

# The Collaborative Tales: Exploring the Role of Public Engagement in Achieving Sustainable Development within the Olympic Movement

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Joseph WEILER\* and Arun MOHAN\*\*

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\* Professor of Law, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.

\*\* Senior Research Associate, Olympic Studies Research Team, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia.

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## **Abstract**

The Olympic Movement has had a powerful impact in furthering the goals of sustainable development and the “triple bottom line” of economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. With the 2010 Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games as the backdrop, the authors of this article study two potentially important instruments in advancing the sustainability agenda: (1) the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing collaborative inputs into the staging of mega events, such as the Olympics; and, (2) the advocacy role prominent athletes could play in raising public awareness and attracting public support about sustainability issues and choices. By tracing examples from Olympic experience, the entertainment industry and the sports world, the authors determine that sustainability related NGOs, celebrities, and athletes can play powerful and potentially complimentary roles in furthering sustainable development. The lesson is that in order to stage mega events, such as the Olympic Games, in a sustainable manner and to leverage off these events to advance the cause of sustainable development, a broad-based “team approach” involving meaningful interaction between event organizers and impacted parties, along with social and environmental advocacy groups that make up the mosaic of the host city or region, is a critical piece of the puzzle.

## **Introduction**

The Olympic Movement has had a powerful impact in furthering the goals of sustainable development and the “triple bottom line” of economic sustainability, environmental sustainability and social sustainability. This paper will discuss two potentially important instruments in advancing the sustainability agenda: (1) the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) providing collaborative inputs into the staging of mega events such as the Olympics; and, (2) the advocacy role prominent athletes could play in raising public awareness and attracting public support about sustainability issues and choices.

Our discussion will have five stages: First, in order to view the impact of NGOs on the Olympic experience, we will provide examples of how community groups have been able to advance their environmental and social ideologies within the Olympic Movement. Second, in order to better understand the potential of athletes as advocates for sustainable

development, we will look at the experience of entertainers acting as activists within the environmental arena, in particular the role of the major entertainment industry environmental advocacy organization, the Environmental Media Association (EMA). Third, we will investigate how sustainable development can be nurtured through athletes as role models, so that the celebrity of athletes in the context of mega events can be channelled towards an advocacy role towards advancing the sustainability agenda. Fourth, we will look at examples of two foundations—Andre Agassi’s *Charitable Foundation* and Prince Charles’ *Prince’s Trust*—that cultivate the intersection between celebrity and social development. Fifth, we will conclude with a discussion of the lessons learned concerning how the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games can provide an opportunity for the promotion of sustainable development on the widest scale possible.

## **I. Non-Governmental Agencies and Sustainable Development**

### **A. Opening Remarks**

Sustainability became a value at the centre of the Olympic Movement only in recent times. First, environmental sustainability was born out of the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France, and the well-documented environmental impact mistakes of that Olympiad. Subsequent Games have had varying degrees of success in the environmental arena, with the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games and 2000 Sydney Summer Games being highpoints, while the 2006 Torino Winter Games have been judged as having had more modest gains in advancing the goals of environmental sustainability. Second, the view of sport as a tool for social sustainability is of a rather recent vintage, with the first well-documented effort to advance the goals of social sustainability in this context begins with Toronto’s Bid for the 1996 Summer Games. The knot that binds these advances is the NGO and the role it has played in advancing sport as a means for environmental and social change.

### **B. Investigating NGO Collaboration within the Olympic Movement**

#### **1. 1992 Albertville Winter Games**

The environmental damage that occurred during preparations for the 1992 Winter Games in Albertville, France provided the impetus for

the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to include environmental stewardship as a primary concern within the Olympic Movement. The need to construct sites and alter the landscape of a region due to the staging of the Olympic Games was not new to Albertville, France. What was novel, however, was the negative publicity the IOC and the Olympic Movement received via activists and concerned citizens who did not take lightly the transformation of the once-pristine Alpine landscape. Indeed, an alliance of environmental groups used media releases and demonstrations to publicize its opposition to the Games. For instance, the *Rhone-Alps Federation to Protest Nature* demonstrated against the alleged need to dynamite-blast Mount Belvedere to construct the downhill course on the basis that such blasting increased the risk of avalanches.<sup>1</sup> In fact, protests occurred during the Opening Ceremonies of the Games, with one such protest consisting of 60 demonstrators marching before the Ceremony, carrying coffins as a representation of the pollution and environmental injury caused by the Games.”<sup>2</sup>

While environmental protests and media coverage was not new to the conflict between environmental groups and their targets around the world, (remember the well publicized “wars in the woods” in British Columbia in the late 1980s and early 1990s), what was new was the profile afforded these protests by the Olympics via live global televising of these protests during the “Biggest Show on Earth.” Prompted by aggressive lobbying by the environmental NGOs, the IOC, its sponsors, and Host Committees henceforth would pay greater attention to the environmental standards for Olympic venues and infrastructure. The question that emerged was whether the Olympic Movement would follow or lead in the effort to achieve breakthroughs in environmental standards of development. Moreover, would the Olympic Movement collaborate with environmental organizations to accomplish this goal? With the 1994 Winter Games in Lillehammer, Norway, the answer was clearly “yes.”

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<sup>1</sup> L.P. DaCosta *et al.*, *Olympic Studies: Current Intellectual Crossroads* (Rio de Janeiro: Gama Filho, 2002) at 301, online: Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles <[www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/Books/OlympicStudies.pdf](http://www.la84foundation.org/SportsLibrary/Books/OlympicStudies.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* at 300.

## 2. 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games

Lillehammer, Norway, home of the 1994 Winter Olympic Games, was awarded the Games in 1987, well before the IOC's environmental planning requirements were passed into Agenda 21, with the new Bid Process. Nevertheless, Lillehammer was the first host city to voluntarily address environmental issues, and proclaimed the event the first "Green Games." The Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee (LOOC) was the first Olympic Host to place a great deal of emphasis on environmental protection in land use and venue construction, as well as through programs concerning recycling and composting.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is important to point out that the environmental sustainability success of the Lillehammer Winter Games could not have been achieved without the involvement of environmental activist groups. During the early Bid phase, environmental groups were opposed to hosting the Games based on the original proposed Bid as advanced by the Games proponents. Environmental awareness in Norway was relatively high, with ongoing campaigns to monitor the environmental impacts of offshore oil drilling and production; and near-shore salmon aquaculture. Indeed, the whole concept of sustainable development was first promoted to the international community in the Brundtland Report (*Our Common Future*), which was sponsored by the United Nations (UN) and authored by the then-Prime Minister of Norway.

Not surprisingly, when the negative environmental impact stories of the Albertville Games reached Norway, the Olympic organizers took seriously the environmental concerns and embraced the environmental groups into the process of planning and implementing the Games. As noted earlier, such involvement was certainly not predicted prior to the Games, when the environmental NGOs' role was limited to protesting against the Games being held in Lillehammer at all.<sup>4</sup>

The turning point in whether the environmentalists would be heard in their concerns about the Games centered on plans to build the Hamar

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations Environment Program, "Sport and Environment Challenge: Lillehammer Games" (Date Unknown), online: United Nations Environment Program <<http://www.unep.org/>>.

<sup>4</sup> Global Forum for Sports and Environment, "A Look Back at Lillehammer" (Date Unknown), online: Global Forum for Sports and Environment <[http://www.g-forse.com/archive/news373\\_e.html](http://www.g-forse.com/archive/news373_e.html)>.

Olympic Hall for speed skating close to a bird sanctuary in Akersvika, Norway.<sup>5</sup> While the local municipal government had already approved the development plan for the Olympic Hall after much discussion involving the environmental community, the speed skating centre was moved to another location and redesigned to avoid the negative environmental impacts raised by the environmentalists.<sup>6</sup> More importantly, the battle saw the birth of *Project Environmentally Friendly Olympics* (PEFO), an independent watch-dog group.

The important lesson from Lillehammer is that the LOOC attributed much of its success to key cooperation between environmental organizations through the PEFO, and various government organizations.<sup>7</sup> The PEFO was formed from grassroots organizations and first met with the IOC in 1989.<sup>8</sup> The *Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature* (NSCN) was the primary NGO involved in the PEFO. Moreover, the PEFO set up the following four-point plan to ensure that the Games protected the environment:

1. Companies were instructed to use natural materials wherever possible;
2. Emphasis was placed on energy conservation in heating and cooling systems;
3. A recycling program was developed for the entire Games region; and,
4. A stipulation was made that the arenas must harmonize with the surrounding landscape.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, the LOOC held weekly “Thursday meetings” with the PEFO and other environmental groups to ensure dialogue and debate.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee, “Lillehammer ‘94 and the Environmental Challenge” (1994) 1 Lillehammer Olympic Winter Games Official Report 124, online: Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles <[http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports\\_frmst.htm](http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports_frmst.htm)>.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* at 127.

<sup>8</sup> H. O. Haugen, *The Construction of Beijing as an Olympic City* (M. Phil. Thesis, Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo, 2003) at 53 [unpublished].

<sup>9</sup> Global Forum for Sports and Environment, *supra* note 4.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the PEFO, the LOOC insisted that every contract it entered into with a partner or supplier had an “environmental charter” incorporated into it, with provisions for environmental impact studies, waste management programs, and the creation of advanced technology in the area of environmental protection.<sup>11</sup>

In a complete turn around from the experience of the Albertville Games, where there were considerable negative environmental impacts—which were paraded out for the world to see during their Opening Ceremonies—the Lillehammer Games saw a new alliance of Games organizers and local community environmental groups working together to not only avoid negative environmental impacts, but to propose cutting edge new environmental standards and practices, and to set the stage for future Games to be showcases for athletic competition, as well as for environmentally sustainable practices.

### 3. 1996 Atlanta Summer Games

Atlanta, Georgia was awarded the 1996 Summer Games in 1990, also well before the IOC’s environmental guidelines came into effect. However, the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) undertook measures before the start of the Games to ensure that the Games were environmentally friendly. For instance, on 13 July 1995, the ACOG presented an environmental policy statement detailing its efforts on behalf of the environment to the IOC at the First World Conference on Sport and the Environment held in Lausanne, Switzerland.<sup>12</sup> It detailed the fact that it had, early in the planning for the Games, developed the *Olympic Environmental Support Group* (OESG), a citizen advisory group, with a mandate “to educate and advise the ACOG on environmental issues and recommend environmentally responsible decisions on Olympic issues.”<sup>13</sup> The Group assisted in setting environmental guidelines for venue sites, making recommendations for solid waste management and

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<sup>10</sup> Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee, *supra* note 5.

<sup>11</sup> British Olympic Association, “The Environment and the Olympics,” online: British Olympic Association <<http://www.olympics.org.uk/contentpage.aspx?no=142&sectionId=8>>.

<sup>12</sup> Green Nature, “Green Olympics: Atlanta 1996” (1996), online: Green Nature <<http://greennature.com>>.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*



recycling, and developing ACOG's environmental policy statement.<sup>14</sup> Some of the NGOs involved included the *Georgia Conservancy*, *Trees Atlanta*, and the *Atlanta Bicycle Campaign* (ABC).<sup>15</sup> Trees Atlanta raised money to plant trees around the city, while the ABC promoted use of bicycles to get to Olympic venues.<sup>16</sup>

However, once the environmental plan was created, the advisory committee was disbanded. The consequence was that the Games were not as environmentally successful as the 1994 Winter Games. For instance, Greenpeace targeted in well-publicized campaigns those sponsors who it believed failed to fulfill environmentally sound goals: for example,

1. IBM was criticized for the problems associated with its information technology, which led to "technical glitches."<sup>17</sup> The consequence was that results were not readily available on computers, but had to be printed out.
2. Xerox was criticized for setting up their printers to only print out on one side of a piece of paper.<sup>18</sup>

#### 4. 2000 Sydney Summer Games

The 2000 Sydney Games saw the birth of a remarkable working relationship between the leading environmental organization in the country (Greenpeace Australia) and the bid and organizing committees. For the first time in Olympic history, and right from the outset of the Olympic process, the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) worked with *Greenpeace Australia* and the *Green Games Watch* (GGW) to address as many environmental issues as

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> UBC Olympic Studies Research Team, "The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in the Olympic Games," by J. Fung & L. Hayhurst, 2006 (Paper prepared for the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games) at 7 [unpublished].

<sup>16</sup> Green Nature, *supra* note 12.

<sup>17</sup> Greenpeace Australia, "Olympic Report: Special Atlanta Issue" (7 August 1996) at 2, online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://www.greenpeace.org.au/>> [*Greenpeace Australia, Olympic Report*].

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

possible.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, this set an entirely new standard of environmental sustainability in the planning and staging of the “Greatest Show on Earth.” However, it is no coincidence that this activity occurred at this particular time, because the organizers had the advantage of learning from the successes of Lillehammer, and the failures of Albertville; and, the IOC was also quite conscious of the need to adhere to the emerging world environmental standards flowing out of the Rio Summit and Agenda 21.

Greenpeace’s Olympic story begins even before the SOCOG existed. Greenpeace’s Olympic campaign started in 1992, when it won a design competition for the Sydney Athletes’ Village. The story is full of intrigue: An open contest to create the best Sydney Olympic Village design was announced that year, and it received over 100 submissions from designers and architects, as well as from Greenpeace.<sup>20</sup> However, to ensure an unbiased evaluation of its proposal, the environmental organization submitted its design anonymously. Greenpeace’s Olympic Village “was car-free, powered by the sun, used land wisely, allowed only non-toxic and eco-friendly materials and showcased cutting-edge green technologies from around the world.”<sup>21</sup> The result of the contest was revolutionary: the Greenpeace Australia design was among the five final winners for the key Olympic venues. Moreover, this achievement led to its collaboration with the Sydney Olympics 2000 Bid Corporation (SOBL) to create an overall environmental strategy.

The commitment of the SOCOG towards environmentalism was expressed in the *Environmental Guidelines for the Summer Olympic Games*, proposed by the SOBL in September 1993, and prepared by Greenpeace Australia.<sup>22</sup> The remarkable breakthrough here was that Greenpeace Australia played such a vital role in acting as an environmental consultant during the Bid process and a watch-dog during the staging of the Games; and, later, an independent assessment authority

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Greenpeace Australia, “Green Games: Introduction,” online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://www.greenpeace.org.au/sites/archives/olympics/index.html>> [Greenpeace Australia, *Green Games*].

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Sydney Olympics 2000 Bid, *Environmental Guidelines for the Summer Olympic Games* (Sydney: SOBL, 1993), online: Accessibility For All <<http://www.accessibility-for-all.com/sustain/environmentalguidelines.pdf>> [*Environmental Guidelines*].

after the Games.<sup>23</sup> Yet, the template for the key role played by Greenpeace Australia was established with the publication of the *Guidelines*, which outlined the environmental standards that were to be achieved during the Games. The *Guidelines* specifically focussed on sustainable development, and recognized the major environmental issues of global warming; loss of biodiversity; ozone depletion; and, air and water pollution.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the *Guidelines* contained over 100 commitments in five key areas: energy conservation; pollution avoidance; water conservation; protection of the natural environment, and waste minimization and management.<sup>25</sup> A further breakthrough occurred later in 1993, when the New South Wales Government passed Greenpeace's *Guidelines* into law.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, upon the completion of the Sydney Games, Greenpeace Australia published a much anticipated and well-publicized report (card) on the Games' environmental successes and failures.<sup>27</sup>

As a direct consequence of the relationship between the SOCOG and Greenpeace, the range of environmental initiatives for the 2000 Games were far-reaching, and included the development of a former wasteland (Homebush Bay); the creation of energy conservation methods, including the use of rainwater for irrigation purposes; and, the formation of recycling and composting programs. However, along with these notable accomplishments, there were significant criticisms of the 2000 Sydney Games concerning "what might have been." For instance, Greenpeace Australia, in its later assessment of the 2000 Summer Games, acknowledged that while there were success stories, there were also missed opportunities, including the dropping of a plan to use solar thermal

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<sup>23</sup> Sydney Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, "The Environment" (2000) 2 Official Report of the XXVII Olympiad 354, online: Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles <[http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports\\_fmst.htm](http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports_fmst.htm)>.

<sup>24</sup> Australian Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, "The Green Games 2000," online: Government of Australia <<http://www.environment.gov.au/events/greengames/index.html>>.

<sup>25</sup> Sydney Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games, *supra* note 23.

<sup>26</sup> *Greenpeace Australia, Green Games, supra* note 20.

<sup>27</sup> Greenpeace Australia, *How green the Games? Greenpeace's Environmental Assessment of the Sydney 2000 Olympics – Executive Summary* (Sydney: Greenpeace International and Greenpeace Australia Pacific, 2000), online: Greenpeace Australia <[http://sites.greenpeace.org.au/archives/olympics/reports/watchdog\\_exec\\_summary.pdf](http://sites.greenpeace.org.au/archives/olympics/reports/watchdog_exec_summary.pdf)>.

electricity at the Olympic Park and the use of chlorine to treat waste water, rather than the originally proposed ozone or UV radiation.<sup>28</sup>

The event management know how legacy from the 2000 Sydney Games is that collaboration between Organizing Committees for the Olympic Games (OCOG) and NGOs can lead to openness in the preparation and staging process. That is, the relationship can enable lessons to be learned and used, not only in the host city and country, but also in future Olympiads. For instance, in its post-Games assessment of the Sydney Games, Greenpeace Australia detailed eight specific lessons for future Games planners to be taken from Sydney's Olympic experience:

1. "Make specific and public environmental commitments before the plans are finished and before construction begins;
2. Make environmental guidelines legally binding;
3. Collect all environmental information and do so in an open and accountable fashion;
4. Ensure an independent environmental audit;
5. Ensure environmental systems are used throughout projects;
6. Find experts on the environment; look internationally if need be;
7. Ensure citizen engagement from the beginning and specify a conflict resolution mechanism in the environmental guidelines; and,
8. Educate everyone involved in the Olympics about the environment."<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, this learning curve would not have been achieved if SOCOG had not welcomed Greenpeace and other NGOs into the management process of the Olympic Movement, and also enabling them to be free to comment on both the achievements and missed opportunities of these Games.

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* at 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

## 5. 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games

The 2002 Winter Games saw NGOs become involved in issues concerning the environment and the treatment of animals.

With respect to environmental sustainability, at the outset of the staging of the 2002 Winter Games, the Salt Lake City Organizing Committee (SLOC) Board of Trustees approved a 12-point Environmental Platform, which served as the basis for its environmental initiatives.<sup>30</sup> In order to fulfill the goals associated with this Platform, the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) was established in 1994 to advise the SLOC on environmental issues. The EAC was a formal group of government, environment, athlete, private business and community representatives.

An example of the team approach undertaken by the SLOC and the EAC was their effort to make the Games a zero net emissions event. When people travel, particularly via airplanes, they generate carbon dioxide emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>), which is deemed to be one of the causes for climate change.<sup>31</sup> While the SLOC could not eliminate the generation of CO<sub>2</sub> at the Games, it sought donations from companies that effectively eliminated 508,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and 304,800 metric tons of criteria pollutants (other emissions that contribute to climate change).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this effort involved a number of NGOs.<sup>33</sup> For instance, the SLOC worked in tandem with the *Leonardo Academy of Madison* to calculate the amount of emissions;<sup>34</sup> and, the *Climate Neutral Network* certified that the reductions were three times that of their emissions, and that this qualified them for a cool climate certification.<sup>35</sup> Second, in its

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<sup>30</sup> Salt Lake Organizing Committee, "Environment: 12 Point Program," online: Salt Lake 2002 Paralympics <[http://saltlake2002.paralympic.org/para\\_info/enviornment/12\\_point.html](http://saltlake2002.paralympic.org/para_info/enviornment/12_point.html)> [*12 Point Program*].

<sup>31</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 12.

<sup>32</sup> Salt Lake Organizing Committee, "Environment" (2002) 1 Official Report of the XIX Olympic Winter Games 196, online: Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles <[http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports\\_frmst.htm](http://www.la84foundation.org/5va/reports_frmst.htm)>.

<sup>33</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 12.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* at 13.

<sup>35</sup> Climate Neutral Network, Press Release, "Olympic Winter Games of 2002, Norm Thompson and Bonneville Environmental Foundation fight global warming by going Climate Cool" (31 January 2002), online: Climate Neutral Network <[http://climateneutralnetwork.org/downloads/CN\\_PressRelease-01.31.pdf](http://climateneutralnetwork.org/downloads/CN_PressRelease-01.31.pdf)>.

effort to inform the public, the SLOC worked with the *World Resources Institute*, the *Earth Communications Office* and *Greenpeace* to develop educational tools that were displayed at the Games.<sup>36</sup>

The Salt Lake Organizing Committee (SCOC) also collaborated with NGOs in regards to animal welfare issues. A component of the Olympic Arts Festival, which included 60 different events, was the Olympic Command Performance Rodeo, which was scheduled to include bareback riding, steer wrestling, team roping, saddle bronco-riding, barrel racing and bull riding. The Rodeo became a target of NGOs who believed that rodeos were cruel to their animal participants, such as the *Humane Society of the U.S.*, *Utah Animal Rights Coalition*, *Showing Animals Respect and Kindness* (SHARK), and the *People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals* (PETA). Representatives from these NGOs met with Mitt Romney, the SCOC President, to try to come to an agreement. Romney stated that he would work to eliminate calf roping at the Rodeo.<sup>37</sup> However, changing the program was difficult because the SLOC was not running the Rodeo. Rather, the American and Canadian professional rodeo associations organized the event.<sup>38</sup> In the end, however, the Rodeo took place as scheduled and included calf roping as an event.

## 6. 2004 Athens Summer Games

The 2004 Athens Games were not highly rated by environmental activists with respect to environmental sustainability.<sup>39</sup> The most vocal critic of these Games was the *World Wildlife Fund* (WWF), which wrote a report assessing the environmental initiatives and impact of the Games.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *12 Point Program*, *supra* note 30.

<sup>37</sup> B. Snyder, "Roping is raising Olympic ruckus" *The Deseret News [Salt Lake City, UT]* (30 November 2001), online: Shark <<http://www.sharkonline.org/?P=0000000163>>.

<sup>38</sup> J. Nelson & R. Woodward, "Olympics-Organisers step into 'hornets' nest' over rodeo" *Planetark.com* (4 February 2002), online: Planet Ark <<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/14348/newsDate/04-Feb-2002/story.htm>>.

<sup>39</sup> M. Davis, "Nature loses at Athens Games" *BBC News* (28 August 2004), online: BBC News <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3607910.stm>>.

<sup>40</sup> WWF-Greece, "Environmental Assessment of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games" (July 2004), online: WWF-Greece <[http://assets.panda.org/downloads/olympics\\_scorecardenglish.doc](http://assets.panda.org/downloads/olympics_scorecardenglish.doc)> [*Environmental Assessment – Athens 2004*].

While it found that a positive aspect of the Games in Athens was the increased infrastructure for public transportation,<sup>41</sup> it detailed a number of negative impacts, such as landscape and habitats being damaged due to construction and infrastructure; and not taking advantage of the full potential of solar power and water conservation.<sup>42</sup>

As a result of these criticisms, the WWF gave ATHOC and the Athens Games a low rating on its environmental scale, with a score of 0.8 out of 4, with 0 standing for “very disappointing” and 4.0 being “very positive.”<sup>43</sup> Greenpeace also rated the Athens Games very low on its environmental scale, giving it a score of 1 out of 10, whereas it had awarded a 5 out of 10 score to the 2000 Sydney Games.<sup>44</sup>

From the perspective of event management learning curve, the importance of the 2004 Athens Games lies perhaps in the reasons given by commentators for the lack of environmental success. According to the WWF, during the seven years before Athens staged the Games in 2004, ATHOC “made no effort to integrate the environment in the planning.”<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the absence of specific environmental commitments was viewed as an indication that the environment was not given priority status by the organizers.<sup>46</sup> The suggestion is that collaboration with an environmental NGO, such as Greenpeace or WWF, may have given both more legitimacy and momentum to ATHOC’s environmental management goals and strategy. The absence of this collaborative input and resources from this kind of organization, made it more difficult to accomplish important sustainability goals, particularly in a context of rising costs and looming completion deadlines.

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* at 7.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* at 9.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* at 2.

<sup>44</sup> Davis, *supra* note 39.

<sup>45</sup> WWF-UK, “No gold medal for the environment in the Athens Olympics” *WWF-UK* (16 July 2004), online: WWF-UK <[http://www.wwf.org.uk/news/n\\_0000001266.asp](http://www.wwf.org.uk/news/n_0000001266.asp)>.

<sup>46</sup> *Environmental Assessment – Athens 2004*, *supra* note 40 at 5.

## 7. 2006 Torino Winter Games

The WWF and its Italian branch cooperated with the Torino Organizing Committee for the 2006 Winter Games (TOROC) and performed a watch-dog role during the preparations for the Games in Torino, Italy. Throughout the process, WWF-Italy commented on TOROC's efforts concerning venue construction, post-Olympic use of venues, and the waste management. For instance, on the eve of the opening of the Games, WWF-Italy documented the environmental achievements and missed opportunities in its report *Ice, Snow and City*. Specifically, the WWF gave TOROC a grade of "satisfactory" for meeting environmental standards.<sup>47</sup> While the Torino Olympic experience was criticized for the use of artificial snow and the construction of venues in mountain areas, the WWF commended the construction of venues that would be used after the Games, as well as clean-fuel public transportation and the recycling of materials in the Olympic villages.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, TOROC followed an important lesson garnered from the Lillehammer Games and the Sydney Games: The goals of environmental sustainability are more likely to be achieved when NGOs are welcomed into the Olympic process and enabled to provide advice and commentary.

### C. Lessons

The forgoing accounts of Olympiads since 1992 demonstrate the power that community-based groups can wield in the planning, staging and direction of the Games. Moreover, they disclose the cooperative role the IOC and NGOs can potentially play in collaborating to nurture sustainability as a goal:

1. First, the IOC and OCOGs can better accomplish their environmental and social sustainability goals if they strategically deploy the full range of economic, political and social capital available, including the lessons learned from previous Games. Thus, when the IOC was embarrassed by negative publicity from

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<sup>47</sup> WWF, "How 'green' are the winter Olympics?" *Panda.org* (10 February 2006), online: WWF <[http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/europe/where/italy/news/index.cfm?uNewsID=59300](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/europe/where/italy/news/index.cfm?uNewsID=59300)>.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*



protesters during the 1992 Albertville Games, it proceeded to add the environmental protection as the third pillar of Olympism, along with sport and culture. Henceforth, the IOC amended its Bid Process to include environmental considerations practices and standards as prerequisites to a successful bid; and, it implemented educational and assistance policies that now help countries with their environmental programs on a nation-by-nation basis.<sup>49</sup> Rather than be embarrassed by environmental protests, henceforth the IOC would take a leadership role in advancing the goals of environmental sustainability

2. Second, the experience of Lillehammer (1994) and Sydney (2000) tell us that organizing committees may be well advised to build relationships with NGOs that focus on environmental sustainability. Olympic organizing committees can benefit from entering into partnerships with those groups who have specific knowledge and influence with respect to environmental sustainability, so that they can better collaborate in creating achievable guidelines and standards that should be followed in order to ensure a successful staging of the Games from an environmental perspective. In addition the know-how from Games management, including systems wherein event organizers and environmental advocates learn to work together, can become a valuable addition to the host community's social capital.

Looking at the experience of the Olympiads staged after the 1992 Albertville Games, one sees that the extent that Games organizers worked closely (or not) with credible environmental NGOs may be a key factor in the relative success of these Games to achieve environmental standards. The role of the NGO can be as important influence at all three stages of the event, before, during and after the Games:

1. Before the Games (during the Bid phase) the NGO can help to bring the community's concerns to the planning table and can play a valuable role in setting reasonable and achievable environmental and social standards that may raise the bar of the Olympic Movement in accordance to the host community's sense of itself

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<sup>49</sup> International Olympic Committee, "Promotion of Sustainable Development," online: Olympic Movement <[http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/environment\\_uk.asp](http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/environment_uk.asp)>.

and the message that it wishes to send the world about environmental and social sustainability within its community, and how these standards coincide with community values and mechanisms for rallying consensus about these critical issues.

2. During the build up to and the staging of the Games, the NGO can play a valuable watch-dog role, holding the Games organizers to the standards of the bid where feasible, and communicating these decisions, and potential compromises, if these occur to the public from an independent, knowledgeable and well-informed perspective. In this way, NGOs can provide well deserved “pats-on-the-back” when positive reinforcement was warranted, and important “pushes-to-the-back” to help the organizing committees fulfill their Bid promises.
3. Finally, in the post-games stage, the NGO can play a critical role both for the host community and for future Games planners, by tracing, from an independent position, what happened to the promises found in the Bid; were they achieved or not; and, why or why not? This independent assessment will offer critical lessons to planners, not only about environmental and social sustainability in the context of mega events in the future, but about the process of building social capital in general, and citizen involvement mechanisms in particular.

## **II. Celebrity Activism as a Blueprint**

### **A. Opening Remarks**

A central thesis of this paper is that athletes can play a vital role in furthering the goals associated with sustainable development. (We will look at examples of such activities in Part III.). However, there are already parallel examples in the entertainment industry, particularly in the United States, that provide a useful experience base for efforts to expand the role of athletes as advocates of sustainability. Indeed, members of the entertainment industry, including actors, musicians, event managers and promoters, agents, producers and directors, have been advocating sustainable development for many years. For instance, Bono, the lead singer for the band U2, promotes the eradication of poverty, while the actors Woody Harrelson, Josh Lucas and Leonardo DiCaprio promote environmental causes. These celebrities follow the example set by those who came before them in Hollywood, including the late Audrey Hepburn,

who campaigned for *UNICEF*, and the late Bob Hope, who entertained the troops with the *USO*.<sup>50</sup>

We will look at examples of celebrity activism in the environmental field, in order to investigate the tools used in this type of campaign, and to outline the lessons that can be transferred to our discussion of athletes as advocates.

## **B. Entertainers as Purveyors of Environmental Sustainability**

Celebrities have been successful in pushing the environmental agenda for a number of reasons. First, they understand that they cannot fully communicate their message as individuals working alone, because they lack the administrative resources to organize the media events and platforms needed to fully exploit the celebrity of the individual entertainer/advocate. As a result, most entertainers and celebrities lend support to environmental groups that have the financial and social resources necessary to reach the public. For instance, since its inception in 1970, the *Natural Resources Defense Council* (NRDC) has been able to cultivate the support of entertainers in its fight for environmental sustainability.<sup>51</sup> In fact, its current Board of Trustees include Laurie David, the former Hollywood talent manager and current wife of Larry David (the co-creator of the sitcom *Seinfeld*); Leonardo DiCaprio, the actor; Robert Redford, the actor and creator of the Sundance Film Festival; and James Taylor, the musician.<sup>52</sup>

Second, members of the entertainment industry, perhaps more than any other members of society with the possible exception of political leaders, have the all-important communication tool at their disposal: Their access to the media. As Los Angeles is the leading centre for motion picture production in the world, entertainers utilize the media and their celebrity to advance their environmental goals. For instance, the mission of *Filmmakers for Conservation* (FFC) is the promotion of global

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<sup>50</sup> D. Freydkin, "Celebrity activists put star power to good use" *USAToday.com* (23 June 2006), online: USA Today <[http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-06-22-celeb-charities-main\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/life/people/2006-06-22-celeb-charities-main_x.htm)>.

<sup>51</sup> Please consult the Natural Resources Defense Council's website, online: <<http://www.nrdc.org>>.

<sup>52</sup> Natural Resources Defense Council, "Board of Trustees," online: Natural Resources Defense Council <<http://www.nrdc.org/about/board.asp>>.

conservation through the making, broadcasting and distributing of films, and to help conservation organizations and filmmakers worldwide to make conservation films.<sup>53</sup> Some of its initiatives include:

1. The Conservation Story Pitch: Conservationists are given the opportunity to pitch stories to filmmakers, who can contact them if they find the idea interesting.<sup>54</sup>
2. The FFC Conservation Filmmaker Award: The FFC presents this award to films that contribute to the efforts towards environmental stewardship.<sup>55</sup>

Furthermore, organizations that cultivate celebrity partners realize that multimedia can be used to circulate their message. For example, the *Detroit Project*, an organization co-founded by Laurie David and Lawrence Bender, (the producer of such films as “Pulp Fiction” and “Good Will Hunting”), aims to influence automakers by means of advertisements in newspapers and public service announcements on television to produce fuel efficient vehicles.<sup>56</sup> In addition, the WWF, using celebrity endorsers, has produced an infomercial that runs in the early morning hours. It has also worked with *MTV* and its program “Trippin’” to bring entertainers to the Eastern Himalayas, where it has been doing a great deal of conservation work. In the first two episodes of the show, “WWF’s Mingma Sherpa [took] actress Cameron Diaz...on a...ride across Nepal and Bhutan.”<sup>57</sup>

The WWF also has a multimedia section on its website, where visitors can download ring tones for cellular phones, and view video clips

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<sup>53</sup> Please consult the Filmmakers for Conservation’s website, online: <<http://www.filmmakersforconservation.org>>.

<sup>54</sup> Filmmakers for Conservation, “The Online Conservation Story Pitch,” online: Filmmakers for Conservation <<http://www.filmmakersforconservation.org/pitches.htm>>.

<sup>55</sup> Filmmakers for Conservation, “About Us,” online: Filmmakers for Conservation <<http://www.filmmakersforconservation.org/aboutus.htm#>>.

<sup>56</sup> Please consult the Detroit Project’s website, online: <<http://www.detroitproject.com>>. To watch the organization’s past television ads, please see: <<http://www.detroitproject.com/ads/default.htm>>.

<sup>57</sup> WWF, “MTV’s Trippin’ Series,” online: WWF <[http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/asia\\_pacific/where/nepal/our\\_solutions/how\\_we\\_work/communications\\_nepal/mtv\\_s\\_trippin\\_series/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/asia_pacific/where/nepal/our_solutions/how_we_work/communications_nepal/mtv_s_trippin_series/index.cfm)>.

about conservation.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, the *People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals* (PETA) has used billboard-ads starring celebrities, such as the *Academy Award* winning actress Charlize Theron, in campaigns against the wearing of fur and leather.<sup>59</sup> PETA has also produced television spots that involve celebrities, which discuss the treatment of pet animals, the use of animals in circuses, vegetarianism, animal experimentation and the wearing of animal products.<sup>60</sup>

In summary, as a result of their clout and resources flowing from their individual and collective celebrity, members of the entertainment industry are able to use various mediums to communicate their social message in cooperation with like-minded organizations.

## C. Case Study: The Environmental Media Association (EMA)

### 1. History

Perhaps the environmental organization with the most clout in Hollywood is the *Environmental Media Association* (EMA), which was initiated in 1989. Its foundational belief is that “through television and film, the entire entertainment community could influence the environmental awareness of millions of people.”<sup>61</sup> The “EMA was founded by some of the biggest names in film and television world, which help EMA serve as a valuable link between the entertainment industry and the environmental community,” and its primary goal is “to mobilize the entertainment industry in a global effort to educate people about environmental problems and inspire them to act on those problems now.”<sup>62</sup>

The EMA has cultivated a powerful relationship with entertainers and celebrities since its creation in 1989. For instance, its current Board of Directors includes: Lance Bass, the musician; actors Ed Begley, Jr.,

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<sup>58</sup> Please consult the WWF’s website, online: <[http://www.panda.org/news\\_facts/multi-media/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/news_facts/multi-media/index.cfm)>.

<sup>59</sup> People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, “Billboards,” online: PETA <<http://www.peta.com/mc/billboards.asp>>.

<sup>60</sup> Please consult PETA TV’s website, online: <<http://www.petatv.com/psa.asp>>.

<sup>61</sup> Environmental Media Association, “What We Do,” online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/what\\_we\\_do.php](http://www.ema-online.org/what_we_do.php)>.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

Pierce Brosnan, Blythe Danner, Laura Dern, Frances Fisher, Soleil Moon Frye, Daryl Hannah, Amy Smart, and Jeffrey Tambor; and, director/producers Paul Haggis and Norman Lear.<sup>63</sup>

## 2. Cultivating the Intersection between Entertainment and Environmental Stewardship

The EMA's set of initiatives is directed at accomplishing the goal of connecting the entertainment industry with environmental protection. First, the EMA has organized protests in association with celebrity activists. For instance, in 1994, the EMA campaigned against the Mitsubishi Corporation and the Mexican government's plans to jointly operate the world's largest salt factory at Laguna San Ignacio in Baja California Sur, which is where the Pacific Gray Whales breed.<sup>64</sup> The EMA teamed with the NRDC to publicize the story, and in March 1997, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. led a delegation of concerned citizens, including Pierce Brosnan, who was invited by the EMA to evoke greater media interest.<sup>65</sup> This cast of stars attracted considerable media coverage by the *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek*, *Associated Press*, and *Televisa* (a Mexican TV network), which in turn increased public understanding of the Pacific Gray Whales and their needs.<sup>66</sup> The end result was that Mitsubishi put its development plans on hold.<sup>67</sup>

The entertainment industry is well aware how to mix celebrity, satire and social messaging. The EMA organized an "Air Polluters Whine Tasting," which was a rally to help the NRDC attract public support for new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) air quality standards. Guests, including over 100 members of the entertainment industry, were invited to sample from bottles of wine with names representing "the whines of polluting industries, which have complained loudly every time tough air pollution laws have been proposed."<sup>68</sup> For

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<sup>63</sup> Environmental Media Association, "Board of Directors," online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/board\\_of\\_directors.php](http://www.ema-online.org/board_of_directors.php)>.

<sup>64</sup> Environmental Media Association, "Media Stunts/Awareness," online: EMA <<http://www.ema-online.org/>>.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

instance, the actor Ed Begley, Jr. stated, when holding a bottle of “Smokescreen Nouveau,” that this wine was “cultivated from sour grapes in the moral valleys of Washington, D.C.”<sup>69</sup> As a result of the rally, over 300 letters were mailed to the U.S. Congress, (including more than 90 to California Senator Diane Feinstein), and greater national media coverage was directed towards the NRDC.<sup>70</sup>

The EMA has also designed a program entitled the “Generation Environment” Project (*Gen E*), where young members of Hollywood (those between 20 and 35) are used in public service announcements (PSA) to bring awareness to environmental issues that “will impact this age group significantly in the coming years.”<sup>71</sup> In turn, “these celebrities can greatly affect the youth that supports their talent.”<sup>72</sup> The PSAs have featured actor Edward Norton, the band R.E.M; and, actress Cameron Diaz. Furthermore, the PSAs, which air on network, local and cable television channels, as well as in some radio markets, have attracted a great deal of attention via the EMA’s annual “Oscar Viewing Party with *InStyle*,” which showcase the PSAs.<sup>73</sup>

The EMA also presents the *Environmental Media Awards*, which were first staged in 1991. The ceremony honours “film and television productions that increase public awareness of environmental issues and inspire personal action on these issues.”<sup>74</sup> Specifically, the EMA recognizes “writers, producers, directors, actors, and others in the entertainment industry who actively expressed their concern for the environment through their work.” Some of the people honoured for their environmental practices, story lines and role-modeling include: Pierce Brosnan, Chevy Chase, Blythe Danner, the Dave Matthews Band, Daryl Hannah, Alanis Morissette, Willie Nelson, Edward Norton, Rob Reiner

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Environmental Media Association, “gen e,” online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/gen\\_e.php](http://www.ema-online.org/gen_e.php)>.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Environmental Media Association, “The EMA Awards,” online: EMA <<http://www.ema-online.org/awards.php#introtoEMAAwards>>.

and John Travolta.<sup>75</sup> In 2004, the EMA began to present the *EMA Green Seal Awards*, which honour “entertainment series and film productions for their efforts to be more ‘green’ behind-the-scenes.”<sup>76</sup>

The EMA not only collaborates with entertainers “off the stage,” but also “on the stage.” That is, the EMA encourages environmental ideals to be woven into television programs and movies. If productions seek their advice, the EMA can study the character arcs for each show and come up with ideas to address particular environmental issues.<sup>77</sup> The organization also encourages characters to exhibit conservationist behaviours “to ensure that the right message is communicated.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual EMA Awards, which took place in 2005, was a star-studded affair, with the list of winners including: “The West Wing” for Television Episodic Drama; “Trippin” for Reality Show; and “Farming the Sea” for Documentary.

<sup>76</sup> Environmental Media Association, “EMA Green Seal,” online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/green\\_seal.php#GreenSealWinners](http://www.ema-online.org/green_seal.php#GreenSealWinners)>. In 2005, the Green Seal Award was given to the following:

1. Feature Film: Benchwarmers;
2. Feature Film: Blood and Chocolate;
3. Feature Film: GridIron Gang;
4. Feature Film: Little Miss Sunshine;
5. Feature Film: Lucky You;
6. Feature Film: Poseidon;
7. Made for Television: 10.5: Apocalypse;
8. Daytime Television: Days of Our Lives; and,
9. Studio: Touchstone TV Set Inventory & Reuse Program.

<sup>77</sup> Environmental Media Association, “EMA Green Guidelines Greening Plotlines & Characters Energize Environmentalism with “Eco Inside,!”” online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/greening\\_plotlines.php](http://www.ema-online.org/greening_plotlines.php)>.

The areas of concern that can be addressed in scripts include: population; consumption and waste; climate change; endangered species; water quality; air pollution; land conservation; transportation and energy; food pesticides; and, environmental justice.

<sup>78</sup> Environmental Media Association, “EMA Green Guidelines: Greening Plotlines & Characters Energize Environmentalism with ‘Eco Inside,!’” online: EMA <[http://www.ema-online.org/greening\\_plotlines.php](http://www.ema-online.org/greening_plotlines.php)>.

The types of behaviours encouraged from characters within the home setting include the following:

1. Put items into recycling bins—newspaper, cans, plastics, glass, junk mail;
2. Drive cars that get high gas mileage or drive electric or hybrid cars;



#### D. A Potential Backlash?

Commentary on hot-button political issues can be a dangerous territory for celebrity activism. Actor Josh Lucas, who promotes bio-diesel as a clean-burning alternative to petroleum-based fuels, worries that:

Being out there as a forceful liberal, in a bizarre way, can undercut you, your career and your ideas. People automatically think it's Hollywood silliness.<sup>79</sup>

Take the example of the current war in Iraq. With information that Saddam Hussein may not have had weapons of mass destruction, many of President Bush's political foes, including liberal activists from the

3. Turn off lights when leaving rooms;
4. Walk or ride a bike for errands, to school, to parties; or carpool;
5. Donate old household items to charities, shelters, schools etc.;
6. Buy food in bulk; carry items in canvas; put food into reusable storage containers; purchase foods in paper packaging or recyclable containers;
7. Buy organic food and other products from farmers markets or health food stores;
8. Turn off the water when brushing teeth or scrubbing pots and pans;
9. Use rechargeable batteries; and,
10. Kids' lunches are stored and carried in reusable containers.

At work, television characters are encouraged to behave in the following manners:

1. Utilize recycling bins (perhaps provided and picked up by a recycling service) for white paper, mixed paper/junk mail, magazines, newspapers;
2. Eat with and drink from reusable kitchenware and mugs (no disposable paper, plastic, or styrofoam);
3. Carpool to work in a vehicle that gets high gas mileage—or in an electric or hybrid, or use public transportation;
4. Work in offices surrounded by plants and natural lighting from windows;
5. Turn off lights, computers and equipment when not in use;
6. Upgrade to energy efficient office equipment with EPA's Energy Star label;
7. Donate old computer software to schools, children's organizations, nonprofits;
8. Use a hand crank paper shredder;
9. Utilize email, reduce paper waste; and,
10. Bring lunch packed in reusable containers.

<sup>79</sup> Freydkin, *supra* note 50.

entertainment industry, such Michael Moore, the director of the Oscar Award winning documentary *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Barbra Streisand, and George Clooney went on the offensive. In fact, “Susan Sarandon, who has gotten flak for her anti-war statements, flashed the peace sign at the 2003 Oscars, the same year Michael Moore received both cheers and jeers for calling President Bush ‘fictitious’ in his Oscar acceptance speech.”<sup>80</sup>

The result is that celebrity activism has its detractors. Many conservative pundits complain about Hollywood’s left-leaning ways, with the specific castigation that they “should not argue about issues they do not understand,” and that they “do not support the troops” in the case of their anti-Iraq War stance. For example, regarding the issue of anti-Iraq War sentiments by entertainers, Jonah Goldberg, in his article “Hollywood should stick to acting, not activism,” argued that:

This highlights the central problem when discussing Hollywood activism: We shouldn’t be discussing it in the first place. But because East Coast news producers fall for the celebrity bait every time, these intellectually insecure performers have an influence vastly disproportionate to anything they’ve earned.<sup>81</sup>

Another conservative commentator, Larry Elder, complained “How long will consumers put up with celebrities who assault political views?”<sup>82</sup> The answer may be: “Not very long.” A survey done for *The Hollywood Reporter* found that 44 percent of those polled said that they would refuse to attend a movie starring a politically outspoken star “who has publicly stated a position that conflicts with their own.”<sup>83</sup> Thus, entertainers, while successful in creating a dialogue about environmental and political issues, have to be careful about alienating the people ticket-buying, television-watching, and music-listening public who at the end of the day pay for their celebrity way-of-life.

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<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> J. Goldberg, “Hollywood should stick to acting, not activism” *Townhall.com* (7 March 2003), online: Townhall <[http://www.townhall.com/columnists/JonahGoldberg/2003/03/07/hollywood\\_should\\_stick\\_to\\_acting,\\_not\\_activism](http://www.townhall.com/columnists/JonahGoldberg/2003/03/07/hollywood_should_stick_to_acting,_not_activism)>.

<sup>82</sup> L. Elder, “Hollywood Leftists – You Pay, We Insult” *Jewish World Review* (20 June 2002), online: <<http://www.jewishworldreview.com/cols/elder062002.asp>>.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted in Elder, *ibid.*

## **E. Lessons**

Entertainers and celebrities can play an important role in promoting social and environmental sustainability. However, cultivating this ability requires one to understand several important lessons:

1. First, the celebrity must have a personal connection to the issue. That is, an organization cannot ask a celebrity to “play the role” of an advocate, in the same manner as that celebrity would play a character in a movie or on television. Instead, these celebrities must believe, wholeheartedly, in the values associated with sustainable development. In our discussion, we saw that various organizations, including PETA and the EMA, have been successful because they have been able to gain the cooperation of entertainers who support their causes.
2. Second, celebrities cannot accomplish the goals of sustainability on their own. Many focus their time on reading scripts, getting ready for projects, and staying in acting shape. Thus, they require the resources of an organization, like the EMA, to provide the administrative know-how and supportive structure to properly spread the message of environmental stewardship. For instance, while people like Pierce Brosnan and Pamela Anderson have the ability to attract media attention on their own, and without the connections of the EMA and PETA, respectively, they would not be able to spread their messages as successfully without the sustained organizational reach and connections, and follow up capacity of these organizations.
3. Third, organizations will be more successful if they have a relationship with the entertainment industry because of the multimedia resources available to it. Los Angeles is the largest production centre in the world. If a cooperative relationship is cultivated with these entertainment advocacy organizations, environmental experts would be able to interact with technical experts in media and communication in order to produce not only conventional video programming but also media devices, like PSAs or infomercials; that can be shown on television, as well as before movies as advertisements; on the Internet; or even as the substantive theme in a program or film. This same strategy can be adopted in Vancouver, in the context of the 2010 Games in order to promote public education and awareness about sustainability. Vancouver is the third largest motion picture production centre in

North America with its own critical mass of entertainment and media infrastructure, experts and stars who can act as advocates for this messaging. The challenge will be to organize a means for these various potentially interested parties to interact with one another in a productive manner. This is the role that the EMA does for its constituents. The question in the Vancouver context is not whether such a third party organization is needed. Our scan of history tells us that effective advocacy does not happen in a haphazard way without organizational support. The real question from a logistical standpoint is whether such an organization should be shaped like the EMA, (created and run by the local, regional or national entertainment/sports industry), or whether this effort should be led by an entity such as 2010 Legacies Now, perhaps working with similarly minded Olympic sponsors and NGO's? Or should there be a combination of the above in order to best accomplish this task in the time-sensitive context of the 2010 Games in order to take advantage of the world coming to Vancouver to see the "Biggest Show on Earth?"

4. Fourth, entertainers have to beware of "turning off" the public to their message. While celebrities have the same right any citizen to voice their views about an issue, whether this issue is environmental, social or political in nature, they must be aware that they can be the targets of harsh criticism from their opposition, particularly the allegation that "they don't know what they're talking about." This means that they must fully understand the issues surrounding a topic, as they are readily the targets of antagonists. Moreover, if these entertainers work on behalf of an organization such as an NGO, it would be up to the organization to ensure that the celebrity activist fully understands all sides of the issue, and the NGO's position on the subject, before using the media platform of the NGO to voice personal opinions about sensitive/controversial issues.

### **III. Athletes as Sustainability Advocates**

#### **A. Athletes as Social and Environmental Advocates**

Providing real-life examples of successful sustainable development in the context of mega events can provide an impetus for events promoters to fulfil the same goals by following similar paths. However,

to promote this agenda, which takes into account goals that are not purely financial, may require strategies and tools more than simple moralist appeals to “doing what is right,” in order to effectively achieve the triple bottom line of sustainability. This is where high-profile athletes—the protagonists/stars of these sporting mega events—may be required to enter the stage in a different role—as advocates of sustainable social and environmental development—in order that this broader social agenda can be achieved.

Athletes are already the most successful “sellers” of consumer products on the planet, with millions of dollars in endorsement income flowing from sponsors to those athletes who are deemed to have the sufficient charisma to influence spectators and fans to purchase what these athletes are pitching. Thus, athletes wear apparel with various insignias; appear in commercials for soft drinks; and model various electronic goods in magazines. Athletes promote the “good life” in terms of what the hip consumer is “supposed” to buy, drink, eat, wear, drive, if they want to live the “fabulous life” of a star athlete. Moreover, athletes with star power and charisma can be very effective advocates for consumer products, which explains why sponsors are more than willing to pay substantial fees for these endorsement services.

In view of this commercial reality, the question becomes: “How can one utilize the abilities of athletes to be ‘super heroes,’ not only on the field of play and in the sponsorship arena, but also to be super heroes advocating for sustainable development?” To be most effective in this area, athletes may need to work with organizations that have the resources to reach out to all corners of the globe, in order to bring this message home to those who are in a position to nurture sustainable development in all its forms. This is where NGOs, particularly those entities in the Sport for Development (SFD) field, might be well advised to consider a new “field of play” and a new set of rules and strategies in order to advance their social agendas. Those NGOs whose focus is to promote sustainability could look at themselves as “sponsors” who, in order to be successful, must disseminate their sustainability messaging in the widest and most effective manner possible, for the same reasons and perhaps in similar ways as companies who sell their “brands and products.” The key is using the tools that are already utilized in advertising and sponsorship—specifically the print media, television, and the Internet—to promote environmental and social sustainability. Moreover, it will be increasingly important for NGOs to associate themselves not only with the sport’s field of play itself (as sponsors of the mega event), but also with the athletes.

The suggestion here is that athletes can “sell” sustainability to the masses for the same reason that they are effective in the effort to sell cars, food, watches, and other components of the “hip” lifestyle. As respected celebrities with major media presence, athletes can easily attract the attention of the public and their messaging will likely have a greater effect on an adoring public, than other less “visible” or prominent leaders in society.

## B. Sport for Development NGOs

While the intersection of sport and community development is a recent phenomenon, it has been embraced by various organizations. For instance, “the UN recently recognized the capacity of sport to act as a tool for development in the Third World, and when it declared 2005 to be the ‘International Year of Sport.’”<sup>84</sup> Sport for Development (SFD) NGOs work to bring sport and play to developing countries which are experiencing increased social, political and environment volatility at the local level.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, while such an NGO may assist in improving the economic status of any given country, “its aim is primarily to promote community development, health, education and public services in general” in developing countries through promoting sport and play.<sup>86</sup>

Canada has played a paramount role in the SFD movement. Canadian Bob Munro, who lives in Nairobi, Kenya, launched the first notable Canadian-connected example of a SFD NGO in 1987. Munro started the *Mathare Youth Sports Association* (MYSA), a youth organization that has used sport “to empower more than 16,000 youths from the Mathare Valley, which is one of the largest and poorest slums in Africa.”<sup>87</sup> The significance of MYSA lies in the fact that it is an NGO that uses sport to promote environmental initiatives. MYSA developed what is known as a “sports clean up”; “Munro’s objective was to organize a small self-help organization so that the youth of Mathare could have a sport outlet while also making headway against the garbage, filth and

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<sup>84</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 27-28.

<sup>85</sup> J. Calloway, “Leave No Child Behind: recreation and sports: instruments for world peace” (2004) 23:1 Youth Studies Australia 35-42.

<sup>86</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 28.

<sup>87</sup> Mathare Youth Sports Association, “History,” online: MYSA Kenya <<http://www.mysakenya.org>>, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 3, n. 2.

squalor endemic to the shanty town.”<sup>88</sup> The clean-up process usually occurs on weekends and holidays, and involves “borrowing equipment, such as wheelbarrows, rakes, slashers and spades, from the municipal council.”<sup>89</sup> Moreover, this service demonstrates the possibilities and synergies of sports and environmental community-based initiatives.

The second example of a Canadian initiative in this field was the *Commonwealth Games Canada (CGC) International Development Unit*. “In 1991, the Commonwealth Heads of Government realized the special role of sport in fostering the Commonwealth value of eliminating poverty and promoting social development.”<sup>90</sup> Consequently, the CGC launched the *International Development through Sport (IDS)* unit in 1993, with the cooperation of the Government of Canada. At present, IDS helps thousands of people in Africa and the Caribbean through the cooperation of over 20 countries.<sup>91</sup>

The third Canadian initiative in this field is *Right To Play (RTP)*, which is an NGO that “uses sport and play as a tool for the development of children and youth in the most disadvantaged areas of the world.”<sup>92</sup> Initially born out of the Lillehammer Olympic Games under the name “Olympic Aid” and led by Johann Koss, RTP is now based in Toronto and it has played a notable advocacy role for at the majority of Olympic Games ever since.<sup>93</sup>

The suggestion here is that SFD NGOs should consider entering into partnerships with those athletes who feel a sense of connection with what the NGO is aiming to accomplish, in order to accelerate the achievement of the goals of the NGO. In order to do this, NGOs must use various communication tools.

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<sup>88</sup> O. Willis, “Sport and Development: The Significance of Mathare Youth Sports Association” (2000) 21:3 *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 825-849 at 831, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 3, n. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Willis, *ibid.* at 832, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 4, n. 4.

<sup>90</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 4.

<sup>91</sup> Commonwealth Games Canada, “Our History,” online: Commonwealth Games Canada <[http://www.commonwealthgames.ca/site/index\\_e.aspx?DetailID=57](http://www.commonwealthgames.ca/site/index_e.aspx?DetailID=57)>, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 4, n. 5.

<sup>92</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

### C. Media Tools

An NGO can use various tools to promulgate its message promoting sustainable development. In 2005, Richards and Heard wrote a report about their study of Marine Environmental NGOs (ME NGOs). Their experiences revealed that six types of tactics can be used by NGOs to circulate their message: media exposure, direct action (protests and boycotts), scientific research, legal challenges, education/awareness raising and consultancy.<sup>94</sup>

While Kovacs' 2005 study on NGOs involved broadcasting advocacy, (that is, advocacy focused on access to public broadcasting), he identified three key areas that were important to bring attention to one's message: relationship building, media education, and media advocacy.<sup>95</sup> By utilizing these three tools well, the advocacy groups effectively created "discussion around particular interests, put forward credible arguments and achieved positive relationships with target publics."<sup>96</sup> Moreover, the successful groups were seen of have built relationships through reasoned discussion, mutual respect, confidentiality and trust, openness and understanding, and shared interests.

In view of this evidence, it is suggested here that the best way for NGOs to build trusting relationships with the public is to work with someone the public already trusts. In our context, this advocate would be a well-respected, high-profile athlete who has achieved the status as an outstanding community leader, not only for his/her athletic achievements, but also through community service and being a role model for parents and children; adults and youth.

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<sup>94</sup> J.P. Richards & J. Heard, "European Environmental NGOs: Issues, Resources and Strategies in Marine Campaigns" (2005) 14:1 Environmental Politics 23-41, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 36, n. 118.

<sup>95</sup> R. Kovacs, "Activism Revisited: Broadcasting, Culture, and the Public Relations of British NGOs" (Paper presented to the International Communication Association's annual meeting, 2005) at 1-38 [unpublished], online: <[http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p15168\\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p15168_index.html)>, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 37, n. 123.

<sup>96</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 37.



#### **D. The Role of Corporate Sponsors**

Having outlined the utility of NGOs linking up with like-minded athletes to promote their causes, the corporate world also could use athletes as advocates for not only their commercial products and services, but also for sustainable development goals. For example, those athletes who endorse the products of bottled-water companies could partner with those NGOs who aim to bring clean-water and good-hygiene programs to poor nations. To use another hypothetical example, athletic shoe companies could increase goodwill in the market place by deploying athletes that they sponsor to advocate the message to the youth of the world that athletic competition is a better use of their time than, for example, engaging in acts of aggression or needless and potentially destructive risk taking.

The premise here is that athletes can be deployed for more than just selling consumer merchandise. Athletes can also be used to “sell” social and environmental goals. Moreover, this association with social, as well as commercial, goals is in the best interest of companies and their shareholders if they are seeking to embrace the triple bottom line of sustainability as a prudent corporate strategy that is in sync with the community’s aspirations for corporate behaviour.

#### **E. Examples of Athletes as Advocates for Social and Environmental Causes**

##### **1. Right To Play**

##### **i. 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games**

As stated earlier, the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Games saw the launch of the SFD movement aimed at sports fans around the globe. The LOOC conceived the organization *Olympic Aid* (now *Right To Play*) in 1992 in preparation for the 1994 Games. The focus of RTP during these Games was to support people in war-torn countries and other regions under distress. The launch consisted of a successful multi-party partnership created among the *Red Cross*, *Save the Children*, *Norwegian Refugee Council*, *Norwegian People’s Council*, *the Norwegian Church*

*Fund and Olympic Aid* to raise funds and awareness of the specific initiatives that each of these organizations was implementing.<sup>97</sup>

As a prime example of what could be accomplished if an athlete became a social advocate, Norway's Johann Koss, who won four speed skating gold medals at the 1994 Games, not only donated a large portion of his winnings to Olympic Aid, but he also encouraged other athletes at the Games and the public to do the same for each gold medal earned. The result was that \$18 million US was raised, which supported development projects involving refugees, children, the disabled, and women in Sarajevo, Eritrea, Guatemala, Afghanistan and Lebanon.<sup>98</sup> "Moreover, the SFD movement, embodied by Olympic Aid, had built enough initial momentum and support during its launch in the Lillehammer Games that it continued to raise a significant amount of funds between 1994 and 2000."<sup>99</sup>

## ii. 1996 Atlanta Summer Games

The 1996 Games saw RTP (still known as Olympic Aid) partner with high profile athletes, such as Michael Jordan, Andre Agassi and Nadia Comaneci, in order to raise \$13 million US for children in war-torn areas.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, a truce was brokered in both Afghanistan and northern Iraq (in the Kurdish zone) during the 1996 Games, with the money raised during the Atlanta Games being used to vaccinate 2.2 million Afghani children and over 800,000 women against major diseases.<sup>101</sup> This experience showed that the Olympics could indeed act "as a tool for peace and conflict resolution" through SFD NGOs, such as RTP, if the world-renowned athletes acted as role models and advocates both to other athletes, (who might be influenced to do the same thing), as well as to their fans.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Right To Play, "Our History," online: Right To Play <<http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=history>>, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 6, n. 12.

<sup>98</sup> Right to Play, *ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 7.

<sup>100</sup> Right to Play, *supra* note 97.

<sup>101</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 8.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

### iii. 2000 Sydney Summer Games

Right To Play raised over \$1.5 million US during the Sydney Summer Games and these funds were used to finance SFD programs in East Timor, Uluru and Eritrea.<sup>103</sup> During the 2000 Summer Games, RTP also initiated a fundraising campaign in support of partnerships with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).<sup>104</sup>

### iv. 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Games

Right To Play decided to host a Roundtable Forum during the 2002 Olympic Games entitled “Healthier, Safer, Stronger: Using Sport for Development to Build a Brighter Future for Children Worldwide.”<sup>105</sup> By strategically using the Olympic Games as a stage to discuss the importance of SFD programs, Right To Play was able to gather support from celebrities such as Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie, various Olympic athletes, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and several other spokespersons.<sup>106</sup> This critical mass of sports and entertainment icons, and political leaders enhanced the credibility of the SFD Movement by describing campaigns that have brought about positive social change around the world.

What these examples suggest is consistent with what communications experts, such as Keck and Sikkink, advise: That these kind of stories of real-life experience—when told by community icons (whether they be athletes, entertainers or politicians)—can serve as crucial “testimonies,” which, when coupled with technical and statistical information, can make a considerable impact in changing the way people think about issues, and, in turn, accelerating the process of changing public policy.<sup>107</sup> In this sense, RTP validated its cause by obtaining testimonials from key figures from the entertainment, athletic, and

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<sup>103</sup> Right to Play, *supra* note 97, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 12, n. 35.

<sup>104</sup> Right to Play, *ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 16.

<sup>106</sup> Right To Play, “Video Clips,” online: Right To Play <<http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=audiovideo>>.

<sup>107</sup> M. Keck & K. Sikkink, “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics” *International Social Science* 51:159 (March 1999) 89, cited by Fung & Hayhurst, *supra* note 15 at 16, n. 53.

political spheres, which then built the necessary momentum for various governments to consider the SFD cause as a valuable tool of social policy that should be deployed in international development strategies.<sup>108</sup>

#### v. 2006 Torino Winter Games

Right To Play had a presence in three venues in Torino, Italy during the 2006 Games: the International Zone in the Athlete Village; a photo exhibit and store in downtown Torino; and, at a reception area in cooperation with Samsung in the Sponsor Village.<sup>109</sup> Through these locations, high-profile “Olympic Athlete Ambassadors” raised astounding amounts of money for RTP:

1. Joey Cheek, a US gold-medal winner in speed skating raised \$500,000 US;
2. Clara Hughes, a Canadian speed skater and gold medalist in speed skating raised \$350,000 US; and,
3. Yang Yang A., a speed skater from China raised \$10,000 US.<sup>110</sup>

Furthermore, the publicity derived from its relationship with these and other Olympic athletes helped RTP to be mentioned in over 500 print articles during the Games, which in turn, helped increase the number of visitors to its website to over ten times its normal rate.<sup>111</sup> The result was that e-mails and donations from individuals and corporations poured in during these Games, totalling over 1,500 individual donations, which raised almost \$1 million US.<sup>112</sup>

#### 2. Greenpeace, Athletes, and the Sydney 2000 “Green Games” Campaign

Prior to the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Greenpeace Australia launched a campaign promoting environmental sustainability featuring

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<sup>108</sup> Fung & Hayhurst, *ibid.* at 21.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* at 22.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

former and current well-known and respected Australian athletes who spoke about their personal efforts to create a “Green Olympics.” These athletes detailed how they, in their personal lives, were becoming more environmentally conscious, and why they believed that their fellow Australians should follow in their footsteps.<sup>113</sup> For example, Drew Ginn, a member of Australia’s rowing team, who won gold at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, was forced to withdraw from the Sydney Olympics because of injury. But nevertheless, he remained a spokesperson for Greenpeace. Mr. Ginn proclaimed that:

Usually at sporting events, the environment suffers. You go along to sports stadiums and there’s rubbish everywhere. So it’s important for everyone to see that you can put on a huge event like the Games and consider the environment. The rowing regatta at Penrith is an indication of that. It was an old quarry that may never have had anything done to it and they’ve actually planted it with numerous trees and other vegetation...Not only do you have a healthier planet but you make yourself healthy if you do these things.<sup>114</sup>

Ginn’s statement points to a great way for athletes to become advocates for the environment: athletes who travel without the use of gasoline-powered vehicles can influence their fans to live a healthier lifestyle, while at the same time benefiting the environment.<sup>115</sup>

Another environmental advocate at the Sydney Games was Herb Elliott, who won gold in the 1500 metres at the 1960 Rome Summer Games, and was Director of Athlete and Corporate Relations with the Australian Olympic Committee. While Mr. Elliott talked about his disagreement with some of Greenpeace’s tactics, (especially consumer and media campaigns of Greenpeace aimed at some Olympic sponsors), he acknowledged that these types of extreme tactics are sometimes required to promote sustainable development: “I think if you change

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<sup>113</sup> Greenpeace Australia, “All things Green and Gold: Top athletes talk about the environment,” online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://greenpeace.org.au/>>.

<sup>114</sup> Greenpeace Australia, Quote from Drew Ginn (Date Unknown), online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://greenpeace.org.au/>>.

<sup>115</sup> UBC Olympic Studies Research Team, “Athletes as Advocates for the Environment,” by J.Kates, 2006 (Paper prepared for the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games).

peoples' views you have to be extreme to make them get out of their lethargy and move them forward.”<sup>116</sup>

Kerri Pottharst, who won the gold medal in beach volleyball at the Sydney Games, worked with Olympic sponsor *Visy* to promoting its “Green is Gold” campaign. As the official provider of recycling services and packaging for the Sydney Games, Visy’s aim was to spread the public awareness about recycling.<sup>117</sup> As a spokesperson for Greenpeace, Pottharst focused on how athletes would be affected by environment problems. For instance, she recounted that while training on a beach in Queensland, she almost stepped on a broken bottle that was left behind in the sand. In her words: “If I’d stepped on that broken bottle I would have been out of my sport for a number of months and that would have been disastrous.”<sup>118</sup>

In this way, Pottharst not only connected her personal feelings about why the environment must be protected, but she also reiterated a simple but important functional rationale based on her own sport training experience: That she requires a clean environment to make her livelihood. This kind of messaging from well-known sports icons has a real chance of getting through to both young and old sports fans. The suggestion here is that this sustainability advocacy by athletes may make a difference in how their fans conduct themselves in individual situations and collectively on the societal level because of this increased level of awareness with respect to matters of environmental and social sustainability, which is brought about because of the attention that celebrity athletes can bring to these issues and lifestyle choices.

### **3. Role Model: Canadian Clara Hughes and Right To Play**

As revealed earlier, Canadian Olympic Gold Medalist Clara Hughes has given her time and money to RTP and its multitude of causes. Thus, we believe that she can be a role model for what other athletes can strive for.

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<sup>116</sup> Greenpeace Australia, Quote from Herb Elliott (Date Unknown), online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://greenpeace.org.au/>>.

<sup>117</sup> Greenpeace Australia, Quote from Kerri Pottharst (Date Unknown), online: Greenpeace Australia <<http://greenpeace.org.au/>>.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

On one level, Hughes is a role model because of her athletic successes. Living in a rough area of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Hughes' early teenage years found her smoking, drinking, missing classes and failing in school.<sup>119</sup> This changed when she watched speed skating on television during the 1988 Calgary Olympics. The result was remarkable: "Hughes vowed to make it one day to the Games. She quit smoking, stopped skipping school and went from getting F's to A's."<sup>120</sup> As part of this dramatic personal turnabout, Hughes focused on competitive cycling. Thus, by 2002, she had "over one hundred cycling victories under her belt, including medals in the 1996 Olympic Summer Games, medals in both the Pan American and Commonwealth Games, plus numerous World Cycling and National Championship titles," thereby establishing herself as one of the best cyclists in the world.<sup>121</sup>

However, speed skating had been ingrained in Hughes after the 1988 Games. Thus, in spite of her cycling successes, Hughes pursued her dream and stunned the sporting world during the 2002 Olympic Games when she won a bronze medal in the gruelling 5000 metre speed skating event.<sup>122</sup> With her medals from the 1996 Summer Olympics in cycling, Hughes became the first Canadian, and just the fourth athlete in history, to win medals in both the Winter and Summer Games. Furthermore, at the 2006 Torino Winter Games, Hughes won gold in the 5000 metre speed skating event, and silver in the team pursuit.

More importantly, Hughes is a role model because of her volunteer work with RTP. In spite of her training and competition requirements, Hughes has been a RTP *Athlete Ambassador* since December 2003. The Athlete Ambassador role is an honoured position, in that it recognizes "a unique global team of athletes who have gone above and beyond in their support of [RTP]." Consequently, Right to Play "has recognized their efforts and has offered them a special place on [its] team as a Right To

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<sup>119</sup> M. Jollimore, "These women are 24k gold" *Time Canada* (9 June 2006), online: <<http://www.canada.com/topics/travel/canadianheroes/story.html?id=b0537583-36a3-4cbe-a7f5-3883ca690d55&k=21203>>.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Right To Play, "Clara Hughes – Speedskating and Cycling, Canada," online: Right To Play <[http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=clara\\_hughes](http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=clara_hughes)>.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

Play Athlete Ambassador.”<sup>123</sup> Athlete Ambassadors travel with RTP on trips to their projects, “they are the face of Right To Play in [its] ad campaigns, and they represent [RTP] at public events and meetings.”<sup>124</sup> Moreover, due to her passion, Hughes was invited to join the RTP Canadian Advisory Board as a co-chair, which provides her with the opportunity to “inject [her] enthusiasm, passion and wisdom into Right To Play’s awareness and fundraising campaigns.”<sup>125</sup> Hughes currently donates her time to a variety of RTP projects, including:

1. RTP’s *Canadian School* program, which provides “Canadian youth with the opportunity to learn through sport and discover the merits of physical activity.”<sup>126</sup>
2. RTP’s signature fundraising event, *Skate for Kids In Benefit of A Child’s Right To Play*. The event is staged in partnership with the Canada-based teams in the National Hockey League (NHL) and aims to “empower youth across the country to raise money and awareness for disadvantaged youth in Canada and around the world.”<sup>127</sup> On the weekend of November 18, 2006, Ms. Hughes will be skating with other Athlete Ambassadors and members of the Montreal Canadians.
3. *One X One*, which is a “non-profit foundation dedicated to supporting, preserving and improving the lives of children in Canada and around the world. Through an annual campaign, “One X One is dedicated to helping create a world where children can live safely and with dignity.”<sup>128</sup> Hughes was the RTP representative at the One X One benefit gala event that took place in Toronto on Sept. 10, 2006, which was hosted by Matt Damon. The event included economist Jeffrey Sachs, special adviser to UN

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<sup>123</sup> Right To Play, “Athlete Involvement,” online: Right To Play <<http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=athletesrole>>.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Right To Play, “What’s next for Clara Hughes?” (July 2006), online: Right To Play <[http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=canada\\_clara\\_whatsnext\\_july2006](http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=canada_clara_whatsnext_july2006)>.

<sup>126</sup> Right To Play, “Clara Hughes – Speedskating and Cycling, Canada,” *supra* note 121.

<sup>127</sup> Right To Play, *supra* note 126.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*



Secretary General Kofi Annan; and Immaculee Ilibagiza, a Rwandan genocide survivor.<sup>129</sup>

4. In May 2006, Clara Hughes travelled to Ethiopia to witness what RTP programs were accomplishing in the country. She stated that “it was a joyful environment,” as RTP was providing a “sense of hope” to the children.<sup>130</sup> Moreover, she proclaimed:

I will never ever forget what I saw and heard and who I met...everything that I was so gifted to experience in Ethiopia. This is true inspiration I hope to bring back into my world and share with others.<sup>131</sup>

Clara Hughes is a motivator of her fellow athletes as well. For example, at the Torino Olympics, after watching American speed skater Joey Cheek donate \$10,000 of his personal funds to RTP, Hughes also donated \$10,000, and “challenged Canadian business and individuals to match her donation or give what they can.”<sup>132</sup> Her efforts have been a resounding success, as she has helped Canadians raise over \$425,000 for RTP.<sup>133</sup>

In sum, Clara Hughes is the type of athlete that sustainability-minded NGOs should be involved with, and the type of person that other athletes should emulate if they are interested in advancing the sustainability agenda. She translated her success from the field of play to the arena of life by providing personal and financial resources to RTP and its multitude of social causes. Moreover, the benefits received from these efforts are reciprocal, as Hughes is able to use RTP’s administrative resources, global reach, network of other celebrities, media know-how and respected track record to accomplish social goals that she may not have been able to fulfil unless she was involved with an NGO of the

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> C. Hughes, “The True Meaning of Hope and Courage” *Right To Play* (30 May 2006), online: Right To Play <[http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ethiopia\\_clarastory\\_may2006](http://www.righttoplay.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ethiopia_clarastory_may2006)>.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Right To Play, “Gold Medalist Clara Hughes Rallies Canadians Support,” online: Right To Play <[http://www.righttoplay.com/site/TR?px=1074046&pg=personal&fr\\_id=1040](http://www.righttoplay.com/site/TR?px=1074046&pg=personal&fr_id=1040)>.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

calibre of Right to Play. Hughes fully understands the importance of her cause and the need to act:

I want everyone to understand the urgency and importance of the mission of Right To Play: to create a healthier and safer world for children through the power of sport and play. This is far more important than any gold medal—even an Olympic gold medal.<sup>134</sup>

The commitment of Clara Hughes to athletic and personal excellence has not gone unnoticed. She was recently recognized for her athletic and volunteer efforts by *Time Magazine*, who named her one of “Canada’s Heroes” in 2006.<sup>135</sup>

## F. Lessons

We have seen that athletes can play an important role in promoting social and environmental sustainability. However, cultivating this requires one to understand several important lessons:

1. First, the athlete should have a personal connection to the issue. That is, one cannot pay an athlete to “play-act” as an advocate. Instead, these athletes must believe, wholeheartedly, in the values associated with sustainable development. In our discussion of the Sydney Games, we saw that athletes became part of Greenpeace Australia’s work because they were convinced that people and corporations must follow a sustainable course of action, both environmentally and socially.
2. Second, Sport for Development NGOs, as well as environmental NGOs, must communicate their messages in a far-reaching manner that envelops all citizens, including athletes. The success of Right To Play as an SFD NGO is based partly on the fact that its athletes/advocates have travelled across the globe in pursuit of achievements on the field of play and in this athletic pursuit many have witnessed, first-hand, the social catastrophes that grip many parts of the world, particularly in Africa. Thus, these athletes can speak from their personal witness of the misery that exists in the regions that are the target of RTP efforts. Moreover, the

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<sup>134</sup> Hughes, *supra* note 130.

<sup>135</sup> Jollimore, *supra* note 119.

organization's strategy of using personal testimonials from politicians, actors and athletes helps the target audience of RTP's campaigns to better understand the issues, and become more personally connected with the cause. This is because a person will likely listen more closely to a story when it is told by a party he/she respects and holds in high esteem, such as Olympic participants who have achieved athletically following the ideals of fair play. This is why such athletes, including Canadian Olympic medalist Clara Hughes, have become central to success of the Right To Play campaigns.

3. Third, without the continual media exposure of sustainability issues prompted by NGOs and other advocacy groups, the public, including athletes, will not likely understand the gravity of the situation. Athletes have been called "focus machines" because they follow specific schedules, diets and exercise regimens in order to be successful in their sports. Consequently, most athletes do not have the time to understand how accomplishing goals associated with environmental sustainability and social sustainability are key to their own personal well-being, as well as that of the rest of society. Therefore, sustainability advocacy groups are well-advised to use the tools at their disposal, such as the Internet, television, the print media, to communicate their messages in a manner that personalizes the issues for all people, whether be they a teacher, police officer, cashier, or, in this case, an athlete. The athlete, in turn, can relate this to his/her own experience, and relay this message along to the public in a manner that can have maximum impact in raising awareness and prompting action about these issues because of the personal celebrity and high regard as role models that athletes enjoy.

#### **IV. Celebrity Collaborations Involving Athletes, Entertainers and Political Figures**

Some of the most successful sustainability NGOs capitalize on the celebrity of figures from different high profile segments of society and create collaborative associations among these segments in order to achieve maximum impact. Taking leading figures from sport, entertainment and political life and combining these in blockbuster events can produce not only maximum media attention, but also profile and credibility to the message and the call to action that these events can

elicit. Some examples of these star studded events help to reinforce this point.

#### A. The Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation

Andre Agassi, an eight-time Grand Slam tournament winner in professional tennis, is known as one of the greatest players the sport has ever seen. In order to “give back to society,” he founded the *Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation* (the *Agassi Foundation*) in 1995 to provide recreational and educational opportunities for at-risk children in Southern Nevada.<sup>136</sup> The Agassi Foundation has now grown to become the largest revenue producer among any of the personal foundations of athletes, as it has raised more than \$60 million since its inception.<sup>137</sup> The Agassi Foundation has created many initiatives, including: the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy, which is a kindergarten to Grade 12 public charter school;<sup>138</sup> the Agassi Boys and Girls Club of Las Vegas; Operation School Bell, which provides clothing and personal hygiene care for needy kids; and Child Haven, a shelter for abused children.<sup>139</sup>

One of the keys to the Agassi Foundation’s success is the support Agassi receives from the entertainment industry. For instance, singer Sir Elton John, and music producer and composer David Foster serve on the Foundation’s Board of Directors.<sup>140</sup> Furthermore, the organization’s annual benefit, entitled the *Grand Slam for Children*, takes place at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, and involves a “superstar line-up of entertainers for an unforgettable evening of music and other entertainment to benefit Las Vegas at-risk youth.”<sup>141</sup> Since the first gala event in 1995, it “has raised more than \$52 million, and every

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<sup>136</sup> Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, “About Us,” online: AACF <<http://www.agassifoundation.org/aboutus.htm>>.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Please consult the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy’s website, online: <<http://www.agassiprep.org>>.

<sup>139</sup> Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, “Child Haven,” online: AACF <<http://www.agassifoundation.org/child-haven.htm>>.

<sup>140</sup> Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, “Board of Directors,” online: AACF <<http://www.agassifoundation.org/board-of-directors.htm>>.

<sup>141</sup> Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, “Grand Slam for Children,” online: AACF <<http://www.agassifoundation.org/grandslam.htm>>.

penny goes directly to benefit underprivileged, abused or at-risk children in the Las Vegas community.” This event has become one of the hottest tickets in town because of the combination of the quality of the entertainers and the credibility of the cause. The list of past performers includes a “who’s-who” of the entertainment industry including:<sup>142</sup>

- |                   |                     |                      |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sheryl Crow    | 10. Sir Elton John  | 20. Ray Romano       |
| 2. Celine Dion    | 11. Jay Leno        | 21. Carlos Santana   |
| 3. Gloria Estefan | 12. Tim McGraw      | 22. Seal             |
| 4. Mick Fleetwood | 13. Brian McKnight  | 23. Rod Stewart      |
| 5. Josh Groban    | 14. Martina McBride | 24. Barbra Streisand |
| 6. Don Henley     | 15. Dennis Miller   | 25. Tears for Fears  |
| 7. Faith Hill     | 16. Stevie Nicks    | 26. Usher            |
| 8. India.Arie     | 17. Lionel Richie   | 27. Robin Williams   |
| 9. Billy Joel     | 18. LeAnn Rimes     | 28. Stevie Wonder    |

The 2006 edition of the Grand Slam for Children, which took place on October 7, included, among others the band Counting Crows, musicians Sarah McLachlan, Phil Collins and John Mayer; comedian and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres, and David Foster, who acted as the musical director for the eleventh consecutive year.<sup>143</sup>

In sum, Andre Agassi understands the power of what his relationship with the entertainment industry can accomplish. Indeed, in his speech opening the 2005 edition of the Grand Slam for Children, Agassi proclaimed:

Our Foundation has touched the lives of more than 180,000 children, and our success can only be attributed to the support of the thousands of people who embrace our cause. I am humbled by the generous support we have received from our supporters from all over the country and around the world. It is because of you

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<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

that lives are being changed every day. Only together can we create a better tomorrow for promising youth.<sup>144</sup>

Thus, as a result of Agassi's efforts, as well as those of his friends and admirers in the entertainment industry, the Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation is the "gold standard when it comes to sports celebrity foundations," since it has achieved a remarkable series of goals based on his "vision, contacts and personal investment."<sup>145</sup>

## B. The *GuluWalk*

*GuluWalk* is another project that fulfills its goals through an intersection between athletes, entertainers and political figures. The initiative was started by two Canadians, Adrian Bradbury and Kieran Hayward, to "highlight the plight of Acholi children in northern Uganda who trek each night to town centers in the districts of Gulu, Kitgum and Pader" to escape from the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a paramilitary group that has been operating in northern Uganda since 1987.<sup>146</sup> Specifically, thousands of children referred to as "night commuters" walk up to 20 kilometres from Internally Displaced Person (IDP) Camps to larger towns, especially Gulu, to be safe from the LRA, who has abducted children for use as sex slaves and soldiers in Uganda's 20-year civil war.<sup>147</sup>

The plight of the "night commuters" sparked the idea for *GuluWalk*, a 31-day night commute in support of these children. "Every evening in July of 2005, Adrian [Bradbury] and Kieran [Hayward] walked 12.5 kilometers into downtown Toronto to sleep in front of city hall. At sunrise, after about four hours sleep, they made the trek home."<sup>148</sup> At the

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<sup>144</sup> Andre Agassi Charitable Foundation, "Annual Report: 2006-2007" at 5, online: AACF <<http://www.agassifoundation.org/docs/AACF2006-2007AnnualReport.pdf>>, cited by Kates, *supra* note 115.

<sup>145</sup> D. McCafferty, "Most Caring Athletes" *USAWeekend.com* (23 September 2001), online: USA Weekend <[http://www.usaweekend.com/01\\_issues/010923/010923athletes.html](http://www.usaweekend.com/01_issues/010923/010923athletes.html)>.

<sup>146</sup> Wikipedia, "GuluWalk," online: Wikipedia <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulu\\_Walk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulu_Walk)>.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*; GuluWalk, "The Original GuluWalk," online: GuluWalk <<http://guluwalk.com/history>>.

<sup>148</sup> GuluWalk, *ibid.*

end of the 31 days, the pair had walked 775 kilometres and 872,739 steps.<sup>149</sup> Due to their efforts, the co-founders were recognized in 2005 as “Newsmakers of the Year” by *Maclean’s Magazine*.<sup>150</sup>

More importantly, the initiative was able to grow into a worldwide peace movement through collaborative efforts with supporters from the political, athletic and entertainment realms. On “GuluWalk Day,” Saturday, October 21, 2006, a global GuluWalk was scheduled to raise money and exposure for the plight of Uganda’s “night commuters.” Through an online campaign where ten thousand supporters were each asked to raise \$100 by signing up for the trek,<sup>151</sup> GuluWalk organizers were able to spotlight the plight of the young victims of the LRA in Uganda.<sup>152</sup> Famous supporters include:

1. Steve Nash, the Canadian professional basketball player who was previously discussed, was the 55<sup>th</sup> supporter to sign-up on the website. He stated the reasons for his support of the GuluWalk:

As soon as I heard about the night commuters, I knew I wanted to help. Margaret Mead is quoted as saying ‘never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world.’ GuluWalk is a small, thoughtful, committed Canadian organization working to effect change in Uganda, but also in the way we look at children everywhere. These kids are far away, but they are no less children, and their lives are being ruined by a silent war. Children all over the world deserve the attention and voice of everyone anywhere in a position to do anything.<sup>153</sup>

2. Sarah McLachlan, the world-famous Canadian musician, was the 560<sup>th</sup> person to sign-up for the campaign online. She is quoted as saying:

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> GuluWalk, “Welcome to GuluWalk Canada,” online: GuluWalk <<https://secure.e2rm.com/registrant/LoginRegister.aspx?EventID=6839&LangPref=en-CA>>.

<sup>152</sup> GuluWalk, “GuluWalk News and Events,” online: GuluWalk <<http://www.guluwalk.com/blog/?id=4399>>.

<sup>153</sup> GuluWalk, “Supporters,” online: GuluWalk <<http://www.guluwalk.com/supporters/>>.

I was shocked and deeply saddened to learn about what is happening to the children of northern Uganda. GuluWalk is shining a much needed light on their struggles, offering us all a way to give hope to the innocent children there. I urge everyone who can, to please sign up. Together, we can make a difference.<sup>154</sup>

3. Lt-Gen. Romeo Dallaire, a current member of the Canadian Senate and former head of the United Nations Observer Mission in Rwanda, was the 816<sup>th</sup> person to lend his support to the online campaign. He stated:

War has a much more intense effect on children than on adults. This doesn't mean that adults are not scared or horrified by it; it's just they have a stronger capacity to cope. This is why the work being done by GuluWalk is so very important. With proper education and support, these children can be empowered. They can be a potent, positive force in building their future and the future of their country.<sup>155</sup>

4. Lloyd Axworthy, the former Federal Cabinet Minister and current President and Vice Chancellor of the University of Winnipeg, was the 807<sup>th</sup> person to support the campaign;<sup>156</sup> and,
5. Buzz Hargrove, the President of the Canadian Auto Workers Union, was the 818<sup>th</sup> online supporter.<sup>157</sup>

As a result of the combined efforts of supporters, famous and otherwise, over 30,000 people participated in the second edition of the GuluWalk in 82 cities and 15 countries, raising over \$500,000 for various programs aimed at improving the situation of children in Northern Uganda.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> GuluWalk, *supra* note 151.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*



### C. The Prince's Trust

Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, is an example of the power of royalty to make a difference in facilitating real social and political change. Prince Charles initiated a foundation called the *Prince's Trust* (the *Trust*) in 1976 after he completed his duties in the Royal Navy for the purpose of changing the lives of disadvantaged young people.<sup>159</sup> He decided to channel his efforts to improving the lives of disadvantaged young people in the UK, (those between 14 and 30), and “began the Trust to deliver on that commitment.”<sup>160</sup> To date, the Trust “has become the UK’s leading youth charity, offering a range of opportunities including training, personal development, business start up support, mentoring and advice.”<sup>161</sup>

The Trust is an important entity for our analytical purposes because of its reliance on entertainers and athletes to achieve its goals. On the entertainment front, the first fundraising concert took place in 1982, and raised £72,000. At the event, bands that were “helped, funded or started by the Trust played alongside established pop stars, including Status Quo.”<sup>162</sup> The year 1983 saw the first *Prince's Trust Rock Gala*, which included various musicians, including: Madness, Joan Armatrading, Phil Collins, Kate Bush and Pete Townshend.<sup>163</sup>

1996 was a revolutionary year for the Trust because it marked “the start of a long-term strategy to establish a link between the Trust and young people’s passions—music, fashion and sport.”<sup>164</sup> The Trust organized the first rock concert in Hyde Park to take place in almost two decades. In 1997, the Trust decided to use sport—specifically football—as a means to help young people develop into successful adults: The Trust initiated the *Team* project, which was supported by the *FA Premier League*, *Football Foundation* and the *Professional Footballers' Association*, whose players participated as *Ambassadors* for the values

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<sup>159</sup> Prince's Trust, “History,” online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

embraced by the Trust.<sup>165</sup> In 2005, the three football organizations re-confirmed their commitment to the Trust by pledging £2 million, and extending the partnership until 2008. To date almost 10,000 young people have benefited from the initiative, which now involves in its activities more than 60 clubs from across the four professional football leagues.<sup>166</sup>

In 2003, the Prince's Trust began a successful collaboration with the fashion industry by holding the first *Fashion Rocks* gala at Royal Albert Hall, which raised £1.1 million.<sup>167</sup> The event involved fashion designers showing their collections on stage via models, while musical artists played some of their most famous songs. The first edition of the event was presented by Elizabeth Hurley and Denis Leary, and musical/fashion pairings included Robbie Williams and Versace; Beyonce Knowles and Armani; Grace Jones and Stella McCartney; Andrea Bocelli and Ralph Lauren; Bryan Adams and Calvin Klein; and, Sheryl Crow and Tommy Hilfiger.<sup>168</sup> Television coverage of this event, which takes place every two years, covers 110 countries worldwide, including the United States, Canada and European nations, and involves huge press coverage in tabloids, newspapers, fashion publications, as well as in music columns.<sup>169</sup>

In 2004, in order to involve musical artists from the "hip-hop" musical genre, the Trust saw the launch of the Urban Music Festival, which drew 30,000 people, making it the UK's largest urban music event of that year.<sup>170</sup> The 2005 edition of the event entertained a crowd of 16,000 fans, and included, among others, Hollywood actor and musician Will Smith.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Prince's Trust, "Dream Team," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>; for more details, please consult Prince's Trust, "Tackle Life Through Sport: Football," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> Prince's Trust, "Fashion Rocks," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/fashionrocks>>.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> Prince's Trust, "The Nokia Urban Music Festival," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>171</sup> Nokia Urban Music Festival with the Prince's Trust, "News," online: <<http://83.138.128.154/UMF/news.asp>>.

The Trust's collaboration with sport has moved beyond soccer/football and now includes cricket and rugby.<sup>172</sup> For instance, the Team Project, which initially involved the football community in the UK, now includes involvement from the cricket community. Specifically, in order to help youth between the ages of 16 and 25, the Trust started the *Prince's Trust Cricket Initiative*, which involves eleven county cricket clubs across the UK supporting unemployed people who are participating in the Trust's personal development courses.<sup>173</sup> A young person participating in the program could take part in a variety of activities including:

1. Cricket coaching sessions;
2. Careers advice sessions;
3. Talks on health and fitness and diet and nutrition;
4. Motivational talks from players and staff; and,
5. Ground tours.<sup>174</sup>

In 1996, the Trust initiated a program called *xl clubs* to target young people facing difficulties in education and work. This program offers a personal development curriculum that "promotes achievement and encourages success."<sup>175</sup> One of the key elements of the program is teaching "club members" to take responsibility for their actions, develop social skills and enjoy the benefits of teamwork. Moreover, the Trust decided that sport was one of the best tools to help young people acquire these skills. In 2005, the Trust, in cooperation with the *Royal Bank of Scotland* (RBS) Group, the title sponsor of the RBS 6 Nations International Rugby Tournament, announced the *RBS 6 Nations with The Prince's Trust Project*, which aims to "apply rugby's team-based values to xl modules, helping xl school pupils build the skills and competencies

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<sup>172</sup> For further details, please consult Prince's Trust, "Tackle Life Through Sport," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>173</sup> Prince's Trust, "On a Prince's Trust Team you can learn a lot between the stumps," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>; for further details, please consult Prince's Trust, "Tackle Life Through Sport: Cricket," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Prince's Trust, "xl clubs: A practical way to learn. A positive way to achieve," online: Prince's Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

they need to improve their attendance, self-esteem and motivation.”<sup>176</sup> Students in *xl clubs*, by “working with the English, Welsh and Scottish rugby union governing bodies,” are in a position to gain:

1. Access to players;
2. Provision of educational and rugby-related materials;
3. Coaching from union staff on nutrition and healthy lifestyles;
4. Advice on careers associated to the game;
5. Behind-the-scenes tours on match days;
6. On-the-pitch involvement; and,
7. Rugby-associated activities.<sup>177</sup>

#### D. Lessons

The experiences of these two foundations, which capitalize on the profile and personal networks and personal networks of their founders, Andre Agassi and Prince Charles, reveal that collaboration among the sport and entertainment sectors is a key to their success:

1. Andre Agassi understood, from the early days of his Foundation, that in order to gather the financial resources needed to make his social goals come to fruition, he needed to cultivate the contacts he had made in both the athletic and entertainment fields. Thus, the Agassi Foundation has become the most successful athlete-initiated foundation in the world because Agassi’s celebrity friends from the entertainment sector (both music and motion pictures) are willing to participate in the *Grand Slam for Children* gala, which is the primary fund-raising mechanism for the organization.
2. In creating the Prince’s Trust, Prince Charles understood that his stature as a member of the British Monarchy and the nation’s

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<sup>176</sup> Prince’s Trust, “For a second year, RBS 6 Nations backs xl clubs in schools” (January 2006), online: Prince’s Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

For further details, please consult Prince’s Trust, “Tackle Life Through Sport: Rugby,” online: Prince’s Trust <<http://www.princes-trust.org.uk>>.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

political elite was not enough to accomplish all the goals associated with his venture. Thus, in the mid-1990s, the directors of the Trust decided that in order to capture the hearts and minds of the young people they were trying to help, they had to use the social tools associated with what their target audience was most passionate about: Music, fashion, and sport.

3. The lessons of this experience for our purposes is that for sustainability goals to be advanced through the work of the Olympic Movement, the IOC and Olympic Organizing Committees are well advised not attempt this huge task in isolation. Indeed, since it takes public awareness of a cause to make its goals achievable, celebrities (in the form of entertainers and athletes) can help to shine a brighter light on an organization's efforts, which, in turn, can increase the likelihood of its success. Moreover, the role of entertainers and athletes is even more important in the Olympic context. The Olympic Games are known as "the Greatest Show on Earth" because, inter alia, they involve a unique intersection between athletic competition and entertainment spectacle. No other event combines the "three pillars" of sport, culture and sustainable development, and the unparalleled attention of the world's media. Moreover, no other mega sporting event involves an entertainment spectacle of the scale of the "Cultural Olympiad" that occur in the three years preceding and during the Games, as well as the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Games themselves. In short, no other event has a similar potential to reach out to a global audience in order to raise awareness and provide a call to action to the people of the world to do their part for sustainable development.

## **Conclusions**

The purpose of this paper is to provide some examples and analysis of the powerful and potentially complimentary roles that sustainability related NGOs, celebrities, and athletes can play in furthering sustainable development. We traced how NGOs have been able to initiate public dialogue with event organizers on a number of topics, including the environment, the treatment of animals, labour conditions and homelessness, and have helped to leverage the notoriety of the events as a means of raising awareness and prompting action on a broad scale to help to bring about important social change. We observed that the ability of

foundations and other organizations to achieve sustainability goals was strengthened through collaborations with entertainers, athletes, and in some cases with high profile and popular political figures.

We also learned that while awareness of the need for strategies to achieve sustainable development is growing, the success of these efforts can be greatly enhanced by tapping into a potentially very powerful catalyst, that is, a “call to action” to athletes to use their global celebrity in the same manner as do entertainers in Hollywood (the EMA), Las Vegas (the AACF) in the United States and London, UK (the Prince’s Trust) in order to advocate for social and environmental sustainability.

In the same way as athletes are often central figures in advertising campaigns for athletic apparel, energy drinks, and electronic equipment, these examples show how athletes can also be deployed in the critical community-focussed work of advocating for sustainable development. It is not unreasonable to attempt this new role for athletes, given the time and effort that some prominent athletes already devote towards a diverse set of social issues, including natural disaster relief, disease prevention, housing and the fight against poverty. Moreover, the experience of the advertising industry and entertainers who are active in environmental advocacy—in particular their skilful use of film and television media, newsprint, and the Internet—offers useful templates in the attempt to use athletes as advocates for sustainable development.

The critical lesson is that in order to stage mega events, such as the Olympic Games, in a sustainable manner and to leverage off these events to advance the cause of sustainable development, a broad-based “team approach” involving meaningful interaction between event organizers and impacted parties, along with social and environmental advocacy groups that make up the mosaic of the host city or region, is an essential piece of the puzzle. The experience of the Olympic Movement to date has been that if there is a synchronized, collaborative effort of these various groups, then the “trinity” of economic, environmental and social sustainability will more likely be achieved. If this happens in the context of the 2010 Winter Games, then Vancouver’s Olympiad will indeed fulfill the ambitions of Games organizers to be “Our Time to Shine.”