



## **“INNOVATION AND INSPIRATION: HARNESSING THE POWER OF SPORT FOR CHANGE”**

### **8<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPORT & ENVIRONMENT 30 – 31 March 2009**

*The participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Sport and Environment comprised National Olympic Committees, International Sports Federations, Organizing Committees of the Olympic Games (BOCOG, VANOC, LOCOG and Sochi 2014), Candidate Cities, representatives of the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee, Olympians, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Partners of the Olympic Movement, sport and recreation events organizers, environmental organizations, research institutions, other members of the Olympic Movement.*

*The conference acknowledged the significance of the location and date of this event being on the traditional territories of Four Host First Nations with the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Winter Games being less than a year away, and express gratitude for their involvement and presence.*

*Two over-arching themes provided the contextual backdrop for the conference as follows:*

- i. The current economic crisis is global, affecting everyone. While the crisis presents additional challenges, it also provides unique opportunities in which environmental and sustainability matters must remain of the highest priority. The economy and the environment are to be dealt with together to enhance environmental sustainability.*
- ii. The importance of the youth involvement in the world of sport is acknowledged by all. The IOC's emphasis on this is evident by the launch of the first ever Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in 2010, with a significant educational component, including a strong environmental content. Early exposures to the best sustainable development practices and the appropriate education of future generations on environmental matters will have a lasting impact.*

With the above themes in mind the conference focused on the key aspects of Inspiration and Innovation that “fuel” the participants’ joint efforts to advance sustainability through sport.

Fourteen years after declaring environment as the third pillar of the Olympic movement, alongside sport and culture, the conference provided an opportunity to reflect on the hard work and achievements during this period, and the growing number of success stories. This provides due inspiration for an ever-increasing number of constituents.

It was acknowledged that creativity and innovation are critical components in achieving demonstrable results. Conference participants put forth the following specific conclusions and recommendations:

**1. *National Olympic Committees (NOC) play an increasing role in ensuring continuous involvement of the sports world in sustainable development***

- It is acknowledged that NOC’s have to tackle different challenges within their own environments. Nevertheless, it is essential that NOC’s recognize their important role as a major conduit for action to further the Olympic Movement’s sustainability agenda.
- NOC’s are encouraged to continue to develop their understanding of the programmes, practices and legacies of Olympic Organizing Committees as well as the proposals and objectives of candidate cities.  
It is recommended that NOC’s identify, and reach out, to domestic and external partners with specific projects that could be supported within their own communities and consider including in their contractual arrangements provisions for sustainable actions.
- NOC are encouraged to form partnerships with local government entities in order to implement specific environmental projects.

**2. *International Sport Federations are critical to advancing sustainability within sport organizations around the world***

- Each International Federation is encouraged to adopt a policy and supporting programme to advance the principals of sustainability through their sport and promote those principles to national sport federations.

**3. *OCOGs are a key source of innovation in the planning, delivery and legacy of sports facilities and events***

- The examples provided by OCOGs and candidate cities should be studied by others in the sports world for possible application at an appropriate scale in their own programmes.
- OCOG’s have the ability to utilize the latest in innovations and technology to create and promote Games of the highest standards of sustainability and legacy.
- The sharing of and transferring of these best-practices, is essential in ensuring that the sustainability of the Olympic and Paralympic Games is continuously advanced.

- The Games present a unique opportunity to raise environmental awareness and develop a new environmental approach in a community, and implement a « green code », thereby arriving at a set of new local standards of higher quality.

**4. Corporate sponsors of the Olympic Movement continue to play a valuable role in creating sports events that mutually benefit sport, the community and sponsors**

- The conference encourages sponsors of the Olympic Movement to share their sustainability practices and technologies with the Olympic family, and channel available resources for educational purposes to increase environmental awareness and the engagement and empowerment of youth.

**Community-based organizations** are an essential component of sport and environment activities as they are central to the promotion of local involvement, innovation and inspiration and the spreading of best-practices.

**Athletes** are important role models, as their commitment to promoting the sustainability agenda has the potential to influence and inspire others, particularly youth, to take action.

The conference concludes with the words of a participating athlete:

***“There are no minds more innovative than the minds of youth. No one is more attuned to the environment than youth.”***

***Vancouver, BC  
Canada  
31 March 2009***