



BIODIV'SPORT

GUIDE

2026

#OneTeamforBiodiversity



INTRODUCTION

Dear organizations,

As a member of the Play for Nature community, your commitment to biodiversity is a fundamental step towards building a sustainable and balanced future.

To support you in designing and implementing your sports project, Play for Nature has developed this guide, providing you with the tools you need to make the most of your initiative and use sport as a driver of concrete action for biodiversity.

A successful Biodiv'Sport project does not end with the final whistle. It is an event that turns a player into a protector, a competition into restoration action, and a tradition into a new challenge for nature.

This guide will help you structure your initiative, taking into account your local context and the current stage of your project. You will find resources to ensure your project's success, tips for effectively engaging local communities around sporting values, advice on guaranteeing the environmental sustainability of your events, and much more.

We look forward to seeing your projects come to life and to working together to protect global biodiversity.

Play for Nature - Biodiv'Sport

Sport for biodiversity: an internationally recognized approach. Discover our reference publications



White Paper · IUCN Congress, 2025



Advocacy Brief · COP16, 2024

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What's next?

DEFINING MY **IMPACT**

What makes a Biodiv'Sport project?



1

**USES SPORT AS A DRIVER OF
ENGAGEMENT AND CONCRETE
ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY AND
ENDANGERED SPECIES**



2

**SUPPORTS THE PROTECTION
OF ENDANGERED SPECIES
LISTED ON THE IUCN RED LIST**



3

**CREATES AND DELIVERS SPORTS
EVENTS THAT MOBILIZE LOCAL
COMMUNITIES AND GENERATE
CONCRETE ACTIONS TO PROTECT
THEIR ECOSYSTEM**

DEFINING MY **IMPACT**

3 key questions to build a high-impact conservation project



THE PROBLEM

What concrete threat affects the species or habitat in your area? Rather than abstract global threats, identify local pressures (poaching, logging, overgrazing, egg collection, etc.). Your project should respond to an on-the-ground reality.



THE LEVER – WHY THIS SPORT?

The choice of sport is not arbitrary. **How is it relevant to addressing the problem?** What will it help reduce? It should serve your conservation goal through at least one of these three angles:

CULTURAL ANCHORING

Brings together communities directly affected by the threat

E.g.: canoe race in a fishing village

EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Creates direct contact with the protected species or ecosystem
E.g.: freediving with megafauna, trail running through target species' habitat

INTEGRATED ACTION

The activity itself produces a conservation outcome
E.g.: kayak clean-up, count-run, hike-and-plant

A good project addresses at least one of these angles. The best combine several.



THE CHANGE

What practice/behaviour changes?

E.g.: fishers adopt selective nets, communities commit to stop logging in zone X

What measurable result does this lead to?

E.g.: decrease in poaching incidents, hectares restored, increase in sightings of the target species

SPORT & CONSERVATION:

3 APPROACHES

Where does your project fit?

Not all Biodiv'Sport projects use sport in the same way. Identify the approach that matches your project and how to strengthen the link between your event and conservation.



SPORT AS A PLATFORM

Sport gathers an audience that will be **exposed to conservation messages**. The audience receives information, but does not necessarily take action.

Awareness banners

Audio messages

Biodiversity quizzes



SPORT AS A LEARNING TOOL

Sports activities incorporate **rules or content** linked to conservation goals.

Biodiversity-themed game rules

Training in sustainable practices

Species-branded equipment



SPORT AS A DRIVER OF DIRECT ACTION

The sports activity itself produces a **concrete and measurable conservation outcome**.

Ecosystem restoration

Data collection

Replacing harmful practices

Tip

The more your event produces a proven conservation impact, the more weight it will carry in our selection.

MY SPORTS EVENT IN PRACTICE

Key elements for a successful sports event that protects biodiversity:

SPORT & MISSION ALIGNMENT

Your sports event should have a clear connection to your target species or ecosystem and the communities affected by the threat.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Involve the local community (men, women, children, students, etc.) from the design stage to strengthen your project's impact and sustainability. A project designed with communities will be better understood, supported, and sustained.



DETAILED PLANNING

Draw up a detailed plan covering all organizational stages, required resources, and a realistic timeline.



TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

Clearly communicate your sports objectives and expected biodiversity impacts to strengthen community buy-in.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Build solid partnerships with local businesses, sports clubs, associations, media, and other key stakeholders to increase your project's reach.



DIVERSIFYING ACTIVITIES

Vary the activities on offer to reach a wider audience (sports competitions, awareness meetings and educational workshops, athlete appearances, participatory planting, collaborative nursery management, reserve visits, etc.).



ANTICIPATING RISKS

Unexpected challenges are part of fieldwork. Here are the main risks to anticipate before the big day.

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Weather can affect participation and event delivery. It is essential to have contingency plans in place (e.g., alternative date or venue).

Make sure you comply with all local regulations related to event organization and obtain all necessary permits.

LOW PARTICIPATION

Despite your outreach efforts, participation may fall short of expectations.

Adjust your communication to maximize engagement using the communication guide (see page 7).

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

LOGISTICS AND ACCIDENTS

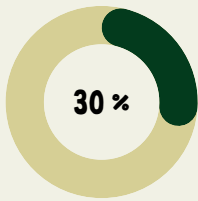
Anticipate needs in terms of safety, transport, and equipment to avoid surprises. Organizing a sports event requires on-site medical teams.

Tip

Invite all stakeholders and local actors (elected officials, local authorities, etc.) to take an active part in project planning.

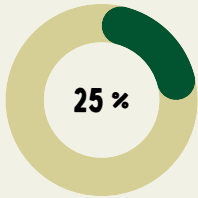
MANAGING MY PROJECT'S BUDGET

Budget allocation may vary depending on the size of the sports event, the location, and other factors specific to your territory or organization. Here is a typical budget structure for organizing your sports project (*this may vary depending on local context and the nature of your event*):



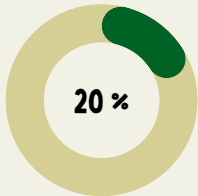
EVENT LOGISTICS

(venue, infrastructure, sports equipment, etc.)

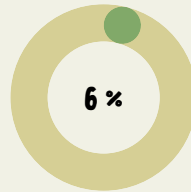


AWARENESS PLAN

(meetings, workshops, and specific actions)

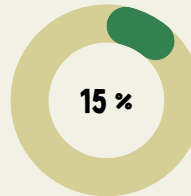


COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

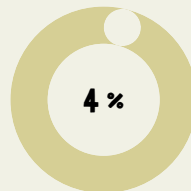


SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

(staff, insurance, medical services, etc.)



HUMAN RESOURCES AND VOLUNTEERS



OTHER COSTS

(contingencies, external consultants, etc.)

COMMUNICATING MY PROJECT

Share your project to mobilize your community and maximize your impact.

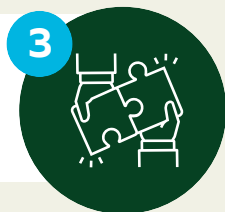
SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE

Use the most popular social media platforms locally (WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Facebook) as well as a dedicated page on your website. Share key information, testimonials, and event visuals. Centralize registrations if possible.



LOCAL CHANNELS

Local radio, local TV, press releases (see page 9). Partner with other events to broaden your audience.



COMMUNICATION RELAYS AND OUTREACH

Local radio, local TV, press releases. Partner with other events to broaden your audience. To mobilize the public, piggyback your event announcement on an existing gathering (market, festival, match) or organize a mobilization parade.



POSTERS AND DISPLAYS

Identify strategic locations (sports associations, clubs, schools, and high-traffic areas).

Tip

Identify prominent figures, such as local athletes, as ambassadors for your project!

MY SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Share your event on social media to mobilize your community and maximize your visibility. Here are the key elements for an effective post:

SPORT-CONSERVATION LINK

Explain in one sentence how your event benefits the species.

TAG PLAY FOR NATURE

Mention @PlayforNature and #OneTeamforBiodiversity so we can share your post.

CATCHY HEADLINE

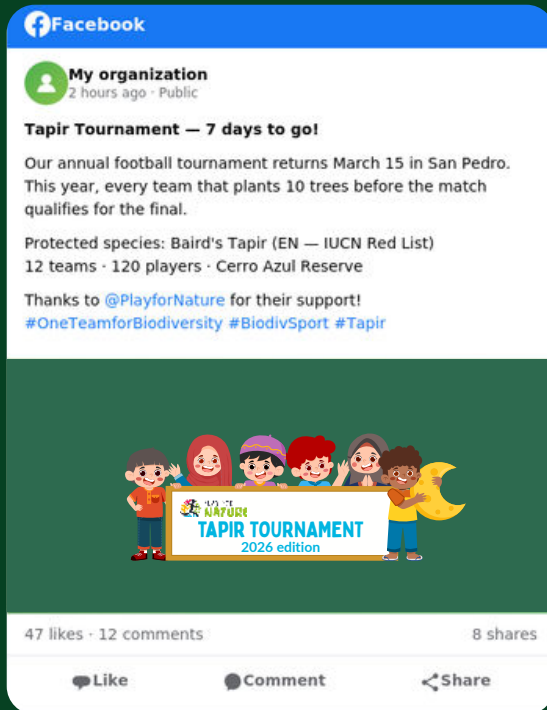
Mention the species and the event in the first line.

PRACTICAL INFO

Date, location, expected number of participants.

A VISUAL

Always add a photo or video: posts with visuals get 3 to 5 times more reach.



MY PRESS RELEASE

Rally community support and generate media interest by sharing your project details through a press release. Here are the key elements to include for a compelling document:

COMPELLING INTRODUCTION

Briefly describe your project's objective and expected impact.

CATCHY HEADLINE

Grab attention with a concise and striking title.



Communiqué de presse

Journées des Espèces Menacées

9 août 2023

Le Parc Animalier d'Auvergne accueille la septième édition des Journées des Espèces Menacées les 14 et 15 août 2023, organisées par Play for Nature. Cet événement a pour objectif de sensibiliser le public à l'importance de la conservation des espèces en voie de disparition tout en offrant une expérience exclusive et éducative au plus près des animaux.

Au programme de ces journées exceptionnelles : les visiteurs auront l'opportunité de participer à de nombreuses activités inédites comme par exemple la visite de l'enclos et le nourrissage des pandas roux, la création d'enrichissements pour les gloutons (objets pour stimuler les sens des animaux), la sortie des lémuriers, la rencontre avec l'équipe vétérinaire du Parc, et bien d'autres !

VILLAGE ASSOCIATIF

Un village associatif sera mis en place, rassemblant des associations de conservation de la biodiversité qui œuvrent sur le terrain pour la préservation des espèces menacées telles que Panse-Bêtes, Borneo Nature Foundation, Cheetah Conservation Fund ou ABConservation. Les visiteurs pourront découvrir les différentes initiatives en faveur des espèces menacées, s'informer sur les projets en cours et apporter leur soutien aux actions menées.

Play for Nature est un Fonds de Dotation auvergnat créé par Julien PIERRE, ancien rugbyman et Pascal DAMOIS, président du Parc Animalier d'Auvergne. Acteur majeur de la protection de l'environnement, son objectif est de sensibiliser à la protection de la biodiversité et de collecter des fonds, notamment grâce à l'organisation d'événements caritatifs.

BILLETTERIE :

14 août : <https://tinyurl.com/mr3j68sv>
15 août : <https://tinyurl.com/2ckbj9c4>



Contact presse

Cécile JOLY
Directrice Play For Nature
3 place Jean Garnier
63420 Ardes-sur-Couze
06 58 91 18 89
cecile@playfornature.org

BRIEF PRESENTATION

Introduce your organization and its history. Explain why this event matters in the local context and ecosystem.

EVENT DETAILS

Add specific information about planned activities, schedules, venues, and any other relevant details.

CONTACTS AND LOGOS

Include your organization's contact details, the names of key contacts, as well as your logo and those of your partners.

Tip Add short quotes, testimonials, and images that illustrate your initiative.

MEASURING MY IMPACT

STEP 1 Go back to your objectives

Review the objectives defined when designing your project to assess whether you achieved them. Each indicator should answer a specific question linked to your objectives.



Important: your sports event is not separate from your conservation actions.

Are you already tracking poaching, deforestation, or species sightings? Measure before and after the event: it is this change that proves impact, not the number of players. How did the event contribute to the observed change?

Success indicators STEP 2

Quantified data give weight to your project. For each indicator, here is a concrete example of what you can measure.

PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT: DID YOU REACH THE RIGHT PEOPLE?

Number of sports participants	Number of spectators	Audience diversity (men, women, youth, elders)
Participation rate	Involvement of local authorities and partners	Conservation ambassadors engaged or trained

Tip

"500 people reached" does not carry the same weight as "80% of participants can name 2 threats facing the species."

MEASURING MY **IMPACT**

AWARENESS: DID PARTICIPANTS LEARN SOMETHING?

Change in knowledge,
understanding of threats

Change in attitudes, habits,
behaviors, or social norms

Qualitative feedback
(testimonials)

Number of articles/posts,
engagement...

CONSERVATION: WHAT CONCRETE RESULT FOR BIODIVERSITY?

Actions completed: trees
planted, area restored, data
collected...

Commitments/framework
documents signed

Percentage change in
threat incidence

Change in sightings of the
target species

Structures created (clubs,
committees)

IN CASE OF FUNDRAISING

Amount of funds raised

Concrete actions initiated
thanks to the funds

Tip

A waste clean-up is a concrete conservation result. Record the quantity collected and set a reduction target for the next edition.

MEASURING MY **IMPACT**

WHEN TO COLLECT?

BEFORE

Document the baseline: questionnaires, site condition (photos), existing wildlife data, quantified objectives

DURING

Participant count, photos/videos, signed documents, field observations

AFTER (3-6MONTHS)

Follow-up survey, verification of actions (tree survival rate), change in threat indicators, feedback from partners and community

HOW TO COLLECT?



REGISTRATION FORM

Participant demographics (age, gender, village)



BEFORE/AFTER QUIZ

5 simple questions about the species and local threats



GEOTAGGED PHOTOS

Before/after images of planting or clean-up sites



ACTIONS COMPLETED

Log of matches, awareness or training sessions, area restored



SPECIES-THREAT MONITORING

Connect your existing field data to the event (before and after)

Tip

The more your monitoring is planned and organized for the long term, the more informative and credible it will be.

WHAT'S NEXT?

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS WITH PLAY FOR NATURE

Send us your field photos and videos, and complete the final report template available on the platform. Schedule a call with our team to review your initiative and discuss next steps.



STRENGTHEN YOUR ORGANIZATION

Develop your long-term strategy with clear objectives. Diversify your funding sources (businesses, grants, donations, sponsors). Build up your team and strengthen your field and media presence.

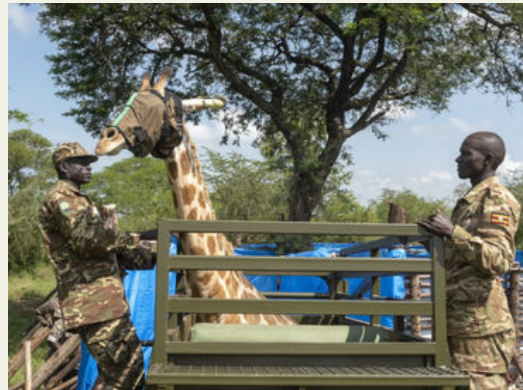
IDENTIFY KEY FIGURES

Identify influential personalities (athletes, elected officials, community leaders) and establish lasting partnerships with local actors who share your vision (clubs, sports associations, government bodies). These alliances will ensure stability and impact.



REPLICATE YOUR EVENT

Regular replication builds credibility and growing impact. Highlight the successes achieved, surround yourself with motivated partners, and adapt your strategy based on lessons learned.



+ APPLY TO FUTURE PLAY FOR NATURE CALLS FOR PROPOSALS: WE PLACE GREAT IMPORTANCE ON THE STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY OF CANDIDATE ORGANIZATIONS!

BEST PRACTICES

Sport as a cultural alternative



Since 2012, Big Life Foundation has organized the Maasai Olympics every two years in Kenya. The event celebrates the skills of Maasai warriors and has become an alternative to a traditional rite of passage that involved lion hunting. Throughout the year, awareness meetings are held with different population groups (men, women, children) on the protection of lions and their ecosystem. Since the creation of the Maasai Olympics, over 80% of warriors say they have never hunted a lion.

★ Key strengths recognized by Play for Nature

- Cultural substitution: sport replaces a harmful practice while preserving its values
- Co-designed with communities from the outset
- Measurable result: 2022, first year with zero lion poaching

"The Maasai Olympics have really helped change the way warriors and all people here think about biodiversity and wildlife. Today, no one in Amboseli would want to kill a lion." – Joseph Legato, Maasai athlete.



An event in the image of the species



Armonía protects the Red-fronted Macaw, a parrot endemic to Bolivia with only 1,200 individuals remaining in the wild. The organization works with communities to combat bird trafficking and promote farming practices compatible with nesting. The futsal championship brings together the 11 communities of Torotoro National Park each year around a common goal: making the Macaw the emblem of their territory.

★ Key strengths recognized by Play for Nature

- Handcrafted trophy featuring the Macaw
- Each team identifies with a local bird

🚀 Going further

- Measure changes in poaching/trafficking practices in participating communities
- Link championship participation to concrete commitments to protect nests

«There is a place called Cónдор Qaqa where condors come every afternoon. That's why we chose this name for our team. Before, people didn't care about them – they even harmed them. Now, the community wants to protect them.» – Zenobio Juchasara, Andean Condor team, futsal competition (Asociación Armonía).



The competition fully integrates conservation action



Nature and People as One

NaPO supports the Rendille and Samburu pastoralist communities in restoring degraded ecosystems in northern Kenya, a critical habitat for the African elephant and Grevy's zebra. The annual football tournament engages youth around a "sport for restoration" model: to participate, each team must commit to concrete planting and regeneration actions on their territory.

★ Key strengths recognized by Play for Nature

- Participation requirement: each team must complete restoration actions to qualify
- Final ranking combines sports points + conservation points (trees planted, survival rate)
- Integration of traditional Rendille knowledge (RAMAT method) into restoration practices

🚀 Going further

- Document progress precisely between editions (beyond team numbers: area restored, tree survival rates)
- Connect restoration efforts with wildlife data (elephant/zebra sightings in restored areas), before/after satellite imagery

«Our incentive system encourages young people to prioritize environmental conservation while having fun.» – NaPO Report 2025



Lasting engagement: beyond the final whistle



GISDEV is a youth organization that protects the Abongphen forest, home to the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee and many endemic bird species. The organization uses football as an entry point to mobilize communities around reforestation and the fight against destructive practices (slash-and-burn, illegal logging, poaching).

★ Key strengths recognized by Play for Nature

- Local governance: the event becomes the moment when the community formalizes its forest use rules
- Economic alternatives: training in alternative livelihoods reduces pressure on forest resources

🚀 Going further

- Formalize forest management protocols (acceptable practices, protected zones, monitoring mechanisms)
- Track chimpanzee population trends in restored areas
- Train long-term actors: eco-volunteers, school environmental clubs, species ambassadors, volunteer eco-guards

«Football proved to be a powerful tool for social mobilization. It created safe spaces for dialogue, increased participation, and improved message retention among youth. – GISDEV Report 2025





29 Route des Pradeaux
63500 Parentignat, FRANCE
06 58 91 18 89

contact@playfornature.org
www.playfornature.org



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