



Grass Not Plastic

We have a problem with synthetic grass made from plastics, contributing to urban heat, adding to microplastics pollution, adding greenhouse gas emissions exacerbating the climate crisis. We need to stop using Fake Grass on sports fields and in our schools.

Synthetic Turf by the numbers

200kg CO2e emissions per square metre for synthetic turf per 7-10 years. This equals **1505 tonnes CO2e one average pitch of 106x71m = 7526m2**, (Report for FIFA, 2017)

38,000 trees to plant and need to survive - to mitigate one average synthetic soccer pitch at 0.039 tonne CO2e carbon sequestration per tree (Meil & Bushi, 2006).

274 tonnes landfill waste – one synthetic soccer pitch at end of life every 7-10 years breaking down into microplastics, nanoplastics, generating greenhouse gas emissions. (Report for FIFA 2017)

Zero - the number of synthetic turf pitches recycled in Australia. Synthetic turf ends as waste to landfill, although a small proportion repurposed before ending as landfill.

60.4 degrees Celsius - surface temperature of Clifton Park synthetic turf on a warm 32C day, when the grass nearby measured 30.9C. (Englart, 3 November 2020)

84.5C measured in Sydney (Pfautsch et al Aug 2022).

16% increase in lower extremity injuries per play on synthetic turf than that on natural turf by elite players based on five years of USA NFL player injury data. (Mack et al 2019)

1-4% Infill loss from synthetic soccer pitch every year = 2.5 to 10 tonnes per year microplastics pollution. (Report for FIFA 2017, Eadie 2021, Boyle et al 2020, Khalid et al 2020)

Fibre loss of 50 kilograms to over 1 metric ton per year from an average pitch (Bertling et al Oct 2021)

5% microplastic content in soil - impacts native grass growth and survival.(Van Kleunan et al 2019)

“Significant reduction” - impact on birdlife abundance in parks affected by remodelling works that included artificial surfaces while in those non-remodelled it remained stable, according to a 2020 Spanish study (Bernat-Ponce et al 2020)

Sustainable sports fields are natural turf

Natural turf surfaces can be built for weekly sports usage capacity up to 35-40 hours at a third of the cost, which also includes water conservation and drought resilience (Battam & Lambie 2020). Maribyrnong Council upgraded Skinner Reserve in Braybrook for the Western Bulldogs to use for training with a natural turf reconstruction for up to 35 hours per week player usage capacity.



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