



Appraisal and Recommendations for Action

Sport Events – Catalysts for Sustainable Development

Introduction

Sport events inspire millions of people and are important events for the host cities, spectators, and athletes alike. They are also a major challenge to environmental policy. Sustainable planning and execution is an important aspect of sport events. This way, they can be catalysts for the sustainable development of both urban centres and athletics, while at the same time establishing eco-political models within society at large.

Along with over 120 other UNESCO member countries, the German Federal Government committed to the sustainability of major sport events at the 2013 World Conference of Sport Ministers (MINEPS). It called on all stakeholders to ensure that investments in infrastructure and sport venues meet social, economic, cultural and ecological sustainability requirements. The “Environment and Sports” advisory council of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) considers it necessary to aim for the highest standards in the area of “sport events and sustainability”. The council has therefore adopted the following positions and made the following demands based on many years of practical experience, research results and current societal challenges.

Basic positions

Sport, nature conservation and environmental protection are of immense significance for the future development of society. These political action areas can make a considerable contribution to a sustainable development of the overall process – both in Germany and in an international context.

Sport promotes inclusion, education and health, creates fun and a zest for life, conveys such values as tolerance, fairness and team spirit, and generally enhances the quality of life.

Sport events are unique events for athletes and spectators alike – and are also a challenge when it comes to sustainability, the objective of which is to prevent our actions today from impairing the development of future generations, or even to benefit those generations.

The common goal of sport organisers/operators and the German Federal Government, regional governments, and local authorities as well as the sport industry must be to plan and execute events such that they contribute to an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable development across generations, both in urban and rural areas. While the dimensions of this goal may be particularly applicable to major sport events such as the Olympic Games or the World or European Football Championship, on a fundamental level, they also apply to smaller-sized competitive events and grassroots sport events. The conservation of natural livelihoods must guide our actions in sport events. The idea of sustainability requires a change in thinking across all areas, for the sake of long-term sustainability and the equal distribution of the burdens, opportunities and risks that are inherent to such events.

This way, major sport events can be drivers both for progress and long-term sustainable development at the urban, district and regional levels while also creating lasting value for local citizens. The concept of sustainability is often seen as too abstract, but through sport, can be made more tangible for society at large.

Toward a comprehensive understanding of sustainability

A comprehensive understanding of sustainable sport events is based on an overall view of all ecological, economic and social aspects of future sustainability. This modern understanding of sustainability requires that pivotal ideas and potential solutions be ecologically viable before, during and after the event, while also being socially acceptable and economically sound. This also includes implementing an educational concept as a key factor in the sustainable development of sport events.

Developing and implementing concrete sustainability strategies

Sport organisations, hosts and organisational committees in Germany are required – in a participatory process whenever possible, particularly for large events – to develop sustainability strategies for sport events. The German Federal Government, state governments and local authorities, as well as national and international sport associations, must support this process in an appropriate manner.

The following are particularly important as part of this process:

- Gathering information on national and regional regulations
- Adhering to ecological, economic and social standards
- Stimulating social integration and sustainable city, district and regional development
- Generating models on national and international levels
- Advertising sustainability models in and through sport
- Making sport more accessible to all people, particularly children and adolescents
- Managing conflicts of objective by means of cost-benefit analyses and innovations

Dialogue process for major events

Major sport events are a challenge, not only for the participating athletes but also for the organisers, authorities and institutions on a federal, regional and local level, as well as for some sections of the population. An appropriate dialogue among these stakeholders as well as the participation of the public are paramount for mastering the challenge of such events.

We expect to establish an ongoing, transparent and dialogue-oriented process involving all stakeholders and concerned groups and citizens regarding any questions surrounding the sustainability concept and strategy.

Credibility

The binding implementation of all work and measures on a local level, at nationwide events and from a national point of view is the key factor for rendering the concept credible. The more the essential elements of the overall concept and the phrasing and monitoring of the process are fully binding, concrete and verifiable, the more authentic and convincing the concept will be.

Long-term use

Wherever possible and inasmuch as the functional requirements of the sport are met, top priority is given to the use of existing sport and event venues, or sport venues which are upgraded through redevelopment and modernisation as necessary, along with their infrastructure, for major events. When the question arises as to whether a competitive site should be erected temporarily or for the long term, sustainable after-use is the key factor. If later use is not economically viable, venues should be designed for temporary use or redesigned for long-term sustainable urban purposes.

Support from first-hand experience

The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) have established the **GREEN CHAMPIONS 2.0** (www.green-champions.de) internet platform for sustainable sport events to provide sport organisers, federations and political decision-makers with practical support in both German and English, including up-to-date information and tips.

Stipulations and suggestions

The “Environment and Sports” advisory council of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB)

- recommends that the German Federal Government, federal states, districts, sport organisations, environmental associations as well as the sport industry, make the many potentials for designing sport events the starting point for their respective assessments.
- stipulates that sport organisers, hosts and the organisational committee develop and implement sustainability concepts for sport events based on both these recommended actions and the support provided on the **GREEN CHAMPIONS 2.0** website.
- recommends that the German Federal Government and federal states strive to promote major sport events in a more targeted manner in the future whenever organisers submit sustainability concepts.
- encourages local authorities to focus more on the development and implementation of sustainability concepts regarding all municipal assistance in the future.
- recommends that the German Federal Government promotes the systematic further development of sustainable sport events through appropriate measures such as the development of management systems, competitions, the promotion of pilot schemes, scientific research, etc.
- calls for the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) and national sport federations to promote the significance of sustainability within their organisations as well as vis-à-vis the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and international sport associations particularly with regard to the awarding decisions.

The “**Environment and Sports**” advisory council for the 18th legislative term of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB):

Full members:

Prof. Dr. Ralf Roth, German Sport University Cologne (DSHS), advisory council spokesman
Detlef Berthold, Ministry for Family, Children, Youth, Culture and Sports of the State of North Rhine-Westfalia
Prof. Dr. Franz Brümmer, German Diving Association (VDST), Sports and Nature Curatorship (advisory council deputy spokesman)
Ute Dicks, German Ramblers' Association (DWV)
Bernd Düsterdiek, German Association of Towns and Municipalities (DStGB)
Nicole Espey, German Association of the Sporting Goods Industry (BSI)
Tilmann Heuser, Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND)
Andreas Klages, German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB)
Torsten Kram, Ministry for the Environment, Energy, Food and Forestry of the State of Rhineland-Palatinate
Helmut Opitz, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union Germany (NABU)
Dr. Hartmut Stahl, Institute for Applied Ecology (Öko-Institut e.V.)
Axel Welge, Association of German Cities
Ludwig Wucherpfennig, German League for Nature, Animal and Environment Protection (DNR)

Permanent guests:

Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR), Dr. Brigitte Adam
Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), Thomas Graner
German Environment Agency (UBA), Hans-Joachim Hermann
Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI), Katrin Schenk

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The “Environment and Sports” Advisory Council

The Environment and Sports Council is an advisory committee of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. Founded in 1994, its main task is to identify conflicts, deficits and potential issues related to sustainable sport development - in particular in the fields of urban development, protection of biodiversity, nature and the climate -, to provide management tools and to actively support sustainable sport events. The council gives advice on these topics to the Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and evaluates the latest research findings. The Council is composed of 13 honorary members who are experts in sustainable sport development. These experts come from various fields, including from the environmental sector, organized sport, local government, science, business and nature preservation.