



INTERNATIONAL
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COMMITTEE

IF Sustainability Case Study
**WATER QUALITY
WORKING GROUP**



IF SUSTAINABILITY CASE STUDIES

The world faces significant challenges across a wide spectrum of economic, social and environmental matters. 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 Federations (IF) Sustainability Project in 2016. This allowed the IOC to obtain an overview of IFs’ sustainability initiatives; identify

common topics, good practices and mutual challenges; and share information. One of the Project’s outcomes was a series of case studies, illustrating how IFs are actively contributing towards a more sustainable world.

As part of the IOC’s objective to profile the role of the Olympic Movement in sustainability through the aggregation of information and collective reporting, it was agreed that the identification and

sharing of IF sustainability case studies should be continued. These case studies form part of the enhanced support system provided to the Olympic Movement through the [IOC Sustainability Strategy](#).

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. The studies are also aligned with one or more of the United Nations’

(UN) framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This framework is pivotal for the Olympic Movement since 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.

The UN’s 17 SDGs provide a common framework for organisations to explain how they plan to contribute to sustainable development and tackle the key global sustainability challenges. The IF case studies attest to the fact that the Olympic Movement contributes to the achievement of many of these.



“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

Each IF sustainability project contributes to one or more of the IOC's sustainability focus areas and one or more of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

IOC FOCUS AREAS



INFRASTRUCTURE & NATURAL SITES



CLIMATE

UN SDGs



INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

FIVE IFS AND THE IOC JOIN FORCES TO PROTECT ATHLETES' HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT BY TACKLING WATER POLLUTION

In May 2017, five International Federations (IFs) and the IOC created a working group to tackle the ongoing issue of pollution in natural water bodies, in an effort to increase the safety of athletes and promote legacy projects in host cities for water sports, recreation and the environment.

The challenges faced during the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games around poor water quality and the risk to

the athletes' health presented an urgent need for a positive long-term approach. The solutions developed during Rio 2016 were unique to event management and a first for water quality management. Maintaining this momentum, relationships, experience and knowledge acquired before and during Rio 2016 has been crucial to the creation of a clear solution and the avoidance of similar issues during future events.

This led experts from the International Swimming Federation (FINA), International Canoe Federation (ICF), International Triathlon Union (ITU), World Rowing (FISA), World Sailing (WS) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to join forces.

By building on the advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the aim was to create a common set of guidelines around water quality and testing regimes for both primary and secondary contact for water sports events.

Comprehensive measures including water testing timelines and parameters



and on-site inspections, and water microbial results, are combined to form a robust classification matrix with categories that help define the ways in which potential risk is managed. These common standards will be used to help guide and support the bidding process, Local Organising Committees (LOCs) and host cities around the world, and will provide clear benchmarks to protect athletes' health and the environment. It is hoped that these benchmarks will also encourage host cities to implement long-term developments, kick-starting legacy improvement projects.

EVALUATION

This collaboration has been beneficial for all involved parties as they were able to share knowledge, experience and best practice. Tackling this complicated topic

OBJECTIVES

A working group comprising medical and sustainability experts from five IFs collaborated with the IOC to create a common set of guidelines around water quality and testing regimes, with the aim of:

- Providing "safe and fair" competition venues for athletes.
- Reducing risks of competition delays or cancellations.
- Promoting long-term improvement to water quality as a legacy for local communities and sport clubs.
- Promoting a healthy ecosystem and enhancing biodiversity.
- Reducing the risk of negative media coverage.
- Providing alignment and clarity for LOCs and local governments.





in a unified way and working together to elaborate water quality management principles has been instrumental for the development of common guidelines that will serve as a tool for future events and present stronger opportunities with bid and host cities. Preventive and proactive measures to clean waterways will not only protect the athletes but also build long-term legacies in the host cities, encouraging local sport clubs, recreational sport and biodiversity back to the waterways, while boosting tourism and the local economy.



LESSONS LEARNED

- By working in collaboration with other IFs, the IOC and world experts you can share best practice and experience around a common topic.
- Host cities and LOCs can more easily adhere to a clear and unified framework.
- Embedding specific requirements into event guidelines and contracts during the bid stage increases the likelihood of long-term positive change.

Simon Toulson, ICF Secretary General

“Water is a precious commodity which is central to the functioning of our sport. The ICF is committed to clean water and promoting awareness of waterways, wildlife and access to water. Protecting the safety and health of our athletes is our number one priority and we stand together as a sport to support clean water and waterways access for all.”

Dr Sergio Migliorini, ITU Medical and Anti-doping Committee Chair

“The International Triathlon Union (ITU) has had water quality rules since its foundation. These standards guarantee that the athlete’s health is not in danger during the swim segment of ITU events. It is a pleasure to collaborate with other IFs and the IOC for consistent water quality standards and testing requirements for future events.”

Jean-Christophe Rolland, FISA President

“The safety of our athletes is a priority for FISA, so the water quality in our competition venues is very important. The opportunity to engage with other IFs that have similar priorities is invaluable. Having clear and well-justified water quality standards and consistent testing protocols helps us as well as our LOCs.”

Dr Nebojša Nikolić, World Sailing Medical Commission

“Rio 2016 was a big challenge for us, but also a great opportunity. Now, more than ever, the sport world is aware of the importance of the environment, which is what brought us together to make it better and more sustainable”

Dr Margo Mountjoy, FINA Bureau Member – Sport Medicine Liaison

“There is synergy in collaboration with IF and IOC colleagues. We all have a common goal and it is a pleasure to learn from and plan with other IF medical leaders in teamwork with the IOC.”