



## SPORTS FOR NATURE

### Introduction

As a signatory of 'Sports for Nature,' DIF (National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark) has committed to undertake ambitious and measurable action for nature by upholding Sports for Nature's four principles. DIF has furthermore committed to providing an annual report on the initiatives that are initiated.

The Sports for Nature's four principles are as follows:

- 1) Protect nature and avoid damage to habitats and species.
- 2) Restore and enhance biotopes (natural habitats) and habitats where possible.
- 3) Consider nature and the environment in the organization's supply chains.
- 4) Educate and inspire positive actions for nature.

This document is DIF's action plan. The action plan containing initiatives within the four mentioned principles. The action plan sets the framework for DIF's efforts over the next four years.

As a sports umbrella organization representing 62 national sports federations, principles 1 and 4 are particularly relevant for DIF to address. DIF has a unique opportunity to educate, inspire, and guide the various national sports federations and sports clubs towards responsible behaviour that protects habitats and species. Likewise, DIF can initiate campaigns, initiatives and further actions plans that contribute to the creation of more nature on the premises of federations, organizations, and sports facilities. This action plan contains the most initiatives within principles 1 and 4.



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## **Principle 1: Protect nature and avoid damages to habitats and species**

This principle aims to ensure that the organization works to protect and avoid damage to natural habitats and species, also including respecting protected areas.

DIF will initiate the following initiatives within this first principle.

### Initiative 1.1: More Trail centres

DIF will promote more Trail centres as a strategic tool to ensure sustainable facilities and to guide the athletes to have a good behaviour and to avoid conflicts with the surrounding nature.

Trail centres are a brand-new concept for sustainable sports facilities for outdoor activities. Trail centres serve as natural meeting places for anyone who wants to actively engage in sports and exercise in a natural area. Trail centres set an example for sustainable construction in terms of the agenda of shared spaces, sustainable material choices, and continuously sustainable operation. Furthermore, Trail centres help redirect activities away from vulnerable natural areas. At the Trail centres, users are also informed and educated about considerate behaviour and nature conservation in the respective area.

In the effort to promote Trail centres, DIF will focus on physical strategic planning, where Trail centres are used to divert visitation pressure from vulnerable natural areas to more resilient natural and landscape areas.

### Initiative 1.2: Outdoor pavilions

Outdoor sports are not limited to experts and hardcore enthusiasts in the wilderness. Outdoor sports can also take place in the resilient everyday nature in the cities such as parks, green areas, lakes, and urban harbours. DIF will promote this through the project "Outdoor Pavilions - Urban Meeting Places for Outdoor Activities." The project will develop offerings that encourage activities in urban areas rather than vulnerable natural areas. This approach protects biotopes and habitats and benefits the carbon footprint, as users have shorter travel distances for training and can walk or cycle instead of driving by car from the city to nature — both green and blue. Additionally, more children and young people will gain an understanding of nature, fostering their love for it and teaching them how to protect it.

### Initiative 1.3: New analysis of sports activities in nature

In 2019, DIF conducted a mapping and analysis of sporting opportunities in the Danish nature. This analysis serves as a basis for sustainable physical and holistic planning in Danish municipalities and nature parks. Building upon this analysis, strategic planning can be implemented to promote afforestation and provide more facilities, ensuring that visitation pressure is distributed throughout the country to minimize wear and disturbances on individual areas, lakes, and rivers.

Since the analysis is four years old and needs updating, DIF will conduct a new mapping and analysis. This will provide municipalities and other stakeholders with up-to-date data, enabling better tools for sustainable physical planning where sports development and nature conservation can be considered simultaneously.

### Initiative 1.4: Code of conduct for "new" sports activities in nature

DIF, in collaboration with other relevant sports federations, will develop a code of conduct for specific sports activities in nature. DIF has already developed a code of conduct for mountain biking (MTB) in collaboration with organizations such as Danish Cycliste Union (DCU), and the Danish Nature Agency. However, new sports activities are constantly emerging, requiring the development of codes of conduct for several of these activities, such as stand-up paddle (SUP) and gravel biking.

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Initiative 1.5: Campaign promoting considerate sports in nature

In 2017, DIF conducted the campaign "Flink af natur" (Kind by Nature) in collaboration with several national outdoor organizations, including the Danish Outdoor Council and the Danish Nature Agency. The campaign encouraged everyone to show consideration for each other and for nature when engaging in outdoor activities.

DIF will explore opportunities to launch a new campaign in collaboration with relevant outdoor organizations and other relevant key actors, with a particular focus on gravel biking. Gravel biking represents a new user group that has led to conflicts, and the campaign will address these issues specifically.

Initiative 1.6: Membership and collaboration with Forest Stewardship Council

DIF will engage with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), a sustainable forest certification organization, to contribute to sustainable forest management that considers nature, promotes biodiversity, protect habitats, and continuously supports outdoor activities. This engagement may involve membership, allowing DIF to actively contribute to shaping the development direction of FSC and strengthening criteria for both nature and outdoor activities. This ensures that forest owners take even greater consideration of nature and outdoor activities. Additionally, DIF can engage with FSC through partnerships to organize a series of workshops for FSC members.





## **Principle 2: Restore and enhance biotopes and habitats, wherever possible**

This principle aims to initiate measures that can restore and recreate nature in sports areas and sports facilities.

### Initiative 2.1: Campaign for increased biodiversity in sports areas

In collaboration with relevant partners (such as The Danish Society for Nature Conservation or Birdlife Denmark), DIF will launch an initiative to promote biodiversity in natural sports areas. Sports organizations own and have control over many areas (e.g., clubhouses, motorsport tracks, golf courses, etc.), offering great potential for enhancing biodiversity through initiatives such as wild flora, deadwood, and the creation of more lakes and wetlands.

The Danish Society for Nature Conservation already has a campaign targeting businesses. Therefore, it would be fitting to collaborate on a similar campaign specifically aimed at sports clubs and sports facilities.

DIF will also engage in dialogue with municipalities, the Association of Sports Inspectors (HI) and Sports- and Leisure Facilities of Denmark (IFFD) regarding the possibility of promoting biodiversity in sports areas.

### Initiative 2.2: Waste collection

DIF will contribute to the annual waste collection organized by the Danish Society for Nature Conservation. With over 20 federations engaging in outdoor activities and more than 500,000 members we can make a significant contribution to waste collection both on land and in water. Initiatives like Green Kayak have already demonstrated that waste collection on the water is a suitable activity for kayaking. DIF and its federations can initiate similar initiatives.

The Danish Society for Nature Conservation already has partnerships with many companies and a concept for this. It would therefore be appropriate to establish a partnership specifically aimed at our federations and sports clubs. Several federations already participate, but DIF can enter a formal collaboration with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation and work towards increasing participation from more national federations.

### Initiative 2.3: Reforestation

In collaboration with relevant organizations (such as the Climate Forest Fund), DIF will actively work towards increased reforestation in Denmark through political advocacy and engagement. A collective effort could involve contributing to debates, providing input to government plans, and potentially launching a campaign for more forests - preferably publicly owned forests managed with the aim of promoting nature and biodiversity (including natural hydrology and deadwood) while providing access to citizens and organizations.

With more than 20 national federations engaged in outdoor activities, there are potentials for crowdfunding, income from sports events, or direct contributions to the Climate Forest Fund. It is relevant for DIF and its federations to contribute to reforestation to enhance biodiversity and as a climate initiative. In Denmark, it has already been demonstrated that sports can and will make a difference. For example, during the World Equestrian Games in Herning in 2022, the organizers contributed to the establishment of a new forest; proving an excellent way to make a sports event sustainable and make participants proud of their involvement in the sustainability agenda as a social and common responsibility.

### **Principle 3: Promote nature and environmental considerations through the organization's supply chains**

The purpose of this principle is to reduce the overall negative impacts on nature and environment by focusing on the positive and negative consequences of purchasing decisions on nature.

#### Initiative 3.1: Procurement policy

DIF will develop, adopt, and implement a procurement policy to ensure that DIF and The House of sports (Idrættens Hus) make more sustainable purchases in the future, considering nature, climate, environment, and people. The procurement policy will be based on the broad concept of sustainability, supporting both nature conservation and DIF's climate and sustainability policy.



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## **Principle 4: Educate and inspire positive actions for nature**

The purpose of this principle is to educate and inspire sports stakeholders to consider nature, the environment, and biodiversity improvement.

### Initiative 4.1: Green Sports

For many years, DIF has had a biennial certification called 'Green Federation,' which has been offered to all national sports federations. The certification consists of mandatory requirements for the federations, including having an environmental code of conduct, providing recommendations to athletes, encouraging clubs to make sustainability efforts, dedicating a staff member to work with environment issues, and submitting consultation responses. Additionally, all national federations seeking certification must define specific areas of focus and corresponding activities.

DIF will further develop the certification Green Federation and launch a new scheme called Green Sports. The new scheme aims to create an even more attractive and ambitious framework for collaboration between DIF and national federations regarding environment, climate, and sustainability. This initiative will be rolled out in the upcoming years, and the first federations are expected to be fully certified in the fall of 2023.

### Initiative 4.2: Nature and Environment Forum

DIF facilitates a network of nature, environment, and development consultants from national sports federations, with nature, the environment, and sustainability as central themes. Current issues and new initiatives are discussed within this network. Members of the network also exchange experiences related to ongoing matters.

DIF will introduce a new version of the Nature and Environment Forum called the 'Nature and Outdoor Forum,' with a heightened focus on nature and biodiversity both on land and in water. The new version of the Nature and Environment Forum will feature a new meeting format and a focus on the principles outlined in Sports for Nature.

### Initiative 4.3: Forest Seminar and User Council Seminar

DIF will gather all sports representatives in the Danish Nature Agency's User Council for a seminar where they will be equipped to work towards sustainable sports, where sports and nature conservation goes hand in hand. The seminar will focus on current issues related to nature conservation and biodiversity. The aim is to develop a shared understanding of how sports representatives can integrate sports activities into nature in a considerate manner, especially in specific situations.

### Initiative 4.4: The Annual Sports Meeting

DIF will continue to actively contribute to the planning, and facilitation of the annual Sports Meeting in Aalborg Municipality. The purpose is to bring more focus to sports in nature and ensure that municipalities and other sports stakeholders become more aware of the challenges and potentials in this area – as it is essential for all those involved in sports to consider nature, biodiversity, and sustainability.

At the Sports Meeting, participants will have the opportunity to exchange experiences, inspire each other, and engage in debates on outdoor sports across municipalities, organizations, and other stakeholders. This is important because outdoor sports encompass more than just sports expertise; it also involves nature, the environment, and physical planning, requiring broad collaboration among various stakeholders, landowners, and authorities.





**Overview of initiatives and tentative estimates of when the initiatives will be launched**

Principles	Initiatives	2023	2024	2025	2026
Principle 1	Trail Centres	X	X	X	X
	Outdoor pavilions in urban nature	X	X	X	X
	New analysis of outdoor sports		X		
	Code of conduct for "new" outdoor sports			X	
	Campaign promoting considerate and sustainable sports in nature		X		
	Membership and collaboration with FSC	X			
Principle 2	Campaign for increased biodiversity		X	X	X
	Waste Collection	(X)	X	X	X
	Reforestation		X		X
Principle 3	Procurement Policy	X			
Principle 4	Green Federations	X	X	X	X
	Nature and Outdoor Forum	X	X	X	X
	Forest seminar and user council seminar	X		X	
	Outdoor as a theme at the Sports Meeting	X	X	X	X