

IF Sustainability Project
**WORLD ROWING
SUSTAINABILITY
STRATEGY**



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 ROWING LAUNCHED A NEW SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY



World Rowing has set new sustainability goals for 2020-2024 with an updated and comprehensive approach to sustainability. After [a pledge to protect world heritage sites](#) designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), [a partnership with the World Wide Fund for Nature \(WWF\)](#) to protect fresh water around the world, and joining the [UN Sports for Climate Action Framework](#), the federation is going beyond the environmental focus to include social aspects within their sustainability targets.

As defined by World Rowing, the intention is to shift from a “preserve & protect” focus to “enhance” and pursue a positive impact on the ecosystems and communities in which they operate. Beyond the areas under direct control of the federation, World Rowing is also embracing its role as custodian of the sport and its capacity to influence the broader community incorporating education and advocacy among their sustainability goals.

The sustainability strategy is built around seven core sustainability principles aligned

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the World Rowing Sustainability Strategy for 2020-2024 are to:

- Establish a clear action plan in the areas where the federation can have positive and immediate impact.
- Educate themselves, the rowing community and World Rowing's partners and stakeholders to build knowledge and capacity to act.
- Align all rowing communities and stakeholders to support a unified sustainability agenda.

with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and covering clean water, biodiversity, responsible consumption, climate action, diversity and inclusion, fair and equitable treatment, and partnerships, education and grassroots activism.

World Rowing is planning to activate its principles through five key areas:

- **An integrated and systematic approach to sustainability** from strategy to day-to-day decisions including clear and measurable targets. It also means adapting and updating statutes, rules, hosting requirements and manuals to reflect the

principles including accessibility, diversity and gender equality. Externally, this also means engaging in partnerships and sponsorship relationships exclusively with organisations which meet the federation’s sustainability standards.

• **Impact on communities and ecosystems** including carbon management, water stewardship, protection and regeneration of biodiversity and an integrated approach to legacy and community outreach on all World Rowing events.

• **Responsible consumption and production** considering product lifespan to avoid unnecessary waste, recycling options and working with suppliers that satisfy minimum environmental and workforce requirements. World Rowing will also work with equipment manufacturers to reduce their product footprint.

• **Internal and external education** by integrating sustainability as a core educational component to coaches, officials and stakeholders. The federation will also collaborate with the broader community, both in and outside the sport of rowing, to support the learning and sharing of best practices and sustainability-related subjects.

BENEFITS

- Developing a strategy as an evolutionary process allows for an approach that can be flexible and iterative for constant learning and improvement.
- By shifting the focus from protection to enhancement, an organisation can leverage its control and influence to generate far-reaching impact.
- The UN SDGs and the Sports for Climate Framework can be of great reference to establish strategic and tactical guidelines for sustainable development.

• **Communication and advocacy** as the custodian of the sport through actions and specific messaging and the promotion of grassroots activism recognising and rewarding positive behaviour.

The sustainability strategy has been defined as World Rowing’s “sustainability race plan” and has the goals of creating action in those areas where direct impact can be made, achieve heightened levels of education and get every stakeholder onboard the new targets. This new period shall also set the

foundations that will shape the next strategy for World Rowing, its event organisers and its member federations.

EVALUATION

World Rowing has adopted a new and broader scope for sustainability that moves beyond an environmental focus to make room for social aspects. The principles have been established in close alignment to the UN SDGs and, consistently, the five action areas have derived from the federation’s commitments to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework.

“WORLD ROWING IS COMMITTED TO THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY IN 2021. THE YEAR 2020 HAS BEEN AN EXCEPTIONALLY CHALLENGING YEAR AND WORLD ROWING IS UNDERTAKING A REVIEW PROCESS TO BENEFIT FROM SOME LEARNINGS AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES EXPERIENCED THIS YEAR.”

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE ROLLAND, WORLD ROWING PRESIDENT AND IOC MEMBER

