



# International Association of Athletics Federations

## IAAF GUIDELINES FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

As a full-fledged member of the Olympic movement, the IAAF tries to comply to the best of its ability with the IOC guide on sport, environment and sustainable development and with the IOC Agenda 21.

Apart from the marathon, race walking events, cross-country, road events and events in the mountains, most disciplines of athletics take place in stadiums. These guidelines look at the environmental and sustainable development aspects of all the disciplines involved in an athletics competition, whether held in a stadium or in the natural environment, as well as recreational running and walking.

In themselves, the different athletics disciplines practised in stadiums or the natural environment do not pose a threat to the natural environment as long as the athletes respect various rules of conduct which are the same as those that should be followed by everyone in their daily lives.

At the Athens Games in 2004, marathon runners breathed in at least three times more methane and 30% more carbon dioxide than Spyridon Louis did at the first Games in Athens in 1896. A marathon runner can sweat up to 4 litres per hour in hot, humid conditions!

The IAAF has established a commission for sustainable development and is cooperating with the United Nations environment programme (UNEP) and other inter- and non-governmental organisations to promote environmental awareness.

The organising committees of the IAAF World Championships in Athletics and other competitions always undertake major environmental projects which have been successfully implemented with the cooperation of national and local authorities, universities and sponsors.

Athletics events must have minimum impact on nature and the landscape. The ecosystem is both a source of life and a living environment made up of elements such as water, air, soil, plants, animals, hydrology, wind, tides and climate. These elements constantly interact with one another to generate a biodiversity. Human beings are heavily dependent on the elements of the natural environment.

Environmental protection and sustainable development are primarily the responsibility of national and local governments. However, their policies and programmes can only be successful with the support of informed citizens among which athletes and officials. As prominent heroes and role models in their countries, the IAAF's athletes could contribute in the promotion of environmental awareness, so that athletics can be practised and performed in healthy surroundings. Think globally (IAAF), act locally (national federations).

### I. FIELDS OF ACTION

The IAAF may act at global, national, local or individual level to promote the environment and sustainable development. The IAAF has adopted criteria, based on the respect of the

environment for the selection of host cities to organise its world championships and sponsors. The national athletics federations may carry out practical projects in cooperation with national and local political authorities, non-governmental organisations or private companies. The athletes may undertake within their clubs or neighbourhood a number of simple and effective initiatives.

### 1. Energy

Potential energy savings should be implemented through technical and organisational measures. Energy required should be produced as far as possible by environmentally compatible means. Energy supply should derive if possible from renewable sources, such as wind power, solar power, hydraulic energy, photovoltaic energy, etc.

### 2. Water

Water is the most precious commodity of all, as it is a limited and non-renewable resource. It is therefore everybody's responsibility to use it carefully and economically and avoid contamination.

For human beings, water is necessary for drinking, for food preparation and hygiene. It is necessary for all life on the planet, there is a need to protect rivers and lakes and ensure that the water everyone drinks does not impair the health. Water consumption for both the event and the venue should be limited. Surface water, rain, and well water could be used instead of potable water. Soil and groundwater contamination should be prevented and waste water quantities have to be reduced.

### 3. Soil

The soil is full of nutritive elements and is the home of numerous insects. The soil filters the water and regulates the flow of rainwater and surface water and is a reservoir retaining water to feed the plants and also as a source of drinking water. The soil plays a crucial role in the global cycles of vital elements, water, nitrogen and carbon. Nitrogen is indispensable to life and there are enormous quantities of it on the planet. Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas. It can be reduced either by cutting the rate at which it is emitted into the atmosphere or by increasing the rate at which it is removed from the atmosphere through so-called carbon sinks. The excess CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere could be trapped by ground vegetation and then by the top layers of soil.

### 4. Air

Air is the reservoir for the oxygen that is needed to support life on earth. The air regulates the close link between vegetation and climate. Air pollution has a wide range of different causes and effects.

### 5. Biodiversity

Biodiversity, or biological diversity, means the whole range of living organisms from all origins whether terrestrial or aquatic, and all the various ecosystems they form.

Vegetables, which include plants, herbs and algae, are an essential part of the diet of many animals and insects. Protecting vegetable biodiversity is important because human well-being depends on it. Trees are the planet's original natural cover. They play a crucial role in the absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide and the regulation of rainfall. Plants

protect also the soil from erosion. The vast majority of forests are still natural. There are different types of species of fauna on the planet.

#### 6. Noise

Noise emissions should be reduced as far as possible directly at source and kept at a very low level. Where noise exposure cannot be adequately reduced through active noise, abatement measures, passive or constructional measures should be taken. There should be permanent and consistent monitoring of events with high noise emissions.

#### 7. Waste

Waste should be avoided or at least reduced. Unavoidable waste should be if possible recycled. Systems should be established for the separate collection of bio-waste, light packaging paper, glass and residual rubbish. Where possible, materials and equipment for temporary facilities should be rented and reused, sold or given a day after the event. Hazardous pollutants and waste are also produced by industries and can only be destroyed using appropriate technologies.

#### 8. Transport

Travel to and from the event must be organised in an ecological and efficient way. An integrated environment, friendly public transport, cycling, and footpaths should be used to facilitate traffic to and from sports venues. Emissions reduction must be a target. A hybrid vehicle which can be driven purely on its electric motor is already in use during IAAF World Championships in Athletics.

#### 9. Construction

Planning of every sports facility is a critical examination of requirements and an ecologically, and economically balanced concept for subsequent use. In planning and construction, use should be made of materials, fittings and equipment that are durable and a risk free to neither health nor the environment.

#### 10. Merchandising

Merchandising products should be pollutant free and manufactured in an environmentally sound manner. Manufacturers must possess a formal environment management system (ISO 14001, or EU Eco-audit, or any other recognised standards) manufacturing should be made in line with demanding environmental and social standards. Particularly with sports clothing and equipment, merchandising products should be of high quality, durable and easily recyclable.

## **II. ECO-FRIENDLY BEHAVIOUR**

At individual level, all athletes and officials can play an important part in promoting sustainable development and protecting the environment, as well as in endeavouring to encourage family and friends, teach children to respect the environment and instil at an early age the need to promote sustainable development. All they need to do is respect a number of simple rules in their every-day life.

1. Avoid wasting energy:
  - Turn out lights;
  - Use heating or air conditioning sparingly ;
  - Avoid open fireplaces for heating and cooking on wood-burning stoves;
  - Do not leave electrical devices in sleep mode.
  
2. Avoid wasting water:
  - Turn taps off fully after use or use water pumps and containers that do not leak;
  - Use efficient toilet flushes;
  - Do not water the garden in the heat of the day;
  - Wash the car sparingly.
  
3. Travel as efficiently as possible:
  - Walk or cycle short distances;
  - For long journeys, use public transport if available;
  - Choose fuel-efficient cars;
  - If using a car, share it with other people (car sharing);
  - For petrol vehicles, if possible choose those that use unleaded petrol and are equipped with catalytic converters; use petrol containing biofuels if it is available and compatible with your engine; also consider using hybrid engines;
  - For diesel vehicles, choose models with particle filters;
  - For motorbikes, choose models with a four-stroke engine.
  
4. Consume responsibly:
  - Consider when possible, the use of products that conform to environment and sustainable development criteria.
  
5. Dispose of waste properly:
  - When travelling, never throw away rubbish in the natural environment (cigarette butts, chewing gum, carrier bags, food waste, etc.);
  - Avoid discharging waste directly into the natural environment; use the sewerage network, septic tanks or latrines that are emptied regularly. It should be noted that, even for the most underprivileged populations, latrines can always be built very cheaply.
  - Sort solid waste into:
    - Reusable waste (glass, plastic, aluminium), mainly objects that can be kept at home and reused;
    - Recyclable waste (glass, paper, aluminium), objects that cannot be reused but which can be converted back into raw materials;
    - Recoverable waste (compostable organic waste), to be used as fertiliser in private gardens or by market gardeners;
    - Hazardous waste (batteries, medicines, paint, solvents) which must be kept out of children's reach and be disposed of in specialist centres;
    - Other waste, which is stored in sealed containers and then collected by the responsible authorities or otherwise buried a long way from the water supply or well.

### III. EXEMPLARY CONDUCT OF SPORT OFFICIALS

#### Sports authorities

By sports authorities, we mean the IAAF, its Area Associations and national federations. It is important to ensure that respect for the environment and the active promotion of sustainable development are incorporated in the spirit and practice of the sports governed by these bodies.

To this end, it is necessary to:

- Set up a commission or working group for the environment and sustainable development;
- Appoint an environment and sustainable development officer.

1. The commission/working group for the environment and sustainable development must have the confidence and support of the organisation of which it is a part. It should be responsible for proposing realistic, practical activities and measures aimed at protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development. The commission/working group should include representatives of all the groups involved in the sport concerned (governing bodies, athletes, managers, club officials, environment or sustainable development professionals, equipment manufacturers, media).

2. The remit of the commission/working group for the environment and sustainable development should include the following aspects:

- Defining the activities related to the environment and sustainable development that should be given priority in Athletics.
- Facilitating the exchange of experiences between members of the Olympic Movement in the environment and sustainable development field.
- Promoting education on the environment and sustainable development by organising meetings and publishing handbooks.
- Coordinating and promoting joint activities with other sports and bodies, governmental or otherwise, responsible for the protection of the environment and sustainable development.

3. The remit of the environment and sustainable development official should include the following aspects:

- Implementing the activities proposed by the commission/working group.
- Ensuring that these activities are actually carried out.
- Giving advice on how these activities should be implemented or putting those responsible in contact with relevant experts.
- Finding partners or support to implement these activities.
- Preparing regular reports on the activities carried out.
- Informing their organisation about the applicable regulations and standards and about new developments related to the environment and sustainable development.
- Helping their organisation to act with respect for the environment and sustainable development (office equipment, waste management, transport and energy policy, etc.)
- Communicating with the media and public about their organisation's efforts to promote the environment and sustainable development.

#### 4. Sports Associations

By sports associations, we principally mean clubs, which are the basic building blocks of Athletics. It is the clubs that are responsible for implementing activities designed to protect

the environment and promote sustainable development. Their attitude sets an example for individual athletes as well as the whole community in which they are located.

#### 5. Sports Officials

Sport officials have a particular responsibility for setting a good example through their behaviour. Their personal commitment to protecting the environment and sustainable development and their own conduct in this area are the motivating force for other members.

- Ensure that club and association members are taught to respect the environment and sustainable development.
- Rigorously abide by the rules relating to the environment and sustainable development which they require the club or association to respect.
- Do not needlessly award themselves benefits that are more harmful to the environment than the action of club or association members.
- Endeavour to maintain a balance between all social groups in the club's or association's managing bodies.

6. A club or an association may actively promote the environment and sustainable development as part of its general activities, the management of its premises and travel arrangements, and community action.

It is essential that all of these aspects should be placed under the authority of an environment and sustainable development officer, who should be responsible for raising awareness among club or association members and setting up relevant activities. In order to fulfil his or her remit effectively, this person should be both a communicator and a promoter

### **IV. GREEN EVENTS**

#### 1. Rules of conduct for preserving the environment for athletics events:

- Whenever possible, travel to the stadium or race venue by public transport, bicycle or on foot;
- Consider when possible, the use of products that conform to environmental and sustainable development criteria;
- Never throw away empty bottles, packaging or food waste in the stadium or in the natural environment. Place them in the bins provided or take them away and dispose of them at the club or at home;
- Never leave behind worn-out or damaged equipment (shoes, clothing, various accessories) in the stadium or in the natural environment. Give them to a company that treats, recovers or recycles solid waste;
- Never go jogging in protected natural environments;
- When jogging in the countryside, use existing paths. Do not run across gardens, cultivated fields or pasture;
- When jogging in the countryside, respect the traditions of the local population. Find out in advance about local traditions, cultures and beliefs.

With regard to the rules to be respected in order to avoid environmental damage, we will distinguish between stadium-based events on the one hand and non-stadium-based events, primarily race walking and marathon events, on the other.

## 2. Responsibility of those involved in stadium-based athletics competitions

For the organisers

- Provide spectators with a convenient public transport system for travelling to the event;
- Preference should be given to day-time competitions if renewable energy is not available for lighting;
- Offer the public an adequate number of toilet and waste collection facilities which are well maintained and allow for waste water to be treated and solid waste to be recycled or destroyed without risk to the environment;
- Inform users of the rules of conduct to be observed: keep the toilets clean, save water and collect rubbish;
- Collect damaged or abandoned equipment or accessories and ensure they are properly destroyed or recycled (worn-out shoes or clothing, broken poles, hurdles or javelins, discuses, shots, etc.).

## 3. For the competitors

- Behave impeccably in terms of fair play and respect for the environment (do not throw rubbish, such as water bottles or packaging, inside the stadium).

## 4. For the public

- Whenever possible, travel to the competition venue by public transport, bicycle or on foot;
- Respect the rules of conduct on use of the toilet facilities and disposing of rubbish, particularly packaging and empty bottles.

## 5. Responsibility of those involved in non-stadium-based athletics competitions

For the organisers

- Provide spectators with a public transport system enabling them to travel along the route of the event;
- Create and clearly mark out footpaths for spectators that respect the site and its inhabitants;
- Offer the public an adequate number of toilet and waste collection facilities along the whole of the route;
- Inform users of the rules of conduct to be observed : keep the toilets clean, save water and collect rubbish;
- After the event, collect up the rubbish left by spectators in the bins provided and ensure it is properly destroyed and recycled;
- As far as media and athlete assistance vehicles are concerned, choose models equipped with anti-pollution systems (catalytic converters, particle filters) or electric, hybrid or biofuel engines;
- Repair the sites used for the event once it is finished. Set aside a sum of money to cover any compensation for damage caused to individuals or local authorities.

## 6. For the competitors

- Behave impeccably in terms of fair play and respect for the environment (do not throw rubbish, such as water bottles or packaging, on the ground).

## 7. For the public

- Whenever possible, travel to the competition venue by public transport, bicycle or on foot;
- Do not stray from the marked footpaths;

- Do not remove anything from the environment, e.g. plants, flowers, branches, pebbles, stones, shells, etc.
- Respect the rules of conduct on use of the toilet facilities and disposing of rubbish, particularly packaging and empty bottles.

## V. OTHER ASPECTS OF ATHLETICS LINKED TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Athletics, particularly jogging and walking, has become very popular among people living in large modern cities. This phenomenon is linked not only to the benefits it provides for physical fitness, but also to the way it relieves the stresses of every-day life. In this respect, these sports fulfil a significant social function in the sustainable development of metropolitan societies. In addition, when practised away from urban areas, walking and jogging can help to preserve respiratory functions damaged by the polluted city air.

Several athletics disciplines are suitable for athletes with disabilities. They offer an important means of integration and recognition for these athletes and help to foster public acceptance of disabilities.

Athletics is also easily accessible for all categories of the population, whatever their social background or their country's level of development. Jogging and walking in particular do not require any specific facilities and can be practised in all kinds of environments. They therefore represent an ideal way for athletes from the most disadvantaged population groups to gain recognition and climb the social ladder.

Athletics is a sport which, because it is easy and inexpensive to organise, particularly lends itself to physical education in schools. Through the variety of disciplines it covers, it can be practised at all stages of a child's physical development. Endurance events are also an excellent way of learning to manage physical effort.

