

IF Sustainability Project
**REQUIREMENTS FOR
SUSTAINABLE
OLYMPIC EQUIPMENT**



NOC AND 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 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.

The IOC provides support to NOCs and IFs in the definition, design and development of their sustainability strategies.



“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 NOC/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



UN SDGs



WORLD SAILING INCORPORATES SUSTAINABILITY AS PART OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS FOR OLYMPIC EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS

When it comes to the selection of Olympic equipment, International Federations (IFs) can mandate suppliers and have a positive influence across the sports goods and equipment industry. As part of the 2024 Olympic equipment selection, World Sailing decided to add sustainability as a criteria within the evaluation process as an opportunity to impact the wider marine industry.

While all of World Sailing Olympic equipment contracts require that companies operate in accordance with the [IOC Supplier Code](#), the new requirements include the existence of a company sustainability policy, a life cycle

assessment of the product, ISO 14001 certification and an environmental improvement programme.

The board-sports industry is a huge impactor to the environment through all the materials used, production processes and raw material extraction. Added to this is the amount of different types of plastics used to make the boards. There are on average seven different types of materials, making it almost impossible to recycle.

One of the windsurf board manufacturers, Starboard, stood out with an existing strong sustainability offering within their products.

As part of their bid, the supplier demonstrated how they could reduce the environmental footprint from the production of the equipment. They did this by conducting a Life Cycle Assessment of their products, as well as a plastic and carbon footprint assessment at the company level and taking measures to reduce the footprint.

On average, a single iQFoil, the official Olympic windsurf board, emits 100 kg of CO2 during its production process, from the extraction of raw materials to shipping the board to the distributor. In its efforts to compensate those emissions, the company is planting mangrove trees in partnership with the Worldview International Foundation in the Thor Heyerdahl Climate Park in Myanmar. Ten mangrove trees are planted by Starboard for every iQFoil board produced, making it 100 x carbon net positive.

The supplier carried out a plastic assessment detailing the use of the material within the company. They then prioritised areas where they could remove the plastic, redesign to



use recycled or natural materials and intercept any plastic coming into the company which are not needed such as

OBJECTIVES

Through adding sustainability as a bidding-criteria, World Sailing aims to:

- Extend its influence to increase the sustainability of future Olympic and non-Olympic equipment.
- Increase the awareness among equipment manufacturers about sustainable production and best practices.
- Inspire other international federations to incorporate sustainability within their own bidding requirements to create exponential impact.

"INTERNATIONAL FEDERATIONS HAVE THE ABILITY TO INFLUENCE SPORT EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE BY ADDING SUSTAINABILITY METRICS TO THE SELECTION PROCESS AND/OR CREATING REGULATION TO MANDATE MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTISES."

DAN READING, WORLD SAILING HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY

single-use plastics. In addition, the company carries out beach clean-ups with its own team and collects 1.1kg of marine plastic waste per each board sold as a tax on themselves for the unavoidable plastics they still use within their products.

The company also measured its carbon footprint as an organisation and planted mangroves trees to absorb cumulated CO2 emissions from the very beginning of the company's establishment, considering that each carbon tree planted can absorb one ton of CO2 over 20 years. By measuring the company's overall climate impact, they have

been able to reduce their footprint and become up to 100 x carbon net positive in their production, also trying to work with suppliers to install solar panels, as they have done at their headquarters in Thailand.

World Sailing will require any new class bids for the 2028 Olympics (and subsequent Olympics) to provide a lifecycle assessment that demonstrates that 90% of the boat (by weight) is recyclable.

World Sailing will continue to encourage equipment suppliers to become more sustainable. Whilst new equipment and

format choice for the Olympics provides an opportunity for sustainability to be part of the selection criteria, existing equipment (boats) and non-Olympic classes would all benefit from implementing similar programmes.

EVALUATION

World Sailing started the 2024 windsurfing equipment selection process in 2019 by adding sustainability as a criteria within the bid. After successfully identifying a compliant

supplier, the international federation will now seek future Olympic equipment suppliers to meet the same standards. Since World Sailing have showcased Starboard's approach for more sustainable equipment production, other boat manufacturers have expressed interest in replicating some of the best practices showing the choice of sustainable sourcing can bring industry-wide impact.

BENEFITS

- IFs can act as a catalyst for more sustainable equipment across the industry by demanding sustainable practices from its suppliers as a requirement. Raising the bar brings positive impact to those who get selected but also those who do not.
- Sharing best practices and encouraging the development of sustainable thinking among all stakeholders can create cross-pollination of innovative ideas across the whole industry.
- While the equipment used in competitions by elite athletes may account for a fraction of total sales, if the same sustainability principles are applied to equipment available to the mass market the impact becomes significant.

