



WORLD
ATHLETICS



WORLD ATHLETICS

FROM COMMITMENT TO IMPACT
2026 Sustainability Report and Strategy Review



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WORLD ATHLETICS
CHAMPIONSHIPS



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INTRODUCTION

FROM COMMITMENT TO IMPACT

THE FIRST FIVE YEARS of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy 2020–2030 have focused on turning ambition into action. Sustainability is now increasingly embedded across the sport, supported by stronger systems and standards.

Progress since 2020 includes advances in event delivery, climate action, gender equity, safeguarding and athlete protection. The next phase will focus on consistency, scale and impact.



PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

The World Athletics Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 was created because we recognised that the future of our sport depends not only on how we grow athletics, but on how we protect the people, places and communities that make it possible.

At the halfway point of this strategy, this review provides an important opportunity to reflect on the progress made between 2020 and 2025, and to look honestly at the work still ahead.

In that period, sustainability has moved from being a standalone commitment to becoming a more embedded part of how we plan events, support our Member Federations, work with partners and safeguard athletes.

The urgency has only increased. As the Rings of Fire report published before the Paris 2024 Olympic Games made clear, with global temperatures continuing to rise, climate change should increasingly be viewed as an existential threat to sport.

For athletics, that threat is not theoretical. It affects training environments, competition conditions, event planning and, above all, athlete safety.

That is why athlete welfare remains at the centre of our approach. Our athletes are being asked to perform in a world that is hotter, less predictable

and more exposed to climate risk. We have a responsibility to respond with practical decisions, credible standards and clear leadership.

We have also been clear that sport cannot simply wait for others to act. Governments have not always stepped up to the plate, and sport will increasingly need to make its own judgments and decisions.

This review captures the progress made so far, from stronger sustainability systems and event standards to greater awareness across the athletics family. It also reinforces our commitment to the second half of the strategy: moving further and faster from ambition to action, and from commitment to impact.

SEBASTIAN COE
President of World Athletics



Five years of progress

The first five years of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 have been a period of transition for our sport: from setting direction to building the systems, standards and capabilities needed to make sustainability part of how athletics is governed, delivered and experienced.

This mid-point review looks at that transition across the six pillars of our strategy. It considers what has changed since 2020, where we have made the strongest progress, and where further work is needed as we enter the second half of the decade.

The picture that emerges is one of practical implementation. Sustainability is no longer defined only by commitments or individual initiatives, but by the extent to which it is being integrated into our decision-making,



For athletics, that threat is not theoretical. It affects training environments, competition conditions, event planning and, above all, athlete safety.

event delivery, athlete welfare, organisational governance and support for the wider athletics community.

That shift matters because the external context has changed quickly. Climate change is creating more direct risks for athletes, event organisers and host communities, from extreme heat and poor air quality to flooding, storms and disruption to infrastructure.

At the same time, expectations around safeguarding, inclusion, human rights, transparency and responsible event delivery have continued to rise. For a global sport practised in every region of the world, these issues are not separate from the future of athletics. They are part of its long-term resilience.

The achievements outlined in this review show that we have made important progress between 2020 and 2025. The development of the Athletics for a Better World Standard, the strengthening of our sustainable event management systems, the evolution of our climate and air quality work, and our continued focus on gender equity, safeguarding and athlete protection all point to a more mature and structured approach.

The next phase will be defined by consistency, scale and impact: ensuring that the systems now in place continue to drive measurable change across our sport. That is outlined in the 'Sustainability Strategy Roadmap for Delivery Midway Update' on pages 42-47.

OUR SIX SUSTAINABILITY PILLARS



WORLD ATHLETICS SUSTAINABILITY TIMELINE

2011

Solar panels help power the stadium, athletes' village and Congress venue during the World Athletics Championships in Daegu

2020

World Athletics launches its Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030

2021

World Athletics signs the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework

2022

The Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard begins its two-year pilot phase

225kg of waste collected at a beach clean-up during the World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships Muscat 22.

World Athletics Championships Oregon22

13,200kg of waste was diverted from landfill, avoiding 12.3 tonnes of CO₂e. (equivalent to the electricity used to power four homes in Oregon for one year)

Water refill stations avoided 325,000 single-use plastic bottles (avoiding 15.6 tonnes of CO₂e, equivalent to the emissions of a petrol car driving 104,000km)

2,358kg of unused food donated to local food bank

2017

63% of waste was recycled at the World Athletics Championships in London

One million spectators used public transportation





2023

World Athletics achieves ISO 20121 certification for its sustainable event management system

World Athletics Council achieves gender equality (50% female representation), becoming the first Olympic sport to do so

World Athletics Championships Budapest 2023

First paperless World Athletics Congress held, eliminating 182,110 sheets of A4 paper (equivalent to 18 15-metre tall pine trees)

Refillable water balloons eliminated 125,400 single-use plastic bottles (reducing carbon emissions by 6.3 tonnes – or three round trip flights between London and New York)

813 m3 of waste recycled (enough to fill nine large semi-trucks)



2024

World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 2024

800 volunteers received mental health training

Zero food waste programme delivered more than 1,000 meals to local food bank

50% of the 2,528 catered meals were vegetarian or vegan (reducing the catering footprint by 2.8 tonnes of CO2e – or 115 return petrol-powered car trips from Edinburgh to Glasgow)

102 events from 36 countries reported their sustainability progress as part of ABW Standard implementation

World Athletics named BBC Green Sport Awards International Organisation of the Year

2025

World Athletics Championships Tokyo 2025

450,000 single-used plastic bottles were recycled, eliminating 10 tonnes of plastic from the waste stream

Biofuels powered 100% of the temporary generators used for broadcasters (avoiding 160 tonnes of CO2e, equivalent to the energy required to power 90 Japanese homes for one year)

12 tonnes of paper was recycled (equivalent to the carbon saving of 3.4 million smart phone charges)

Honda Hybrid Step Wagons saved 1.9 tonnes of CO2e compared to an internal combustion engine car (equivalent to five round-trip flights from Nice to London)

123 events reported their sustainability progress against the ABW Standard



2026

ABW Standard incorporated as a contractual deliverable in select World Athletics Series events

World Athletics achieves recertification to ISO 20121:2024 for its sustainable event management system

World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 24: A new standard for event delivery

In Glasgow, sustainability is closely tied to the city's identity. Known in Scottish Gaelic as Glaschu, meaning "green hollow", and often referred to as the "Dear Green Place", Glasgow has combined this heritage with recent climate leadership, having hosted COP26 and set ambitious net zero targets.

This context made it a fitting host for an important step in our sustainability journey.

The World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 24 became the first event to achieve Platinum recognition under our Athletics for a Better World Standard (ABW), scoring 108 out of 120 points.

This marked a clear stake in the ground: sustainability is now a central principle of how we deliver events. Built around the six ABW pillars (see page 21), the standard was embedded across all aspects of planning and operations.

In Glasgow, this translated into a whole-event approach. A dedicated social impact strategy brought together sustainability, equality, diversity and inclusion, and access to sport, supported by a cross-sector working group that ensured the programme reflected local priorities. At the Emirates Arena,

investments in a new track, energy-efficient lighting and upgraded systems extended the legacy of a key venue from the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

Operationally, partnerships drove impact. Zero-emission-capable vehicles reduced transport emissions, recyclable water packaging replaced single-use plastic and surplus food was redistributed to local communities.

Smaller interventions – from recycled material tokens to waste diversion and school engagement initiatives – reinforced a culture of sustainability throughout the event.

Crucially, social impact was embedded at scale. More than 800 staff and volunteers received mental health training through Scottish Action for Mental Health, while community programmes ensured local residents were part of the Championships experience.

Glasgow 24 did more than achieve a high ABW score, it demonstrated how our standard can be applied in practice. It provides a model for future events, showing that with clear planning, strong partnerships and local alignment, sustainable delivery can be both credible and impactful.



MENTAL HEALTH AS A FLAGSHIP LEGACY

At Glasgow 24, mental health was positioned as a core part of the event's impact. Through a formal partnership with Scottish Action for Mental Health, the Championships aligned with national priorities in Scotland and used the platform of sport to drive awareness and action.

More than 800 staff and volunteers received structured mental health training in the lead-up to and during the event, equipping them with practical tools to support both themselves and others. This was complemented by on-site wellbeing support and a wider programme designed to extend beyond the Championships, creating longer-term behavioural change.

The initiative also reflected a broader ambition: to normalise conversations around mental health in sport. By embedding this work into the core delivery model, and becoming the first event to sign Scotland's Mental Health Charter, Glasgow 24 demonstrated how major events can contribute to cultural change as well as operational sustainability.



I wanted to use this event to look forward so that Glasgow and Scotland can use it as a new blueprint for future major championships. We wanted to focus more on those communities that are used to seeing events come in and disappear, and actually really engage with them meaningfully.

STUART CAMPBELL, Championship Director, World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 24

Building an air quality research lab for athletics

World Athletics' work on air quality began in 2018, driven by a growing concern about the conditions in which athletes were training and competing.

At the time, there was limited sport-specific guidance on how air pollution affects performance and health, despite increasing evidence from major events held in polluted environments. Rather than wait for external standards to emerge, our Health & Science team initiated our own research programme, marking the starting point of our broader sustainability journey.

One of the first steps was a global pilot study deploying air quality sensors in athletics stadiums across multiple continents. This work aimed to better understand the real conditions athletes experience, addressing a key limitation in existing systems: the lack of hyper-local data.

Findings confirmed that pollution levels within stadiums often reflect nearby urban sources such as traffic, and that conditions can vary significantly throughout the day. This reinforced the need for sport-specific monitoring and decision-making tools.

Subsequent research deepened this understanding. Monitoring during events such as the World Athletics Relays showed that athletes are

routinely exposed to pollutants at levels consistent with urban backgrounds, with potential implications for both health and performance. This is particularly relevant in athletics, where increased breathing rates during exercise lead to higher inhalation of pollutants and deeper penetration into the respiratory system.

From this foundation, we developed a structured air quality programme built on measurement, research and guidance. Advances in sensor technology have enabled real-time monitoring in stadiums and arenas and out-of-stadium events, like road races.

These insights allow organisers to identify patterns and make informed decisions – for example, adjusting training or competition schedules to reduce exposure during peak pollution periods. A specific recording methodology using both fixed and mobile monitoring systems have demonstrated how route design, local hotspots and race timing influence exposure, providing practical guidance to reduce risks for athletes.

At an individual level, research shows that relatively simple behavioural changes, such as selecting greener routes or avoiding peak traffic times, can significantly reduce exposure without compromising performance or participation.

Alongside research and monitoring, we prioritised education and guidance. Resources developed for athletes and organisers highlight both the risks of

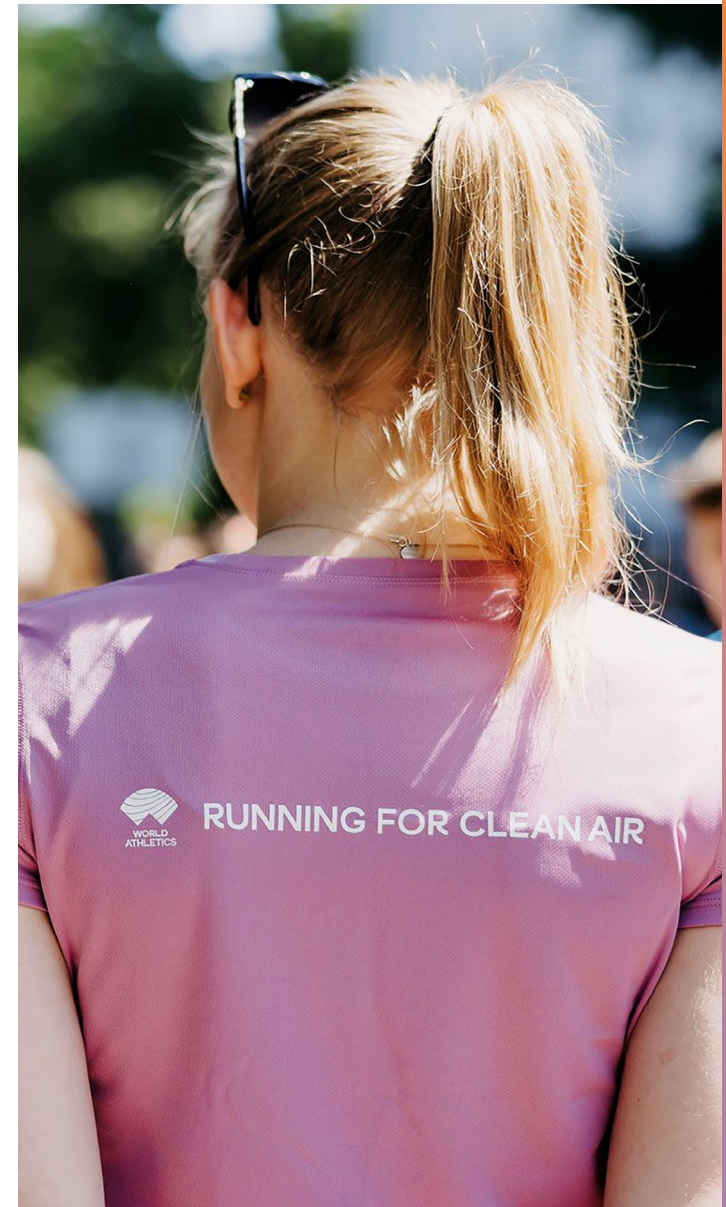
air pollution and practical mitigation strategies, including the use of air quality forecasts and route planning. This reflects a broader shift from understanding the problem to enabling action.

Through partnerships, including our collaboration with the Clean Air Fund, we have extended this work beyond the sport itself, contributing to wider urban air quality discussions and solutions. What began in 2018 as a targeted research initiative has evolved into a comprehensive programme – one that continues to position air quality as a critical intersection between athlete welfare, performance and environmental responsibility.



Sport demonstrates that communities truly care about the air they breathe and that, with support and the right data, they can make a positive difference.

JANE BURSTON, CEO and Founder of Clean Air Fund



A PLATFORM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

Our partnership with the Clean Air Fund has helped transform our air quality work from a research-led initiative into a broader programme connecting sport, science and urban policy.

Through the "Running for Clean Air" initiative, city marathons have become platforms for both environmental monitoring and public engagement, using athletics to raise awareness about one of the world's most pressing public health challenges.

The first phase of the programme focused on Warsaw, Poland and Lagos, Nigeria, where we worked with local partners to deploy air quality monitoring equipment before and during major marathon events.

Sensors tracked pollutants including PM2.5, PM10 and nitrogen dioxide along race routes and in surrounding urban areas, generating hyper-local data that could inform both event operations and wider city discussions on air quality.

In Lagos, the findings highlighted significant pollution hotspots across parts of the marathon route, particularly in areas affected by traffic congestion and poor waste management. The data was subsequently shared with local environmental authorities and contributed to discussions around future race planning and broader urban air quality measures.

The programme has also focused heavily on community engagement. Alongside the monitoring work, organisers delivered awareness campaigns, volunteer training and educational activities designed to help runners and residents better understand the relationship between air quality, health and physical activity.

Building on the success of the first phase, World Athletics and the Clean Air Fund expanded the initiative in 2026 to include events in Botswana,

Thailand and Spain. The programme now combines long-term background monitoring with dynamic event-time measurements, while also supporting scientific research and the development of guidance for our Member Federations and event organisers worldwide.





Using our platform for climate action

Ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, we were recognised for 'Outstanding Leadership' – one of just three international federations highlighted in 'Three Years of Progress: A Review of Sustainability Across the 2021-2024 Olympic Cycle', published by the Sport Ecology Group.

This recognition reflects a clear and deliberate strategy to place sustainability

at the centre of our governance, operations and events.

Our President, Seb Coe, has consistently used his platform to highlight the risks climate change poses to athletics – from extreme heat affecting athlete performance to the growing disruption of competition calendars. Through appearances at international panels, media engagements and press conferences at major events, these issues have been brought into the mainstream conversation around sport. ➔



Let us use sport as an amplifying voice. I will go to my grave fundamentally believing that sport is a key vehicle for change. It doesn't always happen quickly. It doesn't happen overnight. But I've rarely seen a sport go into any political, cultural or national environment that hasn't actually flicked the dial socially or politically."

SEB COE, President, World Athletics

IRÁNYÍTÁS A FENNTARTHATÓSÁGBAN
LEADERSHIP IN SUSTAINABILITY

FENNTARTHATÓ GYÁRTÁS ÉS FOGYASZTÁS
SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

KLIMAVÁLTOZÁS ÉS KARBONBICOCSÁTÁS
CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON

HELYI KÖRNYEZETVÉDELME ÉS LEVEGŐ MINŐSÉG
LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND AIR QUALITY

GLOBÁLIS ESELYEGENLŐSÉG
GLOBAL EQUALITY

DIVERZITÁS, HOZZAFÉRHETŐSÉG ÉS JÖLLET
DIVERSITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND PAYING

1983 1987 1989 2009 2011 2016 2017 2020 2024

A GLOBÁLIS FELMELEGEDÉS HATÁSAI
IMPACTS OF GLOBAL WARMING

A képen az 1995-ös atlétikai világbajnokság helyszíne, a Svédországban, Göteborgban lévő Ulevi stadion látható jelenlegi állapotában. Földünkön jelenleg 1,1 Celsius-fokos globális felmelegedés tapasztalható az iparosodás előtti hőmérséklethez képest.
This is present-day Ulevi Stadium in Göteborg, Sweden, the host of the 1995 World Athletics Championships. At present, the planet is experiencing 1.1°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels.

Az Ulevi stadion várható állapota a Párizsi Klímamegállapodásban meghatározott 1,5 Celsius-fokos globális felmelegedés és az azal járó tengerszint emelkedés esetén.
This is Ulevi with long-term sea level rise committed to by 1.5°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. 1.5°C was the target agreed to in the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.

Az Ulevi stadion állapota 3 Celsius-fokos felmelegedés esetén. A jelenlegi tengerszint emelkedés mellett a várható állapota 2,7 Celsius-fokos felmelegedés várható.
This is Ulevi with long-term sea level rise committed to by 3°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels. Present policies are expected to reach 2.7°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels.

This leadership has been matched by structural change. The introduction of the Athletics for a Better World Standard (see page 21) has embedded environmental, social and governance requirements directly into event bidding and licensing, ensuring that sustainability is not optional but integral to how our competitions are delivered.

Our progress sits within a wider shift across sport. A significant proportion of international sports federations have also published sustainability strategies and become signatories of both the UNFCCC Sports for Climate Action Framework and the Sports for Nature Framework, highlighting a growing collective commitment.

Recognition has also come through the BBC Green Sport Awards, where we were named Elite Organisation of the Year in 2024, acknowledging both our ambition and delivery. Alongside this, programmes such as Champions for a Better World have enabled athletes to use their voices to drive awareness and action.

GIVING OUR ATHLETES A PLATFORM FOR ADVOCACY

Through our Champions for a Better World initiative, launched in 2022, we are giving athletes a platform to speak out on climate and environmental issues.

The programme brings together Olympians and rising stars from across athletics to advocate for more sustainable practices within the sport and encourage their peers to use their voices.

Athletes have already taken this message to the global stage, including at UN climate conferences such as COP27 and COP29, where they have shared first-hand experiences of how climate change is affecting training, performance and competition.

Their message is clear: climate change is not a distant threat – it is already impacting athletics.

This is reinforced by our latest athlete survey, conducted with 141 athletes from 51 countries at the World Athletics U20 Championships Lima 24. The findings underline the scale of concern within the sport:

By amplifying these voices, we are using the global reach of sport to raise awareness, influence behaviour and contribute to the wider response to the climate crisis (see more on page 28).



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LEADERSHIP

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS OUR ORGANISATION AND EVENTS

FOUNDED IN 1912, World Athletics is the international governing body for athletics, bringing together 214 Member Federations worldwide. The organisation governs the sport through a framework designed to uphold integrity, transparency and accountability, while supporting athletics from grassroots participation to elite competition.



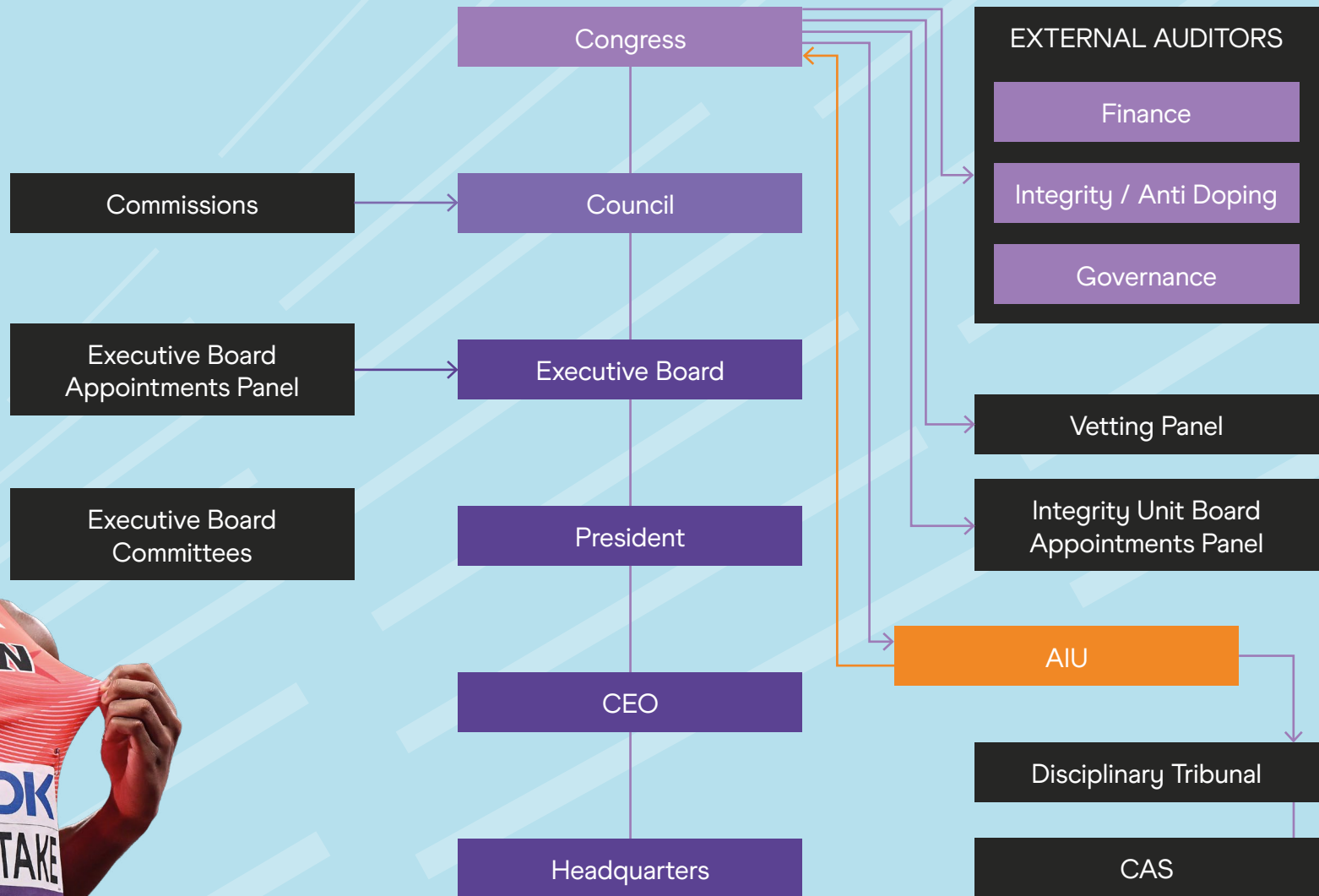
Sustainability Strategy Review

First five years

- Sustainability Strategy launched in 2020
- Signed the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework
 - Published three sustainability reports
 - Achieved and renewed ISO 20121 certification
- Introduced the ABW Standard for event sustainability reporting
 - Published best-practice guidance in 16 languages

Next five years

- Develop a Member Federation Social Impact Standard
- Strengthen collaboration with Area Associations
 - Implement a sustainable procurement policy
 - Launch an ABW Champion Programme
- Refine the commercial sustainability strategy



World Athletics sets the rules of the sport, recognises world records and oversees competitions that connect athletes and fans across the globe, including the World Athletics Championships, the World Athletics Ultimate Championship, the Wanda Diamond League and other World Athletics Series events.

The governance structure of World Athletics is led by Congress, Council and the Executive Board. Congress is the highest authority of World Athletics and consists of the organisation's 214 Member Federations. It meets every two years and is responsible for electing the President, Vice-Presidents and Individual Council Members, approving constitutional amendments and overseeing the long-term direction of the sport.

Council governs the sport of athletics and is responsible for decisions relating to rules and regulations, competition structures, strategic direction and the appointment of commissions and working groups. Council consists of 26 elected members, including the President, four Vice-Presidents, six Area Presidents, representatives from the Athletes' Commission and 13 Individual Council Members. The Executive Board governs the business operations of World Athletics, including financial planning, risk management, organisational policies and oversight of the strategic plan.

Supporting these bodies are a number of commissions and committees,



including the Governance Commission, Development Commission, Competition Commission and Athletes' Commission, alongside Executive Board committees focused on audit and finance, remuneration and risk management.

This governance framework underpins World Athletics' approach to sustainability and has been instrumental in embedding sustainability principles across the organisation and its events. A key milestone in that journey was 🏆

LEADERSHIP

the launch of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy in April 2020.

The strategy established six pillars that now frame the organisation's sustainability approach: Leadership in Sustainability; Sustainable Production and Consumption; Climate Change and Carbon; Local Environment and Air Quality; Global Equality; and Diversity, Accessibility and Wellbeing.

A central objective of the strategy is to integrate sustainability into the delivery of all events owned, controlled, licensed

or influenced by World Athletics. To achieve this, World Athletics developed two complementary tools: the Sustainable Events Management System (SEMS), which provides best practice guidance across 15 key areas of event planning and delivery, and the Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard, which evaluates, measures and scores an event's sustainability performance against the six pillars of the strategy.

Another important milestone was the achievement of ISO 20121

Sustainable Event certification for the World Athletics Sustainable Events Management System in April 2023 and recertification to the updated ISO 20121:2024 standard in 2026. The certification recognised the robustness of the organisation's approach to embedding sustainability into event governance and management processes, while also strengthening the credibility and consistency of the ABW Standard itself.

214

member federations

26

elected Council Members

13

Individual Council Members



EVENTS GOVERNED BY THE ABW STANDARD

The Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard was formally implemented in January 2024 following a multi-year development and pilot phase.

Introduced to event organisers in December 2021, the standard was tested and refined through extensive engagement with stakeholders, including webinars, workshops and one-to-one support sessions. Several dozen events piloted the standard in 2022 and more than 100 piloted elements of it in 2023 before full implementation began in 2024.

The standard consists of 55 action areas covering every layer of event delivery. These include procurement, waste management, energy use, food and water management, travel and accommodation planning, as well as diversity, accessibility and inclusion of staff and volunteers. The standard also addresses the health, safety and wellbeing of participants and stakeholders, partner and host city engagement, and approaches to monitoring, reporting and communications to monitoring, reporting and communications.

The ABW Standard is designed as a scalable and tiered system, allowing events of all sizes to participate, from local competitions through to World Athletics championships events. Achievement levels are categorised as Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Recognised Event status.

From 2024, all events within World Athletics' tours and label race series have been required to begin reporting against the standard, while future World Athletics Series events will be contractually required to meet minimum achievement thresholds depending on the event category. For example, the World Athletics Championships, World Athletics Indoor Championships and World Athletics Road Running Championships will require Gold-level achievement from future editions, while other championships such as the World Athletics Relays and World Athletics U20 Championships will require Bronze-level achievement.

The first year of implementation marked a significant milestone in embedding sustainability governance into the sport's event ecosystem. In 2024, 104 events submitted sustainability reporting through the dedicated ABW reporting platform. Nearly half achieved one of the recognised performance levels, including two Platinum, two Gold, four Silver and five Bronze events, while 35 events reached Recognised Event status.

In 2025, 121 events reported. Three achieved Platinum, five Gold, 10 Silver and nine Bronze.

The review process is based on evidence-backed reporting submitted through a web-based platform. Reports are assessed by the World Athletics sustainability team, supported by internationally recognised experts in sustainability and sport. Select events may also undergo on-site verification and follow-up reviews.

Researchers from the Institute of Management at the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa supported the year-one review by analysing reporting trends and identifying areas of strong and weak performance across the six pillars. The review highlighted several challenges faced by organisers during the first year of implementation, particularly around collecting robust data, evidencing actions and securing sufficient financial and human resources to support sustainability initiatives and reporting processes. These findings have informed the next phase of implementation and continuous improvement.

In response, World Athletics has continued to expand its support structures for organisers. These include dedicated workshop series, webinars, planning templates, reporting guidance and one-to-one advisory sessions. The organisation also continues to refine the standard and reporting expectations to improve usability, consistency and impact across events globally.



THE ABW STANDARD



When the ABW standard becomes a requirement for World Athletics Series events

2026

- World Athletics Race Walking Team Championships – Bronze
- World Athletics Relays – Bronze
- World Athletics Ultimate Championships – Gold

2027

- World Athletics Championships – Gold
- World Athletics Road Running Championships – Bronze

2028

- World Athletics Indoor Championships – Silver
- World Athletics U20 Championships – Bronze
- World Athletics Cross Country Championships – Bronze



ENVIRONNEMENT

PROTECTING THE CONDITIONS OUR SPORT DEPENDS ON

ATHLETICS depends on a healthy environment. From the quality of the air athletes breathe, to the stability of the climate in which events are staged, to the natural spaces that support training, recreation and community participation, environmental conditions shape how and where the sport can take place.



Sustainability Strategy Review

First five years

- Implemented a waste management system at HQ
- Switched to 100% renewable electricity at HQ
- Used the ABW Standard to drive action on climate, waste, procurement and air quality
 - Introduced air quality monitoring at events
 - Amplified athlete voices on sustainability issues
- Supported Member Federations to manage carbon emissions

Next five years

- Develop air quality toolkits for communities
- Integrate training into updated eLearning modules
- Embed actions and training in the ABW Champion Programme and Social Impact project
 - Identify partners for renewable energy and sustainable transport



The World Athletics Sustainability Strategy recognises this through three environmental pillars: Sustainable Production & Consumption; Climate Change & Carbon; and Local Environment & Air Quality. Together, these pillars guide our work to reduce the environmental impact of athletics, support more resilient event delivery and protect the health and wellbeing of athletes, officials, volunteers, spectators and host communities.

This chapter outlines progress across those areas. It includes our climate transition journey, including our corporate net zero pathway, climate adaptation work and support for event organisers to reduce emissions.

It highlights examples of events using the Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard to strengthen environmental delivery, from renewable energy and sustainable transport to circular resource use and local sourcing.

The chapter also explores our long-standing work on air quality, which began in 2018 and helped shape our wider sustainability approach, as well as emerging work on biodiversity through collaboration with research and sport partners.

Ensuring resilience in a changing climate

Climate change poses a material and growing risk to athletics. Rising temperatures, more frequent extreme

weather, flooding, wildfire smoke and worsening air quality are already affecting how athletes train, compete and recover.

They are also creating operational challenges for event organisers, host cities and Member Federations, from schedule changes and increased medical provision to venue damage, transport disruption and pressure on temporary infrastructure.

We recognise our dual responsibility: to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and to help ensure that athletics remains accessible, safe and resilient in a changing climate.

In 2025, we developed our first World Athletics Climate Transition, building on six years of climate action since the launch of our sustainability strategy and bringing together a structured, time-bound roadmap for reducing emissions. 🌱



Athletes have a responsibility to communicate about climate change and climate action, help decarbonise sport, and engage sports fans to take and support climate action themselves.

RHYDIAN COWLEY (AUS), Olympic bronze medallist, race walk relay



managing climate risks and supporting the wider athletics ecosystem.

The World Athletics Climate Transition is built around two foundations: the Carbon Reduction Plan, including our net zero pathway, and the Climate Adaptation Strategy. Together, they provide a practical framework to reduce and balance greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen resilience to physical and transitional climate risks and identify opportunities to support fair, inclusive and equitable outcomes across our sport.

4.5%

year-on-year reduction between 2019-2030 (on track)

4%

year-on-year reduction (2030-2040)

90%

reduction by 2040 from our 2019 baseline

Carbon measurement and reduction

At the core of this approach is our net zero pathway. Developed in line with a 1.5°C trajectory and the principles of the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework, the pathway focuses on our areas of greatest impact across operations, supply chain, staff travel and owned event delivery.

We have committed to a 50% absolute reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across scopes 1, 2 and 3 of our HQ operations by 2030, from a 2019 baseline, and a 90% reduction by 2040. Remaining emissions will be balanced through credible removals, while 100% renewable electricity has been used at our Monaco headquarters since 2020.

Our reduction carbon commitments

We calculated our first carbon footprint in 2019 in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, using an operational control approach. This baseline provides the starting point for our carbon reduction work. It showed that most of our emissions came from indirect activities across our value chain, with more than 97% deriving from two categories: supply chain and staff travel.

Supply chain emissions represented more than three-quarters of our footprint, covering operational expenditure and all expenditure for owned events. Staff travel accounted for 21%, with 96% of those emissions



coming from flights and the remainder from commuting and business travel.

As our first year of reporting relied heavily on spend-based data, improving data quality has been a priority.

By 2024, we had reduced absolute greenhouse gas emissions by 22% from our 2019 base year. This progress has been supported by staff sustainable travel principles, the transition to renewable electricity and improvements in data quality, particularly for business travel and electricity.

Our carbon reduction work is embedded through our ISO 20121-certified Sustainable Event Management System and the ABW Standard, which help integrate climate considerations into event planning and delivery.

Reduction strategy

Over the next five years, we are targeting a further 28% absolute emissions reduction from our 2019 base year, with a focus on the areas that account for almost all of our carbon footprint: supply chain and travel.

- **Supply chain:** We are developing and implementing a supplier decarbonisation strategy that will improve data capture and place sustainability and low-carbon considerations at the centre of procurement decisions for both operations and events.
- **Travel:** We are reducing business and staff event travel where appropriate and prioritising a more digital-first approach to collaboration. This will support staff wellbeing while allowing us to explore innovative solutions, partnerships and investment opportunities, including sustainable aviation fuel.

Identifying risks and opportunities

Climate adaptation is also becoming an increasingly important part of our



When we are running, we need fresh air. We need clean air. We need a good environment for running. The only way is to respect the environment.

ELIUD KIPCHOGE (KEN), two-time Olympic marathon champion

approach. In 2025, we completed our first climate risk and opportunity assessment, considering physical acute risks, physical chronic risks and transitional risks across short, medium and long-term time horizons through to 2050.

The assessment explored both a 2°C warming scenario, reflecting a more orderly transition to a low-carbon economy, and a 4°C scenario, representing a higher-risk pathway in which global emissions continue to rise.

Several material risks were identified for athletics, including extreme heat, increasing air pollution, extreme storms and flooding, and the challenge of transitioning to low-carbon transport.

These risks are being monitored over time to understand how their nature and severity may evolve, and to identify practical adaptation measures for World Athletics, event organisers, host cities, Member Federations, athletes, fans and technical officials.

Climate risk and athletics

Extreme heat is one of the most immediate climate risks for athletics, affecting athlete health, wellbeing and performance, increasing pressure on medical and operational teams and requiring changes to event schedules.

At the World Athletics Championships Tokyo 25, for example, the marathon and 35km race walk events started

30 minutes earlier than scheduled to reduce exposure to extreme heat.

We are responding through practical guidance, operational planning and knowledge sharing. Our Beat the Heat initiatives support athletes and organisers with advice on training, competition, hydration, nutrition and recovery in high-temperature conditions, while our work with hosts includes climate-responsive venue planning, shaded areas, cooling systems, water access points and schedule optimisation.

Extreme storms and flooding are also creating growing risks for athletics, from competition disruption and infrastructure damage to transport delays, financial exposure and health and safety concerns.

The Valencia Marathon Trinidad Alfonso Zurich in 2024 illustrated both the vulnerability and resilience of athletics in the face of extreme weather. Following severe flooding in southern and eastern Spain, the event went ahead and became a platform for community support, with its “Valencia runs 4 Valencia” campaign raising around €1 million for schools, running clubs, local councils and emergency response organisations affected by the storm.

The impact of climate change is not experienced equally across the sport. Some of our smallest Member Federations, including Pacific island nations such as Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands, are among the most exposed. 🌍



Sporting infrastructure is increasingly vulnerable to flooding, cyclones, earthquakes and coastal erosion, while wider climate impacts on crops, fishing and local economies can force young people, including athletes, to leave in search of opportunity.

Athletes are increasingly aware of these risks. A World Athletics survey found that three-quarters of athletes had experienced direct climate change impacts, while 85% believed athletics was already being affected.

Helping athletes speak confidently about climate action

Athletes are increasingly using their platforms to speak about climate change and its impact on sport.

Olympians and elite athletes including Eliza McCartney, Sam Mattis, Aja Del Ponte, Rhydian Cowley and Elena Vallortigara have shared their experiences of disrupted training, extreme heat and changing environmental conditions.

Athletics Kenya President and World Athletics Vice President Jackson Tuwei has also highlighted how climate change is affecting both established and emerging athletes in Kenya.

We have supported athlete engagement through climate communication workshops, including a session at the World Athletics Championships Budapest 23 led by sport and sustainability researcher Madeleine Orr.

The workshop helped athletes explore how to speak confidently and constructively about environmental issues they care about, recognising the role athletes can play in raising awareness and encouraging action.

Advancing decarbonisation through collaboration

Between 2022 and 2025, World Athletics was a member of the GAMES Project (Green Approaches in Management for Enhancing Sports), a multi-sport collaboration co-funded by the European Union to advance decarbonisation in sport.

With the support of project partners, including the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies, the International Biathlon Union, the International Floorball Federation, the Swedish Floorball Federation and Touchline, we were able to better understand and implement climate considerations into governance and operations.

We contributed to several key outputs, including a life cycle assessment of

the 2023 World Mountain and Trail Running Championships in Innsbruck-Stubai. The project also supported the development of an interactive database of sustainability best practices, helped refine the ABW Standard and created training resources to improve climate knowledge across sport.

Supporting environmental and social outcomes through climate compensation

Climate compensation forms part of our net zero pathway, but it does not replace the need to reduce emissions. Our priority is to avoid, reduce and substitute greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible.






Offsetting is used as a transitional tool, particularly for emissions that cannot yet be fully eliminated in the short to medium term. We have offset 100% of our business travel footprint and have committed to continue doing so until 2030, in line with our near-term net zero target. When possible, we prioritise projects in countries that have recently, or soon will host a World Athletics Series event.

Together, these projects support emissions reduction while also contributing to outcomes such as local employment, improved public health, biodiversity protection, reduced deforestation, cleaner energy access and community resilience.

Several events across the global athletics calendar are also using



THE PROJECTS WE INVEST IN INCLUDE:

- 1 Wind power projects in India, Turkey and the Dominican Republic 
- 2 Reforestation and afforestation projects in Colombia and Uruguay 
- 3 Improved cookstove projects in Peru and Uganda 
- 4 A gender-responsive safe water project in Uganda 
- 5 A renewable energy project in Brazil designed to reduce illegal logging 

100%
of business travel offset

85%
of athletes believe they are affected by climate change

climate compensation to support wider environmental and social outcomes, while continuing to focus on direct emissions reduction.

In 2024, **New York Road Runners** launched Team for Climate, a new entry route for its three marquee races: the TCS New York City Marathon, United Airlines NYC Half and RBC Brooklyn Half. Nearly 250 runners took part in the inaugural initiative at the 2024 TCS New York City Marathon, raising almost \$800,000.

The funds were used to purchase carbon credits for two improved forest management projects in New York State, helping offset the marathon's full carbon footprint. The initiative also encouraged lower-impact behaviours, including travel to the start line by Staten Island Ferry, reusable checked bags, a sustainable start tent powered by electric generators, climate stripe singlets and a race-week plogging event.

Weltklasse Zürich, a Wanda Diamond League meeting, has measured its carbon emissions since 2008 and continues to combine reduction measures with climate compensation. In 2025, the event earned Platinum-level recognition against the ABW Standard and offset 100% of its 364 tonnes of CO₂e emissions through certified climate projects.

Around half supported sustainable forest management in Switzerland, with the remainder contributing to

EVENTS TAKING CLIMATE ACTION

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p style="margin: 0;">New York Road Runners Team for Climate</p> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 20px;"> <p> 250 runners</p> <p> \$800,000 raised</p> <p> 2 forest managing projects</p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Weltklasse Zürich</p> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 20px;"> <p> 100% of its 364 tonnes of CO₂e emissions offset</p> <p> 100% renewable electricity at Letzigrund Stadium</p> <p> Integrated public transport ticket</p> <p> Organic and regional food</p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right;"> <p style="margin: 0;">Rimi Riga Marathon Run for Future</p> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 20px;"> <p> 4,000 fir tree saplings distributed to runners</p> <p> 10,000+ trees planted</p> <p> 527 participants compensated their carbon emissions</p> </div>
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a joint Wanda Diamond League project. The event also reduced its footprint through 100% renewable electricity at Letzigrund Stadium, integrated public transport in the admission ticket, local sourcing and regional and organic food provision.

The **Rimi Riga Marathon** has used its Run for Future programme to calculate, reduce and compensate its carbon

footprint while engaging participants in practical environmental action. In 2025, the event supported projects in Riga and Latvia with Riga Forests and Riga City Council, distributing 4,000 fir tree saplings to runners and planting 3,700 fir trees across 4.1 hectares in Jugla Forest.

A further 7,000 pine trees were planted on a two-hectare site in Ogre

municipality, helping pre-emptively offset part of the 2025 event footprint. Participants could also compensate their own footprint during registration, with 527 doing so ahead of the event.



Promoting a healthy local environment

Air pollution is a major threat to both health and climate. Globally, it is responsible for more than seven million deaths each year, according to the World Health Organization.

For athletes, the issue is particularly relevant. During exercise, athletes

breathe faster and inhale a larger volume of air, increasing their exposure to pollutants that may be present. Those training or competing in urban environments, where pollution is often higher, can be especially affected.

Our work on air quality began in 2018, becoming one of the foundations of our wider sustainability programme.

We recognised that while air pollution was increasingly affecting sport, there

was limited sport-specific guidance for athletes, event organisers and venue operators. Our Health & Science Department responded by building a programme focused on measurement, research and practical guidance.

A central part of this work has been hyper-local monitoring. We have deployed air quality measurement devices at stadiums and road race locations to better understand the conditions athletes experience at the field of play, warm-up areas and finish zones.

This data can help stadium operators identify periods of the day with the highest and lowest pollutant concentrations, support competition organisers with decisions on scheduling or postponement, and inform policy makers and municipalities about practical interventions such as traffic restrictions or diversions.

We have also developed guidance for athletes and organisers. This includes simple protective strategies such as checking air quality and weather forecasts, avoiding training during rush hour, selecting routes away from major roads and intersections, reducing exposure during transport to venues, adapting exercise duration and intensity during high pollution periods, and ensuring athletes with asthma or exercise-induced bronchoconstriction follow prescribed medication plans.

Read more about our air quality work on pages 11-12.

Embedding biodiversity considerations into event delivery

We are also developing our work on biodiversity, recognising that sport both depends on and affects nature.

Tracks, road races, mountain running, trail running and cross country events all interact with local ecosystems in different ways. At the same time, healthy ecosystems provide services that sport relies on, including cleaner air, shade, water regulation and more resilient landscapes.

The BENCHES project, led by the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, is helping sport better understand these relationships. BENCHES, which stands for Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Nature Conservation Helped and Enhanced by Sports, brings together research and sport partners to develop tools and practices that measure, manage and mitigate sport's impacts on biodiversity.

World Athletics is participating alongside organisations including the International Biathlon Union, World Sailing, the Italian Canoe Kayak Federation, S.L. Benfica and Touchline.

Each partner brings a different perspective. World Sailing has built biodiversity into its Agenda 2030 sustainability strategy, including work on invasive species and biofouling. The Italian Canoe Kayak Federation has emphasised the environmental vocation of canoeists and established an



Environmental Commission as early as 2005. The International Biathlon Union has integrated biodiversity and nature into its Target 26 sustainability strategy, with a focus on ecosystem protection.

The project complements the elements of our ABW Standard that encourage events to consider local environmental impacts. The next step is to strengthen the tools, evidence and guidance available to event organisers so that biodiversity becomes a more practical and measurable part of sustainable event delivery.

Tokyo 25 adopts all 55 AWB actions

The local organising committee of the WCH Tokyo 25 were the first outdoor World Athletics Championships host to fully adopt the ABW Standard and its 55 action areas, using the framework to shape sustainability across every layer of planning and delivery and earning Platinum-level recognition.

Energy was one of the strongest areas of delivery. Biofuels powered 100% of the temporary generators used for broadcasters, a first for a World Athletics Championships, while all electricity purchased for the championships was either supplied from renewable sources or guaranteed through certified energy certificates.

The official vehicle fleet also included only electric, hybrid or fuel-cell powered cars, compact shuttles and motorcycles.

The event also used Tokyo 25 to showcase local sustainability innovation. Nearly 20,000 spectators visited the LOC tent in the stadium park, where organisers shared the event's sustainability programme and demonstrated next-generation solar cells developed in Japan.

Circularity and local sourcing were also central: more than 10 tonnes of single-use plastic bottles were recycled through a bottle-to-bottle system, 81% of products were sourced within 100km and catered meals included vegan and vegetarian options focused on local and regional food.

100% renewable energy at the Oslo Bislett Games

Renewable energy has been central to the Oslo Bislett Games retaining Platinum-level recognition against the ABW Standard. At Bislett Stadium, 100% renewable electricity powers the event, supported by on-site solar panels and battery storage that strengthen the venue's self-sufficiency and resilience.

This gives the Wanda Diamond League meeting a strong operational foundation, reducing reliance on fossil fuel-based energy while demonstrating how clean power can be built into the everyday running of a major athletics venue. For Meeting Director Steinar Hoen, this forms part of a wider shift in the event's identity. ➡

After almost three decades with ExxonMobil as title sponsor, the meeting took what he describes as “a 180-degree turn” from being closely associated with oil and gas to pursuing a goal of becoming “the most sustainable track and field meeting in the world”.

That transition has been deliberately practical. As Hoen explains, sustainability only works if it is better

for the climate, better for athletes and spectators and better financially. “If it’s not, then it’s not sustainable,” he says. This principle has shaped the event’s approach to energy, transport, waste and venue operations.

Transport has been one of the clearest examples. Since 2017, Oslo and Stockholm have coordinated their Wanda Diamond League meetings so athletes can compete at both events in

the same trip to Scandinavia, reducing international travel while improving convenience and sharing costs.

Athletes travelling between the two meetings use high-speed rail, while those arriving in Oslo are met with airport train tickets rather than buses. The event hotel was also moved next to the airport train stop, making the lower-carbon option the easiest option.

Local mobility follows the same logic. Electric vehicles and buses support event operations, while athletes are transported from the hotel to Bislett Stadium by electric tram, with a dedicated Bislett Games stop created outside the hotel. As Hoen notes, the sustainable option is often also the better experience: quicker, simpler and less exposed to city traffic.

Spectator travel has also been a major focus. Working with Ruter, Oslo’s public transport provider, organisers include public transport in the admission ticket, helping 74% of spectators travel to the stadium by public transport. This reduces emissions linked to audience travel while making lower-impact choices easier for fans.

The event’s environmental work extends beyond energy and mobility. Because the Bislett Games also operates Bislett Stadium on behalf of Oslo Municipality, it has been able to improve systems beyond event day.

Since 2017, the stadium’s recycling system has been transformed, with

clear sorting areas for spectators and users. According to Hoen, the recycling rate has increased from almost zero to around 60-65%, reducing waste, improving the stadium environment and lowering costs as mixed waste becomes more expensive to manage.

The event has also strengthened the way it communicates sustainability. A more coordinated communications plan has helped increase the visibility of sustainability stories across event channels and social media, while athletes including Karsten Warholm, Markus Rooth and Sander Skotheim have supported activities such as tree planting, waste reduction and community outreach.

Practical measures for a local context at Hypomeeting Götzis

Hypomeeting Götzis has shown how a volunteer-led event can embed sustainability in a practical and credible way. After first working with the Austrian Ecolabel for Green Events, the meeting used the ABW Standard to



Sustainability only works if it is better for the climate, better for athletes and spectators and better financially.

STEINAR HOEN





structure and strengthen its approach, achieving Gold-level recognition and coming within two points of Platinum.

For Meeting Director Alexandra Giesinger, much of the work was already part of the event's culture, particularly around mobility, waste separation and regional sourcing. The challenge was not only to act, but to document and evidence those actions.

"We do a lot of things," she explains, "but it was the challenge to write everything down." With a small volunteer organising team, responsibilities

were split across leadership, energy and air quality, communications and inclusion, helping make the process more manageable.

The event has focused on practical measures that fit its local context. Free transfers and shuttle services support lower-impact mobility, while food and beverage choices prioritise regional suppliers and farmers. The meeting has also moved towards glass and porcelain instead of single-use serviceware, requiring additional logistics but reducing waste and improving the event experience.

Air quality measurement was initially a challenge, particularly for an event held in a clean-air alpine setting. Rather than investing in expensive short-term equipment, the team found a lower-cost way to measure particulate matter and has since extended the monitoring period. This reflects the event's broader approach: pragmatic, locally relevant and focused on continuous improvement.

Giesinger is clear that sustainability requires commitment, especially for smaller events. The work brings additional cost and administration,

but also value for stakeholders, partners and the organising team.

"It's a lot of work at the beginning," she says, "but it's nice to see when you receive the silver or gold label." With strong internal commitment and a desire to keep improving, Hypomeeting Götzis is now considering how it can take the final steps towards Platinum.

OLY



SOCIAL

EMPOWERING THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE ATHLETICS POSSIBLE

ATHLETICS is one of the most universal sports in the world. It is practised in every region, by people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, and at every level from grassroots participation to the Olympic Games.

That reach gives World Athletics both an opportunity and a responsibility: to ensure that the sport is accessible, inclusive and safe for everyone who takes part.



Sustainability Strategy Review

First five years

- Accessibility delivered across HQ offices and facilities
- Officials mentoring programme aligned with ABW Standard
- Diversity, accessibility and well-being embedded in Event Operations Manual

Next five years

- Build federation capacity through ABW Champions and Social Impact programmes
 - Address sustainability skills gaps in development programmes
- Strengthen smaller federations through federation and sponsor alliances
 - Support demographic equity across Member Federations
 - Engage global partners to advance equality across regions

The social dimension of our sustainability work is focused on the people who make athletics possible: athletes, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers, staff, spectators and communities. It includes our work to advance gender equity in leadership, strengthen safeguarding across the global athletics community, respect and protect human rights and address emerging risks to athlete welfare, including online abuse. The Sustainability Strategy addresses that work, directly through actions, and indirectly, through support for initiatives

delivered through events or by other World Athletics strategies.

This chapter outlines progress in these areas. It begins with the publication of the World Athletics Gender Leadership Strategy 2025-2027, which builds on significant governance reforms and sets clear targets to increase the representation of women in decision-making, coaching and officiating.

It also explains how our safeguarding framework has evolved, including the revised World Athletics Safeguarding

Policy, the introduction of safeguarding rules and the requirement for Member Federations and Area Associations to adopt their own safeguarding policies and procedures.

Finally, it highlights our continued work to understand and respond to online abuse, recognising the impact that digital harassment can have on athletes' mental health, wellbeing and performance.

Advancing gender equity in leadership

Athletics has gender parity in elite participation on the field of play and equal prize money across World Athletics Series events. Our ambition is for that balance to be reflected off the field too, by creating more opportunities for women to lead, influence and shape the future of the sport.

In 2023, the World Athletics Council achieved gender equality, with 50% female representation. This was a historic milestone for World Athletics and for the Olympic movement, making World Athletics the first Olympic sport to achieve gender equality at global leadership level. It also marked significant progress from 2016, when women represented just 22% of the Council. All World Athletics bodies, including commissions, committees and taskforces, now also benefit from a minimum of 40% female representation, up from 15% in 2016.

The current Council includes women in senior leadership and decision-making roles across the organisation. Ximena Restrepo, who in 2019 became the first woman elected as a World Athletics Vice President, was elected Senior Vice President in 2023.

This progress reflects the governance reforms introduced in 2016, which made diversity and gender equality central to the future direction of the organisation. To support those reforms,



the Gender Leadership Taskforce was established in 2017 with a mandate to build a robust pipeline of female leaders throughout athletics and ensure that the gender provisions in the World Athletics Constitution were achieved.

The publication of the World Athletics Gender Leadership Strategy 2025-2027 provides the next phase of this work. The strategy sets out a clear roadmap to empower women, promote sustainable change and position athletics as a global model for equity and inclusion.

Building leadership pathways

It is focused on three core pillars: succession, advocacy and communications, supported by data-led insights. Through these pillars, we will continue to build leadership pathways, strengthen policy frameworks, increase visibility for women in athletics and monitor progress through better data.

The strategy also recognises that progress at Council level has not yet been matched across the wider athletics ecosystem. Between 2016 and 2024, female representation among Member Federation Presidents increased from 9% to 13%, among Member Federation Vice Presidents from 13% to 24%, and among Member Federation General Secretaries and CEOs from 20% to 26%.

Across the six Area Association Councils, average female representation increased from 16% to 34%, but there

are currently no women among the six Area Association Presidents.

Coaching and officiating are also priority areas. At the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, women represented 40% of International Technical Officials, supported by changes to the World Athletics Referee Education and Certification System (WARECS), including online courses and exams and minimum gender course requirements.

However, female representation at WARECS Gold level remains 27%, showing the need to support progression through the officiating pathway. In coaching, women represented only 11% of coaches at the World Athletics Championships in 2023 and around 20% at the World Athletics U20 Championships, despite gender parity among athletes on the field of play.

The 2025-2027 strategy sets clear targets to address these gaps. These include achieving a minimum of 40% female representation on Member Federation executive boards by 2029, 40% female representation across all WARECS exams by 2027, 40% female representation among CECS Level 1 coaches by 2029 and 30% among CECS Level 2 coaches by 2029.

It also sets targets for 50/50 gender balance among International Technical Officials at the World Athletics Championships Beijing 2027 and the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, and for increased female representation



among team coaches at World Athletics U20 and senior championships.

Implementation is being overseen by the Gender Leadership Taskforce, which will continue to meet monthly, report to the World Athletics Council and share progress with the membership through the annual report. The strategy also includes the launch of a Gender Leadership Academy, expanded Area-level workshops, targeted initiatives

for Member Federations, upgraded eLearning modules and global campaigns such as #WeGrowAthletics.

The ABW Standard, driven by the Sustainability Strategy, supports these objectives by embedding equity, coach, technical official and administrator development and training along with broader community outreach and involvement into World Athletics Series and one-day meeting series events.

Promoting a safe and inclusive sport

We published our first Safeguarding Policy in October 2021. The revised 2024 policy, its third edition, strengthens our commitment to protect everyone in athletics from abuse, harassment and exploitation, and to promote safe, positive environments for athletes, coaches, officials, staff and volunteers.

The policy is built on the principle that everyone has the right to participate in athletics safely, inclusively and with dignity. It applies to World Athletics, our Area Associations, Member Federations, athletes, staff and others associated with our organisation, and defines shared responsibilities for preventing and responding to safeguarding concerns.

Implementation is a central focus. Member Federations were required to adopt safeguarding policies and procedures by December 2023, while Area Associations must do so by the end of December 2024. The revised policy also allows the World Athletics Council to consider sanctions, funding conditions or other measures where appropriate policies and procedures are not in place.

We support this work through guidance, training and resources, including a Safeguarding Starter Pack, tailored support for Area Associations and online and face-to-face training in multiple



Without safeguarding woven into every aspect of our sport we risk losing athletes, officials and other participants, and will struggle to attract new ones.

SEBASTIAN COE, President,
World Athletics

languages. To date, 32,000 people have completed the Safeguarding Essentials eLearning Course.

Safeguarding is also being embedded into event delivery. We have developed a safeguarding plan with every World Athletics Series event LOC since the 2023 World Championships, and completion of the eLearning course will be mandatory for those seeking accreditation for all World Athletics Series events from the World Athletics U20 Championships Oregon 26.

The World Athletics Safeguarding Rules, adopted in 2023, provide the authority to impose safeguards, limitations or restrictions on individuals





who may pose a risk to others. Together, the policy and rules help make safeguarding a practical responsibility across our sport, rather than a standalone policy exercise. The Rules also enable the Athletics Integrity Unit to seek the extension of national-level decisions so that they have global effect.

There is an independent Case Management Group which makes decisions as to safeguarding matters brought before it by the Athletics Integrity Unit.

Protecting the rights of individuals

This work sits within our wider commitment to human rights. The

World Athletics Human Rights Policy, approved by Council in December 2023, confirms our commitment to respecting internationally proclaimed human rights and ensuring we are not complicit in human rights abuses.

It is grounded in international frameworks including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the UN Global Compact and the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

The policy also reflects the World Athletics Constitution, which protects

the right of every individual to participate in athletics without unlawful discrimination, and the Integrity Code of Conduct, which reinforces equality and dignity.

It sets expectations for World Athletics, Area Associations and Member Federations to recognise the dignity of every person, promote equity and fairness, address harm where it occurs and use their influence to encourage third parties to uphold the same principles.



Giving visibility to displaced athletes

The World Athletics Athlete Refugee Team was founded in 2016 for athletes who have fled violence, conflict, injustice and climate change. Since then, it has developed from an inspirational Olympic debut into the world's only year-round, full-time refugee team programme.

The team first competed as part of the Refugee Olympic Team at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, giving visibility to displaced athletes and offering a source of hope to millions of refugees around the world.

We then built on that foundation through our Athletics for a Better World programme, creating a more structured model of support for athletes who are now based across several countries and training environments.

Since Rio, the Athlete Refugee Team has competed at almost every World Athletics Series event, including the 2017, 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2025 World Championships, the World Half Marathon Championships, World Athletics Relays, World U20 Championships and World Athletics Indoor Championships.

We support the programme by funding coaches, creating competitive opportunities locally and internationally and supporting a team manager who coordinates logistics, communication and day-to-day needs. The programme also takes a holistic approach to athlete development. The U20 refugee



This sport is so good that it will change the life of my whole family; this has been the key to a new life.

EMMANUEL KIRUHURA NTAGUNGA, World Athletics athlete refugee team

team model combines athletics with education, wellbeing and personal development, recognising that progress in one area can support progress in others.

In 2023, athletes took part in weekly English classes, with all tested athletes improving their English proficiency during the year. The programme also recorded athletic progress despite major constraints, including limited facilities, harsh weather, internet challenges and the absence of a functional athletics stadium in Kakuma.

The project is also helping to build bridges between refugee and host communities. In Kenya, refugee athletes have competed in local races and Kenyan trials, supported by Athletics Kenya and local partners.

Our pledge through the Sport for Refugees Coalition commits us to promoting safe sport, gender parity, safeguarding education, academic and sport scholarships, certified refugee coaches and equal treatment for refugee athletes at World Athletics Series events.

RESPONDING TO ONLINE ABUSE OF ATHLETE

Athletes use social media to connect with fans, build their profiles and share their stories, but these platforms can also expose them to abuse, harassment and discrimination, with consequences for mental health, wellbeing and performance.

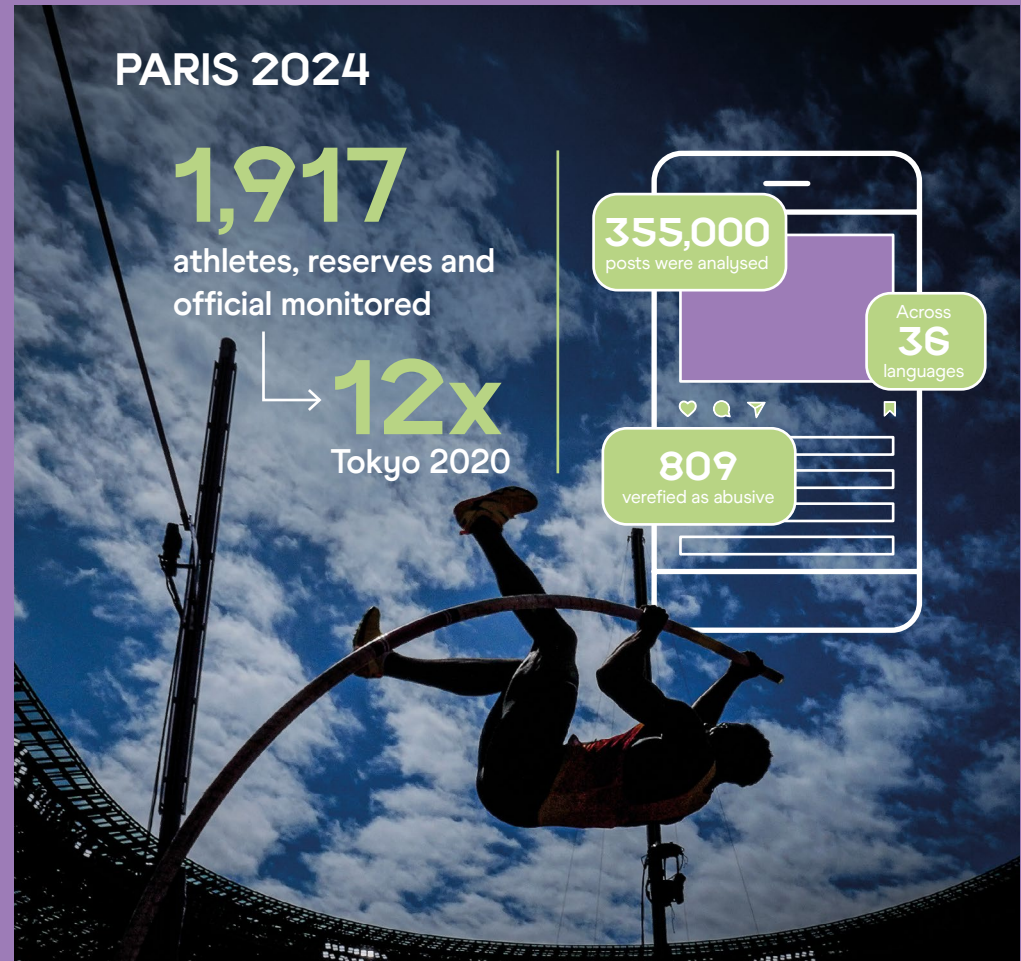
We have continued to research and respond to this issue through a series of online abuse studies. During the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, we worked with Signify Group and its Threat Matrix service to monitor abuse directed at athletes across X, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok.

It was the fourth major study of its kind, following research at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and the 2022 and 2023 World Athletics Championships.

The Paris 2024 study monitored 1,917 athletes, reserves and officials, 12 times the Tokyo 2020 sample size. More than 355,000 posts and comments were analysed across 36 languages and dialects, with 809 verified as abusive.

Racism and sexualised abuse remained the most significant concerns, making up more than 48% of detected abuse, while two athletes accounted for 82% of all verified abuse.

We escalated 128 abusive posts and comments to the relevant platforms, with two cases referred to higher authorities. Previous research also informed athlete support during the Games, including guidance on platform safety tools and additional preventative measures for athletes identified as being at higher risk.



Updated roadmap for delivery

The following is a progress report and update on the 71 actions summarised on pages 60-65 of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 Roadmap for Delivery that formed the basis of the 2025 mid-way report and strategy review.

The initial focus of the sustainability strategy's implementation was on World Athletics taking responsibility for its own business activities, demonstrating leadership to the wider athletics and sporting communities and building momentum for wider delivery. A process of benchmarking and reporting was put in place to obtain baseline data for 2019 to set the starting point for monitoring delivery progress.

In parallel, actions spanning World Athletics sphere of influence – primarily owned and permitted events and World Athletics Member Federations – initiated the process of engaging and educating stakeholders to obtain universal awareness, support and, ultimately, commitment to World Athletics sustainability strategy.

The main driver was the Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard, the system that evaluates, measures and scores an event's achievement in sustainable delivery and in delivering the event in alignment with the six pillars that frame our sustainability strategy. (More about the ABW Standard,

referred to in the strategy as the 'sustainable event charter', on page 21.)

The ABW Standard is ambitious; when fully implemented, it will be the largest sustainability reporting system in the sports industry. Its launch and implementation were identified as the most effective pathway to get as many athletics events as we could to begin their sustainability journeys as quickly as we and they could.

The ABW Standard's objectives align with and drive several of the strategy's actions and objectives, thus its launch and implementation were a key focus of the strategy's first five years. That aim forced a shift in some priorities which were addressed in this midway strategy review.

The roadmap for delivery was reviewed and updated based on several factors:

- World Athletics Climate Transition
- A climate risk and opportunity assessment
- Requirements of the updated ISO 20121:2024 event sustainability management system
- Updated Special Projects department and consultant job descriptions
- Stakeholder engagement – events, Member Federations, athletes, suppliers and others
- Human and financial resources available across all stakeholders

- Existing partner and venue contractual commitments and terms, and
- Evolving commitments and collaborations

The actions are listed below, numbered and grouped by World Athletics HQ department unit, as they were in the Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030. Progress is indicated as either Completed or Ongoing; 'Ongoing' includes actions that are not yet completed or those that require annual review. Actions not yet started – those not yet scheduled to start, or those shifted on the timeline – are listed with revised delivery year indicated.

Most of the strategy updates or delivery timeline revisions were made in the Technical and Venue Standards, Training and Development, Member Federations and Governance, and Partnerships sections. Gap analyses identified resource availability, both human and financial, as a common challenge, particularly among Member Federations. Another was better alignment or inclusion of sustainability goals and objectives into already existing project timelines at World Athletics HQ.

A number of tools or mediums will be created to build momentum in the areas where gaps have been identified, including:

- A Member Federation Social Impact standard, to assist MFs in collecting data that could be valuable to commercial
- A Technical and Venue Standard, to encourage equipment manufacturers and suppliers to incorporate environmental sustainability requirements
- An ABW Champions cohort comprised of administrators, event organisers, officials and coaches, to help drive environmental and social sustainability at the sport's grass roots and ministerial levels, and
- And an updated commercial strategy targeting prospective partners specifically around sustainability.

WORLD ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT	SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS AREA	ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	ACTION PRIORITY	DELIVERY YEAR
CORPORATE					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Publish World Athletics Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 and providing strategic support for the implementation of the sustainability strategy.	High	Year 1 (complete)
		2	Commitment to global initiatives.	High	Year 1 (complete and ongoing) – Signatory to Sport for Climate Action Framework April 2021; engaging with UN Environment (UNEP) and Sport for Nature Framework
		3	Monitoring and reporting.	High	Year 10 (ongoing) – Sustainability Report 2020-2021 published in 2022, Sustainability Report 2022-2023 published in 2024; ABW Standard Year 1 Report published in 2025; annual reporting filed as part of UNFCCC Sport for Climate Action commitment
		4	Build a wider communications strategy to inspire and engage wider stakeholder community.	High	Year 1 (complete and ongoing) – Reviewed annually
	Sustainable production and consumption	5	Develop and implement World Athletics sustainable procurement code.	High	Year 1 (ongoing) – principles completed
		6	Implement waste management hierarchy.	High	Year 2 (complete and ongoing) – waste management system in place at HQ and satellite offices
	Climate change and carbon	7	Carbon roadmap 2020-2030.	High	Year 10 (ongoing) – reviewed annually; 100% HQ travel will be offset years 6-10
		8	100% renewable electricity.	High	Year 1 (complete) – implemented since 2020
		9	World Athletics Sustainable Travel policy.	Medium	Year 2 (complete and ongoing) – sustainable Travel principles and policy recommendations completed and presented for inclusion in organisation policy review
	Local environment and air quality	10	In collaboration with the Monégasque municipality, implement air quality monitoring programme across the municipality of Monaco.	High	Year 1 (ongoing) – air quality is monitored at Stade Louis II in Monaco
	Global equality	11	Upskilling of federation capacity.	Medium	Year 6 – to be included in ABW Champions programme to be launched in and implemented from Year 6
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	12	Continue staff welfare programme and share best practice.	High	Year 10 (ongoing) – reviewed annually as part of internal sustainability audits
		13	Ensure office and facilities are accessible.	High	Year 1 (complete)

WORLD ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT	SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS AREA	ACTION NUMBER	ACTION	ACTION PRIORITY	DELIVERY YEAR
EVENTS					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Develop Sustainable event management system for World Athletics events, certified to ISO20121.	High	Year 2 (complete) – certification achieved in April 2023. Recertification to updated ISO 20121 standard achieved in June 2026
		2	Implement World Athletics “Athletics for a Better World” sustainable event charter.	High	Year 4 (complete) – ABW Standard unveiled in December 2021, piloted in 2022 and 2023 and implemented as of January 2024 across all owned and permitted events. WAS event delivery requirements in effect as a guarantee in Event Operation Agreement from 2026 or 2027 editions
		3	Establish scope and implement a programme of sustainable benchmarking of events in Athletics and share best practice.	High	Year 2 (complete) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
	Sustainable production and consumption	4	Embed responsible procurement code into events.	High	Year 5 (complete and ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
		5	Implement a waste management plan aligning to the waste hierarchy.	High	Year 5 (complete and ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
		6	Establish an event reuse programme.	Medium	Year 5 (complete and ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
	Climate change and carbon	7	WAS events to implement World Athletics commitment to Sport for Climate Action framework.	High	Year 2 (complete) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
		8	Embed climate action into World Athletics sustainable charter for sanctioned events.	High	Year 5 (complete and ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
	Local environment and air quality	9	Air quality monitoring.	High	Year 10 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
		10	Set and implement environmental standards for World Athletics events and venues.	Medium	Year 4 (complete) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
		11	Create best practice guide to minimise impact of sanctioned events on local environment.	Medium	Year 6 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard and BENCHES Project biodiversity impact measurement tool
		12	Develop and share a toolkit with the local community around improving air quality.	Low	Year 3 – to be implemented in Years 6 and 7
	Global equality	13	Officials mentoring programme and Member Federation delivery partnerships; support for Athlete Refugee Team added in Year 2.	Low	Year 4 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard

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		14	Maximise local economic impact.	Low	Year 3 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	15	Sustainable Event Operations Manual to include diversity and accessibility; support for safeguarding and gender equity awareness programmes added in Year 3.	Low	Year 2 (complete) – delivered through Best Practice Guidance, available in 16 languages, and through alignment with ABW Standard
TECHNICAL AND VENUE STANDARD					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Review technical standards, embedding sustainability criteria, for equipment.	Medium	Year 3 (ongoing) – review complete, implementation from Year 6
		2	Establish a venue sustainability standard.	High	Year 6 – development in Year 6, implementation from Year 7
	Sustainable production and consumption	3	Best practice guidance for manufacturing to support delivery of the standard.	Low	Year 6 – development in Year 6, implementation from Year 7
		4	Best practice for venue owners and operators.	Medium	Year 6 – development in Year 6, implementation from Year 7
		5	Host technical and venue sustainability forums.	Low	Year 7 – implementation from Year 7
	Climate change and carbon	6	Provide resources to support equipment manufacturers develop carbon reduction plan.	Low	Year 6 (ongoing) – roadmap is ready. Implementation in Year 6
		7	Provide resources to support venue owners develop carbon reduction plan.	Low	Year 7 (ongoing) – roadmap is ready. Implementation in Year 7
	Local environment and air quality	8	Include air quality factors (volatile organic compounds – VOC) emissions as part of equipment and venue standard.	High	Year 7 – roadmap is ready. Implementation in Year 7
		9	Support venue owners implement a plan to improve air quality in and around venues.	Low	Year 7 – roadmap is ready. Implementation in Year 7
	Global equality	10	Build up capacity of local businesses, globally, to supply world of athletics.	Low	Year 10 – under review; likely out of World Athletics control
		11	Build up quality of regional stadia to host global events.	Low	Year 10 – under review; likely out of World Athletics control
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	12	Establish diversity plan for training referees and officials.	High	Year 7 – merged with Training and Development points 1 and 2 below
		13	Broaden the accessibility of Technical Officials Training Programmes.	Medium	Year 2 – merged with Training and Development points 1 and 2 below

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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Embed sustainability into World Athletics training and coaching materials and develop new resources.	High	Year 6 – to be incorporated into updated eLearning modules. Developed in Year 6, implemented from Year 7
		2	Develop legacy projects, capitalising on the impact of athletics events.	Medium	Year 4 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard
	Sustainable production and consumption	3	Promote and develop if needed, training materials for sustainable sourcing.	Medium	Year 4 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard and Best Practice Guidance. To be incorporated into updated eLearning modules and made applicable to coaches, officials and administrators
	Climate change and carbon	4	Promote and develop if needed, training around managing impacts of climate change and carbon emissions.	Medium	Year 2 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard and Best Practice Guidance. To be incorporated into updated eLearning modules
		5	Reduce the travel requirement for delivering programmes for coaches, technical officials etc., through on-line provision.	High	Year 3 (ongoing) – implemented through webinar series and updated eLearning modules
	Local environment and air quality	6	Promote and develop if needed, training around air quality and local environmental impacts.	High	Year 6 (ongoing) – delivered through alignment with ABW Standard, Health & Science department programmes and updated eLearning modules
	Global equality	7	Balanced recognition of World Athletics Approved sustainable venue charter across areas.	High	Year 7 – to be delivered as part of ABW Champions programme
		8	Sustainable training facility exchange programme.	Low	Year 7 – to be reviewed in Year 7
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	9	Targeted skills development programme.	High	Year 6 – skills gap analysis undertaken in Year 6

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MEMBER FEDERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Engage Members Federations with benefits of sustainability.	High	Year 1 (complete/ongoing) – delivered through Member Federations Info Sessions, eLearning modules and the ABW Standard
		2	Provide all Member Federations with best practice guidance and support for their operations, national championships and sport development.	Medium	Year 3 (ongoing) – best Practice Guidance is available in 16 languages; ongoing engagement through ABW Champions programme.
		3	Support Member Federations in development of their own sustainability strategies.	Medium	Year 5 (ongoing) – to be built through collaborations with Area Associations; pilot projects undertaken with European and African associations
		4	Support Member Federations in incorporating athlete/ team management activities into their sustainability strategies.	Medium	Year 6 – to be implemented through ABW Champions programme and alignment with ABW Standard from Year 6
	Sustainable production and consumption	5	Maximise local economic benefit by engaging with local suppliers.	Medium	Year 6 – to align with Member Federation Social Impact Project to be implemented from Year 6
		6	Focus on resource efficiency to reinforce sustainability targets.	Low	Year 6 – to align with Member Federation Social Impact Project to be implemented from Year 6
		7	Establish a reuse programme for equipment.	Medium	Year 6 – to be implemented through ABW Champions programme and alignment with ABW Standard from Year 6
	Climate change and carbon	8	Provide best practice guidance for Member Federations in managing carbon emissions.	High	Year 1 (ongoing) – guidance is available in 16 languages. To be reviewed in Year 6
		9	Proactively promote and encourage implementation of healthy, sustainable travel policies.	High	Year 2 (ongoing) – guidance is available in 16 languages. To be reviewed in Year 6
	Local environment and air quality	10	Protect local environment and air quality conditions for national, regional and local athletics areas.	Medium	Year 7 (ongoing) – guidance available in 16 languages. Biodiversity impact tool developed in partnership with Erasmus BENCHES project. Ongoing engagement with Health & Science team
	Global equality	11	Support in building capacity within smaller federations through federation and sponsor alliances.	Low	Year 6 – to align with Member Federation Social Impact Project to be implemented from Year 6
		12	Target an ‘even’ geographic spread of World Athletics WAS and sanctioned events.	Medium	Year 7 (ongoing) – developed through regular consultation with Competitions Department and Leadership team
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	13	Support Member Federations achieve in-territory demographic equity across the sport.	High	Year 7 – to align with Member Federation Social Impact Project to be implemented from Year 6 and through ABW Champions programme

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PARTNERSHIPS					
	Leadership in sustainability	1	Align World Athletics commercial offering to existing partners and embed sustainability into partnership agreements.	High	Year 6 – commercial strategy reviewed. To be implemented from Year 6
		2	Develop commercial plan considering and leveraging the sustainability strategy, in order to secure new partnerships around sustainability.	High	Year 6 – strategy developed. To be implemented in Years 6 and 7
	Sustainable production and consumption	3	Innovation partners e.g., around materials and waste – closed loop manufacturing of equipment.	Low	Year 6 – to be reviewed as part of broader commercial plan; to be implemented in Years 6 and 7
	Climate change and carbon	4	Identify partners around renewable energy and sustainable transport.	High	Year 6 – in alignment with Partnerships/Leadership in Sustainability Point 2 above
		5	Develop partnerships with host cities around climate change and carbon.	Medium	Year 4 (ongoing) – delivered at events in alignment with ABW Standard
	Local environment and air quality	6	Leverage event venue contracts to establish ongoing actions and commitment for improving air quality.	High	Year 6 – to be reviewed as part of broader commercial plan; to be implemented in Years 6 and 7
	Global equality	7	Secure global partners with the resource and appetite to engage across geographic regions to drive equality.	Low	Year 6 – to be reviewed as part of broader commercial plan; to be implemented in Years 6 and 7
	Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing	8	Ensure partnership values align to World Athletics values on diversity, accessibility and wellbeing.	Low	Year 6 – to be reviewed as part of broader commercial plan; to be implemented in Years 6 and 7



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