



**Sports  
for Nature**



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# Summary of the 2024 Signatory Reports

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## About Sports for Nature

Sports for Nature (S4N) is a joint initiative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), International Olympic Committee (IOC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and Dona Bertarelli Philanthropy. S4N aims to deliver transformative action for nature across sports, by 2030 and beyond, enabling sports to champion nature and contribute to its protection and restoration. It provides a game plan for sports – at all levels – to accelerate and inspire others to take action for nature.



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# 1 Introduction

Sports for Nature is a global initiative that helps the sports sector take concrete action to protect and restore nature. It supports sports organisations with practical resources, peer collaboration, campaign platforms and expert guidance to reduce their impact on biodiversity and contribute to healthier ecosystems.

Sport has a unique ability to drive change. Its global network – athletes, teams, fans and governing bodies – offers a powerful platform to raise awareness and influence behaviour. By actively addressing its relationship with nature, the sports world can set a visible example and help accelerate sustainability across society.

Nature is essential to the future of sport for three main reasons:

- Our Playground: The physical spaces where we train, play and compete – the fields, rivers, oceans and mountains. Without these being well looked after and accessible, a number of sports couldn't exist in their traditional form.
- Our Provider: The natural environment offers resources that makes sports possible – clean air, water, healthy food etc – as well as the breathtaking landscapes that enhance sports for participants and spectators.
- Our Protector: Natural systems and native species protect communities and sporting infrastructure from extreme weather conditions and other climate change-related events.

A growing movement: The second reporting cycle  
This report marks the second annual cycle of reporting under the Sports for Nature Framework. It builds on the inaugural reporting process conducted in 2023 and reflects the growing momentum and maturity of the initiative.

In 2024, more organisations joined the movement, deepened their commitments, and took action aligned with the framework's four core principles:

1. Nature protection
2. Nature restoration
3. Green procurement
4. Education and communications

This year's report not only highlights what has been achieved by signatories in 2024—it also offers an early look at how the initiative is evolving. From greater diversity in actions to emerging patterns of collaboration and innovation, we begin to see how the foundation laid in year one is shaping a stronger, more coordinated approach in year two.

## The Sports for Nature Framework

Any sports organisation—be it a club, league, federation, National Olympic Committee, series, or event—regardless of size, location, or sport, can become a signatory. To join, organisations must:

1. Commit to meaningful action aligned with the four Sports for Nature principles (above), and
2. Report annually on their progress.

Organisations that joined before 1 July 2024 are expected to report on their 2024 activities. This requirement applied to 60 signatories, of which 54 submitted a report, resulting in a 90% response rate. Signatories who fail to submit a report for two

consecutive years will lose their affiliation with the Sports for Nature Framework. In addition, three organisations submitted voluntary reports, bringing the total number of responses received to 57.



## 2 Methodology of 2024 signatory reporting

The insights presented in this report are based on data collected through the official 2024 Sports for Nature Reporting Form, submitted by signatories of the Sports for Nature Framework. The reporting form captured both quantitative and qualitative information on how organisations are implementing the Framework's four core principles.

All signatories that joined before 1 July 2024 were required to complete the form, which was made available in English, Spanish, and French, with submissions accepted until 31 December 2024. To ensure accessibility and encourage consistent responses, signatories were supported through a number of tools, including a PDF preview of the questions and a dedicated webinar walking them through the process.

Organisations that joined after 1 July were not obligated to report in 2024, but were invited to submit a voluntary report. Three Sports for Nature signatories submitted a voluntary report.

Reporting is not a one-way exercise. Sports for Nature is designed to be a supportive and evolving initiative, providing signatories with ongoing guidance, resources, and opportunities for improvement. A key part of this support comes from the Sports for Nature Advisory Group—a panel of biodiversity and sustainability experts. This group plays a vital role in reviewing all submitted reports, offering tailored feedback, and identifying opportunities for each organisation to deepen and strengthen its work in future cycles.

Through this process, every signatory not only contributes to a shared pool of knowledge, but also receives bilateral, expert-informed guidance—ensuring that reporting leads to learning, and that learning leads to action.



## 3 Highlights of 2024 Signatory Reports

In the second year of Sports for Nature reporting, signatories demonstrated strong and growing commitment across all four principles of the Framework. The data shows that most organisations are actively taking steps to reduce their environmental impact and protect biodiversity through practical, on-the-ground actions.

The percentage of reporting signatories working on each principle in 2024 is as follows:

- Principle 1: Nature protection – 84%
- Principle 2: Nature restoration – 74%
- Principle 3: Green procurement – 64%
- Principle 4: Education and communications – 90%

These figures reflect an encouraging trend: not only are signatories embracing the Framework in a holistic way, but the emphasis on communication and awareness (Principle 4) suggests that sports organisations recognise their powerful role in engaging broader audiences on nature-related issues.

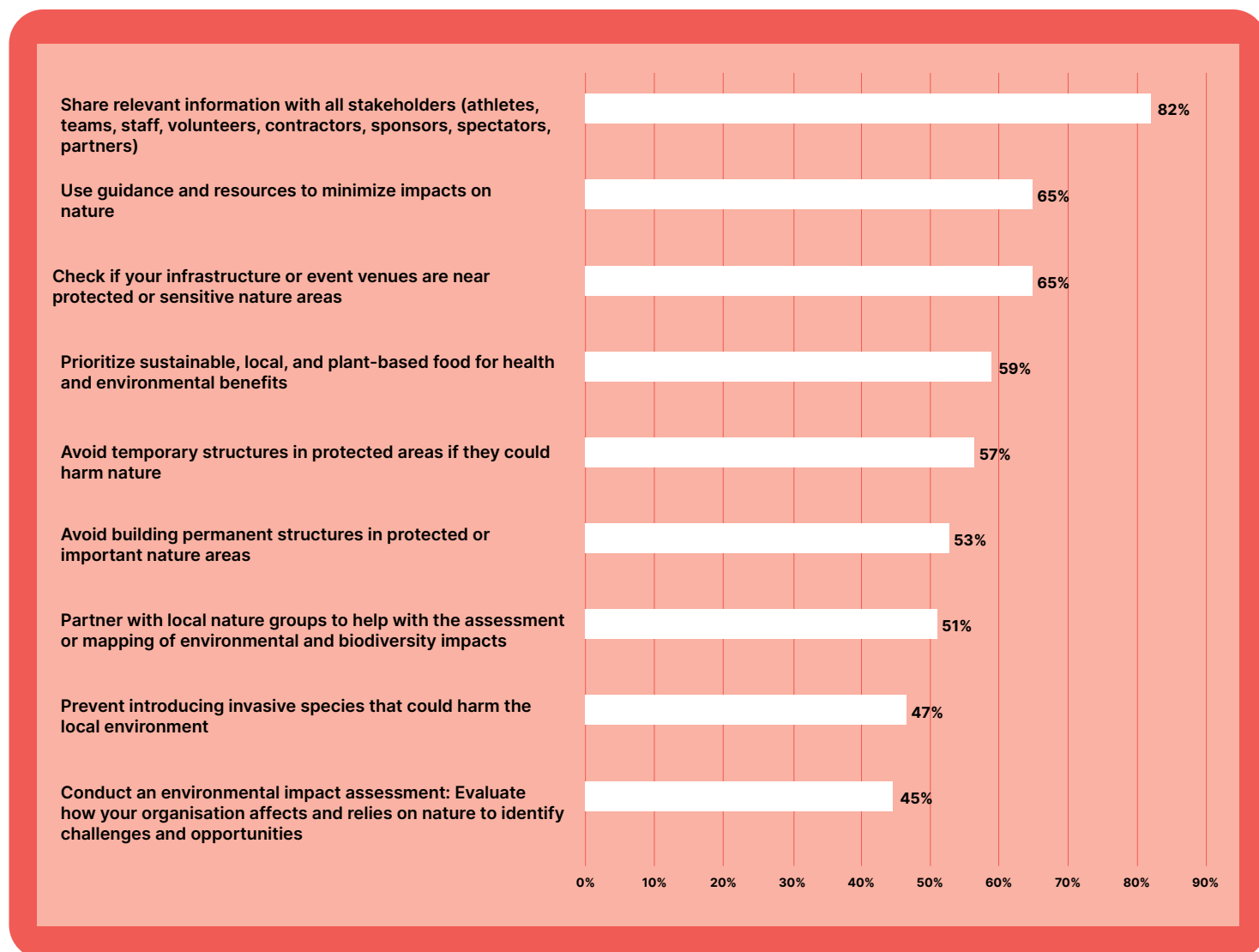
The sections below explore each principle in more detail, highlighting the most common actions reported and showcasing emerging good practices from across the Sports for Nature network.



## Principle 1

# Nature protection

The most frequently reported actions under this principle included:



These responses reflect a growing awareness within the sporting community of how physical operations and infrastructure choices affect the natural world. Many signatories also reported taking

early steps toward environmental due diligence, site assessments, and habitat-sensitive event planning, laying important groundwork for deeper commitments in future reporting cycles.

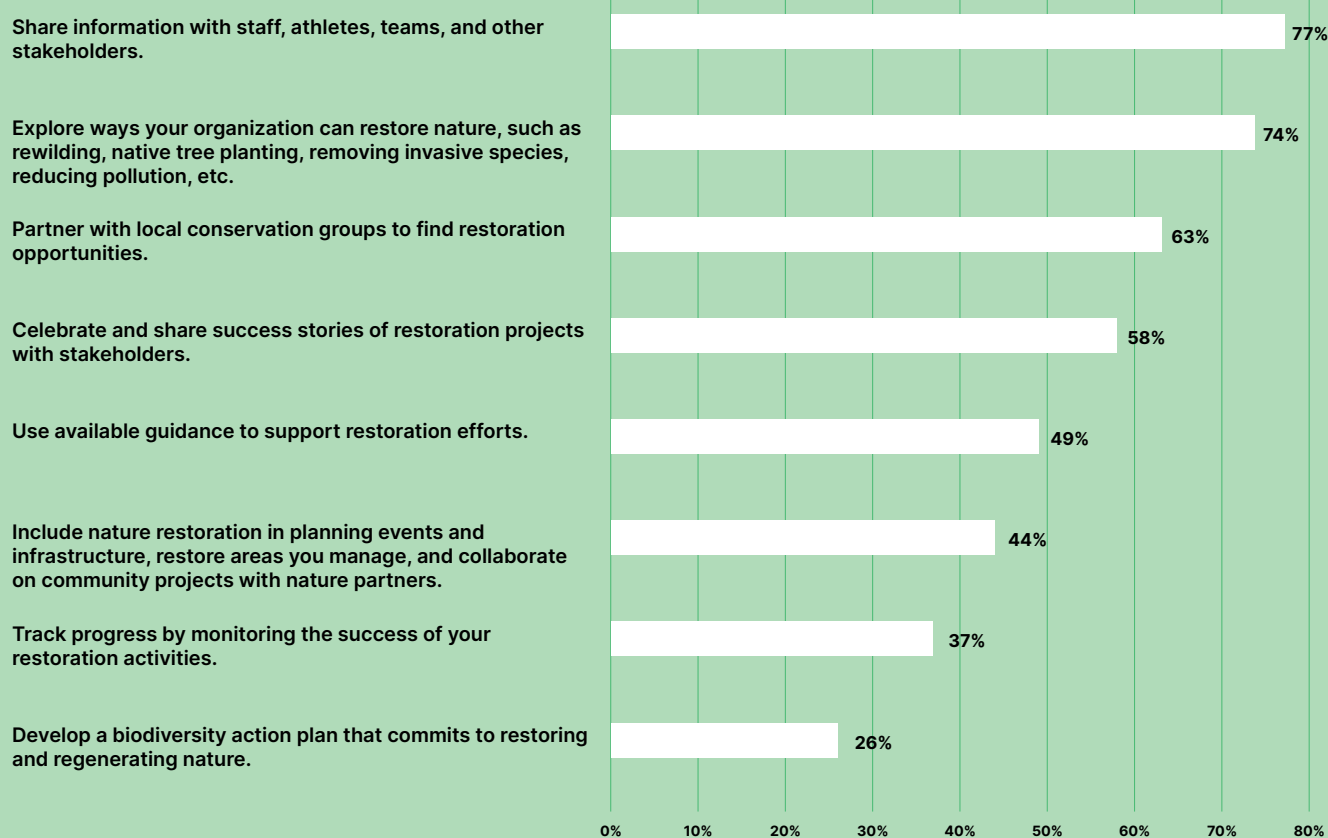
## Principle 2

# Nature restoration

The graph below shows the range of actions reported by signatories under Principle 2 wherever possible. It highlights the most common approaches taken to actively restore nature in operational areas, ranging

from awareness raising and local partnerships to more structured efforts such as tracking progress and developing biodiversity action plans.

### Principle 2 - Actions taken



In line with Principle 2, signatories have implemented a wide range of concrete actions to actively restore.



## Principle 3

# Green procurement

The chart below illustrates the range of actions taken by signatories under Principle 3. It shows how signatories are working to identify environmental risks

in their procurement practices, develop sustainable sourcing policies and promote collaboration across the sports sector.

### Principle 3 - Actions taken

Review your supply chains to understand how your procurement affects nature.

59%

Develop a sustainable sourcing policy that addresses nature risks, focusing on high-impact actions, especially those related to climate.

57%

Share best practices and lessons within the sports community.

49%

Work with others in your industry to share practices and create joint sustainability initiatives.

46%

Offer sustainability training for staff, suppliers, and stakeholders.

32%

Collaborate with suppliers to test and apply your policy.

30%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

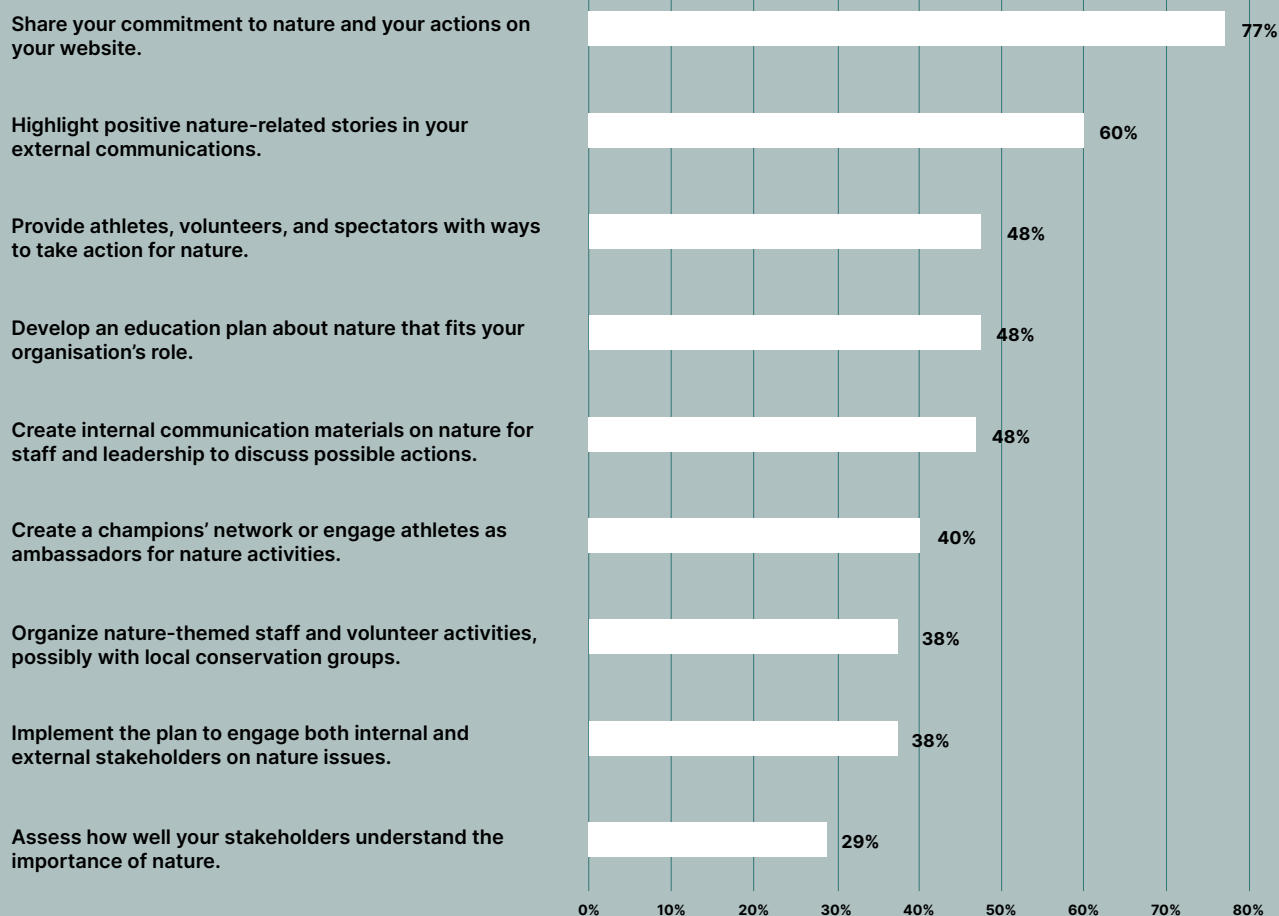
## Principle 4

# Nature restoration

The table below presents a selection of actions taken in 2024 under Principle 4 of the Sports for Nature Framework, which focuses on educating and inspiring positive actions for nature within and beyond sport. These actions reflect how organisations are using

their influence – through communication, training, campaigns, and stakeholder engagement – to raise awareness, build knowledge, and motivate nature-friendly behaviour within and beyond their immediate sports communities.

### Principle 4 - Actions taken



A wide range of educational initiatives were reported in 2024 to raise awareness and inspire action for nature within and beyond the world of sport. These initiatives targeted both internal (staff, athletes,

event teams) and external (fans, youth, communities, federations) audiences through training, campaigns, events and resource sharing.





## 4 Challenges in taking action for nature

While momentum continues to grow across the Sports for Nature network, signatories also face a range of barriers that limit the scale, speed, and depth of their nature-related efforts. These challenges are not unique to sport—but they highlight the need for continued support, collaboration, and investment to turn ambition into sustained action.

### Financial constraints

Access to stable, long-term funding remains a critical challenge:

- **20% of signatories reported significant funding issues**, with at least one losing all biodiversity-related funding due to a sponsor withdrawal.
- **25% are currently operating with ad hoc or unstable financial support**, relying on one-off donations, redirected internal budgets, or small local grants.
- **Only 10% have a dedicated nature-focused budget exceeding €50,000**, limiting their ability to scale projects or build continuity over time.

### Human resources and expertise

Staff capacity and biodiversity knowledge gaps are holding many organisations back:

- **30% of signatories** saw no increase or only minor changes in staffing for nature-related work.
- **35% have assigned 1-2 people to sustainability**, often in dual-purpose or part-time roles.

- **10% have created dedicated sustainability teams or working groups**, and fewer than 5% employ full-time professionals with biodiversity responsibilities.

### Monitoring, KPIs, and strategic planning

While awareness is growing, many signatories are still building the systems needed to track impact:

- **25% are developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** or beginning to implement nature-specific tracking tools.
- **Fewer than 10% currently use advanced tools like biodiversity mapping**, ecological footprint analysis, or ESG-aligned reporting systems.
- **40% plan to finalise or publish formal sustainability strategies by 2025**, showing that many are still in the planning or pilot stages.

### Education and community engagement

Efforts to raise awareness and mobilise communities are underway, but not yet widespread:

- **20% are expanding educational initiatives**, such as e-learning platforms, athlete ambassador programmes, and staff workshops.



- **15% reported active community engagement**, including tree planting, restoration events, or citizen science campaigns.
- **5–7% have reported measurable impact metrics**, such as the number of students, clubs, or local groups reached.

## Operational and structural limitations

Physical and institutional constraints also limit implementation:

- **15% of signatories face logistical issues** linked to limited infrastructure or lack of control over event venues.
- **10% are still undergoing a strategic review**, delaying implementation until late 2025.
- **5–7% have access to valuable biodiversity data (e.g. species inventories or habitat maps)**, but struggle to apply it due to technical or staffing limitations.

## A landscape of uneven readiness

While leadership and innovation are visible in parts of the network, many signatories are still at early or intermediate stages of their journey:

- **30–35% face financial or structural barriers** that limit meaningful progress.
- **40% are still working to define clear strategies**, monitoring systems, or implementation pathways.
- **10–15% have begun to fully integrate nature into their governance**, planning, and reporting frameworks.

These findings underscore a clear need: to empower more sports organisations to act, there must be broader access to sustained funding, expert guidance, and practical tools. Scaling this support will be essential if the sporting world is to play its full part in reversing biodiversity loss and protecting nature for future generations.





## 5 Shifts from 2023 to 2024: Evolving participation and practice

As the Sports for Nature Framework enters its second year of reporting, clear signs of growth and maturity are emerging—both in how signatories engage with the principles and how they structure their internal commitments.

However, when comparing 2023 and 2024 results, it is important to note a major change in methodology. The 2024 reporting form was significantly revised, with more structured questions, predefined action lists, and specific prompts under each principle. Unlike the open-ended format used in 2023, this new design encouraged signatories to provide more detailed, measurable responses.

As a result, apparent increases in action or engagement may be influenced as much by improved data collection as by changes on the ground. Even so, a number of meaningful shifts in practice and organisational culture are evident.

### Organisational continuity and growth

- **A total of 57 organisations submitted reports in 2024**, more than doubling the 26 that reported in 2023.
- **25 organisations participated in both years**, representing 96% retention of the original cohort—a strong sign of long-term commitment.
- **Only one 2023 signatory, Paris 2024**, did not report in 2024 due to the organisation's planned dissolution after the Olympic Games.

### Operational commitment and resourcing

A key marker of progress in 2024 is the significant increase in how signatories are allocating internal resources to support nature-related work:

- **100% of returning signatories (24/24)** updated their descriptions of resource allocation in 2024.
- **Many reported increases in budget**, staff time, or strategic focus, suggesting that environmental priorities are being embedded more deeply in operations.
- **This shift represents the strongest year-on-year signal of progress**, beyond changes in form structure or phrasing.

### Other observed improvements

In addition to principle-specific actions, two broader areas of change stand out:

- **Data quality and consistency.** The introduction of structured forms led to more comparable, actionable data across all respondents, which will enable better benchmarking and analysis in future reports.
- **Use of strategic tools:** While still limited overall, there is a gradual increase in the adoption of planning documents, KPIs, and environmental risk assessments, indicating a shift from ad hoc action to more strategic, longer-term thinking.



## 6 Conclusion and looking ahead

The second year of Sports for Nature reporting has confirmed that the global sports community is not only willing—but increasingly able—to take meaningful action for nature. Three key insights stand out from the 2024 cycle:

1. Engagement is deepening: A growing number of signatories are taking practical steps under all four principles, supported by stronger resourcing, strategic planning, and operational integration.
2. Reporting is maturing: With improved tools and structure, data submitted in 2024 is more detailed, actionable, and consistent—laying the groundwork for shared learning and future benchmarking.
3. The commitment is enduring: Nearly all 2023 signatories returned to report again in 2024, and many expanded their efforts—demonstrating that nature is becoming a sustained priority across sport.

### Looking Ahead

In 2025 and beyond, the Sports for Nature initiative will focus on building capacity across the network, helping all signatories—regardless of size, region, or sport—to scale up their impact.

Key developments include:

- Practical tools: The launch of a dedicated assessment tool in early 2025 gives signatories a hands-on, user-friendly way to understand and measure their organisation's links to nature. It supports planning, action, and learning across all four principles.
- Expert support and peer learning: Signatories will continue to benefit from targeted resources, expert feedback, and increased opportunities for bilateral engagement, including the ongoing role of the Sports for Nature Advisory Group.
- Climate-nature interlinkages: A new resource published in early 2025 highlights the crucial

relationship between climate and biodiversity action, helping signatories understand how nature-positive strategies also support carbon goals and resilience.

- Youth and ambassadorship: There is strong momentum to activate young athletes and sports stars as ambassadors for nature, with new initiatives focusing on youth engagement, storytelling, and role modelling.

Finally, there is a shared sense of optimism and solidarity across the network. Signatories are calling for continued collaboration, support, and knowledge-sharing—and Sports for Nature is committed to meeting that call.

By working together, we can ensure that sport not only protects nature—but champions it, for generations to come.







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