

Sector: Events & Entertainment

Sochi 2014: Increasing participation of youth, environmental NGOs and civic bodies in the Olympics.



The Winter Olympics 2014 is to be held in Sochi, Russia. Sochi is an environmentally and politically sensitive region in Russia. In fact, it was envisioned that the Winter Olympics would act as an impetus to bring about prosperity and political stability to the region, and would be a matter of pride for the citizens in this region. Many infrastructure projects were planned including improvements in the airport, a new railway line and a new roadway. These large projects affected not only the environment of the region, but by altering the landscape visibly, they also affected the lives of the citizens in visible ways. Environmental NGO's and other civic bodies were increasingly isolated, and as their concerns were not heard, they took to protest. The youth were getting disenchanted and the need to integrate them with the overall planning was critical. UNEP invited the CEO of Climate Miles, Mo Polamar to build a communication strategy that will alleviate the alienation within the protesting bodies and to increase the youth involvement.

Client's Challenge

The Olympic organising committee in Russia found it challenging to get various stakeholders groups like the NGO's, civic bodies and the youth, onto a common platform to understand their grievances. There was a and effective negotiation to bring everyone on to the discussion table, and then the need for a roadmap that would take everyone forward together.

Climate Miles Solution

A. Organising and Consulting the NGO and civic bodies - Survey and site visits were conducted to the various parts of the Olympics Games Village and Sochi, and discussions held with the aggrieved people, to have a first hand input on the disruption caused by the infrastructure building. A number of townhall-like meetings were conducted in the offices of the Olympic Organising Committee and elsewhere. Subscription to local bodies like the cycling, hiking clubs were taken,

Client Statement



"Mo Polamar's engagement in this project brought in significant value. He is very dedicated and worked very hard to ensure delivery of all relevant products well within time."

UNEP Official,
Sochi 2014

and the discussion was taken to their turf to assess the overall sentiment towards the games at Sochi. Communication strategy and plan was developed to meet the NGO and civic bodies on a periodic basis.

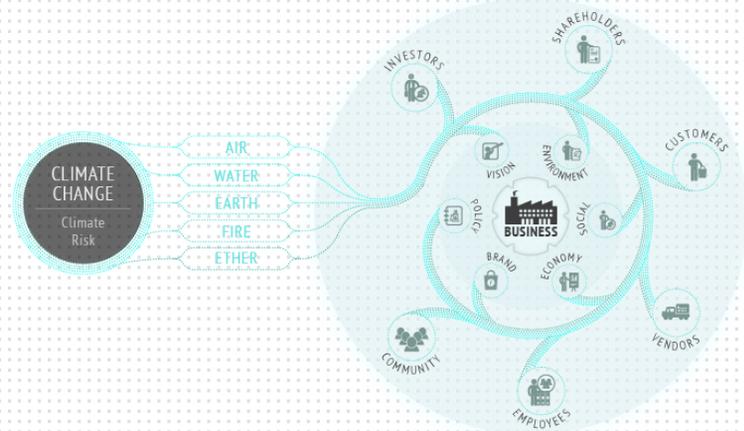
B. Preparation of an overall environmental communication strategy document - A detailed strategy document was prepared in collaboration with the UNEP and other leaders of the Organising Committee. The document

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contained a distillation of all good practices that UNEP had documented and learnt, in addition to creating a unique communication plan.

Client's Approach to Sustainability

The Management of the Sochi Winter Olympics were new to using "Sustainability" in its wholistic context in their working and decision making. The client would often isolate Sustainability to environmental conservation, without considering the humans in the ecosystem. Through a series of discussions and workshops, this mindset was sought to be changed. Especially in a project such as this that was having large-scale visible impacts on the lives of the citizens, the importance of making the decision making structure more-based, and communicating effectively with all the stakeholder groups, was paramount.

Solution Summary

Industry: Events, Sports, Olympics

Scope: Environmental/Sustainability Communication Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Number of sites included : Various – within Winter Olympics city of Sochi

Benefits: Youth empowerment, NGOs and civic bodies participation.

Future course: Implementation of the strategy.

