

Players open Letter to FIFA on Heat Stress and Player Welfare

We write as current and former professional players.

Many of us have experienced heat impacting our sport. It can make you feel light-headed, dizzy, experience fatigue, muscle cramps and worse. You can run less and it becomes impossible to play with the same intensity as with more average temperatures. With the ever busier football calendar, physical and mental fatigue are already impacting many players. The heat made worse by the climate crisis adds an extra layer of challenge.

We find it important that all players are protected from heat impacts, from the grassroots to the elite level. As the elite playing the World Cup sets the example for players around the world, it's essential that the best available medical expertise is put to practice.

We share the concerns outlined by the medical professionals and support their demand that FIFA updates its heat-stress framework before the World Cup.

This should go along with consistent climate action, since it would be a missed opportunity if a sport so impacted by the climate crisis doesn't take its responsibility in addressing it. We know the power that professional football can have if it chooses to do the right thing, from tackling racism to the fight for gender equality and broader inclusion. We therefore support previous calls by players for FIFA to drop fossil fuel sponsors and take serious climate action to reduce its climate impact, including a smaller, more regional football calendar. This has the added benefit of also lowering the impact on already overburdened players.

We look forward to hearing from you on this.

Yours sincerely,

Signed:

David Wheeler, United Kingdom, formerly Exeter City, Queens Park Rangers, Wycombe Wanderers and others

Elena Linari, Italy, London City Lionesses, 120 caps for the Italian national team

Morten Thorsby, Norway, Cremonese, 29 caps for the Norwegian national team

Chuba Akpom, United Kingdom, Ipswich Town

Christian Burgess, United Kingdom, Union Saint-Gilloise

Sofie Junge Pedersen, Denmark, FC Badalona, 89 caps for the Danish national team

Anis Mehmeti, Albania, Ipswich Town, 4 caps for the Albanian national team

Lucia Di Guglielmo, Italy, Washington Spirit, 40 caps for the Italian national team

Nedum Onuoha, United Kingdom, formerly Manchester City, Sunderland, QPR, Real Salt Lake, 25 caps for the U21 English national team

Chloe Gorman, United States, formerly Vermont Green, Aalborg Bk, Estoril Praia, Ho Chi Minh City, FC Mulhouse, 5 caps for the USA national team

Massimo Luongo, Australia, Millwall, 45 caps for the Australian national team

Nabi Kibunguchy, Kenya / United States, Hougang United, 1 cap for the Kenyan national team

Tjay de Barr, Gibraltar, Lincoln Red Imps, 60 caps for the Gibraltar national team

Franco Ravizzoli, Argentina, Blackpool FC

Nick Freeman, United Kingdom, Shrewsbury Town

Matthäus Taferner, Austria, WSG Tirol, 11 caps for the U21 Austrian national team

Justen Glad, United States, Real Salt Lake

Funso King Ojo, Belgium, Port Vale

Pat Baldwin, United Kingdom, formerly Chelsea, Colchester United and others

Jack Wakely, United Kingdom, formerly Chelsea, Wycombe, Ebbsfleet and others

Carly Wetzell, United States, FFC Hof

Dominic Gape, United Kingdom, Colchester United

Beryly Lubala, United Kingdom, Stevenage Football Club

Tiffany Sornpao, United States / Thailand, Vitória SC, 29 caps for the Thailand national team

Colm Horgan, Ireland, Galway United

Matthew Pennington, United Kingdom, Bradford City AFC

Jordan Rhodes, United Kingdom, formerly Blackburn Rovers, Huddersfield Town, Sheffield Wednesday and others, 15 caps for the Scottish national team

Alex Hartridge, United Kingdom, Burton Albion

Luca Hoole, Wales, Shrewsbury Town

Katie Rood, New Zealand, formerly Juventus, Bristol City, Lewes FC, Southampton, Heart of Midlothian and others, 15 caps for the New Zealand national team

Winonah Heatley, Australia, AS Roma, 20 caps for the Australian national team

Russell Martin, United Kingdom, formerly Wycombe Wanderers, Peterborough United, Norwich City and others, 29 caps for the Scottish national team

Maya Antoine, Canada, AS Roma

Jasper Pattenden, United Kingdom, Stevenage Football Club

Matt Bloomfield, United Kingdom, Oxford United

Jack Grimmer, United Kingdom, Wycombe Wanderers

Matt Butcher, United Kingdom, Salford City

Nathan Thompson, United Kingdom, formerly Swindon, Portsmouth, Peterborough, Stevenage, MK Dons

Bobby Olejnik, Austria, formerly Exeter City, Aston Villa, Mansfield Town, Torquay United, Falkirk, Peterborough United and others, 21 caps for Austrian youth teams

Paul Tisdale, United Kingdom, formerly Southampton, Exeter City and others

Max Stryjek, Poland, Kilmarnock

Jordan Houghton, United Kingdom, Stevenage Football Club

Matthew Ingram, United Kingdom, Oxford United

Robbie Simpson, United Kingdom, formerly Cambridge Utd, Coventry City, Oldham Athletic, Brentford, Exeter City, MK Dons and others

Jack Young, United Kingdom, Worthing

Jimmy Keohane, Ireland, Galway United

Joel Grant, United Kingdom / Jamaica, Watford, Crewe Alexandra, Wycombe Wanderers, Yeovil Town, Exeter Town, Plymouth Argyle, Swindon Town and others, 14 caps for the Jamaica national team

Josh Scowen, United Kingdom, Wycombe Wanderers

Danny Rose, United Kingdom, Salford City

Lloyd James, United Kingdom, Yate Town

Matt Oakley, United Kingdom, formerly Southampton, Leicester City, Derby County and others, 3 caps for the England U21 national team

Adam Reach, United Kingdom, Lincoln City Football Club

Malachi Linton, United Kingdom, AFC Totton

James Hamon, United Kingdom, Torquay United

Kieran Sadlier, United Kingdom / Ireland, Sporting Club Jacksonville

Pierce Sweeney, Ireland, Exeter City

Matthew Clarke, United Kingdom, Derby County

Kane Vincent-Young, United Kingdom / Grenada, Colchester United, 8 caps for the Grenada national team

Craig Woodnam, United Kingdom, formerly Bristol City, Wycombe Wanderers, Exeter City and others

Brandon Hanlan, United Kingdom, Doncaster Rovers