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

8TH WORLD CONFERENCE ON SPORT & ENVIRONMENT
30 – 31 March 2009


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

Two principal themes provided the contextual backdrop for the Conference:

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 the highest priority. The economy and the environment are to be dealt with together to enhance environmental sustainability.

ii. The importance of involving young people in the world of sport is acknowledged by all. The IOC’s emphasis on this is shown by the launch of the first ever Youth Olympic Games in Singapore in 2010, with a significant educational component, including strong environmental content. Early exposure to the best sustainable development practices and 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 undertaken and the achievements made during this period, and the growing number of success stories. This provides fitting inspiration for an ever-increasing number of constituents.

It was acknowledged that creativity and innovation are critical components in achieving demonstrable results. The Conference participants put forward 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 NOCs have to tackle different challenges within their own environments. Nevertheless, it is essential that NOCs recognise their important role as a major conduit for action to further the Olympic Movement’s sustainability agenda.

   - NOCs are encouraged to continue to develop their understanding of the programmes, practices and legacies of Olympic Organising Committees, as well as of the proposals and objectives of candidate cities. It is recommended that NOCs identify and reach out to domestic and external partners with specific projects that could be supported within their own communities, and consider including provisions for sustainable actions in their contractual arrangements.

   - NOCs 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 sports organisations around the world**

   - Each International Federation is encouraged to adopt a policy and supporting programme to advance the principles of sustainability through its sport, and to promote such 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.

   - OCOGs have the ability to utilise the latest innovations and technology to create and promote Games of the highest standards of sustainability and legacy.
• Sharing and transferring 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 within a community, and to implement a “green code”, thereby achieving 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 which mutually benefit sport, the community and sponsors

• The Conference encourages sponsors of the Olympic Movement to share their sustainability practices and technology with the Olympic family, and channel available resources for educational purposes to increase environmental awareness and to engage and empower young people.

Community-based organisations 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 young people, to take action.

The Conference concluded with the words of a participating athlete:

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

Vancouver, BC
Canada
31 March 2009