

# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2022-23



WORLD  
ATHLETICS™



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“  
*Do better,  
be better prepared,  
be better equipped,  
be better informed.*”



# Message from the President

When we published our first sustainability report in April 2022, I said that our ambition is to be a leader in organising sustainable events in the coming years.

That ambition took a big step forward with the implementation this January of the Athletics for a Better World Standard, a certification system we've developed, in partnership with many of our one day and label events, that evaluates athletics events on their sustainable delivery. It's an important milestone, adding principles of sustainability to our broader event evaluation process and making sustainability reporting by events a requirement for the first time.

It's a vast undertaking, involving over 450 events in more than 80 countries that are part of our tour and label race series. But it's also an exciting one. When fully adopted, our standard will have the widest reach of any sustainability evaluation system in the sport industry.

Development of the standard was driven by the sustainability structures we've put in place, which received ISO 20121 sustainable event certification last year. That robust independent review of the processes and systems we created was another

key milestone we achieved last year, lending more credibility to our efforts and showing that the sustainability path we're creating for all our events is the right one.

It was also driven by input from dozens of event organisers over the past two years, including the Oslo and Zurich Wanda Diamond League meetings, true pioneers and leaders in the sport and sustainability space, and the organisers of our World Championships in Budapest last year, who were the first Local Organising Committee of our main event to pilot the standard. I thank them for their passion, commitment, long term legacy ambitions and input to this process. Their leadership contributed to the strong success of the sustainability programme established by the organising team of the World Athletics Indoor Championships in Glasgow last month. Their platinum achievement against the ABW Standard sets the highest high bar for our future events. I'm happy to report that organisers of upcoming championship events have willingly accepted that challenge.

As events' engagement around sustainability grows, so do the expectations of our athletes. An overwhelming majority believe that World Athletics does have a role to play in helping to create a better world. Their concerns are loud and clear. It's important for us to continue to act on those concerns and use the influence we and our athletes have to help drive meaningful change through the examples we set at our events.

The challenges are vast and will continue. Our response will remain the same: to continue to do better, to be better prepared, better equipped and better informed to meet those challenges.

SEBASTIAN COE

# Meaningful change

When World Athletics developed its sustainability strategy and launched it in 2020, we knew that it was critical to bring all events under our remit along with us to create the widest possible front from across the sport of athletics to tackle, together, the triple planetary threat of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss.

We did so guided by the recognition that while our events do have an impact on the environment and are being impacted by the changing climate, they also wield the power to help push for some of the changes necessary to meaningfully address the challenges we face.

By making all those events re-examine how they're staged and begin a push towards a delivery model where the key guiding principles include reducing their environmental impacts and maximising their social benefits.

After two years of planning and a year of testing and piloting, that journey finally began in January 2024 with the implementation of our Athletics for a Better World Standard, an evaluation system that's at the heart of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy.

The ABW Standard measures and scores an event's achievement in sustainable delivery, and in delivering an event in alignment with the six pillars of the World Athletics Sustainability Strategy. The sustainability management system that provides us with the framework to manage and deliver our Sustainability Strategy achieved ISO 20121 sustainable event certification in April 2023, further underpinning our efforts to drive the ABW Standard forward.

From this year, compliance with the standard will be built into World Athletics' broader competition evaluation system, making sustainability reporting a requirement for over 450 events from 85 countries on six continents that are part of our label and tour event series.

Since it was unveiled in December 2021, organisers of more than 300 one-day competition series events and label road races have been introduced to the ABW Standard. Several dozen piloted key components, providing valuable input prior to its implementation.

The standard is also being incorporated into the delivery of all seven World Athletics Series events, including the World Athletics Championships, the largest

sporting event in the world, in terms of the number of athletes and countries participating, after the Olympic Games. Cities bidding to host upcoming World Athletics Series events, will be required contractually to commit to a high standard of delivery, making sustainability a core feature of all future World Athletics championships events.

Organisers of the World Athletics Championships Budapest 23 were the first local organising committee to fully embrace the standard, giving it a full throttle test run at the event last August. Organisers of the World Athletics Indoor Championships Glasgow 24, which took place in March, announced their strong ambitions in delivering to the standard and succeeded – without any obligation to do so.

Athletes have also welcomed efforts included in the standard – indeed, those efforts are expected. In a survey of more than 400 athletes who competed at the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, 90% said that World Athletics has a role to play to help build a sustainable future. That same survey revealed that more than 77% of athletes are very concerned about climate change, with more than 85% reporting that climate change has already impacted our sport. Acting on those concerns, in 2022 World Athletics launched its Champions for a Better World, a programme designed to encourage athletes to take a more active, visible and vocal role in addressing environmental concerns.

Much of our work in 2022 and 2023 focused on bringing the ABW Standard to the start line. But the last two years also witnessed significant milestones in achieving gender parity at our sport's highest level and with continued efforts to ensure that our sport remains accessible and safe for all.

A 50:50 gender split was achieved on the World Athletics Council – the organisation's supreme decision-making body – four years ahead of schedule. And, building on the safeguarding policy launched in 2021, we produced a certificated Safeguarding Essentials training course that's available in seven languages.

These efforts, along with several other highlights from across the six pillars of our sustainability strategy, are detailed in this report.



# Setting the standard

Over the past two years, our main focus has centred on implementing our Athletics for a Better World (ABW) Standard. This initiative integrates sustainability principles into all events under World Athletics ownership, control, licensing or influence. This includes our World Championship events, as well as one-day athletics meetings, tours and labelled road races.

Events are vital to our sport, and the standard is essential for ensuring that these occasions, which bring immense drama and joy, are organised and hosted responsibly.

Comprising 55 action areas covering all aspects of event delivery, the ABW Standard focuses on procurement, waste management, energy, food and water management, and travel planning. It also addresses diversity, accessibility, inclusion of staff and volunteers, as well as ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all participants and stakeholders. The standard includes guidance on monitoring, reporting and communication of organisers' efforts.

It offers tiered levels of achievement – platinum, gold, silver, bronze and recognised event – to be met as part of the broader evaluation process for all World Athletics-licensed events starting from 2024. Cities bidding to host upcoming World Athletics Championships must commit to achieving a gold level, integrating sustainability into future championships.

Additionally, the standard is scalable, allowing events at any level to attain the highest sustainable achievement.

# Athletics for a Better World



55 action areas

120 total points available across six areas

(20 mandatory, 100 optional):

- Leadership in sustainability
- Sustainable production and consumption
- Climate change and carbon
- Local environment and air quality
- Global equality
- Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing

## Five event tiers

- Platinum – 108 points (90%)
- Gold – 96 points (80%) – minimum requirement for world indoor and outdoor championships from 2027
- Silver – 84 points (70%)
- Bronze – 72 points (60%)
- Recognised event – 40 points (33%)

## Getting certified

Since it was unveiled in December 2021, organisers of more than 300 one-day competition series events and label road races have been introduced to the standard. Dozens integrated parts of it into their planning in 2023, providing valuable input prior to its implementation from January 2024.

To support its implementation, we developed a Sustainable Events Management System (SEMS), which provides best practice guidance in 15 areas of planning and delivery in 16 languages. The standard's rollout was supported by an ongoing series of webinars, case studies, site visits and one-on-one meetings.

The internal sustainability management system we've developed to provide the framework to manage and deliver our sustainability strategy – which includes driving the ABW standard – underwent a rigorous two-phase audit process to receive ISO 20121 certification in May 2023. The system has been incorporated into the delivery of all World Athletics Series events, including the World Athletics Championships Budapest 23, the first LOC to fully embrace the standard.



1 urban regeneration project

342,000 single-use plastic bottles avoided

1 Green Zone featuring our Champions for a Better World

2 live panels about sustainability

# Celebrating sustainability in Budapest

In August 2023, against the breathtaking backdrop of the River Danube in late summer, the world witnessed nine unforgettable days of athletic excellence. A record-breaking 2,100 athletes from 195 countries competed in the Hungarian capital, captivating over 400,000 spectators from 120 nations.

Amid the athletic achievement – marked by one world record, one world U20 record, seven championship records, 11 area records and 73 national records – we tried to make history off the track with the Local Organising Committee (LOC). It marked our inaugural major event aligned with the Athletics for a Better World Standard, underscoring our commitment to sustainability and progress beyond athletics.

The LOC had two primary legacy goals: to promote health and wellbeing by encouraging increased physical activity among Hungarians through incentive programmes tied to the World Athletics Championships, and to foster tangible urban regeneration.

For urban regeneration, a forest restoration initiative was launched in two Budapest districts: the 20th district, only nine kilometres from the main competition venue, the National Athletics Centre, and the 9th district, situated on the outskirts and serving thousands of city residents.



# Creating Sustainability in Budapest

Elsewhere, a robust waste management strategy was implemented, accompanied by a campaign promoting public transportation for spectators. The introduction of water refill stations in the stadium park, broadcast compound and media centre helped to eliminate 342,000 single-use plastic bottles from the event.

During the Championships, a Green Zone was set up inside the stadium park, allowing spectators to learn about the event's sustainability efforts. Visitors also had the opportunity to interact with our Champions for a Better World athlete ambassadors, who shared their climate change concerns and discussed their support for World Athletics' sustainability strategy.

Two live-streamed panel discussions hosted around the Championships delved into the impacts of climate

change on sports and communities, as well as actionable solutions for event organisers and hosts.

'Sport on the Climate Change Front Lines' featured team delegation members from five Pacific Island nations most vulnerable to climate change, while 'Building Collaborations for Sustainable Events' brought together leading practitioners, researchers and scholars in sport and sustainability.

The panel explored the Budapest LOC's ambitions to align with the World Athletics sustainability strategy. Discussions also revolved around major events' role in exemplifying sustainable practices and fostering collaborations and partnerships, including partner and sponsor expectations regarding sustainability at such events.

*"This is something that's very important to me and something I'm passionate about. Sport has to make changes. Extreme weather is really impacting sport and athletes, and we have to do what we can to make a better world."*

*Eliza McCartney, New Zealand pole vaulter and World Athletics Champion for a Better World*





# Bislett Games at the forefront of responsible sport

*“We are now in the fourth industrial revolution. It is going to be digital and green. Financially it is smart to think and work this way, so it really was a no-brainer.”*

*Steinar Hoen, meeting director, Bislett Games*

The Oslo Bislett Games, one of the most historic stops on the Wanda Diamond League, fully embodies our sustainability ethos. Following its shift away from a headline sponsorship with a fossil fuel company in 2017, the event, guided by meeting director Steinar Hoen, has placed sustainability at the forefront of its agenda.

The event’s dedication extends to the Bislett Stadium itself, which has adopted ‘Ten Commandments’ of sustainability that adorn walls across the venue. These include using only renewable energy, encouraging use of public transport, cycling or walking and standing for diversity and inclusion.

Since implementing sustainable practices, the Oslo meeting has cut its carbon emissions by nearly 40% and travel expenses by a third. Despite setbacks from the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, the organisers achieved zero emissions for all meeting-related transport in Oslo, using the airport train (with round-trip tickets provided for those accredited) and electric vehicles.

The event is aiming for a 50% reduction in emissions by 2024, especially as the Oslo and Stockholm Diamond League events will occur on the same weekend, allowing athletes to travel by train between the two, further reducing flight needs.

Additionally, Bislett Stadium introduced an innovative waste management system, featuring a refrigerated unit for compostable waste that reduces odours and decreases waste collection frequency. Powered entirely by renewable energy, the stadium ensures the system does not increase its carbon footprint.

# Empowering our athletes

Prior to the COP28 United Nations Climate Change Conference in November 2023, we conducted our third annual survey to gather insights from our athletes regarding their perspectives on climate change and other environmental and social issues.

In a survey of nearly 400 athletes who participated in the World Athletics Championships Budapest 23 in August, three-quarters (75%) reported experiencing direct negative impacts on their health and performance due to climate change, with 85% expressing that athletics as a sport has suffered adverse consequences. This marks a significant increase from 2022, when 72% perceived negative effects on the sport and 66% reported direct impacts.

The survey revealed that 77% and 83% of athletes respectively expressed extreme or high levels of concern about the climate crisis and air pollution, with 90% stating that World Athletics has a role to play in building a more sustainable future.

Empowering athletes to be catalysts for change, we launched Champions for a Better World in 2022. Comprising athletes from each of World Athletics' six continental areas, this initiative enables athletes to spearhead sustainability advocacy and awareness raising about climate change.

Entering its second year in 2023, Champions for a Better World welcomed Australian race walker Rhydian Cowley to its roster, which includes Kelsey-Lee Barber (Australia, javelin), Ajla Del Ponte (Switzerland, sprints), Alison Dos Santos (Brazil, hurdles), Sam Mattis (USA, discus), Eliza McCartney (New Zealand, pole vault), Ernest John Obiena (Philippines, pole vault), Elena Vallortigara (Italy, high jump) and Hugues Fabrice Zango (Burkina Faso, triple jump).

To kick off the new year and introduce Cowley, a two-time Olympian, the group collaborated on a video showcasing their sustainable daily practices, underscoring the survey finding that 77% of athletes are open to adjusting their lifestyles to reduce environmental impact.



# Empowering Athletes

75%  
experiencing negative  
impacts of climate change

85%  
think athletics as a sport has  
suffered adverse consequences

90%  
think World Athletics has a role to play

77%  
willing to change their own lifestyles



“Knowing that we have an opportunity to get involved in initiatives like this is awesome. Having a voice that contributes to the solution is something that every athlete can do.”  
Sam Mattis, US discus throw champion



“I think that climate change should be an important issue for everyone. Climate change is really impacting our sport right now, and that's why we need all hands on deck.”  
Rhydian Cowley, Australian race walker



# Collaborating on shared goals

Although we have our own sustainability strategy in place, we know we cannot do it alone. We constantly search for and invest in strategic collaborations that can accelerate shared sustainability targets.

Since 2022, we have been involved in the GAMES project, an Erasmus+ funded initiative exploring decarbonisation practices for sports events and within sports governance.

Alongside the International Biathlon Union, International Floorball Federation and the Swedish Floorball Federation, with technical partner Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies and communications partner Touchline, we have created a database of best practices and been part of site visits to see where operations and policies can be improved from a carbon reduction perspective.

One of the landmark milestones of the GAMES project thus far was the undertaking of the environmental footprint analysis at the World Mountain and Trail Running Championships 2023 in Innsbruck-Stubai.

The analysis covered the entire environmental impact of the event, surpassing its carbon footprint. It used the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodology to evaluate environmental impacts across various aspects, such as infrastructure, mobility, logistics, food, beverage, accommodation, equipment, materials and waste, throughout the event's life cycle.

Collaboration across the value chain to make events more sustainable was the topic of our panel at Budapest 2023 at ASCIS house.

Featuring Dr. Susie Tomson (thinkBeyond), Dr Madeleine Orr (sport ecologist), Sam Mattis (US athlete), Petra Schmitt (Budapest 2023), Mark-Ivar Magnus (World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry) and Bob Ramsak (World Athletics), the panel examined the potential for major sports events to set strong examples around sustainable delivery, and how effective collaboration supports those goals.

Additionally, in May 2023, World Athletics and WFSGI signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance collaboration for sustainable sport development, benefiting athletes, the industry and the planet.



# Our sustainability strategy

Highlights

Through six pillars we are aiming to make the sport of athletics more sustainable and responsible.

## 1 Leadership in sustainability

Objective: Be a recognised driver in sports sustainability

### 2030 targets

100% of World Athletics member federations and licensed events taking sustainability action

100% of owned and licensed events commit to World Athletics Sustainability Policy

100% of World Athletics Series events deliver to ISO 20121 standard

100% of corporate partners engaged and activated

## 2 Sustainable production and consumption

Objective: Positively manage the impact of procurement

### 2030 targets

Technical and event standards account for social and environmental impacts

Baseline of impact at World Athletics Series events and action plan for all events established

100% compliance with sustainable procurement code across World Athletics activities

100% compliance with sustainable procurement code at sanctioned events

## 3 Climate change and carbon

Objective: Transition to carbon neutrality by 2030

### 2030 targets

Achieve carbon neutrality across World Athletics operations and World Athletics Series events (annual 10% reduction against 2019 baseline)

100% of sanctioned event commit to carbon neutrality targets

## 4 Local environment and air quality

Objective: Ensure environmental conditions enable individuals to participate safely

### 2030 targets

Venue, event and equipment standards incorporate environmental factors

Venue and event standards minimise impact on surrounding environments

100% of host cities establish low emission zones around athletics venues

Air quality targets are understood, set and monitored

## 5 Global equality

Objective: Demonstrably share skills across the world

### 2030 targets

100% of World Athletics continental areas capable of hosting high quality, sustainable events in at least one city

100% of World Athletics continental areas have recognised opportunity pathways for both genders in all professions in athletics

Annual female leadership seminars conducted in all continental areas

## 6 Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing

Objective: Ensure athletics is open to everyone

### 2030 targets

100% of athletes competing at international events have standardised basic health checks

100% awareness and implementation of diversity policy throughout the sport

100% of member federations have established collaborative disability in athletics programmes

100% implementation of staff wellbeing policy and World Athletics process to address issues

100% implementation of an athlete and related officials' policy, and World Athletics processes to tackle harassment and safety

# Making sustainability attainable for everyone

“Athletes need a place to train and as we are losing land through erosion it is becoming increasingly challenging for our athletes. We always have to think about how the climate will affect us. It is an integral part of how we plan all our events and activities.”  
 Rusila Tekamotiata, president, Kiribati Athletics



As one of the largest international sports federations, we proudly demonstrate the universal accessibility of our sport. Through our Athletics for a Better World standard, we're promoting sustainable event organisation across over 450 events spanning nearly 100 countries on six continents.

This includes our flagship World Athletics Series events, as well as those we collaborate on, grant permits for, or influence, such as the Wanda Diamond League series and prestigious road races like the World Marathon Majors.

To support the integration of the Athletics for a Better World standard, we developed a sustainability management system, which, in May 2023, was certified to ISO 20121 standard.

This certification required demonstrating consideration of all pertinent financial, economic, social and environmental factors. Conducted by BSI, a leading authority in ISO standards, the rigorous two-phase audit process evaluated how our sustainability management system integrated sustainability into event planning and delivery. Furthermore, the system was evaluated for its ability to monitor progress and ensure ongoing compliance with standard requirements.

Leadership in sustainability also means spotlighting global sustainability issues affecting our sport and inspiring action among key stakeholders. During the World Championships 2023 in Budapest, we highlighted the threat climate change poses to vulnerable South Pacific nations, potentially leading to a decrease in membership as these nations face the risk of completely disappearing.

Through a panel titled Sport on the Climate Change Front Lines, we sought to highlight the challenges faced by these nations and explore how sport can contribute to solutions.

Moderated by our head of sustainability, Bob Ramsak, the panel comprised athletics leaders from Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands. They shared the stark futures their nations face in general terms, as well as barriers to participating and organising sports events.

Pillar 1: Leadership in sustainability

# Reducing waste at our flagship events

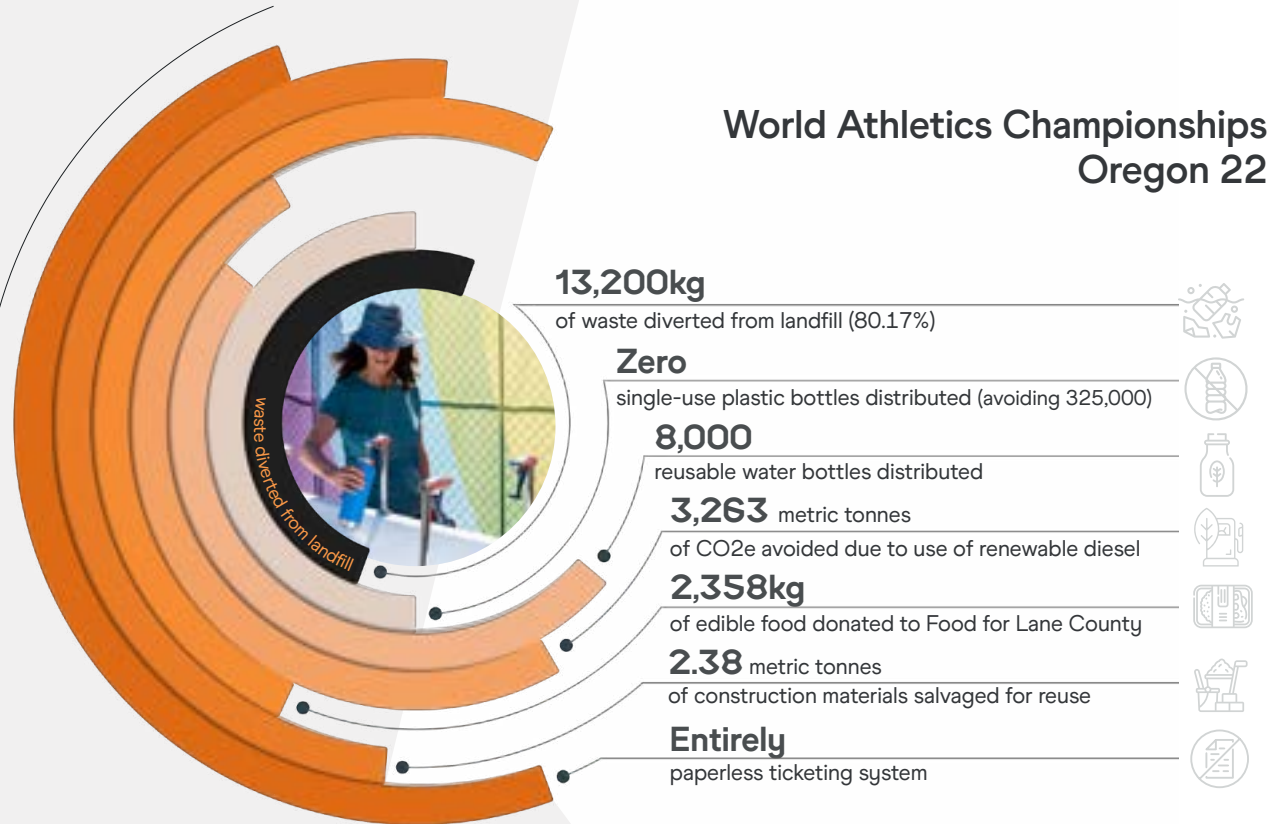
A more responsible approach to the use and consumption of materials and waste management is a fundamental element of our Athletics for a Better World Standard.

One of our key strategic priorities is for our events to account for their social and environmental impacts, and that holistic approach helped our World Championships Oregon22 achieve the Council for Responsible Sport's Evergreen Certification – its highest level of achievement.

Around 325,000 single-use water bottles were avoided due to the event not selling or distributing them. To support the initiative, the organising committee provided 8,000 reusable water bottles, created 35 temporary drinking water stations and established a 'Bring Your Own Water Bottle' campaign to raise awareness.

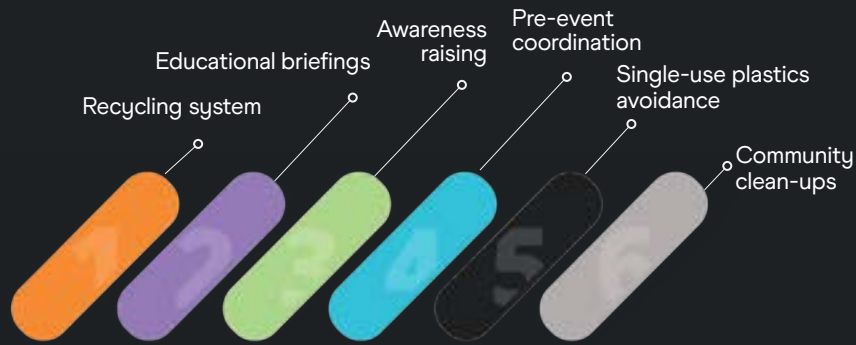
The Championships achieved an 80% waste diversion rate and donated more than two tonnes of edible food to the charity Food for Lane County. In addition, more than one-and-a-half tonnes of food waste was composted.

To reduce the event's environmental impact further, the dedicated car fleet was scaled back and a bike valet service was provided for anyone travelling to the venues via bicycle.





## Budapest 2023 waste management strategy



A year later, at the World Championships Budapest 2023, local NGO Green Zone (Zöldövezet Társulás) and its band of 60-plus team members rallied to make sure the event produced as little waste as possible.

More than 328,000 single-use plastic bottles were saved as a result of providing water stations, fountains and 19 litre water balloons. Around 813m<sup>3</sup> of waste was still collected and sorted through by volunteers, helping to achieve a landfill diversion rate of 60%. A waste compression system was used to transport the recycled materials more effectively.

Alongside the local organising committee, Green Zone helped to coordinate the reuse of several items that have been traditionally single-use, including signage, promotional materials, educational leaflets, cable reels and caps.



“More than 813m<sup>3</sup> of waste was collected, sorted and sent to be recycled – the height of more than three Eiffel Towers.”

Although our flagship events are great opportunities to showcase a more sustainable way of doing things for our sport, our ambition is to make sure that there is a certain level of environmental and social responsibility across all athletics events around the world.

To support this vision, our competitions and events department began a review of all World Athletics certification systems for facilities and equipment. The purpose of the review, which began in October 2023, was to incorporate environmental sustainability requirements for equipment and synthetic surfaces.

In line with our sustainability strategy, synthetic surfaces in particular will be assessed against our four environmental pillars: leadership in sustainability, sustainable production and consumption, climate and carbon, and local environment and air quality.

During 2024, we will strengthen our approach to sustainable production and consumption with the implementation of a sustainable procurement policy and the continued rollout of our Athletics for a Better World standard.

We recognise the bidirectional relationship between our sport and the environment. While our events have an impact on climate change, they also have the ability to promote the positive changes needed to address the challenges we face.

At the World Athletics Championships Budapest 2023, a banner at the Green Zone vividly depicted the threat of climate change to our sport.

Featuring three images, it showcased the Ullevi Stadium in Gothenburg, Sweden, host venue of the 1995 World Athletics Championships, in different scenarios: present day, in a 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures world, and, finally, in a 3°C world. Only in the present-day image was the stadium not completely flooded because of sea-level rise.

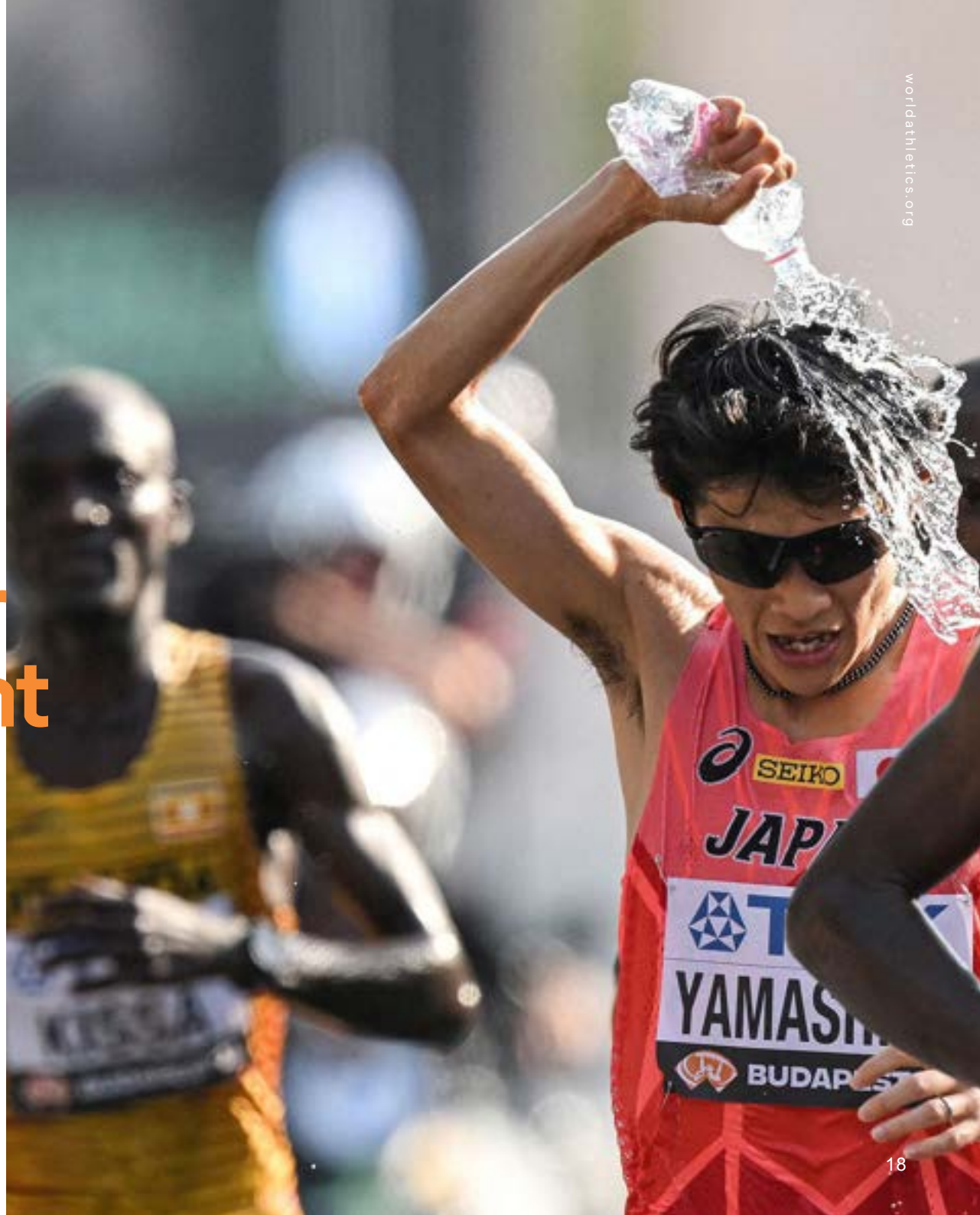
To position our organisation and athletics as part of the solution to mitigate and adapt to our changing climate, we have the objective of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 through two main goals: minimising carbon emissions across our activities and investing in credible offsets to balance our unavoidable emissions.

# Addressing our carbon footprint

As signatories to the UNFCCC Sports for Climate Action Framework, we have been working to reduce our climate impact against a carbon footprint baseline we calculated for the year 2019.

Like many other sports, a significant proportion of our carbon emissions comes from travel. We are addressing this through the development of a sustainable travel policy, which will be fully implemented in 2024, and the restructuring of our competition calendar to concentrate events to make more sense geographically.

A carbon emissions calculation tool has been developed for member federations and athletics event organisers to help them understand their own carbon footprints, and where the opportunities to reduce are. To help them make the most of the tool, we have organised an introductory webinar, created tutorial videos and provide ongoing support.





# Safeguarding our sport from air pollution

“

*It is deeply unjust that athletes in many parts of the world are hindered by poor air quality and face serious health implications in their pursuit of sporting achievement.*

*Kajsa Bergqvist*”

Clean air is essential for athletes at every level, from elites to enthusiasts. Poor air quality disproportionately affects active individuals, especially endurance athletes, and that's why addressing this issue is integral to our sustainability strategy and Athletics for a Better World standard.

The World Athletics Championships Oregon22 initiated a research project to identify essential information and resources for protecting athletes, spectators and event staff from poor air quality impacts.

This effort, part of a broader research collaboration between World Athletics and the University of Oregon, involved monitoring air quality around Hayward Field using sensors to gain insights into the impact of air quality on event preparation.

Through collaboration with the university's Institute for a Sustainable Environment, monitors scanned for pollutants and gases, enabling real-time data collection and sharing before, during and after events.

Global athletics events are increasingly affected by poor air quality. The year before the Championships, an unprecedented heat wave severely disrupted the USA Olympic Trials in Eugene, Oregon. Several wildfires in the region over the last few years have created major problems around smoke and air quality.

Our health and science team has been at the forefront of air quality research since the launch of our Air Quality Project in 2018. This project has involved every local organising committee ever since as the issue was highlighted as a strategic priority at a very early point of our sustainability journey. Research shows that more than half of people globally (53%) are scared of air pollution levels affecting their ability to run or exercise outside.

The team has supported event organisers by creating tools that help with messaging around air quality impacts, such as live screen updates at some events and a widget with live info on the event website.

In June 2022, we launched the Every Breath Counts campaign, urging people globally to sign the Declaration for Clean Air. This initiative calls on governments and businesses to adopt stricter air pollution targets and enhanced monitoring aligned with World Health Organization (WHO) standards.

To coincide with the campaign, we co-hosted a panel discussion with the Swedish Athletic Association at the Stockholm Olympic Stadium to explore how sport could instigate advocacy and action in tackling air pollution.

Kajsa Bergqvist, the Swedish athletics team manager and 2005 world high jump champion, was joined on the panel by Amina Mohamed (Kenya's Minister of Sport, Culture and Heritage), Johan Storakers (*president of the Swedish Athletics Association*), Antti Pihlakoski (*World Athletics Council member*) and Mans Nilsson (*executive director of the Stockholm Environment Institute*).



Sustainability in sports necessitates equal opportunities for all, from athletes to volunteers to administrators. Our Athletics for a Better World standard emphasises creating and maximising such opportunities, vital for fostering inclusive participation and maximising local community benefits during events.

Pillar 5: Global Equality

# Promoting representation



worldathletics.org

At our 2023 Congress, we achieved a significant milestone for the future of our sport and the way it is governed, electing 13 members of each gender to the World Athletics Council, achieving 50/50 gender parity four years ahead of schedule.

Again, we used our two flagship events – Oregon 2022 and Budapest 2023 – to highlight the importance of gender diverse leadership in sport and to outline how we are working to make every level of track and field more inclusive.

In Budapest, we hosted the Moving Mountains: One Step at a Time seminar in partnership with ASICS to review the work and progress of our Gender Leadership Task Force, which was instrumental in helping us achieve gender parity on our Council so early.

Stephanie Hightower, the chair of the Task Force, outlined the group's milestones in the company of over 200 leading figures from the world of athletics. Together with our president, Seb Coe, Hightower emphasised the importance of diverse perspectives in decision-making to advance the sport.

Further panels explored the need to change the narrative around gender leadership and how to provide opportunities to skilled women, as well as the key motivations driving women to exercise.

Just over 12 months earlier in Oregon, four prominent women leaders in athletics – Sanya Richards-Ross, Ximena Restrepo, Fatma Awale and Claudia Schneck – shared their journeys and discussed the importance of gender equity in sport at the Out of the Blocks leadership conference.

In an interview led by Hightower, the quartet shared their experiences transitioning from athletes to leaders, and stressed the importance to male allyship, self-promotion and risk taking to advance gender diversity in athletics.

However, equality and inclusivity are not limited to the realm of gender. To make sure that our organisation provides opportunities and support to everyone involved in our sport, our Athletics for a Better World standard is giving us the chance to work directly with event organisers across wider geographies to build local technical, event management and performance capabilities.

# Protecting our people

Pillar 6: Diversity, accessibility and wellbeing



Sport must prioritise inclusivity and safety for all participants. Our Athletics for a Better World standard underscores the importance of promoting both physical and mental well-being, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for everyone involved.

To ensure that everyone associated with our sport feels respected, valued and protected, we introduced our Safeguarding Essentials training course in seven languages – English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese (Mandarin), Arabic and Russian – towards the end of 2023.

The 90-minute course builds on the World Athletics Safeguarding Policy, established in 2021, and the approval of Safeguarding Rules by the World Athletics Council. Its aim is to raise awareness of safeguarding responsibilities in athletics and how to respond to specific concerns. The target audience for the course ranges from elite athletes to grassroots club members, from coaches to administrators.

Produced in partnership with UNICEF, the course allows participants to learn at their own pace.

Making plans for taking the next steps in safeguarding

Describing what safeguarding in athletics means

Recognising safeguarding risks in athletics

Understanding how to report safeguarding concerns

Knowing how to reduce the risks

## Safeguarding course learning outcomes



258 abusive posts identified

35% racist abuse

16% sexual or sexist abuse

90% detected abuse made on X (formerly Twitter)

46% of abuse athletes from USA



UNICEF also supported us and other international federations to develop advanced safeguarding training modules, while we helped our own member federations with the development of their own policies with a Starter Pack, which included essential documents like codes of conduct, reporting flowcharts and safeguarding rules.

Our safeguarding challenge was laid bare by a study we conducted in December 2023, which revealed that athletes had received more than 200 abusive posts over the calendar year, with 35% representing racist abuse – up from 14% in 2022.

Of the 1,344 athlete social media accounts we tracked during the study, 47 received targeted abuse, with 16% sexual or sexist in nature. Levels of abuse during Budapest

2023 were noticeably higher than during Oregon 2022.

This study, the third of its kind in athletics, is part of a four-year research project we are conducting to comprehend the extent of online abuse athletes encounter during major sporting events. The initiative utilised Threat Matrix, developed by Signify Group and supported by Quest, to analyse data.

With a fourth study scheduled for the Paris 2024 Games, the research will cover data from two Olympic Games and two World Athletics Championships held across Asia, Europe and North America.



# Looking ahead to 2024 and 2025



World Athletics

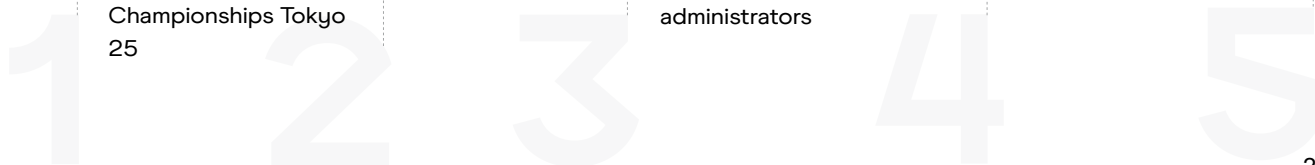
1 Continue to provide support to drive implementation of the Athletics for a Better World Standard

2 Provide guidance and support to organisers of the World Athletics Indoor Championships Nanjing 25 and World Athletics Championships Tokyo 25

3 Develop and implement a Climate Transition Plan

4 Develop curriculum to build Athletics for a Better World champions across the entire sport including athletes, coaches, event organisers, technical officials and administrators

5 Develop materials for coaches and teachers to use athletics as a platform for DEI and environmental sustainability training







# WORLD ATHLETICS™

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