In order to leave a sustainable legacy, the Olympic Games should be economically viable, be integrated into, and ideally enhance, the local socio-cultural conditions, and should respect the environment. These are concepts which the IOC strongly encourages Games Organisers to follow, and it is within this framework that the OGGI study was launched, thereby helping the IOC’s partners to understand the impact of the edition of the Olympic Games which they have been elected to host.

The early dissemination of OGGI documentation by the IOC to bidding cities, means that today, bidding cities and their partners have enlarged their scope and responsibility to encompass not only environmental concerns and initiatives, but also incorporated sustainable development as a vision and objective which underpins their entire project.

The fact that the Vancouver Olympic Organising Committee created a sustainability department within its organisational structure to coordinate and monitor all its activities, the rehabilitation of the Lower Lee Valley in Greater London and the creation of a London Sustainable Development Commission by all parties involved in the London 2012 Olympic Games, are actions that strongly illustrate this.
In order to measure the impact of the Olympic Games, concrete measurement tools were needed. 150 so-called research ‘indicators’ were therefore established and grouped into three spheres: economic, social and environmental. Within these spheres, the OGGI indicators cover a vast range of activities; from those that are a direct result of staging the Olympic Games, such as the construction of competition venues or the Olympic Village, to others that are a more indirect consequence, such as the evolution of hotel infrastructure or the change in the amount of open-air leisure areas in the city. Other indicators facilitate the monitoring of contextual data within a Host City and its region such as crime rates, sports participation and water quality.

Concrete development provided from OGGI data collection is contained within the Beijing Olympic Organising Committee (BOCOG)’s preliminary OGGI report. For example, a general increase in sporting activities is occurring in Beijing; sport as a subject now exists in several schools, and a significant increase in the city’s capacity of waste water treatment are some of the developments that have been identified and will be monitored over the coming years.

Since the realisation of the OGGI study in 2003, the IOC has asked all Organising Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOGs) to conduct the study. Future Olympic organisers are informed of the OGGI study during the Applicant and Candidate City phases through IOC documentation.

At present three existing OCOGs are conducting the study: the Beijing Olympic Organising Committee (BOCOG), the Vancouver Olympic Organising Committee (VANOC) and the London Olympic Organising Committee (LOCOG).

Each OCOG is at a different stage of advancement, with approximately a two-year interval between each one. This situation creates exchange and communication between the different OCOGs, which facilitates their work, and will subsequently enhance the overall study.

Today, OGGI study data is starting to be produced. In late 2005, BOCOG provided the IOC with its initial OGGI report, the first of the four reports that OCOGs are requested to deliver. The report illustrates the situation in Beijing and its surrounding regions prior to the city being awarded the Games. BOCOG’s second report is due in 2007.

In 2006, the IOC will receive both VANOC’s preliminary OGGI report and LOCOG’s study structure.