IBU

International Olympic Committee

IF SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

DECARBONISING FAN MOBILITY

International Olympic Committee

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 contribute to the holistic integration of sustainability and should be continued.

"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

These case studies, which now also showcase the best practices of National Olympic Committees (NOCs), form part of a strategic support system made available 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.

Each NOC/IF sustainability project IOC FOCUS AREAS contributes to one or more of the IOC's sustainability focus areas and one or more of the UN SDGs.

IOC FOCUS AREAS

INFRASTRUCTURE & NATURAL SITES | SOURCING & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT | MOBILITY | WORKFORCE | CLIMATE

UN SDGs

13 CLIMATE ACTION

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DECARBONISING FAN MOBILITY: A SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY APPROACH BY THE IBU

The IBU is committed to making its operations and activities fully sustainable along all three dimensions of sustainability. As an outdoor winter sport, biathlon is directly affected by climate change, and sustainability has therefore become a core objective of the Federation's long-term strategy. The IBU approved its 2020-2030 Sustainability Policy and Sustainability Strategy to be compliant with the Sports for Climate Action Framework's commitments (i.e. to achieve the specific climate goals of halving emissions by 2030 and aiming to achieve net zero by 2040).

As in any sport, spectator mobility is one of the primary sources of carbon dioxide emissions at major biathlon events. The 2023 IBU Biathlon World Championships, held in Oberhof, Germany, in February 2023, exemplified an innovative approach by offering fans who purchased event tickets free access to public transport within a 50km radius of the competition venue. In addition, a park & ride service was provided for anyone arriving by car to further reduce air pollution and the overall climate impact of the event.

The small town of Oberhof faced the logistical challenge of limited space and managing increased traffic during the event could have led to traffic congestion, with increased carbon emissions and negative environmental impacts.

In response, the organisers, with a strong commitment to reducing carbon emissions, took a proactive approach and collaborated with both public and private transport service providers, integrating this partnership as a key part of their environmental strategy. This collaboration was not only a practical solution to the spatial constraints but also an essential component in minimising the event's carbon footprint.

With an overall attendance of more than 150,000 fans, approximately 15% of spectators opted for the free-of-charge public transport option, resulting in around 23,000 individuals arriving by train or bus. The park & ride option for the final 10-15 km to the venue was mandatory for fans arriving by car to avoid traffic congestion; no private vehicles were allowed in town without a special permit.

Event organisers can replicate this sustainable mobility model by collaborating with public transport service providers to tailor suitable timetables to their events, thereby encouraging spectators to opt for environmentally friendly transport options.

The IBU's initiative to decarbonise fan mobility during the 2023 IBU Biathlon World Championships serves as a remarkable example of how collaborative efforts and strategic planning can significantly reduce the carbon footprint of a major sports event. By prioritising sustainable transport options, the IBU World Championships showcased a proactive commitment to climate action, paving the way for future sports events to adopt similar environmentally responsible practices. This project underscores the importance of sustainable mobility initiatives in aligning sports events with broader sustainability goals.

> "We knew that fan mobility plays a major role for both the event carbon footprint and the traffic situation in the host city. Our response was to create a concept that enabled fans to travel in a more environmentally friendly way. Including free-of-charge public transport in the event ticket proved to be a good incentive."

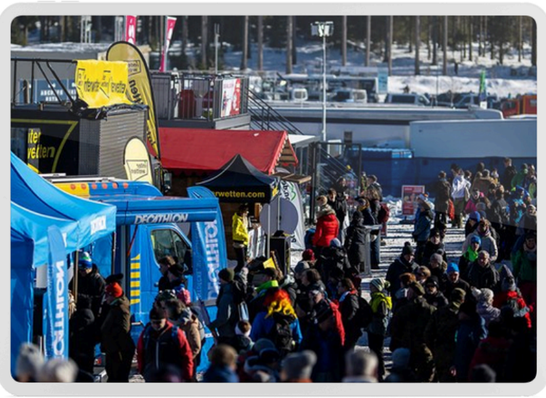
THOMAS GRELLMANN, HEAD OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE OBERHOF 2023

BENEFITS

- Facilitating access to the event via local public transport for fans and minimising traffic congestion in the host town.
- Reducing air pollution by providing sustainable transport options.
- Mitigating the climate impact of the event by reducing transport-related emissions.

OBJECTIVES

- Proactively prioritise public transport and collaboration to provide sustainable mobility options
- Assess the impact of sustainable fan mobility options on event carbon footprint
- Develop effective fan communication strategies to enable behavioural change



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