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Paris 2024, Dakar 2026 and Beyond: Building Sustainable Olympism

Policy Paper

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Introduction

As a sporting event gathering athletes from many nations, the Olympic and Paralympic Games, but also the Youth Olympic Games, have unparalleled global resonance. The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 reached a global broadcast audience of more than three billion people, and just as many are likely to watch the Olympic Games Paris 2024. This shows the considerable power of demonstration and conviction of this event at global level.

From their inception, the modern Olympic Games sought to promote strong values and drive the ambition of an event that would contribute to building a better and peaceful world. According to the Olympic Charter, the goal of Olympism is to “place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.”^[1] These values have many points in common with the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, the latter recognises the role of sport in the achievement of these goals.

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 37

“Sport is also an important enabler of sustainable development. We recognise the growing contribution of sport to the realisation of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives.”

In most cases, the organisation of sporting events, and therefore Olympic events, entails a considerable financial and environmental cost. Beyond the construction of the sports infrastructure and equipment, prior consideration needs to be given to the size and diversity required to ensure that they are used appropriately and maintained in operational conditions, as much as to the role that they can – and must – play for citizens once the “Games Time” is over.

[1] Olympic Charter in force as at 15 October 2023, the first fundamental principle of Olympism.

Many years ago, all these considerations prompted the Olympic Community to initiate thinking on the sustainability of the Olympic Games, a term also taken up by Paris 2024. In December 2014, this notion was included as one of the three pillars of the Olympic Agenda 2020, with the aim of increasing the credibility and positive contribution of the Olympic Games among youth. In December 2016, this was complemented by a sustainability strategy adopted by the IOC Executive Board, which promotes the inclusion of this notion in all aspects of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and, beyond, in all the day-to-day operations of the Olympic Movement.

With every passing day, countries and people are becoming more aware of the urgency of climate change, its negative consequences on the planet, and the need to adopt more sustainable practices. In this respect, it is of course crucial for the Olympic Movement to lead the way, by embracing a greater number of green initiatives and establishing a more sustainable structure for the Olympic Games. The example of Paris 2024, with its ambition from the outset to halve the carbon footprint of the previous editions and its focus on their legacy, is in this regard instructive and holds lessons for the future. However, and while it would not be desirable or probably even possible to turn back, the inclusion of this requirement in major sporting events, which should become a standard, must in no way constitute an insurmountable entry barrier to their organisation in places other than in developed countries. The work carried out on this subject in the context of the Youth Olympic Games which will be held in Dakar in 2026, the first Olympic event of this importance in Africa, forms part of this approach to accommodating a sustainable development objective for the Games, for the benefit of all the people and all the youth of the world.

While the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be opening in Paris in the coming days, it appears useful to analyse how this event and the following ones can fit in with the broader international objectives shared by the member countries of the Olympic Movement and, in particular, the framework defined by the Paris Pact for People and the Planet in June 2023.

1. The Olympic Games, a planetary event which must be a vehicle for sustainable environmental and social change

1.1 – The need for a “new standard” for international sports competitions

While for many years, international sporting events, driven by other interests – financial, prestige – did not mainstream sustainable development into their principles, this is becoming increasingly impossible today for all competitions.

In this respect, several factors are involved:

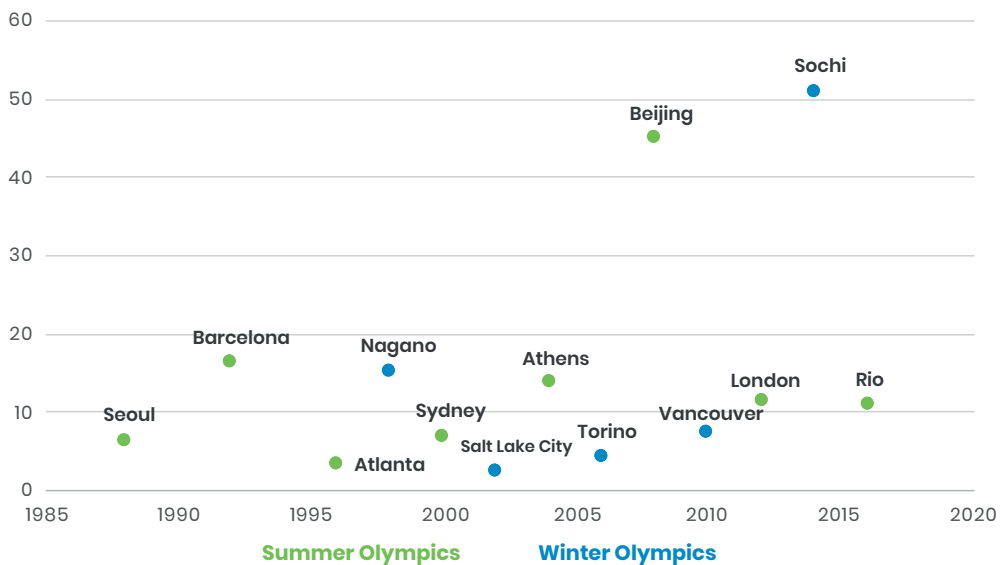
- The international commitments made by the organising countries, which must take into account the cost of the organisation of these events in terms of the climate and biodiversity;
- Pressure from major sponsors, a main source of revenue for the organisation of these events,^[2] who can no longer ignore the environmental and social dimension of the international sports competitions with which their image is associated;

- And the more prosaic need to contain the costs of organising these events and ensure the future operation of the sports facilities, thereby ensuring that they are sustainably financed. As can be seen in the graph below, the cost of events such as the Olympic Games remains extremely high, despite the significant efforts made by the latest editions, with a few exceptions, to control these financial allocations.

These factors, together with the stricter requirements for the organisation of international sporting events and their global impact, make these competitions a perfect testing ground for linking sporting ambitions and the long-term interest of our planet.

[2] PwC’s Sports Survey, Sports Industry: Ready for Recovery?, 2021.

Graphic 1 - Spending on infrastructure for the Summer and Winter Olympics



Source: Gina S. Warren 2017.

1.2 – Risk factors that need to be included in the preparation of sporting events

1.2.1 – The climate

The environmental cost, particularly in terms of the climate, of international sports competitions is increasingly well documented and is today included in the preparation of the Olympic Games. It is a major issue, as certain scientific studies suggest that only about 30 cities around the world are likely to be cool enough to host the Olympic Games after 2085.^[3]

In this respect, the Olympic Movement is a clear leader compared to other sports, especially football. Since the 2000s, the calculation of the carbon impact of the Games has been common practice. While the methodology was for a long time left to the discretion of the Organising Committees, the publication by the IOC of a common methodology for the calculation of their carbon footprint has standardised the practice.^[4] Without going into details, it takes into account all the factors whereby the organisation of the Games has an influence on the climate, from construction to the transport for spectators.^[5]

The latest editions of the Games have had a relatively high level of emissions: 3.4 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (tCO₂e) for London in 2012 and 3.6 million tCO₂e for Rio in 2016. Despite being held without spectators due to the Covid-19 epidemic, the Tokyo Olympics in 2021 reached 1.96 million tCO₂e. By way of comparison, the emissions of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar have been estimated at 3.63 million tCO₂e.^[6]

It is in this context that we should view the ambition of the Paris Olympics to define a total “carbon budget” of 1.5 million tCO₂e not to be exceeded, meaning a reduction of 55% compared to the average for Rio and London, as explained further below.

1.2.2 – Biodiversity, air quality and other environmental factors

One of the factors the most commonly included in the environmental assessment of sporting events is air quality. Indeed, it directly affects athletic performance and the spectator experience. In addition, climate change tends to exacerbate this risk factor. It is estimated that by 2050, a third of sports activities may be threatened by the combined effect of the average temperature rise and the associated deterioration in air quality.^[7] As a result, during certain editions of the Games, the host cities have sometimes had to temporarily stop the pollution produced by certain industrial centres on the outskirts of the city. This was the case during the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

Following the commitments made in Rio in 1992 in the context of the Convention on Biological Biodiversity (CBD), biodiversity has become increasingly important in the organisation of the Olympic Games with each edition. This is also the case in Paris, where a preliminary assessment of the impact of the Games on natural environments and habitats has been systematically conducted, and restoration measures included, where necessary, during the preparation phase for the Games.

[3] Kirk R. Smith, Alistair Woodward, Bruno Lemke, Matthias Otto, Cindy J. Chang, Anna A. Mance *et al.*, The last Summer Olympics? Climate Change, Health, and Work Outdoors, *The Lancet*, 2016, 388(10045), 642-644.

[4] International Olympic Committee, Carbon Footprint Methodology for the Olympic Games, December 2018.

[5] The average carbon footprint of a spectator travelling to an international sports competition is seven times higher than for the normal activity of a person (Gina S. Warren, Big Sports Events Have Big Environmental Footprints. Could Social Licenses to Operate Help?, University of Houston Law Center, December 11, 2017.

[6] Saaniya Sharma, What is the Carbon Footprint of Sport? Carbon Literacy Project, February 2023 <https://carbonliteracy.com/what-is-the-carbon-footprint-of-sport/>

[7] Hyemin Yang, Sustainability in Sport Events from Environmental, Economic, and Social Perspectives, International Academy of Sport Science & Technology, January 2023.

1.2.3 – Proper use of public resources and use of the facilities after the Games

In view of their cost, when the very first modern Olympic Games were organised, consideration was given to how to use the sports and reception facilities for the athletes and partners, such as the media and delegations.

The overall economic benefits of the Games, which are frequently highlighted, have often been overestimated in the past,^[8] prompting the organising countries and cities to question the expected overall result of this type of event. In this context, ensuring the sustainability, and consequently the private and collective profitability, of the infrastructure built has become increasingly important.

While the size of the infrastructure designed for the Games is often criticised, it has to be noted that much of it has lasted and continues to be used today. The renovated Panathenaic Stadium from the Athens 1896 Olympics can still be visited today, and was used again for the 2004 edition of the Olympics. From the Paris 1924 Olympics, the Yves du Manoir Stadium in Colombes, where new events will be held this year, and the Tourelles swimming pool in Paris are among the facilities used daily by clubs and the general public. Broadly speaking, the arrival of the Games in a city provides the opportunity to regenerate an entire neighbourhood (Stratford in London in 2012, an example of a successful redevelopment,^[9] the districts of Shibuya and Harajuku and the Shinkansen high-speed train for the Tokyo 1964 Olympics), or even an entire city (Grenoble in 1968).

Most Olympic Villages are in particular converted into residential accommodation.^[10] From the Sydney 2000 Olympics onwards, with the

emergence of the concept of sustainability, the sustainability of sports facilities has been a factor systematically included in the plans of Organising Committees. Yet the initial plans do not always withstand the weight of time or external constraints. Some facilities are abandoned, as was the case for part of the Turin Olympic Village after the 2006 Winter Olympics, or they remain empty, which has been the case for buildings erected in Rio in 2016 because of their prices.

1.2.4 – The successful integration of the Games into their economic and social environment

While the Olympic Games are in essence itinerant sporting events, since the IOC decision of 1900, they do remain firmly rooted in territories. Hence the need to ensure that, beyond hosting spectators from all over the world and sport performances, they are truly an event for people and benefit local residents and companies.

This dimension has long been linked to the previous one. Until recently, the scientific literature focused on the economic and urban impacts of the Olympic Games, neglecting their social dimension. The emergence of the notion of legacy, which has replaced the notion of impact, has contributed to greater account being taken of this notion.

The integration of the social dimension of the Games requires considering the views of local stakeholders. This aspect has been achieved to a greater or lesser extent depending on the periods and countries. Since the criticisms of the Rio 2016 Olympics over the displacement of disadvantaged populations and the fact that they ultimately benefited little from this event, there has been a growing need for a “social return” for the Games. The same goes for the need to use this major event to develop sports activities for the entire population.

[8] Robert A. Baade and Victor A. Matheson, Going for the Gold: The Economics of the Olympics, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Volume 30, Number 2, Spring 2016.

[9] Le Monde, La reconversion exemplaire du parc olympique de Londres 2012, 20 December 2023.

[10] With very few exceptions, including Salt Lake City, where – and without drawing any conclusions about the accommodation conditions for athletes at the time – the Olympic Village was converted into a prison.

2.

Lessons learned from the organisation of the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The organisation of an international sporting event on the scale of the Olympic Games is a marathon. From the starting line, meaning the candidature stage, Paris 2024 had the ambition of creating a new model for the Games, taking account of their impact for the planet and the people concerned, based on three principles: inclusiveness, frugality and sustainability. In this case, the fact that there were already a significant number of facilities in the Paris region able to host major sporting events helped drive this ambition.^[11] However, this required taking a different approach to the work of the Organising Committee and its event delivery model, where negotiations with the operators of existing facilities was just as important as the design and operation of competition venues designed for the occasion.

In terms of sustainable development, the Paris 2024 candidature programme included the ambition of aligning with the Paris Agreement by halving, as mentioned above, the greenhouse gas emissions, and offsetting the residual emissions to achieve carbon neutrality. The Candidature Committee thus drew on the support of WWF France to define its first strategy for the environmental excellence of the Games. Put simply, the carbon footprint of Paris 2024 is divided into three categories: the impact of infrastructure construction, the footprint related to operations for the organisation of the Games, and travel.

The preparation of the Paris Olympics has been based on two main entities: the Paris 2024 Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (more commonly referred to as “Paris 2024”), and the organisation responsible for the delivery of the new infrastructure (Olympic Works Delivery Company, commonly referred to as “Solideo”), which have both integrated this requirement.

2.1 – The integration of sustainability in the construction of sports facilities for the Games

Firstly, Solideo integrated the sustainability criteria of the Paris 2024 candidature in the infrastructure planning.

In its strategy for environmental excellence, Solideo initially incorporated the two key objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reusing materials and infrastructure through a circular economy programme. One of the objectives was to reuse 75% of the materials after the Games.

Secondly, Solideo defined a “carbon budget” for each facility and conducted an assessment of the infrastructure based on scenarios expressed as tonnes of CO₂ equivalent. The frugality and reversibility aspects were included from the very beginning. This is the case for the Athletes’ Village, as well as for specific sports facilities such as the Olympic Aquatics Centre.

In its sustainability strategy, in addition to the two dimensions of eco-friendly and low-carbon Games, Solideo added the principles of a co-construction of projects with the stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructure, and the promotion of social innovation through sport, to improve health, education, social cohesion, inclusion, and gender equality.

[11] A total of 95% of the Olympics infrastructure existed before the Games or will only be temporary.

Case Study: Sustainable development initiatives in the Athletes' Village for the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games

1. Energy sources

The Athletes' Village is powered by geothermal and solar energy. These renewable energy sources contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of the event. The athletes' mattresses have been made using recycled fishing nets and the bed bases are made of reinforced cardboard.

2. Plant-based foods

Paris 2024 aims to double the quantity of foods of plant origin served during the event. This switch to more sustainable food choices is in line with global efforts to reduce the environmental impact.

3. Design focused on the athletes

The Village has been designed in partnership with athletes from the five continents. Their vision and requirements were taken into account in the design process. The objective was to create a village truly geared towards the needs and preferences of the athletes.

4. Environmental excellence

Over and above the aesthetic dimension, the winning candidature for the Village gave priority to commitments reflecting the vision of Paris 2024 for low-carbon Games. The main features include:

- **Biodiversity:** rooftops designed to accommodate insects and birds, fences with openings for small animals, and other measures to protect and foster biodiversity. To attract different species, 9,000 trees have been planted around the Athletes' Village and a total of 200,000 trees have been planted;
- **Carbon neutrality:** use of wood and bio-based materials. The Saint-Denis Aquatics Centre, which has been built for the 2024 Olympics, is powered by solar energy, equipped with recycled materials, and uses natural bio-based materials;
- **Building materials:** climate adaptation features which adapt to and reduce the effects of climate change, including water management and resilient surfaces.

5. Legacy and conversion of the site

After the Games, the Village will be converted into a neighbourhood with 2,500 new housing units, a student residence, a hotel, a landscaped park covering 3 hectares, new municipal offices and services, and local shops.

2.2 – Sustainability in the organisation of the Paris 2024 Olympics

For the organisation of the Games themselves, the Paris 2024 Organising Committee developed its own legacy and sustainability strategy. It was presented by its President, Tony Estanguet, in August 2021 following the IOC's

adoption of its Olympic Agenda 2020+5 a few months earlier. Implemented by two directors (Marie Barsacq for the Impact and Legacy aspect and Georgina Grenon for Environmental Excellence), it aims to optimise the impact of the Games on society and the environment on the basis of observations and clear and measurable objectives which have been monitored throughout the preparation of the Games.

Graphic 2 - The 6 pillars of the strategy of the Paris 2024 Organising Committee

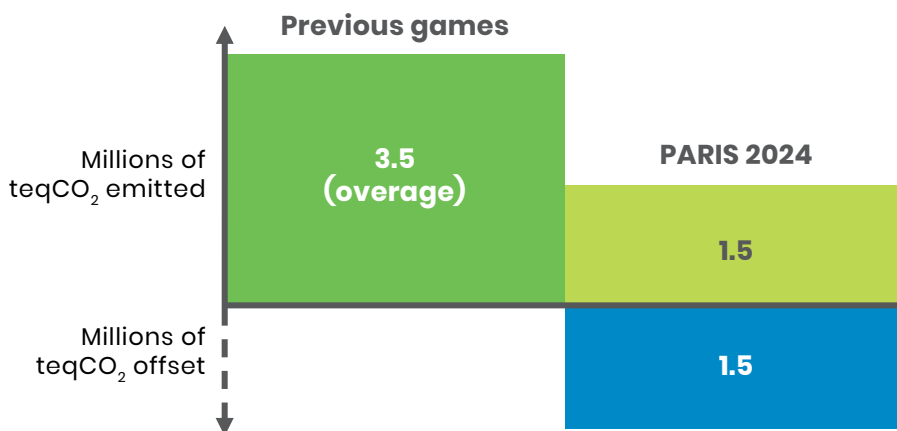


Source: Paris 2024, Sustainability and Legacy Report, page 21, August 2021.

In terms of the climate, the key instrument of the Paris 2024 strategy is the “target carbon footprint”, defined from the outset by Paris 2024 for each component of the Games. This target carbon footprint has resulted in a carbon budget that must be respected, defined using the standard Avoid, Mitigate and Offset (AMO) approach. The monitoring of this carbon budget has enabled the management of Paris 2024 to monitor the carbon impact of the Games throughout the organisation.

The intertwining of carbon management on a day-to-day basis defines a new model for the Games, with a carbon footprint, including offsetting actions, which has become “pre-Olympics” and not “post-Olympics” as had previously been the case.

Graphic 3 - Comparison of the carbon emissions of Paris 2024 and previous editions



Source: Paris 2024.

In practice, for the carbon impact, the Organising Committee took over from the action of Solideo and worked on the travel issue (clean mobility, incentives for spectators to use low-carbon means of transport), and the reduction of emissions during the operational phase (100% renewable electricity for the Games, sustainable catering service, etc.).

In terms of the assessment at this stage, between 2018 and 2023, the carbon footprint of Paris 2024 stood at 476,000 tCO₂e, mainly due to the construction of sustainable infrastructure, as the Games have not yet been held.^[12] While the total carbon footprint of the Games will be assessed in September, the Organising Committee believes that the objective should be met.^[13]

In terms of the environment, efforts concerning the circular economy, waste recycling and the reuse of materials, as well as the reduction of the impact of the Games on biodiversity are also linked to the objective of environmental excellence of the Games, based on the preliminary studies conducted on the various sites. Contracts have already been signed for the second life of 90% of the assets deployed on the sites. Finally, several mobilisation activities have been conducted to make the Paris 2024 Olympics an accelerator of the ecological transition, involving the various partners of the Organising Committee (sports federations, athletes, NGOs, local authorities, the general public).

However, the impact of the Games is not confined to environmental issues. It also includes the issues of its economic and social legacy, which were taken into consideration at a very early stage (one example being the activities conducted with the NGO Play International at the candidature stage).

In terms of the social aspect, Paris 2024 has four objectives: raise awareness of the importance of physical and sports activities for health; increase access to sports activities; include sport in educational and civic activities; make sport a vehicle for social inclusion.

After defining a reference framework (partly based on the OECD's work on major sporting events) and a theory of change – a standard process which development professionals are very familiar with –, Paris 2024 subsequently developed its guide for action, based on the objectives mentioned above.

Without going into details, Paris 2024 has undertaken a great number of initiatives under the banner of legacy. Examples include the results of the "Generation 2024" initiative for sport at school (three million young people reached, 14% of all schools and universities directly involved – 34% in Seine-Saint-Denis – with a significant increase in sports activities among the beneficiaries), and projects for gender equality and the promotion of sport for people with disabilities (Pass-Sport, reduction in the VAT rate for sports equipment by the State).

At the intersection of the environmental and social priorities, it is also worth noting the work carried out by Paris 2024 to give companies access to public procurement, in terms of both the Organising Committee itself and Solideo. In addition to the aspects facilitating access to information for SMEs, a special effort has been made in the field of the social and solidarity economy and the implementation of responsible procurement systems. As a result, MSMEs account for 75% of the suppliers of the Games, and three-quarters of the calls for tender included clauses on social and environmental performance criteria.

[12] OCOG, Pre-Games Sustainability & Legacy Report, May 2024.

[13] OCOG Press release of 27 June 2024: "Paris 2024 presents the latest advance in its low-carbon strategy".

Finally, the legacy of the Paris 2024 Olympics obviously includes all the action taken before and after the Paralympic Games on the issue of disability, a key issue for a more inclusive and solidarity-based society. Indeed, improving the visibility of people with disabilities and their participation in sports is one of the key objectives of Paris 2024.^[14]

Geographically speaking, the Seine-Saint-Denis Department, where there is a significant proportion of the infrastructure of the Games, has obviously been given special attention in view of its particular circumstances: a heavily populated Department (1.7 million residents), cosmopolitan, the youngest in mainland France, and affected by persistent social difficulties (third in mainland France in terms of unemployment, a poverty rate double the national average, 27.9% against 14.1% in 2017).^[15] However, the impact of the Games extends much further beyond this Department and even the City of Paris. A great many local authorities have been awarded the Terre de Jeux label, and more than 500 of them are hosting one or several Games Preparation Centres, which host and serve as a “rear base” for French and foreign sports delegations. The facilities created or renovated for the occasion will remain in place beyond the Games.

To structure its legacy activities, Paris 2024 has created its own budget system in the form of an endowment fund. The objective is for it to co-finance initiatives selected *via* several rounds of calls for projects, systematically including a public or private partner. The aim is to ensure that the projects are part of a sustainable development process after the close of the Games.

Finally, Paris 2024 has structured its international legacy through its involvement in many campaigns conducted on the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Sports for Climate Action, Race to Zero), and through its partnership with Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to use sport for development and support the retraining of athletes in Africa and France.

Despite the scale of these activities, which account for a considerable proportion of the cost of the Games, and the efforts towards transparency of Paris 2024 on this issue – publication of evaluations on the activities, reference framework based on the United Nations SDGs, etc. – some commentators have been critical of these results even before the opening of the Games.^[16] While such criticism is inevitable in view of the amounts devoted by the community as a whole to such an important sporting event, it should be noted that the Organising Committees for the Olympic Games cannot singlehandedly do everything. Their duty is to ensure that the international-level sports infrastructure can subsequently be used by everyone, and use the positive dynamics created by the event to promote physical and sports activities. But they cannot replace the efforts of a country’s national and local stakeholders, who are primarily responsible for the construction and maintenance of sports facilities. All the stakeholders thus need to combine their efforts.

[14] See the article by Richard, R., A. Marcellini, A. Sakis Pappous, H. Joncheray and S. Ferez, “Build and Ensure the Legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Towards a Sustainable Sports Inclusion of Disabled People”, *Mouvement & Sport Sciences – Science & Motricité* 2020/1 (n° 107).

[15] Interim Evaluation Report on the “Legacy & Sustainability” Strategy of Paris 2024, November 2023, page 28

[16] Le Monde, « Un héritage des JO pas à la hauteur des besoins » : en Seine-Saint-Denis, l’éducation physique et sportive reste à la peine, 15 May 2024.

3. Make Dakar 2026 an example of sustainable development through sport

In 2026, Senegal will be hosting the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) on behalf of Africa, and for the first time on African soil. Senegal is counting on the event to mobilise African youth and catalyse the energy and pluralistic expression of the peoples on the continent. The country plans to draw on the values of the Olympic spirit and the power of sport to make the YOG a transformative driver for its socio-economic development, and a source of inspiration for Africa. The YOG thus aim to promote, amongst other things, inclusion, diversity, citizenship, solidarity, leadership through sport, environmental conservation, and the socio-economic benefits. Indeed, sustainability has been integrated into all the operations for the preparation and organisation of the YOG. Its strategy also aims to inspire and drive social and economic development, ensure that the games are responsible in terms of the environmental challenges, and pass on tangible and intangible legacies for future generations.

In this respect, Dakar 2026 aims to help bring about continuous changes to ensure that it has an impact and lasting legacy for the accessibility and reinforcement of the practice of sport. It will achieve this through the construction of community sports facilities and equipment, and by strengthening governance, with the objective of driving social inclusion and fostering the development of sports, women's sports, and the well-being of people.

It is in this spirit that works are underway to rehabilitate the Iba Mar Diop Stadium, the Olympic swimming pool in Dakar, and build about ten community facilities in the three host municipalities of the Games: Dakar, Diamniadio and Saly. These facilities have been financed through the allocation of €60 million of financing to Senegal by AFD.

Furthermore, Dakar 2026 is also committed to promoting the circular, social and solidarity economy through the development of value chains based on recyclable and recycled materials, the development of entrepreneurship, capacity building for the operators, and access to the jobs offered by the Games.

Indeed, Dakar 2026 has aligned its requirements with Senegal's National Strategy for Sustainable Development and the IOC's Sustainable Development Strategy. It intends to develop activities to reduce the production of waste, promote sustainable consumption, minimise the carbon footprint, protect biodiversity, promote gender equality, enhance employability and the green economy, and promote training, education and awareness-raising on sustainable development among the stakeholders.

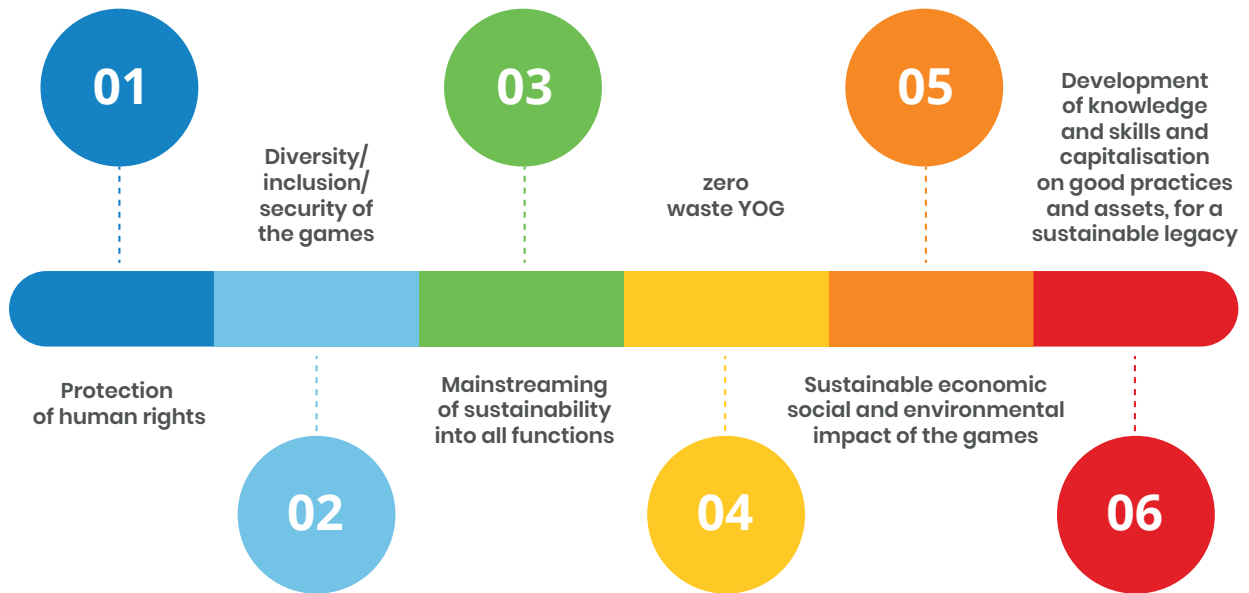
The aim of sustainable development is to reconcile the social, environment and economic aspects, while strengthening governance.

On the social level, Senegal aims to take all the necessary steps to ensure the success of the Olympic activities through an appropriate integration of aspects concerning the promotion and protection of social rights. Dakar 2026 will thus seek to generate major social benefits for communities, while promoting gender equality and inclusion, and reduce the social risks related to respect for human rights.

The concerns of Dakar 2026 in terms of social protection largely follow the national framework, including the Social Orientation Law n° 2010-15 of 6 July 2010, the National Child Protection Strategy (SNPE), and Law n° 2010-11 of 28 May 2010 establishing absolute parity between women and men.

In this context, the main achievements concern the compliance of the works with standards for environmental and social safeguards. In this respect, a transparent and inclusive process has been initiated to resettle people affected by the rehabilitation project for the Iba Mar Diop Stadium and the Olympic swimming pool in Dakar. It includes the gradual recovery of their livelihoods with the construction of a "Leather Centre" to house cobblers who were previously installed on the site of the stadium and have been affected by the works.

Graphic 4 - The sustainability issues of the Dakar 2026 YOG



Source: Dakar 2026.

Cooperation on these environmental and social issues is also underway between Paris 2024 and Dakar 2026 through the “Dioko Alliance”, under the auspices of the IOC. In addition to financing through a loan from AFD, since 2022, this alliance has included the deployment of civic service volunteers to the Senegalese National Olympic and Sports Committee and Dakar 2026, training for officials and top athletes, and the sharing of expertise.

Dakar 2026, a model project for the environmental and social management of infrastructure construction works

For the rehabilitation works at the Iba Mar Diop Stadium and the Olympic swimming pool in Dakar, Dakar 2026 has launched several environmental and social mechanisms to ensure that they comply with Olympic requirements and national legislation.

Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP):

The survey conducted at the site of the infrastructure identified 1,346 Project Affected Persons (PAPs), resulting in a high risk of loss of revenue. These PAPs have benefited from compensation and socio-economic assistance to restore their livelihoods, through the RAP and the LRP. Moreover, in addition to the compensation, the capacity building for the economic operators has been complemented by the construction, with a view towards legacy, of the Leather Centre. It is equipped with a professional sewing unit, a modern catering centre, a food processing unit, and display and sales platforms.

Labour Management Plan (LMP):

Labour management is extremely important for Dakar 2026. The sound management of human resources and occupational health and safety is crucial to the project's success. Ensuring decent living conditions in the work environment and on the sites contributes to the workers' well-being and improving productivity.

To this end, Dakar 2026 developed an LMP to define all the measures required to create a respectful work environment, where people find their work a source of fulfilment in decent and safe conditions.

Gender Action Plan (GAP):

Dakar 2026 is committed to ensuring that the YOG are equitable and inclusive. It has developed a GAP for all the facilities and all the phases (preparation, performance of works, operation of the infrastructure.) For legacy purposes, it will be transferred to the managers and beneficiaries of the sites.

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP):

Through the various stakeholders, Dakar 2026 is implementing the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), which provides a framework for strengthening the positive impacts and mitigating the negative impacts. The activities and the people responsible for the implementation and evaluation have been clearly identified. The key stages for the implementation of these activities, the performance indicators, and the costs have also been clearly established.

On the environmental front, Dakar 2026 is consistent with the public policies built around the ecological transition. Indeed, the priorities focus on the promotion of sustainable mobility to ensure that the YOG have a low carbon footprint, the conservation of biodiversity, the implementation of a “zero waste” strategy around and on the sites, and assistance to ensure that the catering is sustainable, mainly with the consumption of local products.

Dakar 2026 has thus set out to develop and implement an operational transport plan to ensure that there is an efficient service for the various sites of the Games, while taking into account the needs of daily users. This plan should be largely based on three main systems: Regional Express Trains (TER), Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), and the restructured network of bus lines to limit the environmental footprint of travel. In this respect, the projected, avoided and residual greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) will be assessed and monitored.

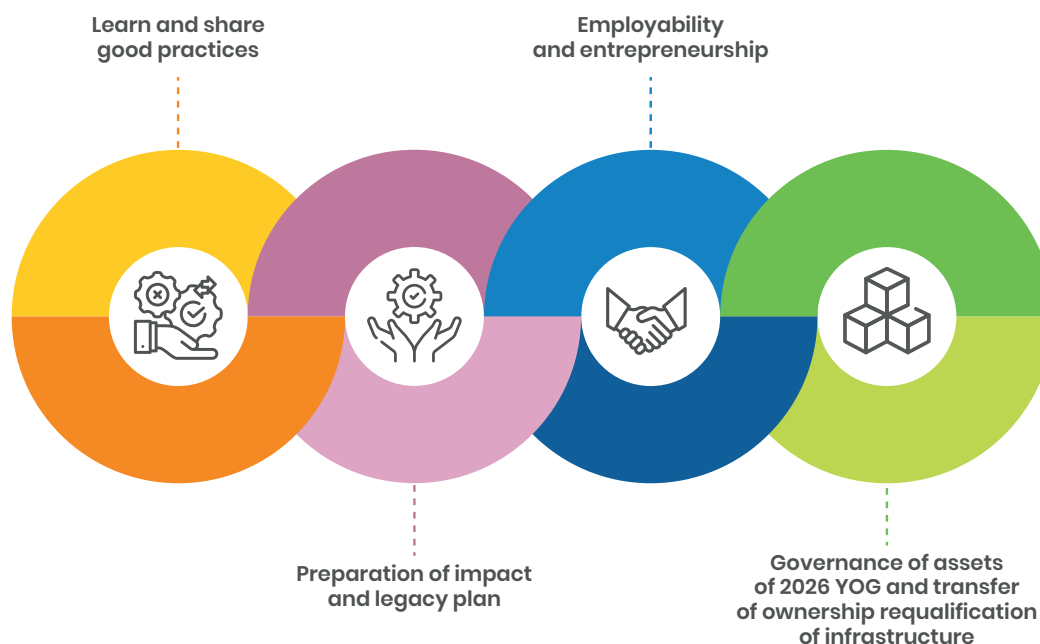
In addition, Dakar 2026 has set out to develop a cleaning and solid waste management strategy on and around the various sites, in line with the environmental policy of the Organising Committee for the Youth Olympic Games (OCYOG), and in compliance with national and local regulations. Furthermore, Dakar 2026 aims to promote the circular economy and social and technological innovation (upcycling). The objective is to ensure that there are substantial socio-economic benefits, and reinforce the Impact and Legacy, as well as the learn and share process. Again for the “zero waste” process, Dakar 2026 firstly plans to optimise the resources and consumption of materials and, secondly, recycle and recover waste, in particular food leftovers, mainly in the Youth Olympic Village (YOV) and for plastics. In this respect, plastic single-use items will not be used at the main sites of the Games, unless there is no viable alternative, and the landfilling of waste will also be avoided.

On the economic front, Dakar 2026 aims to contribute to strengthening the sports economy, promote tourism, and give priority to responsible and sustainable markets. This involves attracting both national and international sporting, commercial and cultural events, and developing the local economy.

In terms of governance, Dakar 2026 is engaged in a process to regionalise the Games, by focusing on strengthening local initiatives, empowering local authorities, and creating sports facilities. Finally, the “Sustainability – Impact – Legacy” Coalition, as an advisory body for reflection, mobilises and engages stakeholders in order to maximise the positive socio-economic and environmental impacts, and ensure that the Games are sustainable and responsible.

Empowering Senegalese youth and African youth, capitalising on good practices, and the sustainability of the approach will all largely contribute to this.

Graphic 5 - Diagram of the legacy strategy of Dakar 2026



Source : Dakar 2026

Case Study: Opportunities for sports professions and Dakar 2026 YOG

A study conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Vocational Training and the European Union has identified a matrix of 210 professions related to sport in general, and to the preparation and organisation of the Dakar 2026 YOG in particular. On this basis, the FIT Senegal Initiative has been launched with support from EU member countries: France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

The FIT Senegal Initiative plays a key role in issues related to the legacy of the Dakar 2026 YOG. Aware of the importance of this aspect, the Dakar 2026 OCYOG has defined, together with the International Olympic Committee and based on the relevant guidelines of government authorities, a strategy and action plan on the Sustainability, Impact and Legacy of the 2026 YOG. This is also a major focus for the International Olympic Committee, which has made it a new standard under the 2020+5 Agenda.

4. Conclusion: Towards a permanently more sustainable Olympic future?

As shown by the examples of the Paris and Dakar Olympics, sustainability is no longer simply a must: it is one of the conditions for the survival of the Olympic Movement and, more generally, all similar-sized sports competitions, such as the football world cups.^[17]

This ambition can already be seen in the organisation of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games, which have adopted and promoted the concept of “radical reuse” for their design: as with Paris, a number of existing world-scale facilities in the city will be used. The “new standard” for the Olympic Games is thus for the Games to adapt to the city, rather than changing the city to host them.

Moreover, several principles can be learned from the French and Senegalese experience to ensure that the Games are sustainable in the future:

- Olympic sites designed to maximise the use of renewable energies (solar panels and clean energy technologies integrated into the architecture), with the sites themselves as models to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of these technologies;
- The extensive use of public transport, electric vehicles, and alternative modes of transportation for the athletes, officials and spectators. This requires close coordination with the local authorities and transport service providers to develop comprehensive mobility plans giving priority to sustainable options (dedicated public transport corridors, smart traffic management systems, provision of recharging facilities for electric vehicles, etc.);
- Effective waste management and recycling strategies are essential to minimise the environmental impact of the Olympic Games. This includes the implementation of comprehensive programmes for waste reduction, recycling and composting at all the Olympic sites and support infrastructure. Here again, the Olympic organisers should work closely with the local authorities and waste management companies;

- The continuation of action to inform and involve the general public in support of sustainable development. This includes the implementation of educational programmes, the use of eco-friendly products and brands, and the promotion of sustainable practices among the athletes, officials and spectators.

In this respect, development and international cooperation actors play their role by assisting host countries, where necessary, with the creation of sustainable sports facilities. As is the case with AFD, which is mobilised to support the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games, the expertise developed in this field needs to be capitalised on and reused to ensure that these international events fit in with the low-carbon and social transition strategies of the countries and regions which host them.

[17] Tim Hide, Are the Olympics Ever Worth it for the Host City? American Economic Association, August 8, 2016.

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