IF Sustainability Project
CONSULTATIVE STATUS
WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION
IF SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

The world faces important challenges across a wide spectrum of economic, social and environmental issues, and the sport community is not immune from their impacts. The Olympic Movement has both an opportunity and a duty to actively contribute to the global sustainability debate in line with its vision of “Building a better world through sport”.

With this in mind, and in response to recommendation 5 of Olympic Agenda 2020 (“Include sustainability within the Olympic Movement’s daily operations”), the IOC conducted the International Federation (IF) Sustainability Project throughout 2016. The IOC carried out the project with three objectives: obtaining an overview of IFs’ sustainability initiatives; identifying common topics, good practices and shared challenges; and sharing information among the IFs. As part of this project, the IOC collaborated with the IFs to compile a series of case studies reflecting how IFs are contributing towards a more sustainable world.

Each case study is aligned with one or more of the IOC’s five sustainability focus areas: infrastructure & natural sites; sourcing & resource management; mobility; workforce; and climate. These focus areas were selected through an extensive stakeholder engagement process, taking into consideration today’s key sustainability challenges and the manner in which the IOC believes the Olympic Movement can most significantly contribute to addressing them.

The case studies are also aligned with the United Nations’ (UN) framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This framework is pivotal for the Olympic Movement: in September 2015, the UN General Assembly confirmed the important role that sport can play in supporting the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs.

“Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognise the growing contribution of sport to the realisation of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives.” Paragraph 37, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
As a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), World Sailing was granted consultative status within the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 1999, when the IF was known as the International Sailing Federation (ISAF). Through having this status, World Sailing has been able to discuss relevant issues and provide advice during meetings. However, consultative status does not confer voting rights. World Sailing has been represented at IMO meetings by members of the IF’s International Regulations Commission.

World Sailing's position at IMO was particularly felt during the period when the IMO’s Sub-Committee on Bulk Liquids & Gases (BLG) started to develop “Guidelines for the control and management of ship’s biofouling to minimise the transfer of invasive aquatic species”. The guidelines covered all ships within its scope, including small boats. World Sailing took the view that these guidelines were impractical for recreational craft of less than 24 metres, the limit under which a boat is considered a recreational craft in various legislation. BLG agreed with this view. World Sailing then teamed up with interested governmental organisations from the United Kingdom and Australia, along with Non-Governmental Organisations.

"BEING INVOLVED WITH IMO ENSURES THE POSITIONS OF THE SAILING INDUSTRY ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE."

Applying for consultative status with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was a strategic decision by World Sailing, with the intention of representing the interests of the sailing world at the highest regulatory level. IMO consultative status permits World Sailing to remain aware, to stay informed and to participate when necessary regarding decisions being made in the maritime area, and to protect the interests of sailing in such decisions.
(NGOs) such as the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA), and developed a set of guidelines tailored specifically for recreational craft. These guidelines were analysed, discussed and approved by the relevant IMO committee. This achievement was considered a successful input and influence at international level by World Sailing.

TIME & PERSONNEL
Two or three of the six active members on World Sailing’s International Regulations Committee usually attend the pertinent IMO meetings, which generally take place in London. On average, World Sailing has representatives at four or five IMO meetings each year.

EVALUATION
World Sailing believes that being involved with IMO is crucial, as it ensures that the perspectives and positions of the sailing industry are taken into account when decisions are being made. Though it has been challenging at times to represent the industry in an organisation dominated by representatives from the shipping and cruise line industries, the IF considers its consultative status with IMO to be an important and worthwhile engagement.

World Sailing would encourage other IFs to join similarly applicable international organisations in order to stay abreast of future policies that may have an impact on them, and to have the opportunity of putting forward their point of view.