

NOC SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT AUSTRALIAN NOC CLIMATE PLAN



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.

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.

The IOC provides support to NOCs and IFs in establishing, designing and developing 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



A SUCCESSFUL PATH TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Australian Olympic Committee (AOC) became a signatory to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework in 2020, committing to reducing its emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieving net zero emissions by 2040.

In 2021, as it embarked on its sustainability journey, the AOC started its “Stage One – Establish a Baseline” project to help build its carbon baseline report and organisational readiness to move towards a more comprehensive climate strategy. On the one hand, it measured its 2019 baseline emissions and its 2020 emissions performance, identifying key opportunities for improvement.

On the other, to ensure the AOC's strategic intent was successful, it collected stakeholder insights on climate

awareness and readiness for action, engaging four groups: the staff, the Athletes' Commission, Olympic team partners (sponsors) and National Sports Federations.

First steps – gathering and analysing employee insights on planetary awareness:

In order to assess the knowledge about and readiness for climate action within the AOC, the organisation undertook discussions and surveying among employees, with the following objectives and findings:

1. Understand the level of knowledge about the relationship between sport and planetary health. Results showed a general lack of knowledge, with 85% responding with “average” or below (prior to the awareness session).
2. Assess employee perception of the AOC's level of engagement on planetary health, with 94.4% of employees rating it as “average” or “little”.
3. Measure the interest levels of employees in contributing to the AOC's sustainability journey and the perceived barriers to success. An encouraging 73.3% of staff expressed a high interest in supporting the achievement of planetary health goals, while identifying the following key challenges: the lack of knowledge on “how to do the right things” (59%), followed by other features like the lack of financial means, support and value.



OBJECTIVES

- Increase awareness, understanding and knowledge of sustainability and climate issues across the AOC family and the whole sporting community.
- Identify and engage all AOC stakeholders who can enable and/or deliver on the expectations of change towards sustainability.
- Develop a clear positioning statement that acknowledges the AOC's leadership role on planetary health action.
- Build a community of contributors and supporters for the further roll out of sustainability and climate action plans.



Further efforts – engaging and educating stakeholders:

The employee survey results mirrored the answers and sentiments expressed by the Olympians who were consulted during an Athletes' Commission meeting and during Wellness Week 2021, where the AOC held a presentation on sustainability.

Given the general lack of knowledge and the expressed readiness for action, the AOC identified the need for stakeholder education and offered planetary health awareness sessions, which combined both educational and broader consultation elements. The employees' levels of knowledge improved dramatically after the sessions, demonstrating their high level of interest and capability to upskill quickly.

Furthermore, stakeholders' expectations for the AOC's sustainability journey were defined and summed up as "leadership through action": building a reputation in planetary health leadership,



empowering and educating the Olympic community and becoming climate positive, with carbon neutrality as a minimum standard.

The result – setting a path towards a sustainability strategy:

The AOC completed its climate baseline in 2022 and, as a result of its continuous efforts to further roll out its sustainability plans, it developed its first **Climate Action Plan**, which received executive approval in November 2022.

Regarding ongoing initiatives, the AOC has made a commitment to continue to support National Sports Federations that wish to establish their own baselines and action plans via working groups and resource sharing.

BENEFITS

- The "Stage One – Establish a Baseline" project contributed to the AOC's strategy exploration efforts and led to the development of its first Climate Action Plan, with key actions to implement from 2022 onwards.
- Integration of planetary health into the DNA of the AOC, which has reviewed and updated its policies to reflect its prioritisation of this topic.
- Increased awareness of sustainability guiding frameworks such as UN Sports for Climate Action among the Australian Olympic community.

"We are uniquely placed to use our voice to communicate, educate, advocate and promote greater environmental responsibility and, of course, we lead by example in taking practical action ourselves and measuring what we do. I am very proud of the enthusiasm displayed by the AOC staff and by our Olympic athletes, whose commitment in this process has been inspirational."

MATT CARROLL, AUSTRALIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE CEO