

# FIT FOR FUTURE EVOLUTION



Published 17.10.2024



## **MOVING FORWARD. TOGETHER**

### ***A message from the President***

The Fit for Future Evolution represents a refinement in our collective ambitions, showcasing the collaborative and forward-thinking spirit of the global paddle sports community. Together, with the support of our Continental and National Federations, partners, athletes, and stakeholders, we are elevating our sport to new heights—both on and off the water. Central to this strategic evolution is our shared mission: to expand the global reach of paddle sports, from independent paddlers to those stepping onto the podium.

To stay at the forefront of change, we must embrace continuous evolution. Technological advancements, societal shifts, and evolving fan expectations are reshaping the sporting landscape, and we must adapt swiftly. A key factor in our ability to evolve, both on and off the water, is our governance structure—this must also move with the times. With this in mind, we are committed to presenting comprehensive governance reforms ahead of the 2026 Congress. This proactive approach will ensure that paddle sports continue to grow, thrive, and lead on the global stage.

Two years ago, we established eight strategic pillars that continue to serve as the foundation of our approach today. These pillars have since been refined into a more streamlined framework, and as we move forward, they will evolve further with our ongoing projects and actions. From these original eight, our leadership has identified five key focus areas that will build upon and expand the groundwork laid, driving significant progress over the next two years. These areas, outlined in Section 3, will be essential to advancing our organisation and continuing to increase its global impact.

While prioritising these five focus areas, with an expanding workforce we will continue to nurture and advance the broader strategy from Fit for Future 2022, ensuring our sport remains vibrant, competitive, attractive, and relevant in an ever-changing world.

As always, it is our collective responsibility to ensure this strategy remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of our growing global community. This is why we continue to work closely with our continental and national federations. By embracing the diverse perspectives of our paddle sports family, we will continue to move forward together with strength and unity.

With your unwavering support and passion, I have no doubt that we will elevate paddle sports to new heights, creating fresh opportunities for athletes, fans, and communities worldwide. This evolution is more than just a strategy—it is our collective commitment to the future of our sport.

Together, we look ahead with excitement, knowing that the trust and unity we share will empower us to achieve even more meaningful accomplishments.

**Thomas Konietzko**  
**ICF President**



## 1. Strategic Achievements under Fit for Future (2022–24)

We illustrate our progress by emphasising six significant achievements from the past two years that underscore our commitment to implement the identified priorities of the Fit for Future strategy and our dedication to promoting paddlesport on the international stage.

Page 4

## 2. Fit for Future Evolution: the Next Step (2024–26)

As we look ahead, we have identified six strategic priorities designed to elevate our global standing. These priorities will guide our initiatives to boost participation, enhance governance, and expand our digital outreach within the international sports sector, all while aligning with the relaunch of the federation.

Page 6

## 3. Operational and Tactical Actions (2024–26)

This section offers a detailed overview of both the measures taken and those planned to support the organisation's growth at a tactical level. These guiding actions will be further refined by our administration under the guidance of the Board of Directors, ensuring we remain focused and driven in advancing our federation.

Page 10

# 1. Strategic Achievements under Fit for Future (2022–24)

These key points offer a snapshot of some of the key achievements following the endorsement of the ICF Fit for Future strategy in November 2022.

## 1. Progressive Paris 2024

**Sellout Success at the Games:** Ensured the seamless delivery of the Games, achieving several new milestones in event delivery, athlete performance and global recognition for canoeing in addition to attracting capacity crowds every day of the competition in Paris.

**Established New Standards in Qualification:** Delivered a seamless qualification system for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Including achieving the third-largest delegation across all sports in the Refugee Olympic Team.

**Launched Innovative Events:** Introduced Kayak Cross at the Games, showcasing innovation in the Olympic programme and attracting new audiences and competitors. In addition showcasing our ability to be able to directly answer to the IOCs Agenda 2020+ 5 recommendations.

**Executed Transformative Digital Campaigns:** Delivered worldwide digital marketing campaigns that significantly boosted visibility and engagement, reaching millions across digital and broadcast platforms pre-during and post the Paris Games.

**Broadened Global Reach:** Expanded competition and development programmes to engage a growing number of nations, achieving historic milestones such as Algeria's Brahim Guendouz winning Africa's first Paracanoe gold medal in Paris. Additionally, 35 athletes who qualified for the Games received direct support through the ICF development programme.

## 2. Strengthened Global Presence

**Established Strategic Offices:** Opened a fully funded office in Hangzhou, China, and will put forward a game-changing proposal with Hungarian sports ministry to relocate the headquarters to Budapest, enhancing our global footprint and tripling available administration resources.

**Achieved New Milestones in Events:** Delivered the first ICF Canoe Sprint World Championship on the Asian continent, and reached record participation in the SUP World Championship (Thailand) and Dragon Boat World Championship (Philippines).

**Global Event Delivery:** Successfully organised and delivered 62 events over the past two seasons, in collaboration with organisers from every continent.

## 3. Advanced Governance

**Developed a New Team and Culture:** Established a new organisational structure to support and drive the successful delivery of the Fit for Future strategy, fostering an innovative and progressive work culture.

**Achieved Record ASOIF Governance Performance:** Attained our highest-ever results in the ASOIF International Federation Governance Review, showcasing our commitment to transparency and integrity.

**Streamlined Event Bidding and Qualification Processes:** Refined event bidding and qualification processes, connecting more events to the Olympic qualification pathway, elevating visibility and ensuring the qualification journey is appealing and understandable to the general public.

#### 4. Developed Strong Partnerships

**Expanding Horizons in the USA:** Signed transformative MOUs with the American Canoe Association (ACA), Oklahoma (whitewater and flatwater), and Columbus (freestyle), paving the way for a reshaped canoe sports landscape in the US as we approach the 2028 Olympic Games.

**Leveraged LA2028 and Oklahoma Partnerships:** Delivered a comprehensive pre-Olympic legacy by securing the 2026 ICF World Championships at the state-of-the-art whitewater stadium as a precursor to the 2028 Olympic Games.

**Global Strategic Alliances:** Established partnerships with global leaders Alibaba and Deloitte. In addition to leveraging their core competencies in their respective fields of expertise, both companies are International Olympic Committee TOP partners with extensive knowledge of the Olympic Movement and provide additional support to the ICF as required across their full scope of expertise.

#### 5. Expanded Digital Footprint

**Pioneered a Digital Streaming Strategy:** Launched an innovative streaming approach, increasing engagement and reach while finding cost-effective ways to balance investments.

**Optimised Broadcast Strategy:** Advanced TV and broadcast distribution, delivering a record number of live and on-demand hours in 2024, driving sustainable growth.

#### 6. Delivered Financial Growth

**Optimised Financial Systems:** Deloitte offered expert guidance and support to streamline financial processes, enhancing reporting efficiency and implementing best practices across our organisation.

**Reduced IOC Revenue Dependency and Expanded Professional Team:** Nearly halved reliance on IOC funding by doubling projected revenue through strategic partnerships, increasing sponsorship, TV rights, and digital revenues.



## 2. Fit for Future Evolution (2024–26)



## Fit for Future Evolution: The Next Step (2024–26)

Preceded by extensive consultation and engagement with key stakeholders, Phase One of our Fit for Future strategy (2022-24) laid a solid foundation by optimising our business model, refining event delivery, deepening relationships with our members and stakeholders, and strengthening our position within the Olympic Movement. These initiatives have significantly enhanced the ICF's operational and strategic standing, establishing a robust platform for future expansion and transformation.

This evolution now represents the second phase of a strategy designed to ensure the long-term success and sustainability of our sport and organisation.

Now, as we transition into this next chapter, our focus shifts to strategic restructuring. This evolution will allow us not only to adapt to the ever-changing sporting landscape but also to lead the way in shaping the future of paddle sport. In phase two of the Fit for Future – Evolution there are six key stand out projects that stand alongside the original 8 pillar framework of delivery.



## 1. Increasing Administration Support

We are committed to expanding and modernising our administrative capabilities, ensuring we have the resources and structure to support the evolving needs of our sport and its global community.

After successful negotiations, we are poised to increase our administrative team threefold, with the following proposals:

- Budapest, Hungary – Headquarters: 20+ Full-Time Employees (Opening January 2025, pending Congress approval)
- Lausanne, Switzerland – 10+ Full-Time Employees
- Hangzhou, China – 10+ Full-Time Employees (Opened mid-2024)

In addition to the office-based teams, we will appoint a number of freelance specialists and consultants to support governance needs in key areas such as legal counsel, TV and broadcast distribution, event communications, and market research.



## 2. Strengthening Governance and Decision-Making

Effective governance is the cornerstone of our federation's success. We will advance our governance structures to further enhance transparency, inclusivity, and efficiency in decision-making across all levels of our organisation.

To achieve this, we will establish a governance reform working group. This group will develop a clear strategy to modernise our governance structure, statutes, and rules, with a comprehensive proposal to be presented at the 2026 Congress. The process will be fully consultative, involving close collaboration with both continental and national federations and other key stakeholders.

## 3. Advancing Our Development Model

At the heart of our vision is the development of paddle sport at every level. By refining our development model, we aim to increase participation, improve access, and provide stronger pathways for athletes, coaches, and administrators.

A key focus will be on establishing High Performance Hubs and supporting National Federations in leveraging funds from Olympic Solidarity to drive long-term growth. A full review of the current development programme will be conducted in Q1 2025, with a detailed implementation plan to be presented to the Board of Directors in April 2025.







#### 4. Evolving our Event Delivery

Fan experience and engagement are integral to the future of our sport. We will revolutionise our event delivery, creating unforgettable experiences for spectators and participants alike, fostering deeper connections and enthusiasm for paddle sport.

The Sports Commission will lead the evolution of ICF events by supporting organisers, introducing innovations to make events more appealing to a broader audience, and actively refining the bidding strategy for future competitions.

#### 5. Delivering on Digital

The digital landscape presents unparalleled opportunities to grow and engage our global community. By leveraging cutting-edge digital tools and platforms, we will make paddle sport more accessible and engaging, transforming how fans, athletes, and stakeholders interact with our content and events.

We are committed to developing a comprehensive suite of digital services to drive genuine engagement with paddle sport enthusiasts. This will include a dynamic mix of live event coverage, highlights, and a focus on lifestyle and educational content.

In Q1 2025, we will launch a revamped broadcast and production strategy, paving the way for the rollout of a new OTT platform, website, and app in Q1 2026. This strategy will enable direct interaction with our audience and facilitate first-party data collection, empowering us to better understand and serve our global community.

#### 6. A New Era, a New Name (rebrand)

This next phase represents a bold evolution for the ICF. With the unwavering support of our members and stakeholders, we are ready to build a future where paddle sport thrives at every level—from grassroots to the world stage—ensuring our sport remains dynamic, inclusive, and future-ready.

To do this we will also take the bold step to rebrand and reposition our federation as Paddle Worldwide.

This new name will help us connect with more people, be reflective of all our disciplines and allow us to build a compelling narrative to every paddler in every place.

**LAUNCH CONGRESS 2026**

### 3. Operational and Tactical Actions (2024–26)



# 1. Support athletes

## Focus group: Athlete Safety & Wellbeing

Continently strengthen opportunities and support for athletes on and off the water through an athlete-centred approach across all aspects of paddle sport.

SUPPORT ATHLETES	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<p>Strengthen the athlete voice and protect fair competition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure effective athlete representation and participation in decision-making within the ICF and its members.</li> <li>2. Increase investment in programmes to protect clean athletes and create a safe and fair competition environment.</li> <li>3. Adopt the Athletes' Rights and Responsibilities Declaration of the IOC.</li> </ol> <p>Improve opportunities and support services for athletes in and beyond sport</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximise opportunities for paddle sport athletes through Olympic Solidarity.</li> <li>2. Build an online athlete community and resource centre to support athlete development in all aspects of their lives on and off the water.</li> <li>3. Raise awareness of the Olympic Movement's key athlete support programmes such as Athlete365 to the Paddle Sport Athlete Community.</li> </ol> <p>Support athlete engagement with fans and create ambassadors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit athletes for social take-overs and lifestyle content for key audiences such @Olympics and @Paris2024 to increase the reach and visibility of paddle sport.</li> <li>2. Share event footage directly with athletes to help them tell their stories.</li> <li>3. Build a database of athlete social handles and invest in mechanisms to easily monitor the collective reach of shared content and communicate directly with athletes.</li> </ol>	<p>Adoption of the Athlete Charter of Rights and Responsibilities during the 2022 ICF Congress in Thailand.</p> <p>Partnered with the ITA which ensures independence and furthered the professionalism of the sports anti-doping programme.</p> <p>Enhanced direct support for athletes was achieved by activating Olympic Solidarity support, with 30 athletes directly benefiting from individual scholarships from the IOC, the majority of whom successfully qualified for the Games.</p> <p>Olympic Solidarity-sponsored camps were created in Africa, along with youth development initiatives in Asia and various coaching seminars across all continents to support athletes.</p> <p>A dedicated resource area for athletes and their entourage has been established on the website, providing information on support and signposting to key opportunities available through the Olympic Movement.</p> <p>Over 100 social media collaborations were delivered during ICF Major events, strengthening relationships with the elite athlete community and expanding both the ICF's and athletes' digital reach.</p> <p>Event footage was successfully shared directly with athletes, enabling them to effectively tell their stories through personalised content.</p> <p>A comprehensive database of athlete social media handles was created, along with mechanisms to monitor the collective reach of shared content, facilitating efficient communication and enhancing engagement with athletes.</p>	<p>Work with the IOC Athlete Department to establish best practices for the continued implementation of the IOC's Athlete Charter recommendations, advancing athlete rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Hire a dedicated staff member to support the Athletes Commission and drive athlete and entourage engagement.</p> <p>Prioritise the expansion of in-competition and out-of-competition testing across all disciplines, working closely with the ITA to further strengthen the protection of clean sport.</p> <p>Continually seek to advance strategies to enhance clean sport initiatives, including: introducing a competition anti-doping fee to increase the number of tests that can be conducted; developing more stringent penalties including financial sanctions, for anti-doping violations; and increasing education and outreach efforts to raise awareness of clean sport among athletes and stakeholders.</p> <p>Further enhance and invest in coordinating the development strategy with Olympic Solidarity funding opportunities to assist National Federations in securing funding from their National Olympic Committees.</p> <p>Collaborate with the IOC, ITA, and other stakeholders to improve the digital development and communications strategy for athlete support.</p> <p>Establish year-round connections with athletes through new broadcast partnerships to enhance content creation and distribution, focusing on building personalities and telling behind-the-scenes stories.</p>

## 2. Strengthen governance

### Focus group: Governance

Build trust through good governance that ensures diversity, transparency and inclusion at all levels of paddle sport.

STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revise statutes to ensure effective, agile and transparent decision-making.</li> <li>2. Create consistency across rules and clarify the process of individual entry for international events.</li> <li>3. Invest in the digital transformation of financial management systems to ensure efficient reporting and tighter budgetary control.</li> <li>4. Create stronger evaluation of events to provide benchmarks and clear success criteria.</li> <li>5. Review and update code of ethics policies and practises.</li> <li>6. Strengthen influence beyond the canoeing community.</li> </ol> <p>Champion inclusion and gender equality in all aspects of paddle sport.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to advocate for gender equality across paddle sport, with a focus on increasing female coaches and representation of women in decision-making positions.</li> <li>2. Advocate for the highest standards of human rights protection and work closely with the IOC Human Rights Unit to maintain the highest level of competency within this area.</li> <li>3. Develop a paddle sport-specific transgender policy that respects the principles of the IOC fairness, inclusion and non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sex variations framework.</li> </ol>	<p>Ensured dedicated budget for governance reform with the project scheduled to commence in 2025 and be presented at the 2026 Congress.</p> <p>Formed a strategic partnership with Deloitte, leading to a comprehensive transformation of financial systems, procedures, and reporting, ensuring organisation-wide financial accuracy, efficiency, and excellence.</p> <p>Appointed the Finance Commission who oversee and strengthen the governance of financial processes across the organisation.</p> <p>The events team completed a thorough review of the event bidding process, with proposed statute changes to be presented at the 2024 Congress.</p> <p>Expanded the sport’s presence in multi-sport events, including the Mediterranean Games, and successfully hosted the European Olympic Qualification for Canoe Slalom at the European Games.</p> <p>The first Women’s Symposium was successfully hosted in Ireland, fostering discussions and promoting opportunities for women in paddle sports.</p> <p>A dedicated working group of experts has been established to develop the ICF policy on transgender athletes.</p>	<p>Establish a governance reform working group and conduct a comprehensive consultation process to review and update the sport’s governance rules, statutes, and structure, with the final proposal to be submitted at the 2026 ICF Congress.</p> <p>Implement Deloitte’s recommendations to further strengthen financial accountability and enhance operational efficiency.</p> <p>Initiate a tender process to appoint a new auditor to oversee financial operations.</p> <p>Expand the capacity of the International Events Team to strengthen the event evaluation process, working closely with Organizing Committees for post-event assessments.</p> <p>Increase investment and administrative support to ensure the effective execution of key projects.</p> <p>Build on the success of the Women’s Symposium by expanding resources and delivering an even more impactful symposium in 2026.</p>

### 3. Maximise synergies

#### Focus Group: Organisational Culture & Team Value

Work with National Federations and key stakeholders to develop synergies that support the global growth of paddle sport.

MAXIMISE SYNERGIES	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct and share market research with members on a regular basis so that we all have a comprehensive understanding of paddle sport activity worldwide.</li> <li>2. Establish a resource and research section on the ICF website to share best practises and guidelines from continental and national federations.</li> <li>3. Inform recreational paddlers through advice from elite athletes and coaches.</li> <li>4. Leverage investment in production from TV, to create coaching and training content with elite athletes and coaches.</li> <li>5. Improve collective engagement in paddle sport on social media by providing national federations with access to global coaching and training content that they can share across their social media channels.</li> </ol> <p>Build a global recreational brand and amplify awareness campaigns.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unite the recreational paddle sport community through a globally recognised brand that celebrates the benefits, diversity and beauty of paddle sport.</li> <li>2. Create a stronger communication network with Continental and National Federations to encourage the development of shared resources and create synergies.</li> <li>3. Develop challenges that inspire recreational paddlers and connect them with the best athletes in the world.</li> </ol> <p>Deliver global campaigns that highlight the benefits of paddle sport. Campaigns should include toolkits for national federations to activate and develop localised content.</p>	<p>Established a comprehensive database of national federation and key stakeholder contacts, enhancing communication efficiency.</p> <p>Conducted research into data strategy and CRM systems, for delivery as part of the digitalization investment in 2025.</p> <p>Conducted a thorough review of national federations enhancing database and building a clear understanding of the membership status.</p> <p>Ensured consistent distribution of the President’s newsletter to national federations, fostering stronger relations, transparency of decision making and sharing key information from the ICF leadership.</p> <p>Collaborated with ASOIF, securing funding for a management research study on innovation with business models, in partnership with the Sports Foundry, due to conclude in Q4 2024 with the publication of research results.</p> <p>Secured board approval for the rebranding of the federation to Paddle Worldwide.</p> <p>Engaged market leaders in TV and digital research to refine and monitor the broadcast strategy.</p>	<p>Organise workshops aimed at enhancing understanding of collaborative opportunities across and with national federations and actively share resources and showcase best practice.</p> <p>Implement innovation weeks to test and try new ideas to enhance the delivery of paddle sport.</p> <p>Hire specialized staff to focus on the digital transformation strategy.</p> <p>Execute the rebranding of the federation to “Paddle Worldwide,” with a launch scheduled for September 2025.</p> <p>Create and implement a new digital ecosystem to improve communications and facilitate first-party data capture.</p> <p>Prepare for the launch of a comprehensive Over-the-Top (OTT) platform in 2026, offering live and on-demand events, educational resources, and exclusive behind-the-scenes content.</p> <p>Increase communication initiatives to assist national federations in raising awareness of recreational paddling opportunities.</p> <p>Relaunch the “Top 100 Places to Paddle” campaign to inspire connections with nature and promote paddling exploration.</p>

## 4. Develop globally

### Focus Group: Sustainable Development Programme Team

Strengthen support and opportunities for athletes, coaches, and officials globally and innovate to improve opportunities to increase impact of development programmes.

DEVELOP GLOBALLY	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invest in dedicated development managers in Africa, Asia and the Americas through dedicated development managers.</li> <li>2. Support coaches from developing countries through the ICF Development Programme to increase the number of competitive athletes and participating nations at ICF World Championships.</li> <li>3. Increase the number of qualified International Technical Officials.</li> <li>4. Modernise the development programme through a blended learning approach (online and in person) to support the continuous development of coaches, officials and athletes at scale.</li> </ol>	<p>Enabled 35 athletes from developing countries to qualify for the Olympic and Paralympic Games through development camps (21 in sprint, 5 in slalom, 6 in paracanoe).</p> <p>Conducted 24 performance training camps in 2023-2024 to enhance athletes' readiness.</p> <p>Empowered over 500 coaches through ICF coaching seminars during this Olympic cycle.</p> <p>Secured over €1 million from IOC Olympic Solidarity to support development initiatives.</p> <p>Revised strategy with a continental manager, focusing on targeted projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Africa: Delivered 7 coach education courses.</li> <li>• Asia: Engaged 13 national federations in slalom training camps and held coaching seminars for India.</li> <li>• Americas: Evaluated Central American sports systems, proposing a long-term development plan and coaching courses.</li> </ul> <p>Ensured coaching knowledge transfer in all athlete performance camps.</p> <p>Utilised short videos to introduce key topics in coaching seminars, covering anti-doping, safeguarding, and nutrition.</p> <p>Initiated the development of a coaching education platform.</p> <p>Refined delivery objectives in Nigeria and Egypt, establishing goals for Africa, the Americas, and Asia.</p> <p>Strengthened collaboration with federations for targeted development projects and secured strategic funding.</p> <p>Delivered successful TIP Camps across multiple disciplines, enhancing recruitment and coach contracting.</p> <p>Expanded the ICF Database to over 2,000 International Technical Officials (ITOs), with 48 new officials passing exams this season.</p>	<p>Develop competitive paddling capabilities in targeted countries to enhance overall performance.</p> <p>Establish high-performance hubs to provide access to state-of-the-art training facilities.</p> <p>Support coaches in efforts to increase competitive athletes and boost participation in ICF World Championships.</p> <p>Implement high-performance training camps and athlete support initiatives to maximise athlete readiness.</p> <p>Pursue funding opportunities through IOC Olympic Solidarity, IPC grants, and other relevant sources.</p> <p>Develop comprehensive training programmes for International Technical Officials to elevate standards.</p> <p>Adopt a blended learning approach for continuous development of coaches, officials, and athletes. Collaborate with developed National Federations to create educational content tailored for specific needs</p> <p>Identify targeted countries based on measurable criteria to focus development efforts effectively.</p> <p>Prioritise long-term development by employing consistent tools and actions to ensure sustainable growth.</p> <p>Adopt a blended learning approach for continuous development of coaches, officials, and athletes, in collaboration with developed National Federations to create tailored educational content for specific needs.</p> <p>Assist National Federations in securing governmental funding to sport development initiatives to strengthen infrastructure and support.</p>

## 5. Climate positive

### Focus Group: Sustainability

Activate the paddle sport community to take climate positive actions and ensure elite events and organisational practices are optimised to support global sustainability goals.

CLIMATE POSITIVE	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a strategic sustainability plan aligned with UNFCCC.</li> <li>2. Develop and implement specific guidelines to ensure sustainable event delivery.</li> <li>3. Ensure sustainability is addressed as a strategic topic with event organisers during the bidding phase.</li> <li>4. Include sustainable practices within the ICFs daily practices.</li> <li>5. Foster a sustainable culture across the paddle sport community through campaigns that raise awareness and encourage actions to help in the fight against climate change.</li> <li>6. Integrate sustainability in the sourcing of goods and services.</li> <li>7. Inspire the paddle sport community to take positive climate action.</li> </ol>	<p>Secured additional funding from Canton du Vaud, Switzerland to refine sustainability strategy.</p> <p>Appointed external agency for activating sustainability initiatives and created the report: Whitewater venues – Advancing urban sustainability</p> <p>Conducted sustainability workshops, engaging national federation leaders in actionable steps toward a sustainable model.</p> <p>Created sustainability toolkit, to be included in revised host agreement.</p> <p>Introduced Travel Monitoring application to track carbon emissions and ensure efficient travel across the ICF staff.</p> <p>Shortlisted for the IOC Sustainability awards with a collaborative project with the Italian Canoe Federation.</p> <p>Sustainability has also been a core area of research in ICF's rebrand and repositioning strategy.</p> <p>Created detailed toolkit for sustainable event delivery, including checklists and best practices for event organisers.</p>	<p>Form a Sustainability Task Force to oversee the development and implementation of the strategic sustainability plan aligned with UNFCCC guidelines.</p> <p>Engage with event organisers during the bidding phase to discuss sustainability requirements and incorporate them into evaluation criteria.</p> <p>Develop internal protocols to integrate sustainable practices into the ICF's daily operations, including waste management, energy use, and resource efficiency.</p> <p>Launch awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of sustainability and encourage community members to adopt eco-friendly practices, featuring success stories and actionable steps.</p> <p>Establish criteria for sourcing goods and services that prioritise sustainability, ensuring suppliers adhere to environmental standards.</p> <p>Organise workshops and seminars to educate the paddle sport community about climate action and sustainable practices, fostering engagement and collaboration.</p> <p>Monitor and report progress on sustainability initiatives regularly, ensuring transparency and accountability within the community.</p> <p>Collaborate with external organisations and experts to share knowledge and resources, enhancing the effectiveness of sustainability initiatives across the paddle sport community.</p>

## 6. Celebrate emotions

### Focus group: Brand, marketing and corporate communication

Engage fans directly with athletes through powerful stories and invest in the digital growth of paddle sport.

CELEBRATE EMOTIONS	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximise the opportunities that the Olympic and Paralympic Games offer.</li> <li>2. Celebrate the highs and lows of an athlete's journey to the Olympic Games through a combination of event and athlete-generated content.</li> <li>3. Develop a digital advertising strategy to increase the reach of Olympic and Paralympic content.</li> <li>4. Maximise the use of the 'Paris 2024 Qualifier' label at all Olympic qualifying events to increase the event impact and connection with the Olympic Games.</li> <li>5. Research and develop a global identity that is relevant to recreational paddlers.</li> <li>6. Conduct comprehensive market research to understand how to meet the needs of recreational paddlers.</li> </ol> <p>Develop a global paddling community through direct membership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with partners to develop products and services that appeal to recreational paddlers and provide an easy transition to competitive paddle sport.</li> <li>2. Develop direct membership offers that provide access to exclusive content, services and discounts.</li> <li>3. Build a strong social media presence around the key attributes of paddle sport: adventure, health, nature, mental wellbeing and escapism</li> </ol>	<p>Actively emphasised Olympic and Paralympic narratives across event reporting and social media channels, engaging with Champions and emerging talents through interviews.</p> <p>Successfully partnered with prominent broadcasters, such as CCTV, FOX Australia, Sky New Zealand, and Multiple European Broadcasters, to ensure comprehensive coverage of the Olympic Journey.</p> <p>Progressed the implementation of a Social Media advertising plan dedicated to Olympic Qualification events, while also producing targeted content for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024.</p> <p>Engaged in productive discussions with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) regarding the utilisation of the Paris 2024 Logo and comprehensive event coverage on the official IOC @olympics handles.</p> <p>Initiated the development of a licensing scheme aimed at granting access to a future digital education platform at the point of purchase for paddle sport equipment.</p> <p>Enhanced accessibility in wildwater world championships by introducing a new plastic boat category, thereby broadening participation.</p> <p>Established a solid foundation for brand development by conducting a thorough review of the current brand, conducting competitor analysis, studying market trends, and creating detailed audience profiles.</p>	<p>Formulate a Comprehensive Strategic Plan to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the Olympic and Paralympic Games, identifying key initiatives that will elevate the profile of paddle sports on a global stage.</p> <p>Develop a Framework that celebrates athletes' journeys, integrating both event and athlete-generated content to create an emotion led storytelling strategy that enhances engagement with audiences.</p> <p>Design a holistic digital advertising strategy that amplifies the reach of content, employing targeted marketing techniques to effectively engage diverse demographics.</p> <p>Leverage the 'LA 2028 Qualifier' Branding to create a cohesive promotional strategy for all qualifying events, ensuring alignment with the Olympic narrative and maximising event impact.</p> <p>Continue to conduct strategic market research to establish a global identity that resonates with recreational paddlers, aligning the federation's branding efforts with community values and aspirations.</p> <p>Engage in stakeholder collaboration to design and develop innovative products and services that meet the evolving needs of recreational paddlers, facilitating their transition into competitive paddle sports.</p> <p>Create a Direct Membership Strategy that delivers exclusive content, services, and discounts, enhancing member value and fostering community loyalty.</p> <p>Enhance the Federation's Digital Presence by implementing a robust social media strategy that highlights paddle sport's core attributes—adventure, health, nature, mental wellbeing, and escapism—while promoting a vibrant community.</p> <p>Establish a Global Community Engagement Initiative aimed at building a diverse and inclusive paddling community, ensuring stakeholder input informs ongoing strategic development.</p>



## 7. Elevate competitions

### Focus group: ICF events team

Build an economically and environmentally sustainable competition calendar that maximises opportunities for all disciplines.

ELEVATE COMPETITIONS	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<p>1. Establish a working group to analyse the calendar of events and make recommendations for optimisation.</p> <p>2. Adapt the Olympic Games qualification process to ensure that Continental Games can be selected as Olympic qualification events for LA2028 and beyond.</p> <p>3. Review and strengthen the bidding and allocation process for events to ensure full continental representation.</p> <p>4. Define results and ranking system requirements and streamline service providers to ensure a consistent experience for all elite paddle sport.</p> <p>5. Develop a dedicated volunteer strategy to ensure that the value they bring to paddle sport is recognised.</p> <p>Develop compelling virtual competitions</p> <p>1. Formalise a set of rules for physical virtual sports competitions using kayak and canoe ergometers.</p> <p>2. Work with industry experts to set standards for equipment to be used in international events and ensure fair competition</p> <p>3. Develop a long-term strategy for virtual physical sports with the aim of becoming part of the Olympic Virtual Series</p> <p>Develop a strategy for multi-sport Games for non-Olympic and Paralympic disciplines</p> <p>1. Create comprehensive bid documents and supporting arguments to ensure a convincing case for the inclusion of paddle sport.</p> <p>2. Use athletes and federations to support the bid.</p> <p>3. Provide professional resources to develop a strategy and support the bid process with the relevant committee.</p> <p>Develop guidelines to ensure best practise in event optimisation</p> <p>1. Optimise event management systems (results, rankings, accreditation, ticket sales) to increase efficiency and standardise delivery.</p> <p>2. Streamline communication channels and invest in effective marketing tools.</p> <p>3. Develop sustainable event delivery policies and provide professional resources to support event organisers.</p>	<p>Appointed Global Director for International Events.</p> <p>Established Sport Commission meetings and secured funding for the Paddle Sport Summit to bring all disciplines together in Q1 2025.</p> <p>Established an Olympic Qualification Review working group, which has conducted a comprehensive analysis and developed a proposal to enhance the Olympic Qualification Systems for canoe sprint and slalom.</p> <p>Reviewed the event bidding process and prepared a proposal for the 2024 ICF Congress, supported by the Sport Commission and Olympic Qualification System Working Group.</p> <p>Successfully advocated for the inclusion of canoe sports in multi-sport events like the Mediterranean Games, while ensuring that the European Games acted as a qualifying event for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.</p> <p>Successfully organised and hosted a Virtual Event in December 2022 and participation in the IOC Esports Week in Singapore in June 2023.</p>	<p>Comprehensively analyse the event calendar, identify inefficiencies, and provide actionable recommendations for optimisation, ensuring a streamlined event schedule that maximizes participation and engagement whilst balancing available resources.</p> <p>Strengthen the bidding and allocation process for events by establishing clear criteria that guarantee full continental representation, promoting equitable opportunities across all regions.</p> <p>Standardise results and ranking system Requirements by consolidating service providers, ensuring a seamless and consistent experience for elite paddle sports athletes and stakeholders.</p> <p>Create a Long-Term Strategy for Virtual Sports aimed at securing a place within the Olympic E-Sports Games, promoting paddle sports to new audiences and increasing overall visibility.</p> <p>Provide Professional Resources to enhance the bid process for multi-sport events, ensuring alignment with relevant committees and increasing the likelihood of successful inclusion.</p> <p>Enhance Communication and Marketing Strategies by streamlining communication channels and investing in innovative marketing tools that effectively promote paddle sports events.</p> <p>Developed Sustainable Event Delivery Policies to guide organisers in implementing environmentally and financially responsible practices, backed by professional resources to ensure sustainable operations.</p>

## 8. Generate revenue

### Focus group: Broadcast & Revenue Generation Team

Develop a commercial strategy that drives investment and partnerships that generate revenue to invest in the growth of global paddle sport.

GENERATE REVENUE	ACTIONS 2022–24	EVOLUTION 2025–26
<p>1. Invest in a digital asset management system to facilitate the distribution and use of content and activate archive footage.</p> <p>2. Increase focus on news distribution and ensure flexibility in production to adapt to broadcasting needs.</p> <p>3. Consolidate media distribution plan and ownership to ensure effective distribution and that content used can be tracked across all media.</p> <p>Maximise revenue opportunities through digital and broadcast channels</p> <p>1. Increase broadcast distribution with dedicated professional resources.</p> <p>2. Leverage Olympic and Paralympic preparations to increase sales of live products.</p> <p>3. Protect the legitimate and commercial interests of ICF and its stakeholders.</p> <p>4. Create a global overview of existing commercial and non-commercial opportunities for recreational paddle sport.</p> <p>Modernize commercial offerings to create additional revenue streams and licensing opportunities.</p> <p>1. Define a monetization strategy for live streaming.</p> <p>2. Create opportunities for commercial advertising and promotion across all digital touchpoints.</p> <p>3. Develop consistent licensing models for equipment providers.</p>	<p>Conducted research and initiated Digital Asset Management project.</p> <p>Improved news creation service with comprehensive coverage, including race and performance clipping, along with enhanced features such as English commentary, international sound options, B-roll footage, and interviews.</p> <p>Appointed Global Director of Growth and Communications.</p> <p>Expanded TV distribution and rights sales, broadening the opportunity for more broadcasters to share athletes’ inspiring stories during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games qualification.</p> <p>Reviewed and aligned contracts to adhere to the latest regulations.</p> <p>Developed sponsorship packages and researched the recreational paddle sport market.</p> <p>Launched streaming initiative to bolster revenue streams from broadcast content, including implementation of Google Ads for improved online visibility.</p> <p>Engaged in ongoing efforts to secure meaningful sponsorship partnerships, involving monetisation strategies for Facebook and YouTube presence.</p> <p>Conducted research on international federation licensing models while exploring potential partnerships for equipment testing.</p>	<p>Enhance News Distribution Capabilities by streamlining production processes to adapt to diverse broadcasting needs, maximising media exposure, and driving revenue through increased reach and engagement.</p> <p>Consolidate the Media Distribution Plan to centralise ownership and control, enabling efficient tracking of content usage and optimising monetisation opportunities across all media channels.</p> <p>Leverage Olympic and Paralympic disciplines, capitalising on the heightened global interest surrounding these events to drive significant revenue growth.</p> <p>Create a global overview of commercial opportunities in recreational paddle sports, identifying pathways to expand participation and engagement while opening new revenue channels.</p> <p>Modernise commercial offerings through OTT platforms and membership strategies to develop a comprehensive monetisation strategy for live streaming services, ensuring a sustainable and scalable source of revenue.</p> <p>Develop Advertising and Promotion Opportunities across all digital platforms, enhancing brand visibility and opportunities for partners through targeted ads and sponsorships.</p> <p>Establish consistent licensing models for equipment providers, fostering mutually beneficial partnerships that clearly define expectations, driving growth and revenue within the paddle sports community.</p>



## **International Canoe Federation**

Avenue de Rhodanie 54,  
CH 1007 Lausanne, Switzerland

T: +41 (0)21 612 0290

E: [info@canoeicf.com](mailto:info@canoeicf.com)

W: [canoeicf.com](http://canoeicf.com)