

On behalf of:



Federal Ministry  
for the Environment, Nature Conservation,  
Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection

of the Federal Republic of Germany

# Conference documentation

Dialogue forum on sustainable sport 2023

Sustainability in sport: shaping the future together

27 September 2023, 10:00–17:00



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## Framework of the event

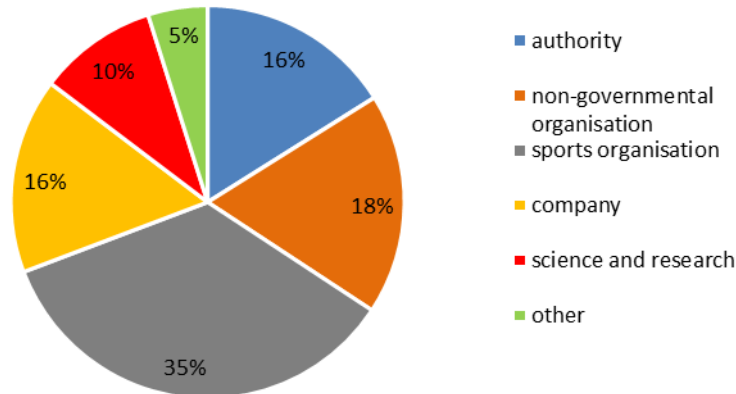
On 27 September 2023, the 3rd Dialogue Forum on Sustainable Sport took place at Humboldt University of Berlin (HU) organised by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) and the BMUV's Advisory Board "Environment and Sport"<sup>1</sup>. Under the title "Sustainability in sport: shaping the future together", the event followed on from the 2017 and 2020 Dialogue Forums. The aim of the 2023 Dialogue Forum was to discuss current issues in the field of "Environment and Sport", exchange best practice examples and develop concrete approaches to make sport more sustainable.

The following five topics were selected from a broad spectrum of discussion, research and action areas for in-depth discussion in small groups. These are currently of particular importance and scope for sustainable development in the field of sport:

1. Sports facilities;
2. Sporting goods;
3. Sport in nature;
4. Popular sports and environmental education;
5. Mobility.

More than 140 people took part on site at the HU. It was also possible to follow the presentations in plenary online. The circle of participants was made up of experts from various fields, including representatives from sports organisations, non-governmental organisations, public authorities, companies and academia. The graphic below provides an overview of the composition of the audience on site.

Composition of the audience on site



The conference documentation provides an overview of the most important content, statements and results of the 2023 Sustainable Sport Dialogue Forum. In addition, the conference documents can be downloaded from the event website<sup>2</sup> and the 3rd position paper "SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society"<sup>3</sup> of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport".

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bmuv.de/WS510>

<sup>2</sup> <https://nachhaltiger-sport-2023.fresh-thoughts.eu/materials/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bmuv.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

## Programme

Moderator: Manuel Andrack

10:00	<b>I. Welcome and introduction to the dialogue forum</b> <b>Prof Dr Julia von Blumenthal</b> , <i>President of Humboldt-Universität Berlin</i> <b>Prof Dr Ralf Roth</b> , <i>Chairman of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport"</i>
10:25	<b>II. Keynote speech—The social power of sport</b> <b>Verena Bentele</b> , <i>Vice-President of the DOSB and President of the German Social Association VdK, former German biathlete and cross-country skier, Paralympics winner</i>
10:45	<b>III. Introductory statements on the main topics of the event</b> <b>Dr Jutta Katthage</b> , <i>Federal Institute for Sports Science—Expert in Sports Facilities</i> <b>Hilke Anna Patzwall</b> , <i>Senior Manager Sustainability VAUDE Sport, Spokeswoman of the Sustainability Working Group of the German Sporting Goods Industry Association, Deputy Chairwoman of the BMUV Advisory Board "Environment and Sport"—Expert in Sporting Goods</i> <b>Dr Neele Larondelle</b> , <i>National Natural Landscapes (NNL)—Expert in Sport in Nature</i> <b>Katharina Morlang</b> , <i>German Sports Youth—Expert in popular sport and environmental education, consultant for children's and youth sport, education for sustainable development</i> <b>Martin Schmied</b> , <i>German Environment Agency—Mobility expert</i> <b>Anton Klischewski</b> , <i>FC Internationale Berlin—Club representative</i>
11:25	<b>IV. Parallel workshops, phase 1</b> <i>Parallel workshops on the following topics:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <i>Sports facilities;</i></li><li>2. <i>Sporting goods;</i></li><li>3. <i>Sport in nature;</i></li><li>4. <i>Popular sports and environmental education;</i></li><li>5. <i>Mobility.</i></li></ol> <b>Dr Jutta Katthage</b> , <i>Federal Institute for Sports Science—Expert in Sports Facilities</i> <b>Stefanie Rieder-Haas</b> , <i>Chief Supply Chain Officer ORTOVOX and</i> <b>Matthias Gebhard</b> , <i>Managing Director of Bergfreunde GmbH—Expert in Sporting Goods</i> <b>Dr Neele Larondelle</b> , <i>National Natural Landscapes (NNL)—Expert in Sport in Nature</i> <b>Katharina Morlang</b> , <i>German Sports Youth—Expert in popular sport and environmental education, consultant for children's and youth sport, education for sustainable development</i> <b>Martin Schmied</b> , <i>German Environment Agency—Mobility expert</i>
12:30	<b>Lunch break with physical activity</b>
14:00	<b>V. Speech by the Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Environment Ministry</b> <b>Christian Kühn MdB (Member of the German Bundestag)</b>
14:15	<b>VI. Insight I</b> <b>Albert Rinn</b> , <i>BTE Tourismus- und Regionalberatung: Digitalisation and activity management in nature and landscape</i>
14:25	<b>VII. Insight II</b> <b>Dr Alexander v. Preen</b> , <i>CEO of INTERSPORT Deutschland eG: How sports retail is becoming more sustainable</i>
14:40	<b>VIII. Parallel workshops, phase 2</b> <i>See information under programme item IV.</i>
15:40	<b>Coffee break</b>
16:15	<b>IX. Report from the workshops, outlook and closing remarks</b>
17:00	<b>End of the event</b>

## Technical introduction to the dialogue forum

### **Prof Dr Julia von Blumenthal**

President of Humboldt-Universität Berlin

In her welcoming address, Prof Dr Julia von Blumenthal emphasised that sustainability plays a major role at Humboldt-Universität Berlin. For example, there is a particular focus on research into human–environment systems. Students from various disciplines are also given the opportunity to deal with the topic of sustainability in a variety of ways as part of a "Studium Oecologicum". In addition, Humboldt University adopted a climate protection concept in spring 2023 with the aim of becoming climate-neutral by 2030.

In order to find answers to important social questions, it is important to pool the strengths of different stakeholders, as the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV) and the BMUV Advisory Board "Environment and Sport" have done. In the context of sport and sustainability, the question arises as to how sport can take place in better harmony with the environment, how sporting goods can be produced and used and how major sporting events (e.g. the Berlin Marathon) can be held more sustainably.

Finally, Prof Dr Julia von Blumenthal wishes all participants an interesting exchange and sustainable results with regard to sport and the environment.



### **Prof Dr Ralf Roth**

Chairman of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport"



In his opening speech, Prof Dr Ralf Roth underlines the outstanding importance of sport and exercise as an integrative element in society. He emphasised the inseparable link between health and exercise in well-designed environments.

However, it is important to note that sport not only has a positive social impact, but also harbours potential environmental and social risks. Prof Dr Ralf Roth sees the need for a sustainability transformation of sport as a comprehensive social obligation. It is the responsibility of all generations to actively participate in shaping future development. In this context, positive and appealing strategies and shared visionary images play a decisive role. At the same time, he emphasises that it may well be necessary to make sacrifices in sport in line with planetary boundaries.



In his subsequent presentation, he points out some key points:

Sport in all its forms is both space-bound and space-defining. This applies not only to sport in nature and the countryside, but also to indoor sports facilities (e.g. climbing gyms) in urban areas. The control, limitation and management of demand for sport is significantly influenced by the design of infrastructures, products and offers. Sport, and sporting events in particular, are the "campfires" of our society, where people come together and have irreplaceable experiences.

Prof Dr Ralf Roth then cites some figures that illustrate the importance and environmental impact of sport. See the figure below.



At the same time, sport is also facing major challenges and upheavals: Energy efficiency and climate responsibility, preservation of biodiversity, conservation of resources and sustainable procurement of products and services, including respect for human rights in the supply chain. A collective change is needed, together with active people.

In the position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society<sup>4</sup>, which is constantly being developed, the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport" focuses on five major fields of action: "Sport in nature, landscape and urban areas", "Sports facilities", "Major sporting events", "Transport and mobility" and "Sporting goods industry and trade". Transport and mobility (e.g. travel to sports venues) is a particularly important topic, as it accounts for around 70% of total emissions in the sports sector.

A paradigm shift in sport is necessary: good solutions must be identified in order to implement them on a broad scale. It is not knowledge alone that is decisive, but action. The project "Sustainable (major) sporting events in Germany"<sup>5</sup> sets important cornerstones here: providing impetus, promoting innovation, acting transparently and bindingly, shaping the future positively and minimising sustainability risks.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bmu.de/WS7114> and <https://www.nachhaltige-sportveranstaltungen.de/>

## Keynote speech—The social power of sport

### Verena Bentele

Vice-President of the DOSB and President of the Social Association VdK Germany



Verena Bentele emphasises her diverse connection to the topic of sport and sustainability: sport has taught her social values such as tolerance, openness, fair play, cooperation, transparency and honesty. She is also very concerned about sustainability and ecology, which is also linked to her childhood experiences on her parents' organic farm. Due to her proximity to the sporting goods company VAUDE, the sustainable production of sporting goods (e.g. the use of recycled materials) has long been an issue for her.

In her keynote speech, Verena Bentele emphasised some aspects of the importance of sport; for example, sport has a positive effect on health. Major sporting events can have lasting positive effects on society, as was the case at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, for example. Most of the infrastructure (sports facilities, Olympic village, subway) is still in use today. Social (sustainability) values are not only conveyed in elite sport, but also in popular sport and in sports clubs. Sports clubs can thus be a driving force for inclusion and integration as well as the education of children and young people and good coexistence. This can be seen, for example, in the "Stars of Sport" competition, which recognises clubs for their social commitment. Especially in the current climate, sport has great potential to facilitate interaction and convey a sense of belonging, thereby contributing to social cohesion.

Sport also has an ecological dimension, especially for outdoor athletes. Sport is dependent on the environment (e.g. snow conditions for winter sports), but also has an impact on the environment, e.g. in terms of mobility and waste. Mitigating climate change is a major challenge, and organised sport must also make a contribution here. This includes the energy-efficient refurbishment of sports facilities, the development of mobility concepts and raising awareness of climate protection through sport. However, financial resources are limited and the need to renovate sports facilities is very high, which will present a challenge. At the same time, sport also needs to adapt to the consequences of climate change. Climate change impacts such as increasing heat must be taken into account when building new sports facilities, but adaptation concepts for individual types of sport are also needed and the question of how existing structures can be better utilised instead of always "more, faster and further".

In an ecological context, it is also about the issues of sustainable consumption, sustainable mobility, protection of biodiversity and integrated sport and urban development. Sport is both part of the challenge and part of the solution. Sport must also overcome the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made outdoor sports more popular again. Furthermore, sport can be a multiplier to bring environmental issues into everyday life. It is crucial that sports officials set a good example here.

Transparency with regard to sustainability is another important factor, e.g. when bidding to host major sporting events. This also goes hand in hand with ethical responsibility. The sustainable subsequent use of sports infrastructures at major sporting events should also be considered. Verena Bentele concludes by emphasising that sustainability should not be enforced from the top down, but can only work with the involvement of people working in sport.

As Vice-President of the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB), she is in favour of applying to host the Olympic Games in Germany, as these could create great social and societal added value (provided that society is involved) and many existing sports facilities could be used.



## Speech by the Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Environment Ministry

**Christian Kühn**

Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Environment Ministry

Christian Kühn begins his speech by talking about the positive health aspects of sport. He then presents a number of projects and initiatives that combine sport and environmental protection. The climate education project "Anpfiff fürs Klima"<sup>6</sup> aims to raise young soccer fans' awareness of climate change, climate protection and climate adaptation in a vivid, realistic way and with low-threshold participation opportunities. An app is being developed for this purpose. Adaptation to climate change has also become unavoidable in sport, both to protect the health of people involved in sport and to protect sports facilities. The necessary modernisation of sports facilities should be used for a green conversion. The task of politicians here is to provide information and raise awareness, but also to create the necessary framework conditions through subsidies or regulations.



Sport is an important partner for the necessary socio-ecological change, as it is firmly anchored in society. In order to encourage action, it is important to provide people with targeted information and raise their awareness. Nature can be a key to overcoming ecological crises. Such nature-based solutions can be found, for example, in the "Natural Climate Protection Action Program"<sup>7</sup>. However, sport is not only affected by global

<sup>6</sup> <https://anpfiff-fuers-klima.de/> and <https://www.bmu.de/PM10200>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.natuerlicher-klimaschutz.de/>



crises, but also contributes to environmental pollution. This makes sport (especially outdoor sport) particularly responsible for nature conservation.

Grassroots sport and environmental education are of interest to many in sport and have great potential. As a workshop, the topic also met with great interest at the dialogue forum. However, it must be borne in mind that knowledge alone does not always lead to appropriate action. One example of the transition from knowledge to action is the topic of activity management in nature. Here, the BMUV and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) are funding several projects that focus on how people can be made aware of environmentally friendly and nature-friendly sports activities through information and markings.

Another important topic is the sustainable organisation of sporting events. The project "Sustainable (major) sports events in Germany"<sup>8</sup> is developing recommendations for sports event organisers of different sizes in all areas of sustainability. The results will include a practice-oriented guide and a toolbox for future sports event organisers. The 2024 European Men's Football Championship offers great potential to set a positive example internationally. The BMUV is supporting the sports side, the ten host cities and is promoting the topic of sustainability through popular sport in society via project funding.

Christian Kühn concludes his speech by calling for all social forces to be pooled in order to overcome the ecological crises. He thanks the participants for their cooperation on the topic.

Following the speech, the revised position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society<sup>9</sup> of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport" was handed over to the Parliamentary State Secretary by the Chairman Prof Dr Ralf Roth.



<sup>8</sup> <https://www.bmu.de/WS7114> and <https://www.nachhaltige-sportveranstaltungen.de/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

## Introductory statements on the main topics of the event



### Sports facilities

Dr Jutta Katthage, Federal Institute for Sports Science (BISp)



*What are sustainable sports facilities?*

Sustainable sports facilities can be defined as sustainable places that give equal consideration to social, economic and ecological aspects. Sports facilities include not only sports facilities, but also sports opportunities that were not built directly for the practice of sport.

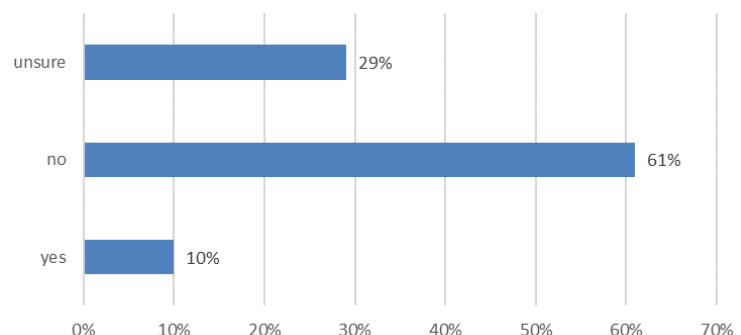
*What role does the circular economy or circular construction play in sports facilities?*

Given the high CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the construction sector and the increasing scarcity of resources, the circular economy is an important topic. Recycling plays an important role here, but this is also associated with difficulties. One example is plastic turf systems, which consist of different plastics and are difficult to separate. Recyclability could be improved if only one group of plastics were used.

*Do we only need "standardised" sports facilities in terms of sustainability?*

Standards allow scope for design. For sports facilities, standards such as DIN 18035-1 (Sports grounds—Part 1: Outdoor facilities for games and athletics—Planning and dimensions) and DIN 18032-1 (Sports halls—Halls and rooms for sports and multipurpose use—Part 1: Principles for planning) are particularly relevant. The aim is for sports facilities to be built in such a way that they can be used for informal sports in addition to the sports that are to be practiced there. These can take place either on the sports floors or on other exercise areas. In the illustration on the right, the audience was asked via Slido about standardised sports facilities.

Do we only need "standardised" sports facilities in terms of sustainability?





## Sporting goods

Hilke Anna Patzwall, VAUDE Sport

*Where does the sporting goods industry stand in terms of achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals?*

The sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda set the framework for action. Business must also live up to its responsibility here. *SDG 17* is of particular importance: *partnerships to achieve the goals*. The textile industry is the world's fourth-largest polluter. Industry, trade and consumers are therefore part of the problem, but solutions must be sought together. Pressure from the public and environmental organisations is high, and there are already some pioneers and good examples in the industry, but there is still a long way to go to achieve the sustainability goals, given the long supply chains and the many global partners.

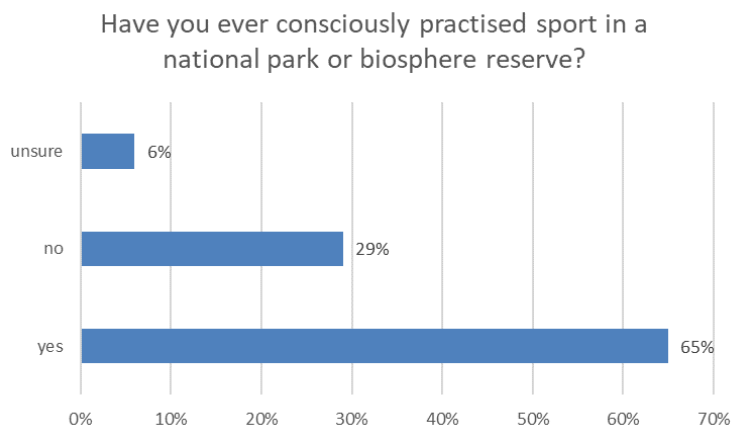


## Sport in nature

Dr Neele Larondelle, National Natural Landscapes

*What are the biggest challenges in the interaction between sport and nature conservation?*

The biggest challenge is to combine the use and protection of nature in such a way that both people and nature benefit. There is still a lot of room for improvement in achieving this goal. Protected areas are the last hotspots of biodiversity in Germany and are visited by sports enthusiasts and recreationists alike (see also the results of the slide survey on the right). There is often a lack of awareness that certain rules and regulations for the protection of nature apply in nature reserves and national parks. Targeted communication and awareness raising are important tasks, but it is not possible without people's insight and support.



Sport and nature conservation are inextricably linked, but the connection is very ambivalent. There are both negative examples of conflicts between nature conservation and sportspeople and positive examples in which sportspeople assist with monitoring, litter collection and mapping, for example.

The Sport in Nature workshop will discuss how outdoor sports enthusiasts can be turned into committed conservationists across the entire area, regardless of their protection status in both urban and rural areas, how communication between outdoor sports and nature conservation can be improved both digitally and analogously and how dos and don'ts can be better accepted.



**Popular sports and environmental education**  
Katharina Morlang, German Sports Youth

*What potential do sports clubs and associations have for sustainable development?*

There is great potential for promoting sustainable development in sports clubs, particularly with regard to children and young people. Sports clubs have great social power and promote positive values (community, team spirit, taking responsibility, dealing with successes and defeats). However, challenges must be tackled openly. Qualified coaches are necessary to initiate learning processes in terms of education on sustainable development. It is also up to politicians to set the right framework conditions so that the potential that lies within sports clubs can be utilised even more.

Sport increases the ability to create, ensures participation and equal opportunities, is important for the development of children and young people and helps to overcome disorientation and strengthen mutual respect and appreciation.

The aim of the German Sports Youth is to make movement, play and sport visible and usable as media for more sustainability, which is also clearly stated in the Education for Sustainable Development Action Plan "Education–Youth–Sport. Shaping the future together!". There are already innovative and creative solutions for education for sustainable development in sport, but there is a lack of awareness that education and learning do not only take place in schools. The potential of sport for actively shaping society is also emphasised in the German government's 12th Sport Report.

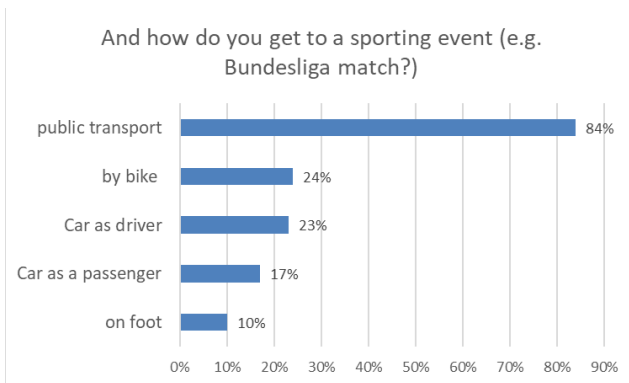
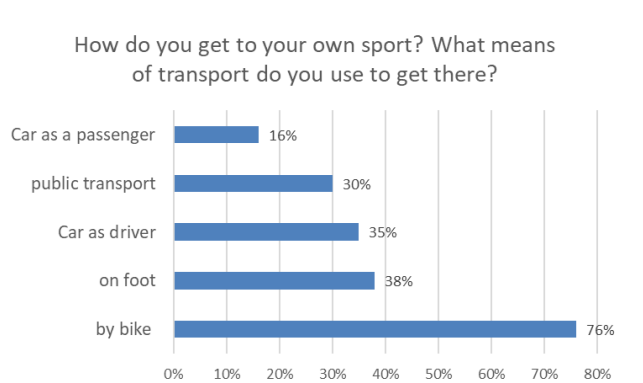


**Mobility**

Martin Schmied, German Environment Agency

*What means of transportation do people use to get to sports facilities or sporting events?*

The nationwide "Mobility in Germany" survey conducted by the Federal Ministry of Transport examines how people get to places to do sport. Overall, most people (just under 60%) use a car (as a driver or passenger) and only around 20% use a bicycle. Public transport is only used by 6%. The result of the Slido survey is atypical in this respect, as most people stated that they would travel by bike. This could be due to the fact that many people from large cities are represented among the participants. It is also interesting to note that mobility can vary greatly with regard to different sports (e.g. diving, tennis). There are only a few reliable studies on this so far.





According to the "Mobility in Germany" survey, more people currently travel to sporting events and other events, such as concerts, by public transport, but more than 50% still use cars. This is problematic, as the car has a significantly higher environmental and climate impact than public transport, cycling or walking.

Overall, the transport sector is failing to meet Germany's climate targets and sport is also partly responsible for these negative effects, albeit to a lesser extent. At the same time, sport can also contribute to the urgently needed mobility transition by further promoting the use of sustainable means of transport. How this can be achieved will be discussed in the workshops.

## Assessments from an association's perspective

**Anton Klischewski**

FC Internationale Berlin

*How does one become a sustainable amateur club?*

FC Internationale Berlin 1980 e. V. is the first officially certified sustainable amateur club in Germany. This was a joint effort. In 2020, a sustainability working group was convened with volunteer members, which today still comprises 12–15 people. There are already some lighthouse projects, but little is happening overall. It is important to share knowledge and experience, for example, in Berlin through the "Round Table on Sustainable Sport".



The association has set itself ambitious goals; for example, it wants to become climate-neutral by 2045, but this is very difficult, especially in the sporting goods sector, as there are hardly any alternatives and they are still very expensive. One solution would be purchasing groups to increase the pressure on industry. The issue of mobility is also a challenge; concepts are urgently needed here, for which cooperation with other clubs, politicians and sports associations is also necessary.

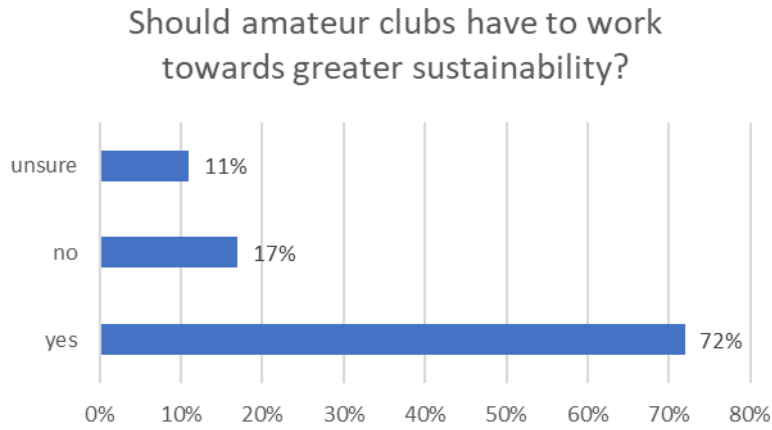
*What specific demands do you have for politicians and associations when it comes to volunteering?*

In view of staff shortages and the important role of volunteering, it would be utopian to demand that every amateur club has a full-time sustainability coordinator. However, it would be very helpful if there was a coordination office in the sports associations that clubs could turn to with questions. For example, the Berlin Football Association has had a sustainability coordinator since 1 October 2023 that is being funded for the European Men's Football Championship in 2024. Such initiatives need to be strengthened by securing funding.

The inclusion of voluntary services (FSJ/FÖJ) could ease the burden on sports clubs, and this should also be further promoted. Finally, environmental NGOs and sports clubs also need to be better-networked so that they can work together to better promote sustainable development. Politicians and sports associations also have a duty to support this.

### *Should amateur clubs have to campaign for more sustainability?*

A majority (72%) voted in favour of this in the survey. However, the framework conditions must first be created so that sports clubs are supported in such a way that they can make a better commitment to sustainability and this can become a matter of course.



### Sequence of the workshops

The workshops took place in a World Café format in the mornings and afternoons. The most important content, statements and results of the individual workshops are summarised below.



## Workshop 1: Sports Facilities<sup>10</sup>

### Expert:

**Dr Jutta Katthage**

Federal Institute for Sports Science

### Moderator:

**Jörg Förster**

German University Sports Federation, Sustainable



### Key questions:

- **Circular economy and sports facilities:** Which building materials and materials can be used to build and renovate sports facilities more efficiently (better), more consistently (differently) and more sufficiently (less is more) and how can grey energy be saved over the entire life cycle?
- **"Green" sports facilities:** How can biodiversity and building greenery at and around sports facilities be promoted and help to cool down our cities and communities in the future?
- **Healthy and lifelong sports facilities:** How can sports facilities be made "climate fit" and "plusenergy fit" by generating more energy than they consume on the one hand and ensuring the health and well-being of sports practitioners on the other?

Background<sup>11</sup>: Sport is usually dependent on structural infrastructure. In Germany, the focus is on existing sports facilities due to an enormous renovation backlog. The aim is to renovate these sports facilities sustainably by improving energy and resource efficiency, using renewable energies, reducing the proportion of sealed surfaces and greening roof and façade areas. The aim of the workshop was to present the status of the discussion—in relation to various elements of sustainable sports facilities—and to discuss specific case studies for sustainable sports facilities (existing and new builds).

The most important results of the discussion are summarised below.



**"In more than half of the municipalities, we have a serious or significant backlog of sports facilities."**

Dr Jutta Katthage

### Building materials and materials

An important building block for more sustainable sports facilities is longer use, which requires them to be functional, adapted and flexible to allow different uses. The costs of construction methods and materials should be considered over the entire life cycle. With regard to the question of what sustainable sports facilities look like in practice, however, there is still a lack of good examples, indicators and guidelines. Another

<sup>10</sup> See also the sports facilities action area in the position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society by the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport", available at <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>11</sup> Cf. input paper of the dialogue forum

problem is financing, which requires support for clubs from municipalities or nationwide funding programmes. In general, planning should be made easier by reducing bureaucracy.

Due to the limited personnel capacities in sports administrations and sports clubs, the topic of sustainability should not be "on top", but should be integrated as a cross-cutting topic into basic and advanced training or relevant courses of study. Networking and knowledge management also help to make the most efficient use of available resources. For example, a competence centre (model: Austria) or contact persons at the associations and state sports federations could also contribute to this.

### **Green and "climate-friendly" sports facilities**

The necessary renovation of sports facilities should aim for multiple use, year-round use and long-term use. Due to the lack of available space, consideration must also be given to integrated uses (e.g. sport and recreation, sports fields as floodplains, etc.), so that synergies can be exploited. As the financial resources for implementation are low, funding programmes and low-threshold offers are considered necessary.

In principle, sports facilities should be planned more holistically and the connection between urban and sports development should be promoted through integrated planning. This requires cooperation with stakeholders from different areas (e.g. nature and environmental protection associations, gardening and landscaping business as well as the construction and real estate sectors, economy, local population, etc.). The creation of green and climate-friendly sports facilities could be supported by a coordination office at state or association level. It is also important to generate and disseminate knowledge (knowledge management) and to raise awareness and train relevant stakeholders.

**"If we don't act now, we will lose many sports facilities."**

Quote from a workshop participant



#### **Key points:**

- Knowledge management (generating and disseminating knowledge in order to learn from each other).
- Improving the qualifications of the many stakeholders and interest groups.
- The importance of integrated sports and urban development in view of the high pressure on space.



## Workshop 2: Sporting Goods<sup>12</sup>



### Experts:

**Stefanie Rieder-Haas**

Member of the Management Board ORTOVOX VAUDE Sport

**Matthias Gebhard**

Managing Director Bergfreunde GmbH

### Moderator:

**Hilke Anna Patzwall**

#### Key questions:

- How can sporting goods be produced in the sense of a circular economy that saves resources and is functional at the same time?
- What can companies do to ensure decent jobs in the sporting goods industry?
- How can the sporting goods industry, retailers, sports organisations and athletes contribute to climate protection more effectively than before?

Background<sup>13</sup>: Sport is almost always a "material sport". This means that we are dependent on sports equipment—by which we mean all kinds of functional objects and items of clothing—in order to practise sport. Most of these are made of plastic, travel long distances to reach the user and end up in the dustbin. The aim of the workshop was to present the state of the discussion—in relation to various sporting goods, services and supply chains—and to discuss models for resource conservation, recycling and the longevity of sports products in the context of the circular economy.

The most important results of the discussion are summarised below.



**"Currently, only 1% of textiles worldwide are recycled."**

Stefanie Rieder-Haas

### Circular economy

The aim of the circular economy is to create products that are both functional and save resources. In practice, however, this is often difficult, as materials that are as pure as possible must be used for recycling. Therefore, recyclability must be taken into account as early as the product development stage by selecting suitable materials. Opportunities for networking and exchange must be created in order to pool the existing knowledge of various stakeholders along the entire upstream and downstream supply chains and to establish a manufacturer-independent, practical, scalable and economical take-back, sorting and recycling infrastructure.

<sup>12</sup> See also field of action Sporting goods industry and retail in the position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport", available at <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>13</sup> Cf. input paper of the dialogue forum

**"When it comes to climate protection, we started from scratch and have gradually built up our knowledge and experience."**

Matthias Gebhard

Furthermore, the longevity of products should be increased through higher quality and better reparability, but this is sometimes made more difficult by conflicting economic objectives. Consumers and civil society movements such as "Fridays for Future" therefore have an important role to play in increasing the pressure on the textile industry, although the responsibility for sustainable products lies with the industry. Retailers have a major influence on both manufacturers and consumers through their product ranges.

### **Decent jobs in the sporting goods industry**

Fair pay is an essential part of ensuring decent jobs in the sporting goods industry. The Supply Chain Act is a step in the right direction, which not only creates transparency about the situation of workers in supply chains, but also sensitises retailers, brands and suppliers to take appropriate measures to comply with human rights due diligence obligations. Certifications and labels (such as the Green Button) could help to increase transparency for consumers and influence purchasing decisions in terms of sustainability.

#### **Key points:**

- In order to achieve circularity of products and business models, the small cycle (extending the service life of products through e.g. high quality, reparability) and the large cycle (technical recycling) must be strengthened in parallel.
- It is the responsibility of politicians to create the appropriate legal framework and incentives.
- Public procurement should take sustainability criteria into account.
- Retailers can have a major leverage effect on the entire supply chain by making voluntary commitments to climate protection.
- Voluntary action has not had a sufficient impact; good approaches to avoiding greenwashing and ensuring compliance with human rights and environmental protection have been taken by the EU Green Deal and the Supply Chain Sustainability Act as well as the new reporting obligations for companies.
- A special focus on the empowerment of women is also necessary to combat poverty and climate change.



## Workshop 3: Sport in Nature<sup>14</sup>

### Expert:

**Dr Neele Larondelle**

National Natural Landscapes

### Moderator:

**Stefan Grubhofer**

Sports Union Austria



### Key questions:

- What must visitor guidance look like in digital and analogue forms in order to reach sports enthusiasts?
- How, where and when must dos and don'ts be communicated so that they are accepted by sportspeople?
- How can cities and communities be designed so that people who are active in sport can find natural opportunities to exercise in the local area?

Background<sup>15</sup>: Sport often takes place in nature; athletes are usually just as interested in the activity as they are in enjoying nature. The management of sports practitioners in nature is a constantly growing challenge for nature conservation. Rising visitor numbers and a wide variety of (digital) tour offers are increasing the pressure on nature and the landscape, while sensitivity to land ownership or existing restrictions and bans is being lost. The aim must be to protect natural habitats, raise awareness of their importance and at the same time make impressive nature experiences and sporting activities attractively accessible. This can only be achieved with good information and communication. In the workshop, solutions for nature-friendly sport were discussed in relation to various types of nature sport and usage hotspots.

The most important results of the discussion are summarised below.



**"There are still too many insensitive or ignorant visitors in this sensitive natural environment."**

Dr Neele Larondelle

### Digital and analogue visitor guidance and communication of dos and don'ts

Comprehensible communication about the necessity of certain *dos and don'ts* in an area is another key to effective visitor guidance, in addition to attractive offer design. Clear, simple and unambiguous language is important for this, for which pictograms and infographics can also be used. In general, positive messages should be conveyed by focusing on offers and requirements rather than don'ts. A greater steering effect can be achieved by appealing to the emotions of sports enthusiasts. In principle, digital and analogue visitor guidance is necessary, and this should convey consistent messages. The communication should be chosen to

<sup>14</sup> See also the field of action Sport in nature, landscape and urban space in the position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society by the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport", available at <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>15</sup> Cf. input paper of the dialogue forum

suit the medium used (app, website, sign, etc.) or the target group addressed. It is also important to ensure that the online and offline information is consistent.

Early coordination with relevant stakeholders is key to ensuring acceptance of the guidance.

### **Opportunities for exercise in cities and communities**

In order to offer people who are active in sports opportunities to exercise in the local area, appropriate infrastructure should be created in the local area. Existing open spaces (parking lots, roofs, etc.) could also be repurposed for this purpose. In addition, existing natural open spaces should be preserved and their attractiveness increased. When planning new residential areas, natural exercise infrastructure should already be considered. Attractive opportunities for exercise are multifunctional and facilitate encounters around sporting activities. It is also important to take climate change into account. The accessibility of exercise areas should also be ensured by improving the continuity of near-natural footpaths and hiking trails and safe cycle paths, as well as connections to public transport.

#### **Key points:**

- Communication: clear, simple, comprehensible and unambiguous language; use of pictograms, adapting communication to the target group, uniform analogue and digital communication. Dos and don'ts.
- Nature conservation, landowners and the sport, tourism and the leisure industry should communicate in a coordinated manner.
- Nudging: Routes must be designed in such a way that people are guided automatically and attractively.
- Urban land-use planning/land use must take into account the need for sport/exercise, possibly linear exercise infrastructure as a basic provision for existence?
- Creating near-natural offerings, unpaved, multifunctional spaces: meeting spaces for exercise.
- Integrate vertical spaces more strongly. Roofs can also be used for yoga, etc.





## Workshop 4: Popular sport and environmental education<sup>16</sup>



### Expert:

**Katharina Morlang**  
German Sports Youth

### Moderator:

**Prof Dr Johannes Verch**  
Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Sportainable

#### Key questions:

- How can sports organisations be systematically developed into educational organisations with regard to sustainability?
- What is the educational potential of sport and exercise for sustainable development?
- How can sports organisations be networked to support each other on the path to sustainable development?

Background<sup>17</sup>: Sports clubs and associations make a contribution to sustainable development, in particular by educating and developing (young) people to become more empowered. The German Sports Youth, among others, pursues the goal of making exercise, games and sport more visible and usable as a medium for greater sustainability. Education for sustainable development (ESD) in sport should provide impetus for ecological and social thinking and action and reach people regardless of their background. In the workshop, participants discussed the potential of exercise, play, sport and sports clubs as well as ways to make athletes and clubs fit for a sustainable future.

The most important results of the discussion are summarised below.



**"Exercise, play and sport have educational potential for sustainable development."**

Katharina Morlang

### Potential for environmental education in sports organisations

Sports clubs have an important educational mission by strengthening social skills such as fairness, tolerance and responsibility. Through playful approaches, aspects of environmental sustainability can also be made tangible and thus potentially have a greater impact than purely theoretical education. Clubs can create concrete incentives to bring sustainability to the wider community. Although some nature sports are not organised in clubs, all clubs have a strong impact on society beyond the club members.

### Challenges

The transformation of sports organisations into educational organisations for sustainable development is a lengthy process. Clubs are currently facing many practical challenges, and the resources of the often already overburdened coaches and trainers for additional training and further education on the topic of education for sustainable development are limited. There is also often a lack of fundamental awareness of sustainability and the educational potential of sport in clubs and sports organisations, especially beyond the aspects of

<sup>16</sup> See also position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society by the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport", available at <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. input paper of the dialogue forum

social sustainability. This is further exacerbated by the (media) focus on elite sport, which is often at odds with sufficient action.

### Solutions

It is important not to see sustainability education as an additional task, but to make it the core of sports organisations. This fundamental change in attitude cannot be achieved through pressure, obligations or constraints, but only if all those affected are involved in the process and can help shape it. At the same time, clubs and associations have systematic means at their disposal, such as the integration of low-threshold sustainability education courses into coach training. Working groups within the association and the appointment of an ESD officer can be further important building blocks.

The problem of limited resources will continue to exist in the future, so the focus should be on distributing and using the available resources as effectively as possible. In particular, cooperation with other associations can be a way of dealing with limited resources (e.g. in the joint creation of concepts).

Staff positions in state sports associations would be useful to relieve the burden on smaller clubs in particular. The umbrella associations are responsible for creating the framework and providing concrete impetus (e.g. by promoting funding programmes for sustainable projects, competitions, etc.) to enable clubs to become educational organisations for sustainable development. Schools and sports clubs should also be more closely networked in order to bring education and exercise together. Overall, the exchange of challenges and solutions between the individual clubs, but also with the umbrella organisations, should be intensified.

#### Key points:

- Sport has great educational potential with regards to education for sustainable development and can reach people from different social backgrounds. However, the existing potential is currently insufficiently utilised.
- Sustainability must become a core issue if clubs are to have an impact on society.
- A strategic approach is important: systematically anchoring sustainability in clubs and umbrella organisations, in funding projects and in the education and training of trainers.



## Workshop 5: Mobility<sup>18</sup>

### Expert:

**Martin Schmied**

German Environment Agency

### Moderator:

**Jennifer Amann**

University of Brighton (UK), Sportainable



#### Key questions:

- How can journeys to sport be organized so that they can be made as often as possible on foot, by bike or by public transport?
- How can people who are active in sport be encouraged to form the largest possible carpools for journeys to sporting events that can only be made by car, for example, through apps that bring together athletes from different sports?
- How can major sporting events be organized in such a way that they cause as little traffic as possible?

Background<sup>19</sup>: Sport is almost always mobility. On the one hand, we move during sport, and on the other hand, we move to the sports venue—usually using a means of transportation. A large proportion of sport-related journeys are made in our (own) cars. In this respect, sustainable mobility is one of the biggest levers for more sustainability in sport. In the workshop, the ecological impact of active and fan mobility was discussed and creative analogue and digital solutions for various needs in different sports were designed.

The most important results of the discussion are summarised below.



**"Cities and villages must be designed to be exercise-friendly."**

Martin Schmied

### Promoting the switch to more sustainable means of transportation

In general, the choice of transportation can be influenced by factors such as convenience, time and cost. For example, improvements to cycling infrastructure and public transport connections and the optimisation of timetables and training times can provide incentives to travel more on foot, by bike or by public transport. The sport-specific framework conditions and the fundamental differences between urban and rural areas must be taken into account here.

On the other hand, concrete incentives must also be created for the use of more sustainable means of transportation. For example, clubs can take part in competitions such as "City Cycling", subsidise the purchase of bicycles, provide rental bicycles or introduce a reward system for sustainable travel in order to encourage a rethink in terms of mobility behaviour. Raising awareness among children and young people also plays an important role here.

<sup>18</sup> See also the transport and mobility field of action in the position paper SUSTAINABLE SPORT 2030—Responsibility for Nature, the Environment and Society by the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport", available at <https://www.bmu.de/download/positionspapier-nachhaltiger-sport-2030>

<sup>19</sup> Cf. input paper of the dialogue forum

## Form carpools

The primary aim here is to motivate sportspeople to use carpools and to create low-threshold educational opportunities. A reward and incentive system (e.g. event vouchers, free/cheaper parking, competition, etc.) can contribute to this. It is also important to communicate the advantages of carpooling (economic benefits, strengthening team spirit, etc.) in a targeted manner. Apps, websites or WhatsApp groups can be used to coordinate carpools. The need for parents to drive their children can be avoided if training times for children and parents are adjusted or special club buses are provided. If different sports are played at one sports facility, carpools can also be formed across different sports. The responsibility for communicating and coordinating the offers is primarily seen as lying with the clubs, whereby a mobility coordinator would be helpful.

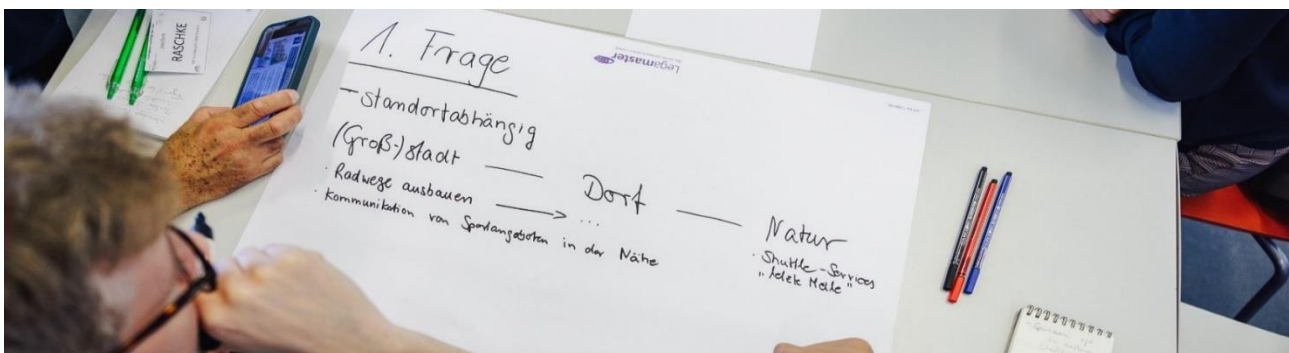
## Major sporting events

Accessibility by public transport or on foot/by bike should be considered when choosing the venue. In the case of league matches or sporting events (e.g. European or World Championships), clustering preliminary round matches and limiting them to a small number of venues could help to reduce the overall volume of traffic. Travel distances should also be taken into account, e.g. in terms of geographical proximity to participating clubs.

The choice of sustainable means of transport for travelling to major sporting events can be encouraged by providing information on the event website about travelling by public transport or carpooling. In addition, the attractiveness of different modes of transport can be influenced by appropriate incentives and regulations (e.g. reducing the number of parking spaces, reward system for carpooling, special tickets that also integrate long-distance transport at a reasonable price, etc.). Even if the journey to the event is designed as an "experience" and part of the event (e.g. through special trains), an incentive to switch to public transport could be created.

### Key points:

- A differentiated view by type of sport and "urban or rural" is important; the focus should be on the existing potential.
- **Public transport:** Rethinking necessary! For example, adapt footpaths to the public transport network (instead of the other way around), adopt good examples/approaches.
- **Carpooling:** Create incentives through rewards (reduce membership fees, collect points, raffles, etc.), clubs must communicate and coordinate, think across sports.
- **Major sporting events:** Better integration of local and long-distance transport, combined tickets and special trains (important: mobility of fans must not affect other people).





## Insight I—Digitalisation and activity management in nature and landscape

**Manuel Andrack in conversation with  
Albert Rinn<sup>20</sup>**

BTE Tourism and regional consulting

*Why is digitalisation and activity management such an important and topical issue?*

Albert Rinn explains that there are various forms of activity management, for example, through rangers or fences. However, there are great opportunities in digital guidance in particular, as most people inform themselves in advance (digitally). The key here is to provide the right impetus through information.

*What does that look like in practice? If I want to go to Neuschwanstein Castle, does the computer tell me not to go there?*

Of course, there will always be places that are particularly popular. It is not a question of directing people to other places that are not visited at all. However, digital activity management can provide information in such a way that the negative effects are minimised. This offers the opportunity to combine a positive experience of nature for users with nature conservation.

*A lot is happening in this area at the moment. What else can we expect in the future?*

The problem is that although there is a lot of information, the digital and analogue information is different. It is therefore an important task to summarise the various sources of information in data sets. There are already examples where this works well. The Alpine Club, for example, has an activity portal that recommends traveling by public transport or routes where nature and sport are in harmony. There is also a similar portal for canoeists and climbers. Acceptance of this digital guidance is generally high among sports enthusiasts, as it is also about safeguarding the experience.



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<sup>20</sup> Albert Rinn represents the consortium of the project "Digitization and Activity Management in Nature and Landscape", which was commissioned by the BfN. The project is being carried out by BTE Tourismus- und Regionalberatung and Digitize the Planet e. V. and scientifically supported by the sports ecology working group at the University of Bayreuth.

## Insight II—How sports retail is becoming sustainable

**Manuel Andrack in conversation with  
Dr Alexander von Preen**  
CEO of INTERSPORT Germany eG



*Sporting goods are increasingly being worn as everyday fashion. Because every collection is also a driver of resource consumption, doesn't this also create a sustainability problem?*

That is true, but the framework conditions are different to those for fast fashion. In sports, there are "only" two to four collections per season. On the other hand, more emphasis is placed on quality, for example, by offering repair services. This also extends the service life. However, plastic is still the first choice in the sporting goods industry. This needs to be counteracted. However, this is not easy, as consumers have high expectations when it comes to the functionality of sporting goods.

*What does this really mean?*

Recycling and developing new products and new fibres. There is a company in Austria that produces durable fibres from wood. However, the problem is that these products are still very expensive. Due to inflation and cost pressure, consumers are currently very cost-sensitive. Basically, the aim is to supply products that are durable and repairable, which means that a contribution can already be made at this stage.

*At what point is everything "fair and good" at INTERSPORT?*

INTERSPORT has just drawn up a sustainability strategy that aims to offer at least 50% sustainable products by 2030. The conversion of production and the search for new suppliers takes time, so 2030 is a realistic target, but an ambitious one. Although there are companies that are already further along, retailers must represent the entire sporting goods industry. At the moment, INTERSPORT has 700 suppliers. Converting them is not easy.

*What is the sporting goods industry doing to prevent textiles from ending up in landfills in countries of the Global South?*

It's a shame that this is happening. The framework conditions for the circular economy need to be improved. Together with a recycling company, a concept is being developed here that has come up with an innovation for separating fibres. A hiking boot, for example, consists of over 40 different materials. These must be separated in such a way that all fibres can be reused. However, this is not easy, which is why the materials are often thermally recycled or end up in textile landfills. There are a number of ways to prevent this. The longevity of the products and second-hand use are also important.

*KIK has a very low residual rate as products are sold at very low prices. What does this mean for sporting goods retailers?*

Of course, there are different ways of doing this, but transparency is very important. INTERSPORT focuses primarily on durability, reusability and a second-hand market. These are the short-term solutions. In the long term, innovations are needed so that production can be converted.

## Outlook and closing remarks

### **Prof Dr Ralf Roth**

Chairman of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport"

### **Michael Kracht**

Head of the Division for Civil Society and Associations, Tourism and Sports at the Federal Environment Ministry

**Prof Dr Ralf Roth** would like to thank all participants for their valuable contributions and constructive discussions. The insights gained will make a decisive contribution to the future work of the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport". He emphasised the existing key objectives and principles, but noted that a structured collection of successful examples of good practice was lacking. He therefore advocates the creation of platforms that enable an exchange of ideas for the sustainable future of sport.

The dialogue forum also made it clear that the organisation and financing of sustainability measures raise key questions. In this context, the topic of governance is becoming increasingly important. The Advisory Board will consider whether "strategy and organisation" should be treated as a separate focus topic.

In future, greater attention will be paid to education, particularly in the context of education for sustainable development in all its dimensions. Prof Dr Ralf Roth encourages all those involved to work together on the necessary transformation and calls for the targeted use of individual networks in order to continuously advance the relevant topics.

According to **Michael Kracht**, the dialogue forum made it clear how important networking is and that this is exactly the kind of format that is needed for knowledge management. Sport is a great social force, and there is also a close connection between sport and the environment.

Finally, he thanked all participants for their participation, Humboldt University for hosting the event, the Advisory Board "Environment and Sport" for their excellent cooperation, all the experts for their inspiring speeches and contributions, as well as the organisation team including the two sign language interpreters, the technical team and Mr Andrack for moderating the event.



## Publisher's Information

### Publisher

Fresh Thoughts Consulting GmbH

Hütteldorferstraße 215/29, A-1140 Vienna

E-mail: [office@fresh-thoughts.eu](mailto:office@fresh-thoughts.eu)

Website: [www.fresh-thoughts.eu](http://www.fresh-thoughts.eu)



### Co-publisher

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection

Division G III 3: Civil Society and Associations, Tourism and Sports

Stresemannstraße 128–130, 10117 Berlin

Website: [www.bmu.de/nachhaltigersport](http://www.bmu.de/nachhaltigersport)

On behalf of:



of the Federal Republic of Germany

The R&D project on which this report is based (FKZ: UM22160010) was carried out on behalf of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection. The responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the author.

### Editorial office

Fresh Thoughts Consulting GmbH

### Last updated

December 2023

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