

**2017 WORLD ROWING REVIEW PROJECTS
NATIONAL FEDERATIONS MEETING
WORLD ROWING CUP, BELGRADE – 5 MAY 2017**

The background and terms of reference of the World Rowing Review Projects were presented. See presentation slides in the pdf document attached.

The following questions and comments were received from the national federations (NFs) present. The responses from FISA are noted below each question:

1. Rule 36 – World Rowing Championship Programmes

NF Would it be possible to know before June the progression of each working group? That way we can see if there are some weak points and we can add our complementary information to the proposals

FISA At each NF meeting we will present an update on the progress of the review project so that by Lucerne will have a proposal for the Congress. The proposals presented to Congress will be voted down to one which will be voted against the existing proposal and require a two-thirds majority.

NF Must the NFs send their proposals by 16 June?

FISA 16 June is the latest date that we would like to receive input from the NFs, in order to allow the working group sufficient time to prepare their proposal for the FISA Council meeting in Lucerne on 10 July. We need to consider all principles first and then we will go to details.

NF Regarding the decision to be made on boat classes – it is refreshing to hear that you are thinking about building pathways from junior to U23 to senior. Is there a potential with the younger age groups to phase some changes over the three years rather than having the block of three years with no changes?

FISA Only the Extraordinary Congress has the authority to vote on rule changes, including Rule 36. The authority to change rule 36 at the Ordinary Congress in Sarasota was granted by the 2017 Extraordinary Congress, but on the topic of Rule 36 alone. We will think about if and how such changes between the Extraordinary Congresses could be achieved within the Rules, and will consult with legal and governance experts, if necessary.

NF Given that in future the Olympic programme will be event-based, where each event will be assessed on its contribution to the Games, could FISA look at each event and create a ranking, or prioritisation of the events? Is there a willingness to make a ranking of events, so we accept that the events are not equal anymore?

FISA Our position has always been that each event or boat class is unique in that it requires slightly different skill sets, team dynamics – this is important to defend our 14 Olympic events. But we want to consider your suggestion so please send your proposal in writing with more detail.

2. 2020 Olympic Qualification System

NF Do you have any information on the IOC decision on the athlete quota for Rowing?

FISA The IOC Programme Commission was meeting today (Friday 5th May) to discuss the event programme and athlete quotas. The Olympic Charter states that there should be 10,500 athletes in the Games, but in Rio there were 11'300, so the IOC tells us that the number of athletes for Tokyo must be reduced. They are looking at several sports' quotas to reduce the number of athletes, but it is not yet defined by how much.

NF How were there 11'300 athletes if the quota system was in place?

FISA Athletics and Swimming principally have a different system, and their numbers were very high. But we still all are under pressure to reduce because many of the sports with small quotas are (justifiably) asking for bigger quotas. Rowing, with the third highest quota, will definitely be under pressure to reduce and to contribute to the bigger picture.

NF The IOC has allowed additional sports in Tokyo. It seems that there is a room for some sports to negotiate.

FISA The quotas for the five new sports is in addition to the 10,500 athletes. It was a decision by the Tokyo Organising Committee and IOC to offer these exhibition sports, but they do not affect the quotas of the 28 official sports.

NF Has there been any discussion on doubling up?

FISA Our position up to now is no doubling up, based on the fact that the nature of the competition makes it very difficult to do this. We also want to keep as many athletes as possible in the quota and doubling up will impact this very seriously - if we allow doubling up we will be asked to cut our quota.

NF What is the current position on two chances to qualify?

FISA In the past there have been cases where key athletes have been ill at the World Championships and, without the second chance, a top crew could have missed the Olympics. It is also a tradition of the "repechage" round in rowing – it has been a tradition up to now but we have included it now for reassessment. One particular question that has been raised is whether all eights should qualify at the World Championships, thus offer only one chance for that boat class due to the heavy cost to keep an eights squad training for an additional year.

NF Does this mean that in order to participate in the second qualification event we have to have first gone to World Championships?

FISA No, two chances to qualify are offered and it is up to the NF to utilise them or not.

NF Why is the Paralympic qualification system not being looked at?

FISA It is being reviewed the under the Para-rowing Review Project.

3. Lightweight Rowing

NF What age should the lightweight category be introduced? Should we have lightweight rowing at Under 19 age?

FISA Up to now the answer is no, however it is a valid point and we will add it to the list.

NF How about regulating the size and shape of the boat like sailing, rather than the weight of the athletes?

FISA This has been raised for discussion previously – it is something to be discussed within this project.

NF I suggest to not to have lightweight sweep rowing at the senior level but it can still be retained at the U23 level as a feeder to the senior open weight sweep boats.

FISA We can consider this suggestion within the review project.

NF Considering our objectives for gender equality, should we be considering the appropriateness of our age groups in terms of the developmental phases of men and women. It is well known that women mature around two years earlier than men so, for example, should we have U21 for women and U23 for men, meaning that the women progress to the senior level at an earlier but more appropriate age in terms of their physiological development?

FISA An interesting point – it is true that the U23 age limit was not established with both genders in mind. We would need to consider this on a global basis however – the two year difference may apply in northern European countries but does this depend on race and culture? Would the same principle apply to the junior age group?

NF Follow-up: It could. In which case the junior girls would be under 17, and junior boys remain at under 19. Another NF asked whether this would not go against our principle of gender equality, to have different age groups for men and women. It was also suggested that the Under 19 age group is appropriate for all juniors because it fits with most of the school systems around the world.

4. Para-rowing:

NF Can we look into how to better promote Para-Rowing events now? 2020 is too late. We should look at the promotion of Para-Rowing events, as we now have the potential to integrate them better into our programme and include them in TV broadcast, for example.

FISA This is a good point and well noted. After the vote at the Extraordinary Congress in Tokyo, FISA added the Para-Rowing events into main stream programme of the World Championships. They will start the main final A programme on Saturday and Sunday, and will be included in the Host Broadcast. We are encouraging the IPC to have a full host TV broadcast in Tokyo.