innovative in how they respond to environmental change. This lack of support makes them vulnerable, but it also makes them models of resilience and adaptation.

Sports Can Mobilize Climate Action

Women's sports have long been agents of social change, from the fight for equal pay to the fight for LGBTQIA+ inclusion. Now, they're uniquely positioned to lead the charge on climate justice. Why? Because fans of women's sports are already community-minded, socially conscious, and willing to support change. By integrating sustainability into team culture, merchandise, and messaging, women's sports can push climate action from the sidelines to center court.

Equity Is Environmental

Climate change disproportionately affects marginalized communities, such as women, BIPOC populations, and LGBTQIA+ individuals. These are also the communities represented in and supported by women's sports. For the Seattle Sports Equity Coalition (SSEC), fighting for equity in athletics must include fighting for climate stability. It's all one issue.

Local Weather, Global Message

Seattle's weather is changing. So is its sports scene. With the Seattle Freeze joining the Reign

and Storm under the Seattle sports umbrella, the SSEC has an unprecedented opportunity: to link climate and gender justice in one unified vision. Not only for a better game but for a better planet.

Let's make this season count—not just on the scoreboard, but in the world we all share.

Want to join the movement? Visit our website to learn more.