IF Sustainability Project
CORAL REEF RESTORATION
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 Olympic Agenda 2020, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) launched the International Federation (IF) Sustainability Project in 2016 to obtain an overview of IFs’ sustainability initiatives – identifying common topics, challenges and good practices while also sharing information among the IFs.

One outcome of the project 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 information contributes to the holistic integration of sustainability and should be continued. These case studies, which now also showcase National Olympic Committees’ (NOCs) best practices, form part of a strategic support system given 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. They are also aligned with one or more of the United Nations’ (UN) framework of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide a common framework for organisations to explain how they plan to contribute to sustainable development and tackle the key global sustainability challenges.

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
WORLD SAILING ENGAGES ATHLETES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT LIFE BELOW WATER

Rising water levels, air pollution and the destruction of biodiversity on land might be at the top of our minds when it comes to climate change, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Under our oceans, the destruction of the world’s coral reef is something worthy of urgent attention.

Beyond providing natural beauty, coral reefs are of extreme importance to on-land and underwater life. They offer our coastlines a natural protection from damaging wave action and tropical storms, and assist in carbon and nitrogen fixing, a fundamental piece in the fight against climate action. Moreover, as much as 25% of our marine life depend on them as they provide habitat, shelter and nutrients. An estimated 4,000 fish species rely on them at some point in their existence.

World Sailing’s 2020 Hempel World Cup Series Miami was identified by World Sailing as the perfect opportunity to bring education and action together in alignment with the United Nations Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) and the WS Sustainability Agenda 2030.

In partnership with their title sponsor, Hempel A/S, and the Rescue a Reef programme at the University of Miami (UM), the event managed to collect 250kg of marine litter, improving water levels, air pollution and the destruction of biodiversity on land might be at the top of our minds when it comes to climate change, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Under our oceans, the destruction of the world’s coral reef is something worthy of urgent attention.

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and create awareness among hundreds of athletes and volunteers.

**Mangrove clean-up**

150 sailors, including 50 World Cup participants and volunteer sailors from local sailing clubs, took part in a pre-competition mangrove clean up organised by US Sailing. Beyond the immediate effect of the clean-up, the hands-on experience provided a chance to educate and create further awareness among those present. The long-lasting effects can include changes in habits among the participants and exponential reach through advocacy across their circles of influence.

**Coral reef restoration**

Athletes took part in a hands-on reef restoration expedition hosted by UM researchers following a lecture on how climate change is affecting coral reefs. Over 150 staghorn corals, previously grown by the University in underwater nurseries, were outplanted as part of the activity. This technique used by the Rescue a Reef programme has proven effective in growing the local reef population.

World Sailing had partnered with the University of Miami in previous editions of the event and it was the feedback from the sailors that led to these activities. Many sailors around the world carry out regular beach clean-ups and encourage events to host.

**EVALUATION**

A positive legacy was embedded in the World Sailing’s 2020 Hempel World Cup Series Miami. 150 sailors were rallied to gain awareness and take action to protect the world’s coral reefs, removing 250kg of marine litter and contributing to the outplanting of 150 new corals. While the initiative gathered positive feedback from the participants it also created an opportunity for their sponsor to create a meaningful engagement with the sailing community. Following the success at the event, World Sailing plans to repeat beach clean-ups at its events looking to continue coral reef restoration expeditions when events are in suitable locations.

“WE FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO SUPPORT LOCAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND ALLOW ATHLETES TO PHYSICALLY PARTICIPATE WITH SOME OF THE RESEARCH THEMSELVES.”

**CONTACT:** Dan Reading, World Sailing Head of Sustainability

**BENEFITS**

- 250kg of marine litter was removed from a local mangrove ecosystem and 150 corals were outplanted.
- Close to 150 athletes and local sailors were engaged in education and action against the impact of climate change.
- The project received positive feedback from the sailors, created a positive impact in the local community and provided sponsors with a new powerful platform to engage with the sailing community.