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Press Release

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**ABN AMRO and Renewaball campaign to take the pollution out of tennis***World’s first circular tennis ball can cut carbon emissions in the Netherlands by 970,200 kilos a year*

 **As the main sponsor of the ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament (WTT), ABN AMRO is taking another major step this year towards making tennis a more sustainable sport. Nearly 5.5 million tennis balls are used in the Netherlands every year. And 97 percent of these end up in the dustbin, incinerators or – in a roundabout way – in nature. Not giving used tennis balls a second lease of life has a huge environmental impact. According to a life cycle assessment carried out by** [**Ecochain**](https://ecochain.com/story/renewaball-the-first-circular-tennis-ball/) **for ABN AMRO and Renewaball, a single tennis ball generates 0.58 kilos of carbon emissions. This means that collectively all the tennis balls used each year in the Netherlands are equivalent to 18,833 people who fly from Amsterdam to Barcelona. That has to change, and ABN AMRO is taking action by supporting the world’s first circular tennis ball – the Renewaball.**

Tennis is the third most popular sport in the Netherlands, played on a regular basis by over one million people. The sport has actually grown over the past year, despite the pandemic. Few players are aware, though, that tennis is harmful to the environment. Ordinary tennis balls are responsible for over 3.2 million kilos of carbon emissions a year – equivalent to 18,833 people who fly from Amsterdam to Barcelona. To stop tennis balls ending up in the trash or in nature, ABN AMRO is facilitating the collection of as many used tennis balls as possible. The balls will provide the materials for the manufacture of the world’s first circular tennis ball, the Renewaball. This can significantly reduce the ecological impact of the sport.

**Renewaball reduces carbonemissions and plastic soup**
Ecochain has carried out a life cycle assessment to measure the difference between the carbon footprint of an ordinary tennis ball compared with a circular tennis ball. The assessment found that the amount of carbon emitted in the lifetime of a Renewaball was much lower than that of an ordinary tennis ball. This means that using Renewaballs could cut carbon emissions in the Netherlands by no less than 970,200 kilos. That equals 5,707 people who fly from Amsterdam to Barcelona. Moreover, because the circular tennis ball is produced in Europe, the carbon emissions associated with transport in the production phase are 3.6 times lower than those of ordinary tennis balls. “The world’s first fully recyclable tennis ball doesn’t just radically reduce carbon emissions, it also significantly helps combat the plastic soup problem,” says Hélène Hoogeboom, Managing Director and co-founder of Renewaball. “The felt on the Renewaball is made of wool instead of nylon, so it doesn’t release microplastics every time it’s hit. We’re delighted that ABN AMRO is supporting our initiative and exploring with us how we can set a new standard in tennis with the Renewaball.”

**Why collection is important**

The life cycle assessment also showed that an effective collection system is vital if we are to substantially reduce the carbon footprint of tennis balls. “We’re glad to be able to support this initiative by providing hundreds of collection points so that the tennis balls collected can be used to make new, circular tennis balls. By joining forces on this, we can take a major step towards making tennis a more sustainable sport,” explains Ernst Boekhorst, Head of Brand, Sponsoring & Foundation at ABN AMRO. “The launch of the Renewaball aligns with our focus on circularity as part of ABN AMRO’s sustainability strategy. We want to contribute to a better, more sustainable world and we’re doing it through all kinds of sustainable and social projects. Our partnership with Renewaball is a great example of that.”

**Sponsoring a variety of sports**

ABN AMRO has been the main sponsor of the ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament for 48 years now and is the sole sponsor of the ABN AMRO World Wheelchair Tennis Tournament it founded 13 years ago. This role as main sponsor is part of ABN AMRO’s extensive sponsorship strategy. One aspect of this is collaborating with the sports clubs it sponsors on ways to make the clubs more sustainable. ABN AMRO also has a strong focus on promoting diversity and inclusion in sport.

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