

Strategic Directions - background and comments

1. Introduction

The strategy of a federation like the IOF is an important management and communication tool. As a communication tool, the strategy points out what the federation is aiming for and defines the guiding parameters. It is important that the strategy clearly communicates our ambitions both to the IOF member federations and to third parties. As a management tool, the strategy assists in organising and guiding the operation of the federation towards achievement of the defined ambitions via target-oriented action plans which lead the work. A strategy, by its very nature, focuses on existing strengths as well as on exploring new chances and opportunities.

Strategic Directions has been in use since 2006 and at the 2012 General Assembly it is time to agree on the 2012-2018 edition. The process was launched at the 2010 General Assembly and an intermediate report was presented at the 2011 Presidents' Conference. The present review round aims at providing the IOF member federations with the details that were not yet in place at the time of the 2011 Presidents' Conference.

2. Background

The discussions at the 2011 Presidents' Conference showed general agreement on the vision of the IOF and the main goals to be achieved by 2018.

Vision:

Orienteering shall be included in the Olympic and Paralympic Games

Key Goals:

- *Orienteering shall be a truly global sport*
- *Orienteering shall be visible and attractive*
- *Orienteering shall be positioned for inclusion in the Olympic and Paralympic Games*

The vision shall summarise the ultimate long-term goal of the IOF. The Key Goals indicate the main success factors that will bring us closer to the fulfilment of the vision.

Strategic Directions contains a number of Strategic Initiatives outlining the activities needed to achieve the Key Goals. Council proposes to focus the work of the IOF, i.e. the central organisation and the member federations, on the following strategic initiatives:

- Focus on key outcomes
- Increase the attractiveness of orienteering to young people
- Strengthen the IOF's position on the world sporting stage
- Increase the visibility of orienteering
- Strong management and funding

3. Key Goals

3.1 A truly global sport

For an eventual inclusion in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, orienteering must be considered to be a truly global sport. This means that orienteering must have the required geographical spread of active member federations, but it also requires the sport to be well-governed. In Council's view, it is essential to highlight the development of the sport, both in

new countries and in existing member countries. This goes together with an attempt to raise the level of elite orienteering in all IOF regions. From an outside view, a good spread of medal candidates is important in order to create more excitement in major events. Equally important factors are the evidence of well functioning regional working groups and the staging of our major events in all IOF regions. A further dimension of a truly global sport is its presence in multi-sport games. IOC representatives attend such games for all age groups, and this is where they see sports that are not yet on the Olympic programme.

3.2 Visible and attractive

Any new sport intending to enter the Olympic programme must bring added value to the Olympic Games. To disclose the value of orienteering, we must make it visible to people outside the orienteering sport. The best tools that the IOF has today are the World Championships. Therefore our main ambition with the Key Goal "visible and attractive" must be to position the World Championships as our premium platform for promotion to the world outside of our sport: World Championships must be made attractive for external partners.

Looking at the most recent development within the Olympic movement it is evident that an aspiring sport also must bring commercial market potential to the Olympic Games. Having many young people practicing the sport indicates such potential. The IOF needs to attract more young people to orienteering.

A strategy shall also focus on existing strengths. The environment is one of the strengths of orienteering, and very relevant in this context. The Council therefore proposes to add this aspect to the Key Goals.

According to the current policy of International Paralympic Committee only Olympic programme sports are considered for the Paralympic Games. The IOF should therefore continue to develop trail orienteering so that, in due time, it is well positioned for the Paralympic Games.

3.3 Positioned for the Olympic and Paralympic Games

The third precondition for an eventual inclusion in the Olympic Games is the existence of good international relations. The IOF needs to have a wide and reliable network of relationships with various organisations. This Key Goal indicates some areas where we can make orienteering more known on the world sporting stage.

Being acknowledged in the world sporting community means that orienteering is seen as a serious candidate for inclusion in the Olympic Games, meaning that it fulfils all formal criteria and also provides intangible assets. This message needs to be spread on every possible occasion. The IOF shall therefore systematically implement the IOC evaluation criteria for sport and disciplines in its work and shall also communicate this activity.

The IOF shall gain active support from sport governing organisations, federations and the public sector by establishing direct contacts with relevant management representatives and administration staff.

4. Strategic Initiatives

The Strategic Initiatives comprise a detailed list of the activities Council regards essential in order to reach the Key Goals. To achieve our Olympic ambitions, we need to focus on a

number of important key outcomes. Unless orienteering fulfils the formal criteria we cannot expect being considered for the shortlist of sports to be evaluated for the Olympic Games.

The motivation for increasing the attractiveness of orienteering to young people is given above. Referring to the newly established Olympic Youth Games, our focus must be on 14 to 18 year-olds. The IOC values social aspects in the work with youngsters and we should not simply create new championships for this age group. Our strategic action includes several ways of attracting young people and keeping them active in orienteering.

To promote orienteering in the world sporting community, the IOF must foster an international awareness that the sport of orienteering adds value to the community. To strengthen our position, we therefore need to take orienteering to places where others are and build external relations. Some relevant activities aiming at achieving these two goals are therefore formulated in the Strategic Initiatives.

Visibility is one of the Key Goals. The IOF shall explore new means of achieving more visibility. We have to develop our events to bring orienteering closer to sport governing organisations, marketing businesses, as well as the public sector.

Last but not least, to secure the implementation of the above-defined Strategic Initiatives, the IOF must strengthen its management and financial capabilities. The activities listed under this Strategic Initiative are intended to help us achieve this goal.