

To: International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Dear Thomas Bach: President of the IOC; all IOC Executive Board members; Andrew Parsons: President: International Paralympic Committee; and Tony Estanguet: President of Paris Olympics 2024

We applaud you for the measures put in place to make the Paris Olympics the most sustainable Games ever. Your Legacy and Sustainability Plan is poised to deliver an edition of the Games that can be held up as an inspiring example.

That said, the world is still well behind when it comes to reaching the emissions reduction targets established by the 2015 Paris Agreement. Emissions continue to rise as do global temperatures, and to record levels. The results in terms of extreme weather are often devastating. The sports world, as you well know, is not immune.

As athletes and sportspeople, we are directly affected by the detrimental impacts of climate change. During the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, marathon and race-walking events were moved¹ 800 kilometres north of the intended venues, due to high temperatures.

The women's Olympics soccer finals were not only rescheduled, but the stadium was changed² due to extremely high temperatures - a first in the history of the Olympics. In addition, an archer fainted³ and three tennis players retired during their matches due to heat-related illnesses.

At this year's Paris Olympics, increasing heat levels and poor air quality will adversely affect athletes' performances and careers.

As current and retired Olympians who care deeply about facing up to the climate emergency, and support the IOC's impressive work on this urgent issue, we are writing to urge you to not renew your sponsorship deal with the world's largest producer of conventional fossil-fuelled cars, Toyota.

Instead of phasing out combustion engine vehicles in line with settled climate science, Toyota is ramping up production - it plans to add more than 11 million to the roads this year.

This means Toyota's emissions are massive: at a self-reported 575 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent, the company already has far higher emissions than France, and they're rising.

Toyota continues to lobby governments to delay, weaken, and roll back essential climate regulations. According to a report by InfluenceMap⁴ released in May this year, Toyota is the worst company in the auto sector in this regard, holding back progress everywhere from the US⁵ to Australia⁶.

Less than 1% of Toyota's car sales last year were electric⁷, while other major car makers like BMW already reached 15%.⁸ But instead of trying to catch up on electric vehicles (EVs), Toyota is using

1 <https://olympics.com/en/news/ioc-olympic-marathon-race-walking-sapporo-tokyo-2020>

2 <https://apnews.com/article/2020-tokyo-olympics-soccer-womens-soccer-sports-international-soccer-bbbcb51d556702e3030bbd35c7bcf847>

3 https://edition.cnn.com/world/live-news/tokyo-2020-olympics-07-24-21-spt/h_4a916ece85e458bcabb6ae78765fcb71

4 https://influencemap.org/site/data/000/028/Automaker_Climate-Lobbying_05-24.pdf

5 <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/22/climate/toyota-hybrid-epa-pollution.html>

6 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/mar/08/toyota-asks-for-australias-proposed-vehicle-emissions-standard-to-be-watered-down>

7 <https://www.motor1.com/news/706746/toyota-electric-vehicle-2023-sales/>

8 <https://www.press.bmwgroup.com/global/article/detail/T0438999EN/a-successful-2023:-bmw-group-posts-record-sales-meets-ambitious-e-mobility-growth-targets>

misleading marketing tactics to confuse the public into *thinking* 100% fossil-fueled hybrid cars are EVs. Various regulatory agencies around the world have called foul: the company is facing formal advertising complaints in more than 11 countries.

Sadly, it appears Toyota is even abusing its position as an Olympic partner by spreading misleading information that will have the effect of slowing down the energy transition. The company claims that its vehicle fleet provided to the Games is “100% Electrified”⁹ - but actually less than half are fully battery electric; and most of the rest run on petrol.

The damage here is twofold - firstly these petrol cars will increase the emissions of the Games, violating its commitment to cut emissions as much as possible. Secondly - by promoting petrol vehicles as “sustainable” to a huge global audience, this sponsorship deal risks undermining the clear message of climate scientists that we need to phase out fossil fuel-burning vehicles completely.

For all of the above reasons, we welcome the reports¹⁰ coming out of Japan that Toyota is considering ending its partnership with the Olympics. This is a golden opportunity for the IOC to announce that this partnership will end this year, and to make clear that going forward, a company like Toyota will not meet its sustainability standards.

We also ask that the Paralympic Organising Committee cut all ties with Toyota as well, as some news reports¹¹ that Toyota hopes to retain its sponsorship of the Paralympic Games.

In 2024, giant polluters lobbying against the public good, and against the fundamental interests of athletes in a safe climate, should not be granted the privilege of partnering with the Olympics and Paralympics. This year must be the last time the world’s biggest polluters are allowed anywhere near the Games.

There are many more technologically advanced, more transparent, and much lower emissions mobility partners with which the IOC can work going forward that are aligned with its ambitious climate goals.

As the 8-year contract between Toyota and the IOC comes to an end after the Paris Games, it will be time for Toyota to pass the baton to a clean Olympics mobility sponsor.

9 <https://newsroom.toyota.eu/toyota-to-provide-sustainable-mobility-for-all-at-the-olympic-and-paralympic-games-paris-2024/#>

10 <https://apnews.com/article/toyota-olympics-paris-2024-sponsorship-f02abe0a660f44546d5e702ac7e60291>

11 <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2024/05/1cdba3e0efab-toyota-to-end-top-tier-olympic-sponsorship-contract-after-paris-games.html>

Yours sincerely,

1. Laura Baldwin - Team GB sailing Olympian
2. Dotsie Bausch - USA cycling Olympian
3. Marcelien Bos de Koning - Dutch sailing Olympian
4. Jenny Casson - Canadian rowing Olympian
5. Francesca 'Frankie' Clapcich - Italian sailing Olympian
6. Rhydian Cowley - Australian race walking Olympian
7. Tess Howard - Team GB field hockey Olympian
8. Melissa Humana-Paredes - Canadian beach volleyball Olympian
9. Philippe Marquis - Canadian freestyle skiing Olympian
10. Eliza McCartney - New Zealander pole vault Olympian
11. Alena Olsen - USA rugby 7s Olympian
12. Izzy Petter - Team GB field hockey Olympian
13. Etienne Stott - Team GB slalom canoe Olympian
14. Kris Thomas - USA rugby 7s Olympian