

The UNEP Magazine for Youth



TUNZA



for young people • by young people • about young people

Sport and the environment

Respect
Friendship
Excellence

TUNZA

the UNEP magazine
for youth. To view current
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United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

PO Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel (254 20) 7621 234
Fax (254 20) 7623 927
Telex 22068 UNEP KE
E-mail uneppub@unep.org
www.unep.org

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Director of Publications Nick Nuttall

Editor Geoffrey Lean

Special Contributor Wondwosen Asnake

Youth Editor Karen Eng

Nairobi Coordinator Naomi Poulton

Head, UNEP's Children and Youth Unit

Theodore Oben

Circulation Manager Mohamed Atani

Design Edward Cooper, Ecuador

Production Banson

Cover image Mario Mencacci

Contributors Abdikadir Aden; Leyla Aliyeva;
Alexandre Boullot; Jane Bowbrick; Manon
Bruehl; Pál Schmitt; Elizabeth Sluyter-Mathew
(IOC); David Stubbs (LOGOC); Roya Talibova
(International Dialogue for Environmental
Action, IDEA); Rosey Simonds and David
Woollcombe (Peace Child International); Ray
Zahab.

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Partners for Youth and the Environment



UNEP and Bayer, the German-based multinational involved in health care, crop protection and high-tech materials, are working together to strengthen young people's environmental awareness and engage children and youth in environmental issues worldwide.

A partnership agreement, originally signed in 2004 and renewed in 2007 and 2010, runs through 2013. It lays down the basis for UNEP and Bayer to implement the projects under the partnership. These include: TUNZA Magazine, the International Children's

Painting Competition on the Environment, the UNEP Tunza International Youth and Children's Conferences, youth environmental networks in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and West Asia, the Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Program and a photo competition, 'Ecology in Focus', in Eastern Europe.

The long-standing partnership between UNEP and Bayer has become a public-private partnership that serves as a model for both organizations.

The future of the environment lies with our children



Abdikadir Aden

Every individual, young or old, can make environmental conservation part of their daily activities. But we forget that the biggest pillar for achieving this rests with our children.

In school compounds, small children become the engine of survival for a tree seedling. Watering is assigned to each one of them so that they own the plant. When such a child leaves primary school after eight years or even more, he or she has left something behind, a legacy for the planet.

This gives children the chance to take the lead as youngsters – even below the age of 10 – so in the future they will be aware and fully responsible for their own environment. They will have all it takes to address global environmental issues such as global warming and climate change.

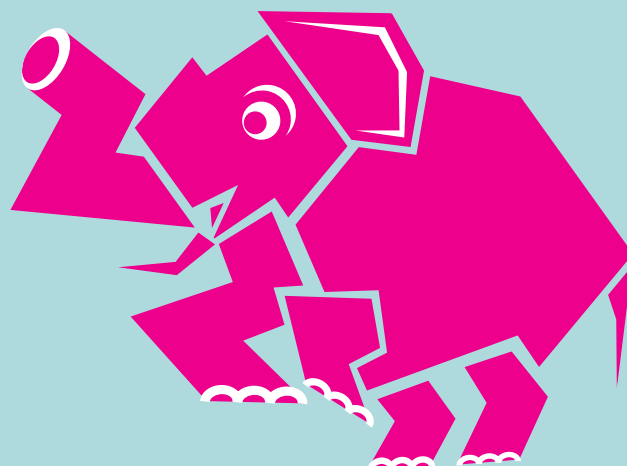
I believe that our small children are the most successful way of conserving Mother Nature. The first step is giving them the leadership they want. After that, they will be in a position to take the lead and become role models, not only for young people but for the old guard, too.

Have you ever noticed how great children are at getting environmental messages across, especially on environmental awareness posters? They can send a big signal to society. So, everyone should always have them in mind in every little step they take. This ensures that they WILL have a better future.

Let's not forget our children, but hold them in our hearts.

Abdikadir Aden is Tunza Eco Generation Regional Ambassador to Kenya.

EDITORIAL



'A sound mind in a healthy body' is a saying as old as the Olympics themselves. It was certainly familiar to Baron de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, who was motivated to revive the Games because he worried that young people were turning away from physical activity. What would he think now, with our ever more sedentary lifestyles and the growing scourge of obesity?

Today, the Olympic Movement and UNEP would turn this saying into 'a sound mind and a healthy body in a healthy environment'. These three are linked. Everyone needs clean air, clean water and nutritious food if they are to achieve their potential. Societies need healthy and vigorous people if they are to thrive and develop. And is there a better way of connecting with the natural world than running, biking, skiing or having a game of football?

The four-yearly Olympics are a celebration of excellence, when the world's best athletes come together for just a few weeks to compete in an atmosphere of friendship and respect – two other Olympic values. But the Olympic Movement also sees the Games as a moment to showcase excellence in the development and management of the world's largest sporting event, involving not just the athletes, but thousands of administrators and coaches, millions of spectators, and the billions who watch the competitions on TV. The Olympic mission now includes ensuring that the building and development of infrastructure for the Games is as green as possible, that the facilities at the Games, from transport to food, take full account of the environment, and that the Games leave a sustainable legacy for years to come.

And much as we might dream, we can't all aspire to become Olympians. Or can we? Olympic ideals are not just about sporting excellence. Indeed, Baron de Coubertin believed that playing well is more important than winning, not just in sport but in life. Is there a better way of expressing our concern for the environment and sustainable development than those three Olympian values – friendship, respect and excellence?

Give it a spin!

Sport, as expressed by the Olympic values of excellence, respect and friendship, is all about physical well-being and active, healthy lifestyles. And as Namibian Olympian and World 200-metre champion Frankie Fredericks puts it: 'Sport can help the young keep out of trouble, particularly if they live in troubled areas, and help tackle the obesity problem. People learn how to share, and how to deal with winning and losing. Those are very valuable lessons.'

But you don't have to be an athlete to enjoy physical fitness, and daily activity is crucial to good health and well-being. Regular exercise is an important way to prevent non-communicable diseases such as heart disease and

diabetes, which are now among the most common causes of disability and premature death worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO), for example, recommends at least 30 minutes of physical activity on most days to reduce the risk of heart disease. But physical activity doesn't have to be costly. Walking, running,

cycling, inline or roller skating, skateboarding, yoga and dancing are among the many inexpensive, low-carbon ways to keep fit. And that's not to mention – for the more ambitious – windsurfing, rock-climbing, skiing, gymnastics, rowing, snowboarding, riding, unicycling... the list goes on and on!



Blaze/Urban Culture Jam/Brian Slater/www.blazeonline.org.uk



Pat Young/lululemon athletica 2011/flickr

Green your mind

Did you know that all sorts of outdoor activities benefit mental health? Studies have shown that even gentle exercise in nature, such as walking, gardening or cycling, has a positive effect on mental well-being, including increases in self-esteem and confidence and decreases in anxiety and depression. And of course we know the sun shines away the blues. Even more impressively, vitamin D has been found to improve cognitive function.

Healthy life, healthy diet

Even while the number of people in the world without enough to eat is rising, in many places sedentary lifestyles and too much of the wrong kinds of foods are leading to obesity. The WHO predicts that there will be 2.3 billion overweight adults – that's one in three of us – in the world by 2015, of which more than 700 million

will be obese. Obesity also affects 20 million children globally. Reducing people's ability to live active lives and reducing life expectancy, the condition has been linked to heart disease, stroke and diabetes. The crisis is so great that the American Diabetes Association says that the number of people developing diabetes is likely to more than double by 2030. It's not only important to eat sensibly for the

health of the planet, but for the health of our bodies. The best way to eat for a healthy life is by consuming a wide variety of different foods – grains, vegetables, nuts, fruits, foods from animals if you wish – and balancing the different types of food.



MShades/flickr

Respect, friendship, excellence



PÁL SCHMITT, former President of Hungary and an Olympic gold-medal winner (Team épée, 1968 and 1972), is the founder president of the International Olympic Committee's Sport and Environment Commission. TUNZA spoke to Pál Schmitt about the Olympic Movement's role in promoting environmental protection and sustainable development.

TUNZA: When we think about the Olympics and sport in general, the environment and sustainability aren't the first things that come to mind. What are the connections?

PS: Everything we do depends on a healthy environment, and that's especially true of athletes. They need space in which to train, nutritious food, clean air and clean water. Actually, everything any of us does also impacts the environment, whether that's building sports facilities, travelling to them, just going for a run or kicking a ball around.

But it's not only about sport. The founder of the modern Olympic Games, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, saw sport as a catalyst 'with significant power and potential to facilitate social and economic development', and believed that sport should work to achieve 'the harmonious development of man, with a view of encouraging the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity'. That's why the Olympic Movement is fundamentally concerned with sustainability.

TUNZA: Do you think Olympians – those who compete in the Games – can help?

PS: As an Olympian myself, I know that competing in the Games is fantastic. Athletes know about the benefits of an active lifestyle and a good diet. They also know about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, smoking and so much more. Today's sports stars are media personalities as well as athletes, and people listen to them. So it's important that they take their responsibilities as role models seriously. That's why we in the Olympic Movement work with them to help them spread the Olympian values of respect, friendship and excellence.

TUNZA: How do you feel those values apply to sustainable development?

PS: They're very important. Respect is not just respect for people, but for the whole of the natural environment on which we all depend. Friendship is about friendship with all people, no matter who they are or where they're from, and that includes future generations. Then there's excellence – Pierre de Coubertin said 'the important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle, the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well'. And remember, like sporting achievement and records, what is excellent today will hopefully become normal next year. It seems to me that respect, friendship and excellence are essential constituents of sustainability.



Szulics Miklós

TUNZA: Do you try to engage young people, specifically?

PS: Absolutely – that's why, for example, we decided to found the Youth Olympic Games (YOG). The first summer and winter YOGs were in Singapore (2010) and Innsbruck, Austria, (2012) respectively. Alongside YOG sporting events, which are fantastic, there's also a Culture and Education Programme (CEP) that introduces the competitors to all sorts of new ideas from communication skills to increasing their knowledge of sustainability. In Singapore, with UNEP, there was a renewable energy component, while in Innsbruck we also ran seminars on protecting fragile mountain environments – important for winter sports. The response to the CEP has been so positive, we are considering introducing something similar at all Olympic Games.

TUNZA: The Olympic Movement encompasses more than 200 National Olympic Committees and 35 International Sports Federations, all those who are working to stage Olympic Games and millions of athletes. How do you spread your message of sustainability amongst them?

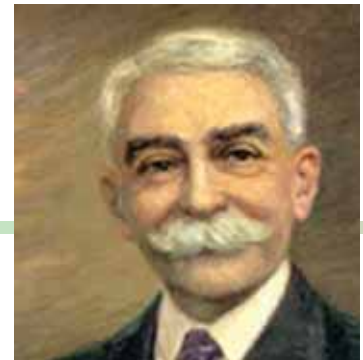
PS: All our work is based on the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21*, first published in 1999. Like the UN's own *Agenda 21*, it's a vibrant, relevant action plan for introducing sustainability into every aspect of sport. To back this up, we also have the *Guide on Sport, Environment and Sustainable Development* to help the sporting bodies transform the recommendations of the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21* into concrete actions and programmes. These aren't just for aspiring Olympians; they're for all levels of sports people and administrators, everywhere.

Then there are the biennial Sports and Environment Conferences, organized with UNEP. These gather people from all parts of the Olympic Movement to share experiences, learn from one another and think about what needs to be done and about new issues. And equally important are our regional Sport and Environment seminars, themed to 'think globally, act locally', which allow sports people who share backgrounds and problems to get together and develop practical ways of incorporating sustainability into all they do.

But the main thing for everyone is to get out there and take part in introducing sustainability.

Sustainable development and the Olympics (1972-2012)

BACK IN THE 1890s, the founder of the modern Olympic Movement, Baron **Pierre de Coubertin** (right), saw sport as an important means of achieving social and economic development, and believed that sport could achieve 'the harmonious development of man' while encouraging 'the establishment of a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity'.



This timeline shows the common ground between the emerging global goal of sustainable development, the Olympic Movement and Pierre de Coubertin's original vision.

1972



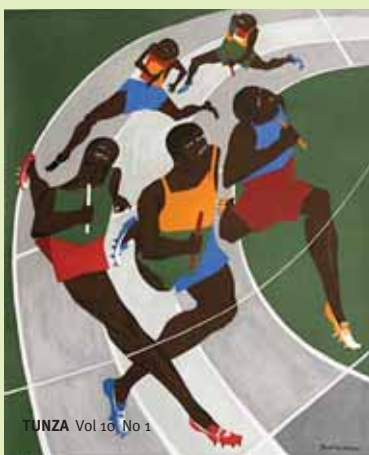
The **Club of Rome** publishes *Limits to Growth*, expressing concern about the growing world population and finite natural resources.

The **United Nations Conference on the Human Environment**, attended by 119 countries, declares: 'Man has a special responsibility to safeguard and wisely manage the heritage of wildlife and its habitat, which are now gravely imperilled by a combination of adverse factors'. The conference also establishes UNEP.



München 1972

National Olympic Committees from around the world plant shrubs from their countries in the Olympic Park at the **Munich Olympiad**.



1987

The concept of sustainable development is coined in the **Brundtland Commission's** report, *Our Common Future*.



1992

The **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development** (Rio '92) adopts the **UN Agenda 21**, a blueprint for a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development issues into the 21st century.

During the **Barcelona Olympics**, sports federations and National Olympic Committees sign the **Earth Pledge**, committed to making our planet a safer place.



1994

The **UN International Year of Sport and the Olympic Ideal** promotes understanding among the youth of the world through sport and culture.

The year of the **Lillehammer Winter Olympics**. Environmental issues receive broad attention, and these are the first Games to explicitly include environmental considerations.



1995

The **International Olympic Committee's Sport and Environment Commission** is formed to guide progress on environmental governance and sustainable development throughout the movement.



1996

The *Olympic Charter* adopts the environment as the third pillar of Olympism, together with sport and culture.

1998

Nagano Olympic Winter Games, with the motto 'harmony with nature', becomes the first Winter Olympic Games to host more than 2,000 athletes.



1999

The *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21 – Sport for Sustainable Development*, applying the UN's *Agenda 21* to sport, is published.



2000

The **Sydney Olympiad** incorporates environmental thinking into all aspects of the Games. The construction of the eco-friendly Olympic village ends the myth that green housing technologies are too expensive to implement on a large scale.



2001

The booklet *Be a Champion for the Environment* is published, focusing on the importance of a clean environment for the Olympic Family and athletes in general.



2002

The UN **Summit on Sustainable Development**, in Johannesburg, South Africa, reaffirms the international community's commitment to the implementation of *Agenda 21* and agrees to focus on 'the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of people, which include: chronic hunger; malnutrition; foreign occupation; armed conflict; illicit drug problems; organized crime; corruption; natural disasters; illicit arms trafficking; trafficking in persons; terrorism; intolerance and incitement to racial, ethnic, religious and other hatreds; xenophobia; and endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis'.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) forms a partnership with the UN Interagency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace.



TM ©

ATHENS 2004



2004

The **Olympics, back home again in Greece**, renew Athens' transport infrastructure, improving traffic, significantly reducing air pollution and protecting the natural heritage of its archaeological sites.

2005

The IOC publishes its *Guide on Sport, Environment and Sustainable Development* to help all sport transform the recommendations of the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21* into concrete actions and practical programmes.



2006

The environment is included in the lead-up to the **Turin Winter Olympic Games**, during the Games, and in what is left behind. The Organizing Committee forms a strategic alliance with UNEP to provide support and cooperation in the implementation of environmental projects connected to the Games and their legacy.



Sport and the environment

2007

The International Olympic Committee receives the UNEP **Champion of the Earth Award** in recognition of its influence in promoting sustainable development and environmental leadership.

2008

In preparation for the Olympics, Chinese authorities work to improve Beijing's chronic pollution and create a cleaner and greener city, significantly improving living conditions by improving infrastructure, introducing wind and solar power, traffic regulations and a smoking ban. A massive tree-planting campaign is also undertaken. For the first time, UNEP carries out an independent assessment of the Olympic Games' environmental performance.



Beijing 2008
TMG

2009

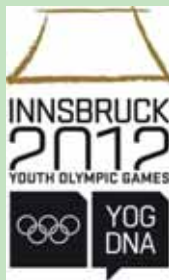


2010

vancouver 2010
Olympic rings

The **Vancouver Winter Olympics** set new standards for truly sustainable Games, pioneering ways for organizations mounting major sporting events to integrate, monitor, manage and report on sustainability in everything they do.

The inaugural **Youth Olympic Summer Games** are celebrated in Singapore, focusing on culture and values, and complementing an international multi-sport event.



2012

The inaugural **Winter Youth Olympic Games** are celebrated in Innsbruck, Austria, bringing together more than 1,000 young athletes from more than 60 nations, all of whom also participate in the Culture and Education



2012

The **United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)** is convened to 'secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges'.

London is the first summer **Olympic** host city to embed sustainability in its planning from the start. For the 2012 Games, sustainability means far more than being green. It infuses all attitudes, thinking, planning, building and purchasing. London 2012 is basing its approach on the WWF/BioRegional concept of 'One Planet Living' – living within the limits of the world's resources rather than using resources equivalent to three planets, as currently represented by European lifestyles.



The Olympic Movement is heavily in-

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