



# United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة · 联合国环境规划署  
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT · PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE  
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

## Winter Olympics Get Green Seal of Approval

**Nairobi/Torino, 8 February 2006** – As sportsmen and women from around the world gear up to compete in this year's Winter Olympics in Torino, behind the scenes environmentalists are applauding the green credentials of the Games.

Just as years of training will pay off for the more than 2,500 athletes from 85 different nations competing in 15 different disciplines, the Games will be the culmination of an extensive environmental programme aimed at making the event environmentally friendly and sustainable in ways that will benefit the entire region for years to come.

A high-level delegation from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) will be in Torino for the Winter Olympics. Led by Klaus Toepfer, UNEP's Executive Director, they are coming to see at first-hand how the games are delivering high environmental standards for athletes, spectators, the region, and the wider world.

Mr. Toepfer said: "Our long-standing productive relationship with the Torino Organizing Committee will come to fruition when the 'greenest Games ever' open in Torino. I am particularly pleased that our positive assessment of the work of the organizers in the field of environmental sustainability has also been confirmed by our friends at the WWF."

"UNEP has always strongly asserted the important role civil society organizations have to play in promoting and monitoring environmental sustainability," Mr Toepfer added.

During the Games, the UNEP delegation will participate in a number of planned activities including a 'green dinner' focusing on climate change, on the evening of 15 February, to celebrate the first anniversary of the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol on 16 February.

Ensuring a climate-friendly Games is one of the cornerstones of the preparations put in place by the Torino Organizing Committee for the 2006 Olympic Winter Games (TOROC).

The HERitage Climate TORino (HECTOR) project is designed to make the Winter Games carbon neutral. By supporting forestry, energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes both at home and abroad, the Torino Olympics will be able to offset the estimated 100,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide that will be generated during the 16 days of the Games.

### Key environmental aspects of the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino:

TOROC has issued two Sustainability Reports: one in 2003, the second in 2005. They were hailed as milestones in the quest to make mass spectator events both entertaining and environmentally sound.

TOROC also voluntarily developed a comprehensive Environmental Management System to integrate the principles of sustainability in the staging of the Games. The system conforms to the ISO 14001 and the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) regulation of the European Union.

An extensive monitoring plan was developed for the entire Olympic area which includes sixteen environmental indicators, including water cycle, air quality, soil use, energy consumption, waste production, ecosystems, landscape, and urban environment.

Suppliers of goods and services involved in the Games are also considered and selected based on the ecological quality of their products. In line with the European Eco-label for hotel services, TOROC is promoting an eco-label trademark to touristic sites and hotels in the Olympic areas and is providing technical support necessary to obtain certification.

A new initiative – Refrigerants, Naturally! – also forms part of this environmental component of the Games. Two of the official sponsors of the Olympic Games, McDonald's Corporation and the Coca Cola Company, are (along with Unilever) the founders of 'Refrigerants, Naturally!'. This voluntary initiative, supported by UNEP and Greenpeace, is promoting alternative point-of-sale refrigeration technology in the food and beverage industry that safeguards the climate as well as the ozone layer.

Under the initiative, Coca Cola has deployed more than 1,000 beverage machines at the Torino Games that use carbon dioxide as the refrigerant, thereby eliminating the need for ozone-damaging chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

If such technology were adopted globally on a large scale, it could make a significant improvement in this industry sector's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time safeguarding the Earth's protective ozone shield.

Other measures include a waste materials plan to handle the anticipated increases in rubbish during the games; the development of eco-friendly buildings at, for example, the new Olympic Village, and the use of pollution-free materials in their construction; and an extensive sustainable transport plan.

The waste management plan envisages combining recycling 68 per cent of organic and other dry waste material produced during the Games with an efficient system of energy retrieval (32 per cent of the waste being transformed into fuel), with the ambitious aim of reducing to zero the quantity of waste destined for rubbish dumps.

Waste production is also being discouraged, for instance by the use of bio-polymers in disposable tableware and a reduction in the use of paper for communication and information purposes.

### **Notes to Editors**

For more information on the Torino Winter Olympics, including the HECTOR initiative, the Sustainability Reports and other environmental aspects, please visit <http://www.torino2006.org>

Refrigerants, Naturally! is a 'Partnership for Sustainable Development', recognised by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development as a voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiative that contributes to the implementation of Agenda 21, Rio+5 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. For more information, please visit <http://esa.un.org/dsd/partnerships/public/partnerships/1460.html>

In 1994, UNEP and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) signed a Cooperative Agreement in which both organizations agreed to promote environmental considerations in sport events of the Olympic Movement.

UNEP is represented on the IOC Sport and Environment Commission, which meets regularly to review environmental issues as they relate to the Olympic Games and to advise the IOC Executive Board on environmental issues.

The Olympic Movement itself has declared the environment to be the third dimension of Olympism, alongside sport and culture. The Centennial Olympic Congress, held in Paris in 1994, devoted part of its debates to sport and the environment. Its final document called, among other measures relating to the environment, for the inclusion in the Olympic Charter of a provision underlining the necessity of preserving the environment. The Olympic Charter was subsequently amended in 1996.

UNEP has developed an active Sport and Environment Programme to promote the links between sport and the environment. In February 2003 the UNEP Governing Council adopted a long-term strategy on sport and the environment, which seeks to further reinforce UNEP's work in this field. The strategy also seeks to strengthen partnerships with sports organizations and federations, and specifically requests UNEP to initiate cooperation with Olympic host cities.

**For more information please contact**

Eric Falt, Director, UNEP Division of Communications and Public Information, on Tel: +254 20 762 3292; Mobile: +254 733 682 656, E-mail: [eric.falt@unep.org](mailto:eric.falt@unep.org)

Nick Nuttall, UNEP Spokesperson, Office of the Executive Director, on Tel: +254 20 762 3084; Mobile: +254 733 632 755, E-mail: [nick.nuttall@unep.org](mailto:nick.nuttall@unep.org)

If there is no prompt response, please contact Elisabeth Waechter, UNEP Associate Media Officer, on Tel: 254 20 762 3088, Mobile: 254 720 173968, E-mail: [elisabeth.waechter@unep.org](mailto:elisabeth.waechter@unep.org)

**UNEP News Release 2006/09**