

CLIMATE SCORECARD FOR THE 2010 WINTER GAMES

With environment the official third pillar of the Olympic movement, and climate change a defining issue of our time, the 2010 Vancouver Olympics should be expected to show leadership and deliver a strong message to the world about solutions to climate change and global warming.

This scorecard looks at how well the Vancouver Olympics addressed its own climate impact along with how it did in engaging others on the issue of climate change. It is intended to be constructive feedback for the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC), the government partners and sponsors involved in the Games, the International Olympic Committee, future Olympic organizing committees and other parties interested in sport and the environment.

We considered the actions taken by the Vancouver Olympics in 10 climate-related categories that we felt were together a good measure of overall performance with respect to climate action and leadership¹. We took into account VANOC's own bid commitments, David Suzuki Foundation recommendations from its report, *Meeting the Challenge* (commissioned by VANOC in 2007), and the achievements of climate programs from previous summer and winter Olympics, as well as other large sporting events. As well, there is an expectation that each successive Olympics will raise the bar in terms of overall performance, and the same should apply to environmental initiatives around the Games. Finally, given high public concern for climate change, we considered what a winter Olympics Games should ideally be doing on this important issue, particularly given the fact that the very future of the winter Olympics depends on winters cold enough to have snow and ice.

With the Vancouver Olympics just over a week away, we were able to summarize their performance in nearly all the categories. The exception is the final category, public engagement, where performance has been disappointing to date, but could be improved with a strong effort during the Games to reach out to the thousands of spectators and billions of TV viewers worldwide with an inspiring message about climate solutions.

¹ VANOC also implemented a much broader sustainability program that included other environmental initiatives, aboriginal participation, and inner-city engagement, but these initiatives are outside the scope of this scorecard.

SUMMARY OF THE CLIMATE PERFORMANCE OF THE 2010 VANCOUVER OLYMPICS

CATEGORY	HOW THE VANCOUVER OLYMPICS PERFORMED
1. Goals	Setting goals that are specific, measurable and sufficiently ambitious is a critical first step in developing a successful climate program. The Vancouver Olympic bid set clear goals related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, but was vague in other areas.
2. Transparency	Transparency promotes accountability, and can also provide opportunities for constructive dialogue with stakeholders. VANOC was relatively transparent about its climate program.
3. Measuring climate impact	Measuring its greenhouse gas emissions allows an organization to manage and potentially reduce its climate impact, and VANOC has made improvements over previous Games with a more rigorous and comprehensive approach.
4. Venues	Venues are a visible legacy of all Olympics, and the Vancouver Olympics will leave the region with innovative, energy-efficient buildings that will reduce community greenhouse gas emissions – and save money – for many years into the future.
5. Energy Use	Fossil fuel energy use at venues, including electricity, heating and cooling, is typically a major source of greenhouse gas emissions for winter Olympics. However, the Vancouver Olympics will primarily use clean energy sources.
6. Transportation	Local transportation and shipping are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions for the Olympics. In Vancouver it appears opportunities to create lasting reductions in transportation emissions in the region have been missed.
7. Overall greenhouse gas emission reductions	The number one priority in managing the climate impact of any large event is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible (i.e., before offsetting), and it is estimated that the Vancouver Olympics will have reduced overall emissions by around 15%.
8. Offsetting remaining emissions	Since the Salt Lake City Winter Games in 2002, most Olympics have taken responsibility for some of their climate impact by using carbon offsets. VANOC has so far committed to offset 118,000 tonnes of its emissions, which is substantial, but still represents under half of Games-related emissions.
9. Mobilizing sponsors and others	Olympic Games, with their high visibility, have an opportunity to use their own environmental initiatives to leverage action from Olympic sponsors, suppliers and others. The Vancouver Olympics reached out to sponsors and others with several climate-related initiatives.
10. Public Engagement	Environment is one of the three pillars of the Olympic movement, and the Olympic Games are an unparalleled opportunity to reach out to billions of people around the world and inspire them with solutions to climate change. Yet this is the category where VANOC has had the least success.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE: BRONZE

DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE CLIMATE PERFORMANCE OF THE 2010 VANCOUVER OLYMPICS

1. GOALS

Setting goals that are specific, measurable and sufficiently ambitious is a critical first step in developing a successful climate program. The Vancouver Olympic bid set clear goals related to energy efficiency and renewable energy, but was vague in other areas.

The Vancouver Olympics' climate-related goals included LEED-certified, energy-efficient venues; the use of renewable and green energy for its power needs; and relying on public transit during the Games – all of which were achieved.

Less clearly defined goals included “*moving towards a zero emissions Games that are climate neutral*” [emphasis added] and a commitment to an “*extensive public information, education and awareness program*” on the environment, both of which were ambitious, yet vague, and contributed to mixed results (as discussed later in this scorecard).

Further, the Vancouver 2010 Bid Book did not set any goals related to a sustainable transportation legacy, and while some already-planned projects in the region were reprioritized by local transit authorities to be ready for the Games, no new projects resulted. And VANOC did not publicly announce any greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, which would have increased accountability and provided a “stretch goal” for the Games to achieve. In 2009 VANOC announced it would offset “up

to” 300,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions for the Games without committing to this number. VANOC did set a goal of diverting 85% of its waste and appears to be on track to achieve this goal, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with the disposal of waste in landfills.

2. TRANSPARENCY

Transparency promotes accountability, and can also provide opportunities for constructive dialogue with stakeholders. VANOC was relatively transparent about its climate program.

Olympic organizing committees should ideally track information related to all the environmental aspects of their Games and make this information publicly available. This is particularly important because the IOC itself, which has access to detailed information about the activities of organizing committees, does not appear to demand environmental accountability from Olympic organizers. VANOC provided information about its climate-related initiatives via its annual sustainability reports, its website, and through communications with stakeholders. VANOC was quite open about some of the challenges it faced, including its limited budget for sustainability initiatives, and invited advice and ideas from outside the organization.

VANOC has published three sustainability reports to date, with two more planned, which is

more than any previous Olympic organizing committee. It also published a high-level forecast of the overall climate impact of the Games commissioned from a third party as early as January 2007, and a more recent estimate in November 2009. VANOC initiated a regular dialogue with local environmental groups, and created an external advisory committee that provided feedback to VANOC on sustainability issues including its climate program.

However, VANOC has not made public more detailed information about some of its activities, including its overall transportation program, a breakdown of its overall budget for sustainability initiatives, and details about the B.C.-based clean-energy carbon offset projects it will use, which limited opportunities for feedback on these items.

3. MEASURING CLIMATE IMPACT

Measuring its greenhouse gas emissions allows an organization to manage and potentially reduce its climate impact, and VANOC has made improvements over previous Games with a more rigorous and comprehensive approach.

VANOC estimates that the Vancouver Olympics will generate about 268,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, including 118,000 tonnes mainly from its own operations, 22,000 tonnes from sponsors and partners, and 128,000 tonnes from spectators and others.

VANOC's emissions inventory is based on internationally recognized standards for greenhouse gas (GHG) management. It reflects stakeholder input and has been verified by third parties. VANOC is also the first Olympic organizing committee to track and report Games-related GHG emissions from the day of winning the bid until the closing of the Games (including the Paralympic Games), a period of almost seven years instead of just the few weeks or months during and around the Games considered by Salt Lake City in 2002 and Turin in 2006. VANOC is also tracking and reporting on spectator air travel, the largest (and often ignored) Games-related emission source by far.

Some emission sources have been left out from VANOC's inventory, such as fugitive emissions from refrigeration. While the use of refrigerant gases with a significant climate impact will likely be relatively low at the Vancouver Olympics (primarily due to the reduced need for air conditioning, and the fact that ice arenas and many coolers and vending machines will be HFC-free), including this emission source would be consistent with previous Olympics (such as the Sydney 2000 Olympics, where HFC use was a major issue). Including this source would also have set a precedent for future (primarily summer) Olympics where refrigerants with a significant climate impact are more commonly used.

It should also be noted that while VANOC has gone beyond previous organizing committees in measuring its climate impact, emerging best practices in greenhouse gas management suggest that future Olympics

will have to consider other Games-related emission sources, including those from suppliers and contractors.

4. VENUES

Venues are a visible legacy of all Olympics, and the Vancouver Olympics will leave the region with innovative, energy-efficient buildings that will reduce community greenhouse gas emissions – and save money – for many years into the future.

Wherever possible, existing facilities have been used and retrofitted, greatly reducing construction-related greenhouse gas emissions. In the case of venues and villages built specifically for the Games, VANOC won an award for its leadership in establishing green building criteria and simultaneously constructing the largest group of single-project, low-impact facilities in North America.

Notable features of new venues include compact site design and clustered locations that minimize transportation, and a focus on energy efficiency. It has been estimated that in some venues the energy costs will be reduced by 15 per cent or more. Also, for the first time ever at an Olympics, the energy consumption of many venues during the Games will be tracked and reported in real time, allowing venue energy managers to monitor and attempt to optimize energy use. The public will be able to see the energy being tracked online, as well as at various sites during the Olympics.

Eight out of nine of the new venues have applied for independent certification (minimum LEED Silver) under the LEED green building

rating system, and the UBC Winter Sports Centre will meet UBC's own green building criteria. Vancouver Olympic & Paralympic Village is targeting LEED Gold and Platinum and will include a "net-zero energy" building that will produce as much energy as it consumes over the course of a year. Both athlete villages are part of a pilot project with the Canada Green Building Council to test the new LEED Neighbourhood Development (ND) green development standard. As well, VANOC's own headquarters renovation received LEED Gold certification.

Most new venues and the villages are designed to be repurposed for community use after the Games.

5. ENERGY USE

Fossil fuel energy use at venues, including electricity, heating and cooling, is typically a major source of greenhouse gas emissions for Olympic Games. However, the Vancouver Olympics will primarily use clean energy sources.

VANOC's bid commitments included acquiring its venue energy needs from renewable and green sources including micro-hydro, solar photovoltaics, fuel cells, solar heating and ground-source heat pumps – and it delivered on this commitment. The majority of electricity for venues will be supplied by new and existing connections from the B.C. transmission grid, greatly reducing the need for diesel back-up generators. VANOC estimates that this will reduce greenhouse gases from generator use by 90 per cent compared to the 2006 Winter Games in Turin.

In addition, VANOC obtained

Green Power Certificates from BC Hydro for all of its electricity use, so electricity used by the venues and villages will have little to no net carbon impact – the lowest level yet for an Olympic Winter Games.

The venues themselves will generate heat from a variety of innovative sources, including waste heat from refrigeration systems, landfill methane, seawater, ground source heat pumps, and exhaust ventilation. Community energy systems have also been created for the Vancouver and Whistler athlete villages. In Vancouver, heat captured from a main sanitary line will serve the village's space heat and hot water needs, and in Whistler heat will be recovered from the municipal waste-water treatment system.

6. TRANSPORTATION

Local transportation and shipping are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions for the Olympics. In Vancouver it appears opportunities to create lasting reductions in transportation emissions in the region have been missed.

The Vancouver Olympics presented an opportunity to develop long-term sustainable transportation infrastructure between Whistler and Vancouver – for example, by expanding use of the existing rail line. Instead, the Sea to Sky highway was widened at a cost of \$600 million, and diesel buses will be brought in temporarily from across North America to shuttle spectators to and from Whistler.

The new highway will encourage more vehicle traffic after the Games, exacerbate urban sprawl,

and result in increased greenhouse gas emissions from transportation for the region – already B.C.'s largest emissions source. Similarly, while VANOC and its partners are promoting the use of public transit to minimize gridlock during the Games, and have a goal to reduce vehicle traffic by 30 per cent for that period, it seems likely residents will simply return to their vehicles after the Games, because there will be few legacies for the region's already overcrowded public transit system, which suffers from chronic underfunding by the provincial and federal governments.

However, the Vancouver Olympics did result in the shifting of priorities and timing with respect to transit infrastructure construction and upgrades. Some notable legacies include the fast-tracking of the new Canada Line to the airport, which will add 19 kilometres to the region's rapid transit network (but at the expense of postponing the Evergreen Line to the eastern suburbs), and the addition of some new Skytrain cars to the system.

In Whistler, 20 hydrogen buses were purchased at a cost of \$90 million. This money might have been better spent on a greater number of trolley buses. Moreover, the buses will use hydrogen fuel trucked in from Quebec during the Games.

VANOC did develop sustainable transportation guidelines for its light duty fleet, bus operations, and logistics fleet, and these have been in place since early in the organizing phase. Initiatives include right-sizing vehicles, ride sharing, route optimization, driver training, and a no-idling policy – although it is unclear how successful these have been.

As well, VANOC has emphasized the use of transport companies who are designated FleetSmart, and some Games equipment and goods will be transported using advanced rail locomotives.

The City of Vancouver will launch a demonstration streetcar project, and it will be free to riders during the Games. Many streets that are closed to vehicle traffic will remain open to pedestrians and cyclists. Bicycle valet service will be available at eight sites, and some streets will be turned into pedestrian malls during the Games. There will be no public parking allowed at venues, which have all been sited near to public or VANOC-operated transit. All tickets to the Games include access to transit for the day (a practice that dates back to the Sydney 2000 Olympics).

7. OVERALL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION REDUCTIONS

The number one priority in managing the climate impact of any large event is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions wherever possible (i.e., before offsetting), and it is estimated that the Vancouver Olympics will have reduced overall emissions by around 15%.

VANOC estimates that it will have reduced the carbon footprint of the Vancouver Olympics by approximately 15 per cent, or 57,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions below "business as usual". These reductions will come from initiatives such as LEED venue design, construction practices, power sources, transportation/logistics, waste management, and travel efficiencies (including for the Torch Relay, where vehicle sharing

is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by two-thirds).

As a result, the Vancouver Olympics will likely produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions for its own operations than either the Salt Lake City 2002 Olympics or the Turin 2006 Olympics.

It must be acknowledged that developing a reference or “business as usual” scenario for a one-time project such as the Olympics can be challenging, particularly given differences between host cities and countries. However, VANOC’s assumptions about what constitutes “business as usual” have not been made public, so it is not clear how they arrived at 15 per cent. And because VANOC did not have any publicly announced overall emission reduction targets, it is difficult to evaluate their success in reducing emissions, and it’s possible that reduction opportunities were missed.

8. OFFSETTING REMAINING EMISSIONS

Since the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002, most Olympics have taken responsibility for some of their climate impact by using carbon offsets. VANOC has so far committed to offset 118,000 tonnes of its emissions, which is substantial, but still represents under half of Games-related emissions.

VANOC has so far committed to offsetting 118,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases, which are those that result primarily from its own operations. This will likely exceed the achievements of the Turin Winter Olympics in 2006, which according to its final report only offset around 68,000 tonnes.

However, the Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Olympics received donations of carbon offsets well in excess of their total measured emissions — enough to qualify as carbon neutral — although the quality of the Salt Lake City offsets was not rigorously assessed.

The Vancouver Olympics are the first to have an official carbon offset sponsor, carbon neutral athletes, and a carbon neutral torch relay. However, there are three areas, in particular, where the Vancouver Olympics could have gone further.

First, without offsetting spectator air travel – which accounts for about half of the climate impact of the Vancouver Olympics (as confirmed by VANOC’s own measurement of the climate impact of the Games) – the Vancouver Olympics cannot make an unqualified claim to be carbon neutral. While standards for carbon neutrality are still emerging, a growing body of practice suggests that a comprehensive claim of carbon neutrality should mean that all significant emission sources, both direct and indirect, are offset. As a result, if it does not go further than its current commitment to offset only 118,000 tonnes, VANOC can only claim that it is carbon neutral for its direct emissions.

Not addressing spectator air travel would be a missed opportunity for the Vancouver Olympics, particularly as other large event organizers (e.g., World Cup Soccer 2006, UN Climate Conference 2009) have taken responsibility for this significant emission source. VANOC has been relying on spectators to voluntarily purchase offsets for this portion of the Games’ climate impact, and the program has recently been

promoted through emails to ticket holders, a web-based calculator, and in the media, with plans to reach out to spectators during the Games through advertisements at venues and other means. However, participation rates in voluntary offset programs are typically very low, and VANOC missed an opportunity to help fund these offsets directly by including a small levy on event tickets.

Second, VANOC will exclusively use carbon offsets from clean-energy projects in British Columbia that will be certified to meet offset requirements similar to those set out in B.C. regulations. However, the emission reductions from the B.C. projects will not occur until well after the Games are over and VANOC has been dissolved, lending uncertainty to the process for ensuring that the reductions will be delivered. The Turin Olympics in 2006 had a target of acquiring over 100,000 tonnes of offsets, but their final report indicates that only about 68,000 had been delivered shortly after the Turin Games concluded, and it isn’t clear if the remaining offsets were ever secured.

Third, the offset portfolio available to spectators and others includes both clean-energy projects from B.C. and Gold Standard offsets from developing countries. Gold Standard offsets are recognized around the world for their high quality, and their certified sustainability benefits for communities in less privileged parts of the world align well with the spirit of internationalism underlying the Olympics. However, they are only part of the voluntary offset program for the Vancouver Olympics, and will likely make up a small percentage of the total offsets used.

Nevertheless, all of the offsets used for the Vancouver Olympics will be from clean-energy and energy-efficiency projects. No offsets from tree-planting projects, which have been subject to controversy related to their climate benefits, will be used.

9. MOBILIZING SPONSORS AND OTHERS

Olympic Games, with their high visibility, have an opportunity to use their own environmental initiatives to leverage action from Olympic sponsors, suppliers and others. The Vancouver Olympics reached out to sponsors and others with several climate initiatives.

VANOC convened a “Sponsor Sustainability Initiative” to promote sustainability practices with its sponsors. While this provided a forum for sponsors to discuss sustainability issues, it’s not clear how effective it was in achieving results. As well, VANOC created a “Sustainability Stars” program to highlight the sustainability practices, including carbon reductions, of both its Olympic sponsors and partners. In 2009 VANOC set up a “Carbon Partners” program that encourages sponsors to measure and offset their Games-related carbon footprints, particularly from air travel and accommodations. Participation in the Carbon Partners program appears to have been fairly broad, although to date the details and overall outcome of the program have not been made public.

In 2009, VANOC convened the World Conference on Sport and the Environment in Vancouver and brought together athletes, sporting organizations and event

organizers and sponsors from around the world to discuss ways to incorporate environmental concerns, including climate change, into sporting events.

In addition, VANOC developed a sustainable procurement policy that included climate-friendly requirements. It also worked with a Swiss-based institute to create a *Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit* that is already being used by several national Olympic committees and national and international sporting associations, and includes advice on how to source supplies and services to meet sustainability objectives, including reduced climate impact.

10. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Environment is one of the three pillars of the Olympic movement, and the Olympic Games are an unparalleled opportunity to reach out to billions of people around the world and inspire them with solutions to climate change. Yet this is the category where VANOC has had the least success.

With the high profile of the Olympics, and their ability to reach and inspire a global audience, public engagement is the among the most important things the Vancouver Olympics could do to promote climate solutions. At the very least, VANOC has the opportunity to educate the public, media and others about the many climate initiatives it undertook, and discuss their benefits – for example, the energy saved by its venues and associated reduced energy costs.

However, despite having implemented a variety of positive climate initiatives that it could have promoted, the obvious

tie-in between climate change impacts and winter sports, working with host cities and a provincial government that are active in climate protection, unprecedented support from the public for climate action, and the potential to work with high-profile media sponsors and through multiple other communications avenues, VANOC has to date failed to capitalize on its high profile and reach out to Canadians or even Vancouverites about climate solutions.

A proposal by B.C.-based environmental groups that VANOC host a public “sustainability pavilion” featuring information about local and Games-related environmental issues was not adopted. In 2007, VANOC commissioned a report on social-marketing strategies from two professional communications firms, but so far a large-scale campaign by VANOC has not materialized. Instead, VANOC held two video contests for Canadian youth, and produced two short animated videos of its own about its sustainability programs. In 2009 VANOC also began to work with “Project Blue Sky”, a social-media platform that encourages people to use more sustainable forms of transportation, but this project has not achieved a high profile to date.

VANOC appears to have made efforts to engage its own employees in workplace initiatives. However, on VANOC’s website homepage – a primary contact point with the public – the “Sustainability” section has very low visibility. Instead, some of VANOC’s highest-profile communications to Vancouver-area residents to date have been relatively negative messages about the need to stay home and avoid traffic congestion during the Games. VANOC

has worked with local transit authorities and municipalities to develop the TravelSmart program, which includes public outreach promoting the use of public transit, biking, walking, telecommuting and carpooling. Still, although VANOC claims on its website that roughly 50 per cent of its passenger vehicles are “low emission”, anecdotal evidence suggests many of them are SUVs with one occupant, sending the wrong message to the public who see them on the streets.

VANOC and its Torch Relay sponsors also missed an opportunity to actively promote climate solutions as a key theme of the 2010 Torch Relay as it travelled through thousands of communities in Canada and came within a one-hour drive of 90 per cent of Canada’s population. Although the Torch Relay used fuel-efficient vehicles, found ways to reduce vehicle use and relied on carbon offsets for remaining greenhouse gas emissions – and several of the torchbearers were environmental leaders in their communities – neither climate change nor the environment has come through strongly (for example, in the media) as a key theme of the event. Instead, VANOC stated on its website that the key themes were building “healthier individuals” and creating a “stronger Canada”.

In contrast, Vancouver’s “Cultural Olympiad” – representing the second pillar of the Olympic movement – is a high-profile and well-funded arts program that will stage over 600 public events around Games time.

Nevertheless, with the Games about to begin, VANOC still has a chance to “touch the soul of the nation and inspire the world” with climate solutions – including at

the opening ceremonies, through the media (inspiring commercials between sporting events about its green venues, or renewable-energy program, for example), and on its high-traffic website home page – but the window of opportunity is closing fast.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the performance discussed above, the David Suzuki Foundation believes the Vancouver Olympics have made it to the podium for their climate-protection efforts, earning a bronze medal. The Vancouver Olympics have performed very well with respect to venues and energy use, and have made advances in several categories over previous Olympics – for example, with regard to measuring and offsetting their climate impact.

However, the Vancouver Olympics were less successful in other respects. The event will not leave the region with a significant legacy in sustainable transportation. To date, less than half of its measured climate impact has been addressed with carbon offsets. Moreover, the Vancouver Olympics failed to create a high profile for climate solutions around the Games in its public communications, in contrast to its efforts with the Cultural Olympiad.

As it stands now, the Vancouver Olympics will likely be remembered as among the most progressive of any Olympics held so far with respect to climate change. However, it must be acknowledged that good efforts have been made by previous Olympics. For example, the

Sydney 2000 Olympics – despite some missed opportunities and being held 10 years earlier – made climate change and the environment an integral part of their operations and are often still referred to as the “Green Games”.

Yet not even the Sydney Olympics would rate a gold medal in the opinion of the David Suzuki Foundation. The Olympic movement still has a long way to go to raise the bar on climate action, and to make the environment pillar a truly integral part of the Games. Tellingly, most people aren’t even aware that environment is one of the three official pillars of the Olympic movement.

Olympic bids now typically include aspirations to be the “greenest Games ever” and this appears to be encouraged by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). However, when it comes to making sure that environmental commitments are met, there is little evidence of strong IOC engagement. A look back at the past several Olympics shows remarkably varied performance with respect to the environment, with the Athens 2004 Games standing out in particular for their weak environmental record.

The IOC must play a stronger role to ensure that the environment is taken seriously by Olympic organizers, as it is in the unique position to ensure that bid cities follow through on their environmental commitments. It could do so by making environmental performance in key areas a requirement for all host cities, just like requirements for other aspects of hosting the Olympics, such as setting venue requirements, advertising rules, etc. The IOC should set minimum

environmental benchmarks so that every organizing committee has clear targets to meet – or even exceed. Such benchmarks would also allow successive Olympic Games to be assessed and compared (currently, it is nearly impossible to compare Games given the very different environmental programs they implement), and for opportunities for improvement to be identified.

The IOC should at the very least put in a place an external monitoring body for each host city in order to ensure that the environmental standards are upheld. For example, the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 is an external body created to increase accountability of the London Olympic organizers with respect to their commitments to sustainability. While it has no power to sanction, the Commission identifies good practice and areas for improvement, assesses risks and makes recommendations to the London 2012 Olympic Board.

Because not all host countries have the same financial means, the IOC should also create an environmental fund, which could be financed from media-rights revenues or other sources. The fund could help less wealthy countries to incorporate environmental considerations into their Games, and to invest in long-term environmental and social initiatives in their regions.

Climate change is too important an issue to be left to the discretion of Olympic organizing committees – it must be an integral part of every Games. Organizing committees should see climate change as an opportunity to innovate, not a burden. The Vancouver Olympics have demonstrated that climate change initiatives, such as green

venues and clean energy, are not only doable but affordable, and can leave lasting legacies for host cities. Future Olympics can and should raise the bar even more, and meet the challenge of hosting a sporting event that not only takes responsibility for its own climate impact but that inspires the world with climate solutions.

SOURCES USED

This scorecard was based on the latest publicly available information as of January 29, 2010, including:

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