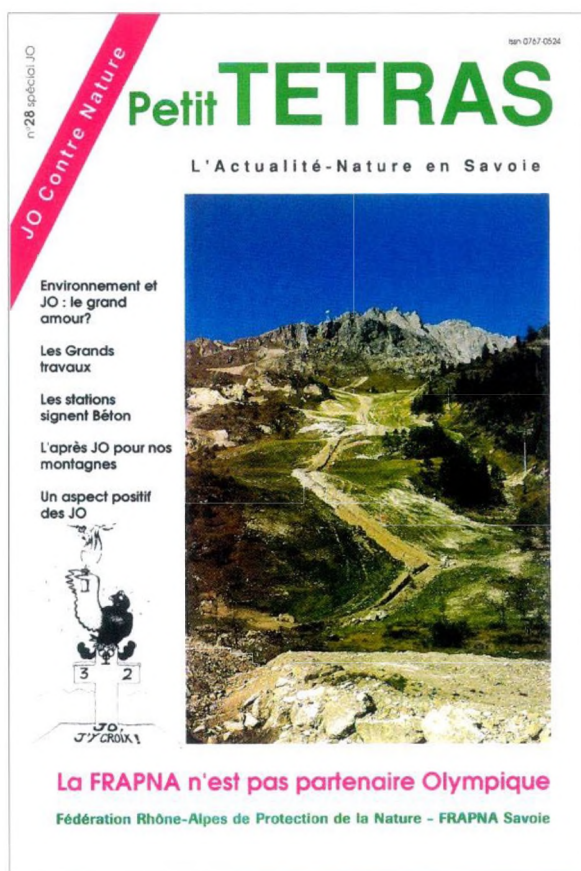


Origins of the environmental dimension of the Olympic Movement*

By Alberto Aragón-Perez

Cover of *Petit Tétrás*, a French magazine published in 1992 by FRAPNA, an ecologist group that actively protested against Albertville'92. The group claimed the Games would cause serious ecological damage to the region.

Photo: IOC-OSC Archives



The relationship between the Olympic Games and nature can be traced back to antiquity. Pausanias, the renowned Greek writer, visited Olympia in the 2nd century CE when the sanctuary was experiencing its golden age. He described the sacred place with appreciation for the beauty of the landscape, especially the Alpheios River: "By the time you reach Olympia the Alpheios is a large and very pleasant river to see, being fed by several tributaries, including seven very important ones" (Pausanias, 5.7.1, transl. W. H. S. Jones, 1966). He depicted Olympia as an ecosystem with abundant trees. "The Pelopium (...) is surrounded by a stone fence, within which trees grow" (Pausanias, 5.13.1). "It is no wonder that the white poplar grew first by the Acheron and the wild olive by the Alpheios" (Pausanias, 5.14.3). "Under the plane trees in

the Altis, just about in the centre of the enclosure, there is a bronze trophy" (Pausanias, 5.27.11).

The father of modern Olympism was a concerned conservationist. In 1907, IOC President Pierre de Coubertin wrote in the *Olympic Review* that he was alarmed by an increasing problem: "the environs of towns and, in general, every place for races and excursions suffer the rubbished papers that tourists and sportsmen have sprinkled." He gave particular attention to car races because "The problem would be to find for the tracks of rallies a product rather than paper, or susceptible of modifying its deplorable resistance which it offers to the action of the elements (...) like an indelible scar" (Coubertin, 1907: 238–239).

In light of the above, is ecology part of the DNA of the Olympic Games? Another question that arises is whether the Olympic Movement engaged with ecology before or after the 1992 United Nations (UN) Conference and the 1992 Winter and Summer Olympic Games. This article aims to provide a perspective on the topic.

Albertville '92: ecologist protests

Preparations for the 1992 Olympic Winter Games sparked protests from the very beginning. A plan to build new facilities along the French Alps was the problem. Hosting the Games in February 1992 significantly boosted the protests against the IOC, the organisation responsible for all Olympic Games. Verification can be found at the Olympic Studies Centre in Lausanne, in the archive of correspondence from ecologist groups and individual citizens. Most letters were directly addressed to President Samaranch.

A good example of that correspondence is the letter written by the Fédération Rhône-Alpes de Protection de la Nature (FRAPNA) in January 1992. This local ecologist group played a prominent role in complaints about the impact of Albertville '92. After "finishing a report on the damaging effects that the preparation of the Games of Albertville had on nature", FRAPNA concluded that "the IOC directly involved with this organisation". The letter was attached to issue number 28 of *Petit Tétrás*, a magazine published by FRAPNA, titled "FRAPNA is not an Olympic partner: Olympics against Nature" (OSC Archives).

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IOC Secretary-General Françoise Zweifel replied to many of these letters sent by ecologists and individuals. Her usual message stated that “The IOC is also very concerned about environmental issues, which will be dealt with in depth at its next Congress” (OSC Archives). Zweifel’s response shows that the IOC recognised ecological issues in Albertville ’92, that they concerned Samaranch and his team and, more importantly, that they needed to discuss the topic in future IOC Sessions.

The Olympic Winter Games in Albertville caused more criticism than ever, while interest in ecology rose in Western societies. First of all, these Olympics were hosted in the heart of the Alps, one of the most treasured ecosystems in Europe, and “never before had the Winter Olympics been so regionalized, with the competition sites (...) in 13 Alpine communities”. “Reports confirmed that construction was on a scale that would result in the irrevocable transformation of the natural environment” (Cantelon and Letters, 2010: 423). The environmental damage caused by the construction of new sporting venues altered the natural landscape, but there were other negative impacts as well. The inhabitants of La Plagne, the site of the luge and bobsleigh events, “wore gas masks (...) against the risk (...) of the 40 tonnes of ammonia needed to freeze the bobsleigh track” (Newlands, 2011: 155–156).

Some media had voiced discomfort back in 1989; therefore, an alliance of ecologist groups used media interest in the issue to protest by using the opening ceremony as a protest platform. International pressure backed criticism of the 1992 Olympic Winter Games. The IOC, which had previously had little engagement with ecological matters, abruptly faced negative feedback from the international media and environmentalists. The upcoming Earth Summit also came under international pressure. “Landslides, road building, deforestation, disruption of natural habitat, permanent facilities without post-event use, non-recyclable waste, blighting of the countryside” were just some of the costs associated with the 1992 Olympic Winter Games (DaCosta, 1997: 101).

It became a political concern when the Council of Europe voted in early 1992 on a resolution condemning the environmental impact in Albertville ’92 and favouring eco-friendly guidelines at sport events. The European Parliament also intervened on 16th March while adopting a report by a German Europarliamentary, deploring the environmental damage and recommending “to the IOC that environmental compatibility should henceforth be an essential criterion for the choice of a site for the Olympic Games” (OSC Archives).

The Albertville ’92 OCOG did not acknowledge the existence of environmental scandals, avoided a negative image, and conveyed the opposite perspective. OCOG Co-President Michel Barnier said that, “apart from the

recognised success of the event, the Savoie successfully met another challenge: the gradual reconquest of the environment”. This strategy was based on the revitalisation of landscapes and parks. It was argued that new constructions for the ski jumps in Courchevel and the bobsleigh run at La Plagne promoted “landscape integration measures such as new plantations” (Barnier, 1993: 23).

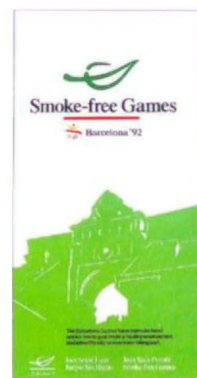
The IOC also refused to admit publicly that Albertville ’92 had affected the environment. It officially rejected ecological issues at the Games, although internally it assumed them, as we have demonstrated. In addition, it reported on what it considered to be positive efforts for the alpine landscape, mostly emphasising aesthetic initiatives aimed at alpine beautification. The *Olympic Review* was one tool to spread that official message¹. The Olympic Movement hid its real concern about the issue by dismissing the ecologists’ complaints, claiming that they were ‘media campaigns’ (Cantelon and Letters, 2010: 424).

Lausanne also backed Michel Barnier as a politician specialising in the French environment and one who guaranteed green efforts by the OCOG. He even was appointed Minister of the Environment and Way of Life in 1993. The IOC emphasised that he was “a man who for years has (...) approached to the serious problems posed for a man by the rapid deterioration of his environment” (Gafner, 1993: 6). Consequently, he was in charge of defending the 1992 Winter Olympics in issue no. 35 of *Olympic Message*, a journal published by the IOC. The magazine recognised “mistakes made”, though it aimed to stress proper management of ecological challenges.

The IOC understood that it needed to establish a defensive strategy in order to approach eco-friendly policies and avoid more negative campaigns². Albertville ’92 is important to this research because, despite adopting new infrastructural, economic and territorial standards³, the IOC was criticised for negative environmental impacts.

The 1992 Earth Summit: brief overview

The UN Conference took place after decades of information regarding ecological problems. Environmental awareness emerged in many countries, and there was talk of global warming in some social sectors and countries⁴. An ecological emergency and a need for international political reactions were perceived. The increasing demand for natural resources led to ecological awareness. Erosion, desertification, and threatened ecosystems were thought to affect our modern ways of life. Sustainable and responsible uses of resources were seen as essential. This led to a tendency in liberal sectors towards the consideration of

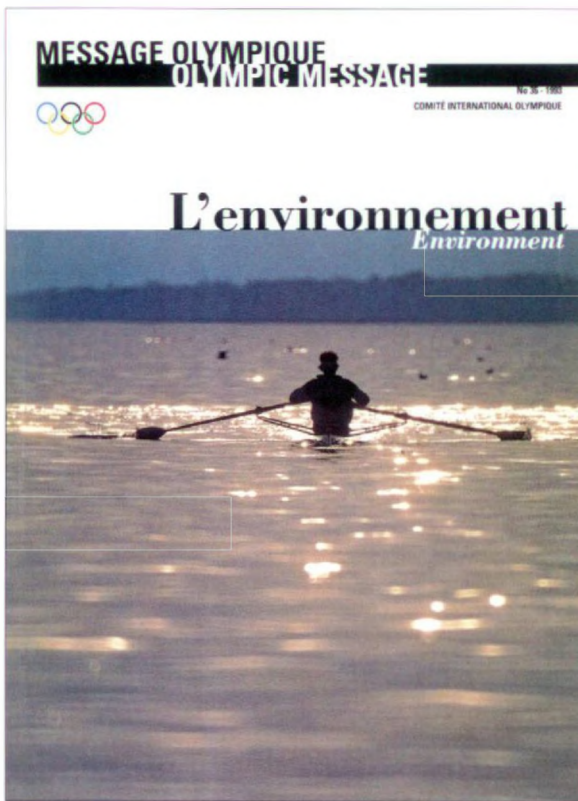


Poster for the ‘Smoke-free Games’ project. Barcelona ’92 guided environmental principles with practical measures such as this campaign and the monitoring of atmospheric and air pollutants. COOB’92 launched a campaign to ban smoking in the indoor facilities (Spanish law did not yet prohibit this). The IOC had earlier set a good example: In 1983, following a proposal by the President, smoking was banned during sessions. The first ‘smoke-free’ Winter Olympics took place in 1988 in Calgary.

Photo: IEO-IASIFBO Archive

sustainable ideals and principles (Strong, 1994: 20–23; Eckersley, 1992).

The 1992 UN Conference in Rio, or Earth Summit (known as Eco-92 in Brazil, the host country) was a high-level meeting that marked global society's attitude towards ecology. The evolution of ecologism after the Second World War "explains the context of the 1992 Conference. In December 1989, the UN General Assembly, in reaction to (...) the Brundtland Report, decided to host a conference about environment and development in June 1992" (Strong, 1994: 41). This decision in 1989 was adopted with UN Resolution 44/228. It was also agreed that the meeting should be attended by all the nations in the world, represented by their heads of state or government⁵.



The UN Conference on Environment was held from 3rd to 14th June 1992. Nearly all UN member nations participated and 116 were represented by their heads of state or government. The Global Forum was also held in Riocentro, site of the UN conference. This was an opportunity for international organisations, ecologist groups, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to discuss strategies and proposals. Meanwhile, UN member states discussed agreements like the Rio Declaration, the Agenda 21 or the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Participating NGOs received official passes to Riocentro for the Global Forum. The Exhibition Hall inside Riocentro was specifically for the NGOs, equipped with meeting rooms and where the Olympic

delegation delivered its presentation. The schedule at the Global Forum included 'A Better Way', in which every organisation had 30 minutes to present its vision and solutions to ecological issues. The speeches were followed by debates with other NGOs (Soromelho Marques, 1993; OSC Archives).

The conclusions of the 1992 UN Conference in Rio urged countries and organisations to "facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available" (Rio Declaration, 1992, 10th principle). Rio de Janeiro became the focus of several approaches to ecologist thought: radicals, left-wing movements, animal rights activists, pragmatic environmentalists, conservationists, and similar groups. The IOC paid attention to the Earth Summit in the wake of the negative image generated by the environmental impact of Albertville '92. The Organising Committee of Barcelona '92 (COOB'92) did not emphasize a communication strategy before 1992. The Rio Declaration's 10th principle was adopted when the 1992 Summer Olympics were about to begin. Although this left little time to have an effect, the UN Conference raised environmental awareness during Barcelona '92, and in some cases, it was raised by the IOC itself.

The IOC's participation in the Earth Summit

As early as the 1960s, the UN began working with the Olympic Movement. The IOC approached the UN when the issue of South African apartheid brought about an interest in sports. At the 1972 Olympics in Munich, a symbolic gesture acknowledged the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm when many NOCs planted shrubs and trees brought from their countries in Munich Olympic Park (Chappelet and Kübler-Mabbott, 2008: 109; IOC, 2012: 16).

Embodied by the capitalist economy and influenced by preparations for the Earth Summit, Western nations and organisations increasingly embraced environmentalist concepts. The IOC paid attention to the Earth Summit in the wake of the negative image generated by the environmental impact of Albertville '92. It assessed the advantages of promoting post-Olympic green legacies. "In the current phase of globalized capitalist flows, this process of an ecological rift is (...) acute, and it has had an immense impact in environmental sustainability." In this context, "the IOC has operationalized the green dynamic imbued by Olympic Games hosting" (Karamichas, 2013: 67).

The process started in Lausanne's IOC Headquarters, when the UN Conference's Media and Information Office met with the IOC a few days before the Rio Summit. The IOC was considered an NGO by the Summit's organisers (the other form of participation was as a UN member state). This meant that it was part of the Global Forum

Cover page of *Olympic Message*, issued by the IOC in March 1993. It was totally focused on environmental and sustainable approaches to the Olympic Games and their necessary eco-friendly management.

with access to important meetings: IOC representatives at the Earth Summit were aware of the main negotiations and agreements between the UN, nations, and other organisations. A photocopying service was available to accredited NGOs; this allowed the Olympic delegation to collect important documents (only one copy per accredited participant) to be examined by the IOC Board in Lausanne⁶.

The IOC delegation took the floor at 'A Better Way', respecting that "The rules of participation of NGOs in the conference will be considered by the Bureau at the beginning of the conference" (OSC Archives)⁷. Presentations at 'A Better Way' followed a specific structure consisting of an introduction, a subject, and ideas for change. The IOC delegation delivered a speech: 'The Olympic Movement and the Environment, by the International Olympic Committee'. Its introduction focused on the following:

- The 103rd IOC Session in Paris (1994 Centennial Congress) planned to focus on four central topics, with the environment as an additional topic.
- The first emblematic ecological initiative in the Olympic Movement was the planting of bushes and trees in the Olympic Park during Munich '72.
- The new IOC Headquarters in Lausanne were built respecting the trees in Vidy Park, and the architectural plans for a new Olympic Museum were modified to preserve an old oak.
- The IOC had cooperated with the UN and its agencies for years (UNESCO, WHO, UNEP, etc.).
- The Olympic Movement demonstrated an interest in ecology by its presence in Rio, where it aimed to cooperate in protecting the Earth.

It was also argued that "the IOC is an international non-governmental organisation whose actions and measures in favour of the environment are projected without political purposes". Although environmental policies were the responsibility of each UN member state, this meant that "the IOC holds tools to improve the relation between sport and the environment" (OSC Archives).

The IOC presentation also emphasised three recent milestones that validated Olympism's interest in ecological issues: atmospheric pollution and dangerous smog during the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, Albertville's 1992 Winter Olympics and "its policies of beautification of landscapes and the environment", and the negotiations between the COCOG of Lillehammer '94, ecologists, and the local community (OSC Archives). Barcelona '92 was not mentioned.

The IOC delegation also announced new environmental criteria for candidate cities. This initiative, to be launched during the 2000 Olympic Games bidding process, would include a mandatory report, including environmental

requirements, submitted by the candidate cities. Aspects such as a transportation plan to prevent air pollution, waste treatment, efficient water and energy management, and ecological education programmes were to be included in the report. In an implicit allusion to Albertville '92, the IOC also promised that the bids should prove that their infrastructure projects "were focused on a method to eliminate, or at least to reduce, all attacks against nature" (OSC Archives).

The presentation culminated with a brief message written by Juan Antonio Samaranch, endorsing the Olympic commitment to ecology. Neither the IOC President nor the IOC Executive Board participated in the Earth Summit. Samaranch, however, did go to Rio de Janeiro in February 1993 to attend the Beach Volleyball World Tour. This opportunity was used to ratify the agreement on Olympism with the local authorities and the Earth Summit conclusions (OSC Archives).

The Earth Summit in Rio led directly to the adoption of measures by the IOC, and the assumption of liability for negative impacts resulting from hosting the Olympics⁸. IOC Member Richard W. Pound stated in 1993 that, as a participant in the UN Conference, the IOC must "determine the extent of its role in protection of the environment. The enormity of the problem has been identified by many national and international organisations. Conferences have been held; laws have been enacted" (Pound, 1993: 14).



Ecology ever more in focus: At Beijing 2008 participants and visitors struggled at times with the city smog but other Games have also given cause for concern. Winter Games have often necessitated extensive building works and incursions into areas of nature and harmful emissions are also a target for criticism.



The UN Conference's Media and Information Office designed a specific 'Earth Pledge' campaign involving media and international stakeholders. Olympism was one of them. After the Rio Summit, the office contacted the IOC. On 1st July 1992, they sent a fax to Juan Antonio Samaranch telling him about the campaign to promote this during the Barcelona Games. Samaranch agreed and IOC Director General François Carrard asked the COOB'92 CEO Josep M. Abad to join sign up for the scheme. Finally, athletes signed an 'Earth Pledge' wall in the Olympic Village, an initiative repeated in Rio.

Photos: Fundació Barcelona Olímpic

This implicitly recognised the validity of ecologists' demands regarding the Olympic Games. It forced Lausanne to accept the subject of environmental impact as another important aspect of the Olympic Movement. The IOC considered ecological legacies and assumed a new Olympic dimension in the following years (Kováč, 2003: 112).

Barcelona's participation in the Earth Summit

The city of Barcelona was chosen in 1986 to host the 1992 Olympics, and the municipal authorities planned to revitalize the metropolitan area, based on strategic cornerstones, i.e. the regeneration of the shoreline, the reduction of air pollution, and the promotion of green areas. The Earth Summit, held only 40 days before Barcelona '92, fostered global social and political awareness of said goals. The achievements of Barcelona '92, in the realm of sustainability, were implicit but not explicit. Although they did not adhere to ecological guidelines or specific standards; the urban regeneration was based on a sustainable idea: to manage the Games in order to leave an urban legacy with a better quality of life after the Olympic Games.

The environmental control programme was planned according to European environmental policies and standards. Aiming to achieve a positive legacy for itself, Barcelona encouraged a planned urban impact. It embarked on a massive improvement programme under the dynamic impetus of Mayor Pasqual Maragall. The construction of a ring road eliminated most rush-hour

traffic jams, with a corresponding drop in air pollution and noise levels. This was accompanied by the creation of an additional 3.5 sq km of green areas. The construction of an Olympic Village over 0.5 sq km brought Poblenou, a decaying industrial area, back to life.

The Organising Committee of the Barcelona Olympic Games was not directly represented at the UN Conference in Rio. The Games were the main priority for COOB'92, as they would begin one month and a half later. The Barcelona City Council, COOB'92's main institutional partner, attended the Earth Summit, and Pasqual Maragall, Mayor and COOB'92 President, signed the commitment to the aims of the UN Conference in June. The 1992 Games continued to absorb most of the city's attention. As a result of the meetings in June, the Mayors of Barcelona and Rio de Janeiro (Maragall and Marcello Alencar, respectively) met and signed an official declaration a few months later, in 17th December 1992.

The introduction to the declaration stated: "In the year 1992, the cities of Rio and Barcelona have been capitals of the world, due to the UN Conference on the Environment and Development and the Olympic Games. (...) The two cities, one in the northern hemisphere and the other in the southern, proclaim their certainty that the role that cities can play in the world will increase and will be positive" (ACMB archive).

This statement reflected a symbolic connection between Olympism and ecologism. However, neither the IOC nor the UN joined the meeting or signed the declaration. The document, mostly a representational proclamation with no legal effects, was agreed to by two cities without either international organisation. Highly significant is the fact that both cities emphasised two circumstances, that they hosted the Olympics and the Earth Summit in the same year.

The final conclusion of the declaration strengthened international cooperation: "We want to be valid and acknowledged references for large international organizations, in first place the UN, its organs (UNESCO, UNFPA, HABITAT, [...] UNDP). The 92 Rio Conference for the first time enabled international associations of cities and local entities [...] to appear together [...] at the Conference. [...] In the world there are families, towns, cities, regions, countries and nations. We believe the best guarantee for the progress of all of them and for their common existence is the government of the UN" (ACMB archive).

Both cities were establishing a brotherhood according to the principles of the 1992 UN Conference. The environment and development were issues to be dealt with together, addressed by cities like Barcelona and Rio under the international leadership of the UN. It is true that Maragall signed it four months after Barcelona '92 as the Mayor of Barcelona, and not as the

COOB'92 President. Barcelona, however, promoted this agreement claiming its unique authority as an Olympic host city. In conclusion, the governments of Barcelona and Rio had agreed that the Olympic values and the spirit of the Earth Summit should coexist.

Aside from Barcelona City Council, Barcelona '92 did not participate in the Earth Summit. The COOB'92 did not attend the UN Conference because it was fully focused on hosting the Olympic Games, as the interviews demonstrate. The only documented approach to the Conference occurred during the 81st meeting of the COOB'92 Executive Board on 15th June 1992. These meetings were structured in functional areas and operational targets. The programme of the 81st meeting reveals that, after dealing with operations of budgets, human resources and certifications, the next to last point on the agenda was established to "follow the Summit in Rio" (CEO-JAS/FBO archive). There were no further comments, although 15 minutes of the meeting were scheduled to talk about the Rio Summit.

The management of Barcelona '92 had previously followed environmental principles with practical measures: 'Smoke-free games' campaign, monitoring of sea and air pollutants, and a Rio-Barcelona declaration. Such environmental measures implemented during the organisation of the 1992 Games were not reinforced within the framework of a communication plan. The 1992 UN Conference highlighted the importance of raising environmental awareness, and therefore, gave impetus to the adoption of measures during and after the 1992 Summer Games. Communication initiatives included the organisation of an exhibition called 'Beloved Earth' during the Games [a], pedagogical activities at the International Youth Camp (IYC) [b], assembly of an Earth Pledge wall in the Olympic Village signed by athletes [c], and planting of a number of trees equivalent to the amount of paper consumed by COOB'92 [d]. Their main characteristics were:

- They had different targets. [a] and [d] were addressed to the general public. However, [b] and [c] were focused on the Olympic Family: the IYC's participants and athletes, respectively.
- Their promoters were different stakeholders of the Games. [a] was organised by the COOB'92 Olimpíada Cultural Department, [b] and [c] by the COOB'92's Olympic Village Department, [c] by the IOC and [d] by Barcelona City Council in collaboration with the COOB'92 Executive Board.
- Chronologically, the initiatives were held at different times in relation to the Earth Summit (between 3rd and 14th June) and the Olympics (between 25th July and 9th August): [a] opened in May and lasted until the day after the Games closed, [b] and [c] took place exactly during the two weeks of the Olympics and [d] was implemented months after Barcelona '92 had ended.

- All four projects were conceived either in late 1991 or in 1992, directly influenced by the preparations for the Earth Summit [a] and [b], its celebration [c], or its aftermath [d].
- There was collaboration with the UN through its agency UNESCO in [a] and [b] and directly with the UN Conference [c].

One month before the 1992 Olympic Games, the Earth Summit in Rio announced conclusions that were quickly adopted by the IOC. The declaration signed by Rio and Barcelona, and the four initiatives, are good examples of the approach taken by Barcelona '92 to the Earth Summit. These projects had different targets and features, were different from each other and encapsulated the same spirit: ecological awareness in symbiosis with the Olympic platform.



The International Youth Camp (IYC) of Barcelona '92 offered an ecological education programme, providing different environmental activities.

Photo: Fundació Barcelona Olímpica

The Olympic environmental dimension

By studying the minutes of all IOC Sessions, we understand that sustainability and the environment became a major issue for the IOC Members starting in the 97th and 98th IOC Sessions. These sessions (in Birmingham in June 1991 and in Courchevel in February 1992, respectively) hosted detailed discussions about the subject for the first time in Olympic history (OSC Archives). The issues concerning Albertville '92 were another significant episode. The IOC paid attention to ecology, mostly in reaction to the criticism of Albertville '92.

The draft of the IOC President's opening speech at the 99th IOC Session, on 20th July 1992 in Barcelona, proves that the head of the Olympic Movement had already adopted an eco-friendly discourse prior to the Summer Olympic Games. President Samaranch dealt with matters like the relationship between Olympism and culture, the Athletes' Commission, and the extreme situation in Sarajevo. He also provided different impressions about sustainability and ecology and concluded his speech with an allegory comparing



The concept of the Winter Games of 1994 in Lillehammer drew justifiable praise. It used a large number of temporary constructions. The Olympic Village was subsequently dismantled and the buildings sold as holiday houses.

the world of sports to a forest and the IOC to a big tree suffering the winds of incomprehension. Samaranch claimed: "dear colleagues, IOC Members, our tree has pretty deep roots" (CEO-JAS/FBO archive). Samaranch's message, together with other discussions during the 99th Session about ecological aspects concerning Lillehammer (OSC Archives), demonstrates that the IOC was ready to implement an environmental strategy.

Samaranch acknowledged the sustainability of Barcelona '92 as an example: "The effort made by Barcelona (...) has been accomplished, however, with a pattern of restraint. I think that athletes shouldn't feel lost in some kind of giant engine. Here, near an Olympic Village built next to the sea, we have a new occasion to return to the sources of Olympism." He then cited the new Olympic Museum's modification to avoid felling a very old oak in Lausanne. The IOC President then declared that the 1994 IOC Centennial Congress would officially adopt an ecological third dimension and would establish strong green criteria for bidding cities. "Among the topics that [the Congress] will address, I must mention the environment. Olympism, which is basically a culture rooted in nature, must be in the frontline of the battle to preserve our planet" (CEO-JAS/FBO archive).

The March 1993 issue of *Olympic Message* was entitled Environment and was fully devoted to this topic. It contained articles about Albertville '92, Barcelona '92, Lillehammer '94 and the 2000 bidding process. It became a means of officially recognising the new Olympic dimension. It also noted that the Olympic

Movement had already targeted the environment, which the journal confirmed in its foreword: "The environment has therefore become an intensely topical theme for the IOC, and rightly so. (...) This issue of the Message is devoted to the search for a reasonable balance" (Gafner, 1993: 4). After the alarms raised by the ecological protests during the 1992 Winter Olympics, the interaction between Eco-92 and the Barcelona Olympics demonstrated that the communication of ecological education could be achieved at the Olympic Games.

For this reason, the IOC understood that the adoption of its third dimension was feasible and realistic. It was accomplished in less than five years, which contrasts with long-standing discussions such as amateurism. The IOC environmental policy has promoted worldwide ecological awareness since 1993. It collaborates with internal institutions like the UN and the EU, and has undertaken a series of actions and educational values to raise awareness among the sports community (DaCosta, 1997: 101-102; IOC, 1997: 43). After two decades of the Olympic green dimension, positive and less positive feedback regarding its achievements emerged. The policy proved to be flexible when under external pressure, but it also lacked the strength to resolve internal controversies. The candidate city and chosen sites for the Olympic Games must follow guidelines and recommendations, but some call for placing more importance on the environment when evaluating bidding cities (Mestre, 2010: 26; Jägemann, 2013: 253-254).

In conclusion, through the projects and initiatives described in previous sections, the synergy between the UN Conference in Rio and the Olympics in Barcelona was a key achievement in the process to adopt a green third dimension. The IOC stated in 1993 that "demonstrators protesting against the environmental impact of the various constructions (...) by the staging of the Games [of Albertville]" prompted the 98th IOC Session in Courchevel to propose developing a long-term environmental protection policy (Gunz, 1993: 40). Twenty years after the 1992 Olympics, the IOC recognised that it had been a key year because the United Nations (UN) and the Earth Summit formally moved environmental issues into the political mainstream. Its influence meant that "environmental governance became a structural part of the Olympic framework and thinking. The culmination of this was articulated at the Centennial Olympic Congress (1994) where concern for the environment became the third pillar of Olympism" (IOC, 2012: 5-6).

The origins of the environmental dimension of the Olympic Movement are an important legacy of Barcelona '92. Although nothing is totally black and white, so the environmental management of the Barcelona Games was neither black or white. The

current environmental and sustainable dimension of Olympism was not the outcome of a single legacy, but of various ones. One of them, and a very significant one, is the connection between the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development and the 1992 Summer Games. This paper studied all the details of that connection. We can confirm that the origins of the environmental dimension of Olympism were rooted in Barcelona '92. As such, sustainability-oriented behaviours and eco-friendly criteria in the Olympic Movement were more likely to be incorporated as a legacy of the Barcelona Games. ■

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Municipal Archive of Barcelona (ACMB archive), which houses the COOB '92 documentary archive.

- 1 *Olympic Review* printed Samaranch's speech during the 98th Session, noting that the organisers of the 1992 Winter Olympics preserved “magnificent mountains by protecting their flora and fauna, as in the superb national park of La Vanoise” (OR, no. 294, 1992: 143). The IOC President compared the aforementioned protection of the Alps to the construction of the new Olympic Museum in Lausanne that preserved a hundred-year-old oak. The magazine also promised that bidding cities would be asked for a report on their ecological impact.
- 2 In addition to ecological issues, criticism of an organisation as prominent as the IOC occurred in the early 1990s (powerful, successful in securing funding, etc.). This was inevitable (Toohey and Veal, 2007: 50–51). Some criticised the committee for its undemocratic, oligarchic and secretive nature, and books like *The Lords of the Rings* (Simson and Jennings, 1992) were published. This worried the IOC.
- 3 There was a change in the management of the Olympics between the 1980s and 1990s; i.e., LA'84 was organised around a few objectives, for example, developing a cadre of volunteers to minimise costs and to aid in staging the sports competitions. Atlanta'96 planned additional goals such as urban redevelopment (legacies like Woodruff Park and Centennial Olympic Park) and economic growth (Burbank et al., 2001: 79–101–106). Since Samaranch's presidency Olympism was reprogrammed following a paradigm of modernisation, an idea that guides contemporary societies. This led to commitment to the environment (Karamichas, 2013: 73).
- 4 There were many interests and ecological approaches in the Earth Summit, the result of a complex process. Governments, NGOs, private companies and scientists were some of the varied kinds of stakeholders at the event (Dias de Oliveira, 2013: 423). However, this paper only studied relevant aspects of the Summit to understand the participation of the Olympic Movement.
- 5 It took place in June 1992, a tribute to the 20th anniversary of the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The same Secretary-General, Canadian national Maurice Strong, coordinated both UN Conferences in 1972 and 1992 (Johnson, 1993: 19). UN Resolution 44/228 was also important because it reflected the fact that 128 developing countries (like China, countries in Eastern Europe and African nations) forced Western countries to strengthen the connection between the environment, development and poverty, as Montañó indicates (1994: 238). Since 1990, the resolution was also committed to hold a few previous international conferences known as PrepCom and coordinated by the UNCED, in order to prepare for the Earth Summit.
- 6 These official papers are currently part of the IOC-OSC Archives. These include the guide Information pour les ONG Accréditées a l'UNCED, a progress report on preparatory negotiations entitled *The Final Report and PrepCom documents*.
- 7 The IOC's speech was delivered in a meeting room seating 200. Other participants at the Global Forum could read the speech because “the documents prepared by the NGOs to be presented at the Conference will be deposited on tables at the entrance of the main conference rooms” (OSC Archives).
- 8 Pernas López argues that the IOC observed similarities between the spirit of the 1992 UN Conference and Olympic principles. The 27 principles of the Rio Declaration could be traced back to the vision of Olympism and to some principles of the Olympic Charter. Another example is the adoption of Agenda 21 by the Olympic Movement seven years after it emerged during Eco-92 (2011: 15–16).