



**INTERNATIONAL  
FLOORBALL  
FEDERATION**

# **PLAN OF ACTION 2021 - 2022**



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The two-year period that lies ahead of us brings a set of completely new challenges for the IFF and its Member Associations. The previous period has brought quite severe financial issues for the IFF with the global effect of Covid-19 in 2020 and an emergency bailout of the U19 World Championships in 2019. The financial rescue package secured by the IFF for the Canadian U19 WFC local organisers ensured the event was able to go ahead. If not for this, the financial loss for the IFF and all the participating countries would have been enormous. In 2020 the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced IFF to postpone or cancel all events from March onwards. The financial effect of Covid-19 has been in the negative of approximately 700,000 CHF. As a result, many of the regular IFF activities have been cancelled and the IFF Administration has been furloughed, for around 20 days for each staff member, at the end of 2020. The development of the Covid-19 pandemic is still unclear, and we cannot be certain of when and if events can finally be played.

If the Covid-19 situation improves and we can play events as planned, the postponement of several major IFF events will make the year of 2021 a super year of Floorball with four World Championships. The Women's U19 (2020) & Men's U19 (2021) World Championships will be played back to back at the end of April and beginning of May. These are then followed by the Women's World Championships 2021 to be played at end of November – beginning of December, overlapping the Men's WFC 2020 which will be played in the first part of December 2021. This will require a lot of preparatory work for the IFF Administration and co-operation between the local organisers. In 2022 the Men's World Floorball Championships will be played in November, due to the FIFA World Cup in Qatar in December 2022, so we are also here in for a totally new term for the championships.



The *IFF Strategy 2021-2032 – Strengthening the Foundations* will be introduced and will require the building of a timetable and concrete implementation plan. Together with the rebuilding of the IFF finances and the successful execution of the events in 2021 and 2022, these will be the major areas of focus for the whole organisation.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IFF today consists of 74 Member Associations, out of which 44 countries are Ordinary Members. According to the present IFF Statutes and the IFF Licence System for participation in major events, the members are classified in different Tier groups and support and service is provided in accordance with their development tier. The IFF strongly urges all Member Associations, if they fulfil the requirements stipulated by the IFF Statutes, to apply for Ordinary Membership in the IFF. As a part of the implementation of the licence system, the aim is to promote the values of the system – ensuring that our members are aware of the content and the process. Having said this, IFF will start to work more closely with its members to try to find ways to strengthen their operations. There is mutual interest for the IFF to improve the organisational level of its members, as a number of the Member Associations are owing IFF quite substantial amounts of money and the only way for IFF to receive these is by helping to develop and stabilise national organisations.

Through the implementation of the IFF Licence System the IFF administration will more actively strive to support the Provisional Member Associations to develop their operations, in order to become Ordinary Members and participate in the IFF events on some level. The objective is to see a significant increase in the number of countries moving up in Tier classifications during the two years.

As part of the process of recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, the IFF will concentrate on rebuilding our finances and start different processes to strengthen our outside funding.

The IFF Administration needs to find new ways to enhance athlete participation, by defining targets and actions plans for online seminars, meetings in events, etc. There is a need to implement an Artificial Intelligence (AI) strategy to utilise technical solutions (robotic process automation (RPA), chatbots, etc.) as a way to free staff time for more demanding tasks. The main asset of the IFF is its staff and therefore we need to be make plans for educating IFF employees, with a target of at least 1 course per year/per person, for example Elements of AI -course, new media, facilitation, sustainability, RPA.

### **3. INTERNATIONAL FOCUS**

The basis of our operations for the first two decades was to spread, grow, and develop the sport globally, while at the same time seeking official approval and recognition from the international sports community. The IFF has now successfully secured the recognition and membership of all the major global sports organisations (IOC, GAISF, ARISF, IWGA, IMGA, FISU and WADA), so in what can be defined as the second phase of our existence, we now need to move to strengthen our positions and work towards global growth.

The focus for IFF must change and we need to be a more active, stronger, and trustworthy partner of the international sports community, bringing forward new ideas and operations which have proven to be effective in the Floorball community as a whole. It is key to grow the number of countries where Floorball is a major sport, both on and outside the field of play, during the coming ten years. The IFF must help with the development of the organisation, good governance, strategic planning and broadening the sports pyramid in these countries.

The future of Floorball, as a growing sport, is very closely connected to the success of how the IFF and its Member Associations will be able to develop hand-in-hand on the national and international level. It is crucial that all IFF members continue to strive for national recognition to their respective National Olympic Committee (NOC) and National Sports Confederations, and put forth the most suitable, and internationally well-known, national candidates with the biggest chances to be elected, regardless of whether they be sports politicians or high ranking employees. We need to use the success of participation in The World Games 2017 and the future participation in the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games 2021 in Thailand and The World Games 2022 in Birmingham, USA, as 'door-openers' to the NOC's and the National Sport Confederations.

Now is the time for the IFF and the whole Floorball community to change our approach. Instead of just aiming for being included in multi-sport games, we must strive to strengthen our activities and operations so that the multi-sport organisers come to recognise that having Floorball as part of their event is crucial. This does not mean that we shall not seek inclusion in these events, but we need to build our organisation and our operations and make them stronger, so they are seeking our inclusion, rather than the other way around. As a part of this we will work on a special multi-sport games strategy to be presented to the IFF General Assembly 2022.

### **4. OBJECTIVES FOR 2021-2022**

The IFF is building and steering its operational planning based on a variety of documents, which are all approved by the Member Associations in the IFF General Assembly (GA). The new IFF Strategy, to be approved by the IFF General Assembly 2020, serves as the main long-term reference document for the direction of our overall operation until 2032. This document, the IFF Plan of Action, serves as the short-term plan of what we need to do and how to reach the strategic objectives.

The IFF Central Board (CB) is to create an implementation plan for the defined three periods 2021-2024, 2025-2028 and 2028-2032, with a detailed execution plan and timeline for the needed actions to meet all the targets outlined in the IFF Strategy. There is a need to clearly prioritise when each target shall be dealt with and define a responsible person, such as CB member, Staff, or Committee member, for each target.

The implementation of the IFF Strategy must be tied closer together with the actions of the Member Associations. Discussions between the IFF and Member Associations on the co-operative plans are scheduled to be held during 2021.

#### **4.1. Increased number of players, members, and enhanced member services**

To increase the number of players and series played in the different countries is one of the main short-term targets the IFF has set. Developing activities and service level through the IFF License System, as well as different development projects, will help us to reach the target.

The IFF must continue to focus on, not only increasing the membership in Africa and Latin America, but also to take care of the existing countries, working to bring the new members up-to-speed and to help close the gap as early as possible. At present, different sources indicate that there are around 90 countries where Floorball is played in one form or another. The objective for IFF must be to collect these countries under its umbrella, and by the end of the period have around 80 members.

In establishing Floorball in new countries, IFF now actively seeks for and connects to new Floorball groups, often working with expatriates from established Floorball members who are active in the country, as a way to gain faster entrance to the new market. The IFF will continue this approach to gain new Member Associations for the next two-year period.

The cooperation with Special Olympics International (SOI) is crucial as there are already over 60 countries participating in the SOI Floorball programs. This calls for an increased strategic cooperation with SOI based on a concept proposal. In 2020, we held several development and coaching seminars for Special Olympics, many of them online, as well as testing the use of match statistics for their events. This co-operation should continue and expand in the coming years.



The IFF will investigate the possibility to create an online platform for the IFF and Member Associations where they can share knowledge, be inspired by each other, and support each other, especially in regards of organisational and financial operations. As IFF's resources are limited, we need to find new ways of working, like forming more country groups such as the Euro Floorball Tour or 6-Nations to help speed-up development. There is also a need to launch development projects together with the Member Associations for online education in fields of organisation, coaching and refereeing. Here there is already a possible opportunity to test this concept, with Czech Floorball having received the approval for their EU project in October 2020. The aim with this is to build a development model for a Floorball Member Association in the coming three-year period.

To continue to grow and flourish, reaching our vision and set objectives, the most important factor for IFF is, without doubt, the welfare and positive development of our Member Associations. The whole is equal to the sum of its parts, neither more nor less, and so the success of the IFF depends directly on the success of each of our Members. The stronger our Member Associations

become, the further and faster they can develop Floorball on a national level, increasing the visibility and importance of the sport, and in turn, the IFF will become stronger. It is important to understand, however, that this requires a much tighter co-operation between all the stakeholders of the Floorball family.

There is a clear need to strengthen the internal communication between the main countries. This could be done through increased networking between the top 8-10 countries on a Presidential and Secretary General level. Also, the need for the IFF Core Country meetings is evident and these should be organised on an annual basis. The IFF also plans to organise more bi-lateral meetings with Member Associations and targeted meetings, such as with the Core Countries representatives, to help improve this co-operation.

The need to continue to look for solutions and measures to close the gap between the different levels of our members on the field of play, will continue to be an important part of the development and strengthening of the members during this period. Here, a number of initiatives will be taken within the field of development, and also on the political level in order to find new ways of assisting and developing the Member Associations. An initiative to organise coaching webinars and an International Floorball camp for players and coaches is already being discussed with the Sports Institute Eerikkilä in Finland.

## 4.2. Development work

Floorball Development Seminars will continue to be run by the IFF as a way of bringing together more countries, but the IFF is equally willing to offer country-specific education in the field of coaching, organisation, refereeing or good governance issues. Striving for further development in the Member Associations has seen the introduction of Level 2 seminars in Coaching and Refereeing. The lack of possibilities to meet face-to-face in 2020, due to Covid-19, forced the IFF to seek new forms of running the seminars and a good and quick way to react to the needs of the Member Associations have been the webinars. Not only do they allow for greater participation, they



also allow us to offer more services at a lower cost. The IFF will keep the webinars as a part of the regular development tools in the future, even after we have returned to 'normal' post-Covid-19 life. The development seminar itself will remain as the main education method, whichever way it is delivered, as the three-day interactive education method is, without doubt, the best and most motivating tool.

Similar to what already exists for the international referees, with their various classifications, the IFF has started to create a certification system for coaching education to help the Member Associations. Many countries already have their own coaching accreditation system, however we hope the IFF system may help to standardise these while also providing a new tool for those who have not yet developed their own system. The plans for this during 2020 could not be carried out, but the project will continue as soon as it is possible. IFF will continue to make country-specific workshops to develop the member services of associations (competition and education).

The forms of co-operation that we offer vary from material support to joint development clinics and seminars. The IFF needs to strongly focus on the regions where Floorball is not presently very well represented, such as Africa, Middle-East, South America and Central Asia, and must carefully choose the type of support offered to ensure that it best suits their needs and offers the greatest

level of successful outcomes. The equipment support program will continue as it has been and hopefully the problems of 2020, where delivery of equipment was severely limited, will improve for 2021 and 2022.

### **4.3. Implementation of Licence System 2.0**

The IFF License system 2.0 was originally approved by the IFF General Assembly in Riga in 2016. The system is based on a three-level tier system for the IFF Member Associations and the purpose is that both the Associations and the IFF can define where each Member Association is on the development path. The criteria are built so that even in Tier Group 1, the Member Association is able to register and participate to IFF events, and as they move higher in the tier groups the more opportunities that open up for them. A main focus in the system is the financial aspect, helping to ensure that Member Associations are running sound financial operations without any debts to IFF nor to other Associations. This financial security will help to secure the positive development of the Member Association.

The IFF presented the outcome of the License System 2.0 survey in the IFF Associations' Meeting 2019 in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Since then, the Member Associations have begun to define what actions they need to take to be able to fulfil the criteria of the License System 2.0. For many Associations, the changes and updates will not be so significant but there are some with financial questions which will require the co-operation of the IFF to solve. The plan is to continue the process and have as many countries as possible being compliant, with the aim of no country being ineligible for participation in IFF events due to not meeting licence criteria.

The IFF office has already started consulting with the Member Associations to define their individual needs and guide them in the process of stepping up the tier ladders. This work began after the Associations' Meeting 2019 and the process will be ongoing through 2021.

### **4.4. Lobby work and Multi-Sport Events**

The lobbying work by the IFF has been very successful, yet there is still more to be done. Up until now, the IFF strategy has been to secure participation in any multi-sport event, but in the coming period, a careful return on investment analysis must be made, to determine where we shall concentrate our scarce resources and efforts.

With the confirmed inclusion of Floorball to the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Thailand 2021, The World Games 2022 in Birmingham, USA, the IMGA European Master Games in Tampere, Finland in 2023, and the SEA Games 2023 in Cambodia, it makes it necessary to analyse the resources of our activities and analyse when and where to seek entry into more multi-sport games. A key objective is still that IFF could secure the participation in more multi-sport events after 2022. The IFF is presently in the process to apply for participation in the GAISF Urban Games with a modified version of Floorball, based on the Urban Floorball concept.

Once again, it is vital to stress that the inclusion to the NOC's is a key issue for all Member Associations since it is the NOC who, in nearly all cases, decides if and when Floorball may take part in a multi-sport event.

The lobby work must be directed not only on the international level, but also on the local and national level by the Member Associations to ensure that the best possible result is achieved. The IFF CB will need to discuss how to communicate the importance of moving forward in the international scene to all stakeholders, including clubs, Member Associations, and their leadership groups, and to have the international work included in their strategic plans. During the period, IFF will actively seek inclusion to the framework of international organisations such as GAISF or WADA.

With participation in The World Games 2022 already secured, the preparations will continue during 2021. For TWG 2022, the key success factor will be our ability, in co-operation with the US Floorball Association, to localise the strength and support for Floorball in the Birmingham region.

After the successful SEA Games in the Philippines in 2019, the discussions are continuing with the organisers for the SEA Games 2021 in Vietnam. It is still unclear if Floorball will be on the program for Vietnam, although confirmation of inclusion to SEA Games 2023 in Cambodia has already been secured.

In Africa, the IFF will continue the development of the regional competitions. The African Cup, for both men and women, was played for the first time in 2018 with west African countries; Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Nigeria. The Africa Cup 2019 took place in Kenya and was again played in both categories, women and men, with mostly eastern African countries: Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia and Uganda, but the aim will be to find a way to have participants from both east and west Africa together in the future. The travel distances and related costs are the biggest hurdle for these regional competitions.

#### 4.5. Marketing

To achieve the faster development that we aim for as well as providing the level of support to Member Associations that we want, it is clear the level of marketing rights income the IFF generates must be increased. The IFF Marketing function aims to secure the IFF Title sponsor and two main sponsors during 2021. An increase in external funding is the key for further development of IFF services and activities, however, to secure the best possible result, the support of, and the active cooperation with the Member Associations will be also needed.

The IFF has secured a range of Floorball material equipment sponsors for the period 2019 – 2022 to keep the same look and feel of all IFF Events, which helps to strengthen the branding of Floorball. The IFF Corporate Identity will be reviewed and the results used to better suit the demands of the increased activation of the Floorball brand.

By using the results of the Sportcal Global Sport Index, surveys of the adult World Floorball Championships and the Floorball Fan surveys, the objective is to improve the sales arguments and achieve better sales results. The IFF has started to pursue sales with the help of the marketing agency Protocol Sports Marketing and the IFF Sales Coordinator will also actively contact companies in the Scandinavian market space, as this is where the potential of sponsorship support is greatest. The growing importance of sustainability is emphasised in the newly structured sales material.



As the general financial situation due to Covid-19 is very challenging the IFF is, for economic reasons, postponing marketing campaigns to allocate funds to the most critical functions.

## 4.6. TV & Livestreaming

One of the key factors for success in the field of sponsorship sales is the increased visibility of Floorball on TV and online platforms. The IFF has been able to develop the streaming product with the consistent use of professional commentary by Mr Olly Hogben, and to support the growth of the TV and livestream coverage the IFF will continue to include professional commentary for major events. In some cases, the television and livestreaming coverage we currently provide is of a higher standard than that of well-established Olympic sports.

IFF will continue the cooperation with the Olympic Channel which started with the WFC 2016 and The World Games channel. All IFF events, big or small, are now required to be livestreamed to the IFF YouTube channel. IFF will continue to act as the producer of the TV signal for major events and work with the coordination of the uplink and the satellite segment. During the period, the IFF



will investigate and plan for a financially viable move from YouTube to an Over-The-Top (OTT) platform, fully managed by IFF, to maximise the monetisation of content and increase revenue. IFF is in the process to negotiate with the Latvian company PolarHD about a long-term agreement for the TV-production/ livestreaming of our major events.

The more active use of the social media channels is essential for the future and the IFF will look at ways to increase and commercialise our presence in social and mobile media.

The target is to integrate these channels as an important part of the sponsorship deals. The IFF, together with sponsors, will need continue to attract more followers with active campaigns and develop new content, such as the World Virtual Freestyle Floorball Cup launched for the first time in October 2020.

## 4.7. Future of Floorball

The experience of The World Games 2017 with a shorter game time, smaller teams, and very intense and exciting matches, fostered a discussion of the need to change the format also for the IFF major events. When discussed in the IFF Associations Meeting in Bratislava 2017, the Member Associations were clearly in favour to change the structure. It was decided at the IFF General Assembly 2018 to execute a set of initial tests for the new system in IFF events during the seasons 2019/20 and 2020/21, as well as in other selected international events organised by Member Associations, with the objective to prepare a proposal for the General Assembly 2022. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic no tests were carried out in IFF Events in 2020 but the Women's WFC 2021 qualifications, EuroFloorball Cup 2021, and EuroFloorball Challenge 2021 will all be played according to the concept with 17 players & 5 officials and game time 3x15 minutes with 10 minutes intermission.

In the *IFF Strategy 2021-2032 – Strengthening the Foundations*, it has been defined as a target to create new game formats and playing systems, such as mixed floorball. The IFF will begin the work to be able to have new products ready for testing during the two-year period. In addition, the IFF will continue the process and preparations for the introduction of a European Championship starting in 2023.

#### **4.8. Ethics**

IFF will continue to develop the activities inside the organisation and towards the Member Associations to promote the positive values of sport, as described in the IFF Good Governance Policy. These include fair play in a game without match-fixing, and a doping-free sport, giving our athletes the chance to perform in an environment without racism, hooliganism or other kinds of intolerance or violence. The IFF Guidelines against Sexual Harassment & Abuse will be updated and a stronger focus of implementation will be taken, both within the IFF and the Member Associations.

When it comes to the work against doping and enhancing good governance structures, Floorball in general is standing out positively already and this will, on both a national and international level, become more important. A positive image for Floorball will foster many areas of work, including growth, sponsorship, and recognition. Securing the voice of the athletes throughout the organisation, and in all development processes, is also a factor needed for IFF to follow the general trend in International Sports.

### **5. ADMINISTRATION**

The IFF administration, consisting today of eight full time employees and the use of seasonal trainees and volunteers at major events, has continued to increase the number of services and operations that the IFF offers to its members. The growing number of competitions and IFF initiatives, the increased demand for services provided to the stakeholders, as well as the expectation that IFF should carry out more tasks on behalf of its members, requires that the IFF administration needs to develop both in numbers and quality. This is imperative if we are to maintain and expand the service level to our members. There is a discrepancy between the need to increase the number of employees and the missing funds of realising this. The IFF office staff is the biggest asset the federation has, and it is imperative for the continuing development of the organisation. There needs to be succession planning created to secure the consistency of the organisation with priority tasks and services, which must be upheld.

The IFF office has been located in Helsinki, Finland since 2004. In 2020 the IFF re-signed an agreement with the Finnish Floorball Federation whereby they will provide IFF with office facilities until the end of 2024, and thus the IFF office will remain in Helsinki for that time period. The IFF CB shall start the preparations in 2024 for a new agreement with the Finnish Federation, with the aim to keep the office in Helsinki for a future period. The process to register the IFF in Switzerland has been completed and the IFF is now officially registered in Switzerland in Canton de Vaud.

Due to Covid-19 the majority of 2020 IFF events have been postponed to 2021, making it difficult to define what kind of needs for additional trainees the IFF may have for the upcoming events in 2021 and 2022. The basic plan is to continue the same way as before, hiring temporary help for the major events, as well as during the Finnish summer when traineeships traditionally take place. With the major events running back-to-back or overlapping, it is certain that during the events themselves locally-based help will need to be secured to assist the IFF staff.

The growing workload of the IFF administration will require different measures in the coming years. One solution is to use more in-house interns to work in the different fields of the activities, and the office will continue seeking opportunities to employ different trainees and civil workers on a project basis. Another approach is to start outsourcing certain duties, such as tasks to do with social media and the IFF YouTube channel. Since the IFF office has been financially self-funded for over sixteen years, and the turnover of the budget has increased relatively slowly during the last ten years, IFF needs to look more carefully on our revenue generation, in order for IFF to live up to the expected service level.

At the end of 2020, the IFF administration reached eight employees, consisting of a Secretary General, Competition Manager, Event Manager, Communications & Anti-Doping Manager, Operations Manager, Sales Coordinator, Information Coordinator, and a Competition Coordinator. The additional resources shall be directed to the fields of competition, marketing, TV, information, and development. On a regular basis, the IFF will inform our Member Associations about the different fields of responsibilities of the employees via the IFF web page and through our newsletters. When, and if, the financial situation permits, the administration will be strengthened during the period between the General Assemblies in order to meet with the IFF Vision and Missions.

## **6. CENTRAL BOARD**

The role of the IFF Central Board (CB) is as a strategic level decision-making body, working with the overall political questions and direction of the movement. The Executive Committee (ExCo) plays a larger role in the tactical level questions, while the Office carries the operational execution responsibility in accordance with the decided direction. The CB plans at least three to four meetings per year, out of which two are often organised in connection to IFF events, but the CB will need to look over the scheduling of these, since the possible demands might require a change in the meeting calendar, which has been the case in handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, where thirteen meetings were needed in 2020.

The IFF Executive Committee (ExCo), consisting of the President, the Vice President, Treasurer, the AOFC Senior Vice President, and the IFF Secretary General, will handle and prepare the upcoming issues for the CB and take decisions where they are needed. The past legislation has fully proven the necessity of such a body. The IFF President and the Secretary General bear the responsibility of developing the contacts to the international sports community for the CB.

The CB will continue to allocate questions in specific areas of responsibility to each CB member. These special responsibilities will be assigned to the respective committees, functions, office and, if required, to a special working group. This will give more time for the CB to concentrate on the top level strategic and political questions, which will help to determine what is best for world Floorball, and to help spread and develop Floorball worldwide.

The tested approach of dividing the CB meeting into a working session, discussing a few strategic questions in depth during the first day, and having the meeting the second day has proven to be very successful and will continue to be implemented for future meetings. The CB needs to look over the methodology of the workshops if the Covid-19 pandemic will continue for a longer period of time, as conducting the workshops online with the current format is not as effective as would be liked.

The CB will establish a special working group to plan the timetable and build the implementation plan for the *IFF Strategy 2021-2032 - Strengthening the Foundations* during the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021.

## **7. COMMITTEES & FUNCTIONS**

The IFF CB will continue the chosen line of having a limited number of operational bodies – Athletes' Committee (ATC); Entourage Committee (ENC); Ethics Commission (ETC); Medical Committee (MC); Referee Committee (RC); and Rules and Competition Committee (RACC). The tasks of the RC and the RACC will be assessed to see if there is a possibility to better develop the way the committees are structured and how they are currently working.

The other fields of activity are organised into functions led either by a CB or staff member. The functions for marketing, lobbying, and regional development are led by CB members. In addition to these, the IFF operates other functions such as development operations, equality, information, marketing operations, materials, and ParaFloorball. The responsibilities of the committees and functions are

allocated by the CB. Additionally, the CB will ask the Secretary General to appoint the relevant employee to act as the secretary of the committees.

### **7.1. Rules and Competition Committee (RACC)**

The Rules and Competition Committee (RACC) will continue to focus on dealing with the changing requirements the fast development of our sport sets on our regulations and competition structure. The main task remains with the ongoing evaluation of the Adult as well as the U19 World Floorball Championships playing system and the timeframe for the playing of these competitions. We are seeing a lot of other sports changing the scheduling of their events which will have an influence on the timing of IFF events as we aim to avoid clashing, because of the impact on possible TV coverage and sponsorship deals. This will have to be monitored closely by RACC.

In addition to the regular administrative work of running IFF events, the RACC will continue to modify the Competition and Organiser Regulations as needed. The introduction of new age categories for international events will be looked upon, and the international calendar will continue to be revised. A major change of the way that Floorball is played, in regards of the length of matches and the number of players, is likely to be finalised in the coming period. A review of the U19 WFC playing system will see a new structure introduced for the final round event where the first steps to a structure nearer the adult WFCs will be taken in the final rounds of the U19 WFC 2020 (postponed to 2021) and the U19 WFC 2021.

### **7.2. Referee Committee (RC)**

The number of appointed international referees has been adequate to carry out all the international events over the last two years. The number of countries where the IFF referees are coming from has increased, with the development being especially good in AOFC area. Singapore Floorball Association has been an asset to IFF in the development of the AOFC referees and IFF has together with the SFA already agreed that the programs will continue in the upcoming years as well.

The basic work to start to develop the referees in Africa started in 2019 and will continue also in the future. The challenge is that, so far, only one African team has participated to an IFF event and all the events held in Africa have been officiated by European referees. The plan is to start to use African referees in the Africa Cup with European educators, thereby strengthening the level of the African referees and guiding their education in the right direction from early on. The professional level of the educators in these projects is vital.



A continuing challenge for the RC, as in many team sports, is the low number of female referees, and close co-operation with the IFF Member Associations will be crucial in our efforts to increase the numbers. The process has been ongoing already for some time and will continue, however, it is clear there is no shortcut to results in this area. It will take time for not just the number of female referees to increase, but also for their level of experience to reach that which is required for international events. Securing the participation of women as educators is also a key element to increasing and keeping the level of female referees higher. There has been a positive increase in the number of female referee observers in past years and the RC wants to strengthen this growth in the future.

The work of the observers, as well as their education, is an important foundation of the overall referee function. The RC will work to find more tournaments suitable for the observers to participate in, as a way to help maintain their connection to international Floorball.

### **7.3. Medical Committee (MC)**

The Medical Committee (MC) will continue to focus its work on following the requirements set by WADA and adopting them to the IFF Anti-Doping rules and regulations, administrating the IFF TUE procedure, evaluating the IFF in- and out-of-competition testing programme and the Anti-doping education programme.

The MC will also continue to develop the collection of Injury Information from the IFF Events, which has already led to one scientific study published by Ms. Kati Pasanen (FIN) in cooperation with the IFF. In addition, the MC will continue to produce and update medical documents to advise floorball players about certain conditions that can affect sport participation.

### **7.4. Ethics Commission (ETC)**

The IFF Ethics Commission (ETC), which is elected by the IFF General Assembly will continue to work with the documents guiding the IFF operations and the implementation of the Good Governance principles. The questions of advocating equality, preventing any form of harassment in Floorball, and stopping irregular betting and match fixing are high on the agenda.

The Ethics Commission will deal with any reported case of unethical behaviour or abuse, based on the guidelines for what type of cases the ETC will deal with. The ETC will continue to overlook the operations of the IFF, reviewing any behaviour or actions it deems to require attention.

During 2020, a thesis study on Sexual Harassment and Abuse policies in Floorball was completed by IFF staff member Mari Myllärinen, and the findings from this analysis will be used to review the policies of the IFF and its Member Associations in the coming period.

### **7.5. Athletes' Commission (ATC)**

The Athletes Commission (ATC) is now elected during the adult WFC qualifications which allows for a much greater number of athletes to participate in the voting. The latest voting was for the male representatives in January / February 2020. The current female representatives will continue serving until their elections in 2021, and the chair of the Athletes Commission (currently a female) serves ex-officio on the IFF CB and will remain in this position until after the female elections in 2021.

The ATC elections are usually held in conjunction with the WFC qualification events in January/February, however, with the confirmation of the AOFC event not being held until the end of June and the uncertainty of whether the scheduled events at the start of the year will go ahead as planned, an alternative election method may need to be used. It is possible that voting will be done via an online platform.

Representatives from the ATC are now included in the Referee Committee, the Rules and Competition Committee, and the Rules Change group. One ATC member has been identified as a key candidate to be educated in Anti-doping matters and will be the 'face' of the IFF's AD education work, including assisting IFF staff with Outreach programmes during events. When appropriate, they will also attend WADA conferences as an IFF ATC representative.

The ATC has extended its work in regional areas, especially in Asia Oceania, and the members help to promote the ideals of the IFF and educate on IFF campaigns, such as Anti-Doping and match-fixing awareness. They will continue the work in the region to help strengthen the ties between the many developing countries in the region and the more established European members. The ATC continues to work to increase the visibility and awareness of its work and the members will draw on their Floorball experience to act as role models and Floorball mentors.

In conjunction with the ATC annual meetings, it is planned to always offer some form of training session between the ATC members and local junior players and / or U19 WFC participants. This kind of face-to-face work has proven very popular with both the participants and ATC members and will continue to be a feature of the ATC work. The U19 WFCs remains the best event for the ATC to really make an impact on young players, while during the adult WFCs the ATC members (who are not playing at the event) will be used in media and IFF promotional roles. The overall aim of the ATC continues to be to act as the voice of the athletes in the IFF's decision-making process.



## 7.6. Entourage Commission

The role of the Entourage Commission (ENC) remains somewhat unclear in relation to the IFF and its participants, however, regulations related to an athlete entourage are included to competition, anti-doping, and betting regulations. The ENC will continue to seek advice from the IOC and GAISF to formulate its objectives and future work.

## 8. COMPETITIONS

The appointment of organisers for the IFF major competitions follows a specific appointment schedule, meaning that a first letter asking for organisers normally is sent 60 months prior (five years) to the competition and the appointment is made 48 months (four years) prior to the competition. The organiser bids are done using the IFF Event Management Tool and the Bid Evaluating tool. As a part of this process there is a need to continue to address how best to secure profitability and increase marketing and organisation revenue for both the IFF and the organising national associations of major events.

### 8.1. Adult World Championships

In 2021, both a women's and men's World Floorball Championships (WFC) will be played, with the Men's WFC 2020 having been postponed by one year due to Covid-19. The 13<sup>th</sup> Women's WFC will be played in Uppsala, Sweden from 27<sup>th</sup> November – 5<sup>th</sup> December 2021, while the 13<sup>th</sup> Men's WFC will be in Helsinki, Finland from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2021. The 14<sup>th</sup> Men's WFC will be played 5<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022 in Zurich, Switzerland, outside of the usual December playing dates due to the FIFA World Cup being played in Qatar in December 2022.



IFF will continue with the regional qualifications, which normally are played in January/February of the final round year but due to the COVID-19 pandemic the qualifications to the WFC 2021 will be played as late as 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Although the current qualification system, which requires the participation of all countries registered for the event, apart from the organising country, has been considered both successful and popular, the re-evaluation to consider other options will continue based on the decisions of the IFF General Assembly.

In 2021, the Women's WFC Qualifications will test the Future of Floorball playing format. Teams will be limited to a maximum of 17 players + 5 team officials on their official team list. Playing time will be 3 x 15 minutes.

## 8.2. U19 World Championships

As with the adult WFCs, in 2021 both a women's & men's U19 World Floorball Championships (U19 WFC) will be played. The 11<sup>th</sup> Men's U19 WFC will be in Brno, Czech Republic from 28<sup>th</sup> April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021. The 9<sup>th</sup> Women's U19 WFC will be played in Uppsala, Sweden from 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May December 2021, while the 10<sup>th</sup> Women's U19 WFC will be played in 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in Wellington, New Zealand



Starting from these events the tournament will be played with the teams divided into four groups based on ranking and ballot, rather than the old A- and B-division system. This change is the first step in moving the U19 WFC system closer to the adult WFC format. In this first stage, qualifying matches will be played between the 4<sup>th</sup> placed teams in group A and B and the 1<sup>st</sup> placed in group C and D to determine which teams will be in the top 8 for the next U19 WFC. As it will still be the top 9 (plus/including host country) who will receive direct qualification to the U19 WFC, these matches will be of great significance. The RACC will continue to evaluate the playing time and the playing system of the U19 WFC's and determine what, and when, further changes could be made.

## 8.3. Champions Cup

Unlike the other IFF competitions, the top club competition in Europe, the Champions Cup (CC), is run by the EFT-countries (Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland) in cooperation with the IFF. The CC was introduced in 2011 and re-organised for the period 2015-2017 as a three-day event with the national champions of the Czech Republic, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland together with the winner of the EuroFloorball Cup (EFC) and one second team of the organising country for men and women. A further change was made in January 2019 with the event being played as a final four event with only the champions from the EFT countries participating.



The Champions Cup Steering Group continues to work with building a proposal for a new playing system to replace the final 4 from 2023, with the idea being to introduce a playing system of home and away matches involving all national club champions in Europe. The overall goals of the CC continue to be more spectators, positive financial results and broader visibility for the event. The promotion of the CC and the other club competitions will be key in the process and it will be led by the IFF Sales Coordinator, together with the Champions Cup Steering Group.

#### 8.4. EuroFloorball Cup & Challenge

IFF will continue to organise the EuroFloorball Cup (EFC), which is scheduled to be played every year in October with 6 teams for both men and women. The EuroFloorball Challenge (EFCh) is scheduled for August each year and the winner of each Challenge event directly qualifies to the next higher-level event in the following year. The EFC and EFCh are organised for the national champions of the 5th and lower ranked Member Associations. The EFC and EFCh competitions will continue as they are for the next two years, with an eye being kept on the participation levels and the future integration with the Champions Cup.

#### 8.5. Asia Oceania Floorball Confederation Cup

The Asia Oceania Floorball Confederation (AOFC) Cup is scheduled each year for June/July being played for men and women in alternate years. The inclusion of Floorball to regional multi-sport events, such as the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games and the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (AIMAG) may require a re-evaluation of this event and its timing.

In the AOFC there are plans for a regional club competition in the coming years, similar to the EuroFloorball Cup concept, which will be used to promote the sport in the region. However, the AOFC Cup remains the major test point for development of the sport on the Asian Continent and serves as a path for initiation of new teams to international competition.

#### 8.6. Africa Floorball Cup

There have now been two Africa Floorball Cups (2018 & 2019) using the Urban Floorball format, with reduced player numbers, game time, and court size. The problem of how to include teams from both Eastern and Western Africa remains a challenge, with the travelling distances and cost factors being significant barriers to participation in a combined event. Further discussions will take between the IFF and African Member Associations to consider the best solutions for this. Encouraging the highest possible participation level is the most important aim.

#### 8.7. World Virtual Freestyle Floorball Cup

The IFF launched the first ever World Virtual Freestyle Floorball Cup (WVFFC) in October 2020. The aim of this new competition format was to activate floorball players around the world and organise events utilising new virtual concepts, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic when regular Floorball activities were limited. In addition, this event format gives the possibility for players from countries with no national teams to participate in an official IFF Event.



This is a competition where every floorballer can take part by showing in a short video (maximum 30 seconds) their best tricks or skills. The competition was organised virtually and the winner is crowned based on social media voting on Facebook and Instagram. As this was the first time the event was held, the event format will be assessed upon its completion and a decision on its future will be made in early 2021.

## 9. PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

The strategic evaluation of which multi-sport games IFF is seeking inclusion in, was taken after the evaluation of the IOC Agenda 2020 and IFF has now entered The World Games, the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, the South-East Asian Games and European Masters Games. The Olympic Agenda 2020 clearly indicates that The World Games and the Masters Games are the global multi-sport events highest on the radar of the IOC. It is of course important to be able to participate in also other multi-sport events on a regional level, to increase the visibility and awareness of Floorball among the National Olympic Committees and National Sport Confederations. However, IFF will need to evaluate the pros and cons of participation in new multi-sport events and have a dialogue with the concerned Member Associations.

Over the next period, the IFF will work with the following multi-sport events and international organisations:

### 9.1. The World Games (TWG)

The World Games to be held in Birmingham, Alabama, USA has been postponed to 2022 and Floorball will be played with 8 men's teams. The final

number of participants (players & officials) is still to be confirmed by the International World Games Association (IWGA). The IFF has already begun our co-operation with the IWGA, the Birmingham local organisers, and the USFbA in preparation for this event. There is a lot of work to be done within the USA to raise the profile of Floorball and this activation work must begin as early as possible, especially in the local & regional areas of Birmingham.



**The World Games**  
2022 BIRMINGHAM, USA

### 9.2. International University Sports Federation (FISU)

FISU has introduced a new system for the World University Championships to be played with University teams instead of student National teams. The fact that Universities can participate in the new format, will give a possibility to enlarge the participation to new countries and bring more visibility within the University sports. The discussions will continue with FISU, in order to see what effect this will have for Floorball to gain access into the Universiade.



### 9.3. International Masters Games Association (IMGA)

Floorball was included to the European Masters Games (EMG) for the first time in 2019 when the event was held in Torino, Italy with 6 teams from five different countries participating. The teams were divided in two competitions, 35+ & 45+ and was held over three days from 1st – 3rd August at Palestra Palatucci, Torino. The next EMG will be held in Tampere, Finland from 20<sup>th</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2023. Floorball will be included in the sport programme and a much higher level of participation is expected. Preparations will begin in 2021/22 and the IFF needs to continue to work closely with the National Associations to promote this event.



### 9.4. Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF)

Discussions between GAISF and various sports bodies, including IFF, regarding the World Urban Games are most likely to continue after the inaugural event held in 2019, but the Covid-19 has slowed down the process. IFF needs to determine if we want to explore the opportunity to participate in the GAISF Urban Games and if this is the case take the needed actions



to secure our participation. GAISF have launched a bid process for a host city and are aiming for having a second event organised in 2021 or 2022.

## **9.5. Regional Multi-Sport events**

### **9.5.1. Southeast Asian Games**

The process and work to include Floorball on the programme of the Southeast Asian (SEA) Games 2021, in cooperation with the Vietnam NOC and the AOFC is ongoing and we are close to be included. The IFF will work with the AOFC member countries to try and ensure the highest possible participation in the event. The 2021 SEA Games is scheduled to be played from 21<sup>st</sup> November - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021. The aim is to plan the timing of the floorball event so that we avoid a clash with the Women's World Floorball Championships (27<sup>th</sup> November-5<sup>th</sup> December).

### **9.5.2. Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games**

Floorball is for the first time included in the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games to be held in Thailand from 21<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with a maximum of 8 Men's and 8 Women's team from Asia participating. This event is organised by the Olympic Council of Asia. The Thailand Floorball Association is closely connected with the planning of the event with the President of the Thai Association, Dato Seri Chaiyapak Siriwat, also being a Vice President of the Thai Olympic Committee.



## **10. RULES OF THE GAME**

The preparation of the Rules of the Game - Edition 2022 (valid from July 1, 2022) will be finalised during the period. IFF is changing the Game Rules in a four-year cycle, where the new edition of the Game Rules will come into force from the 1st of July 2022. There are two groups who work on the change of rules - the Rules Reference Group which is tasked with reviewing the confirming the proposed changes, and the Rule Group whose task it is to actually write the text for new/changed rules as it will appear in the Rules of the Game.

The Reference Group started its work in November 2019, asking the Member Associations and other stakeholders for proposals to change the existing game rules. The IFF received a total of 80 proposals. The IFF Rule Reference Group had its first meeting in March 2020 and followed up feedback on the proposals from the Member Associations, IFF RC, IFF RACC, IFF Athletes' Commission and the IFF office, both in June and August 2020.

The reference group asked for associations to test "allowing to kick the ball more than once", and "free hit as beginning of power play after delayed penalty". Further, the reference group asked the proposers to testing "2+2 minutes bench penalty", one as an addition to the existing scale of penalties and one which would replace the 5-minute bench penalty. The testing started in September 2020 and the evaluation will take place in February 2021.

The Rule group started the work of writing the texts for the rules to be tested in July/August 2020 and the work with texts for all new rules started September 2020.

For the Rules of the Game Edition 2022 the milestones are as follows:

- *November 2019:* Request was sent to all member Associations and all persons in the IFF bodies urging them to send in proposals, with a priority list and in a special template
- *February 2020:* Deadline for sending in proposals
- *March 2020:* Reference group meeting. Preparing a list of rules for testing and asking for test Associations. Asking for feedback from IFF RC, RACC and Athletes Commission on the Changes in the book
- *April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020:* Deadline to apply as test Association
- *April/May 2020:* CB decision of test Associations
- *June 2020:* Reference group prepared a final proposal and again asked for feedback
- *August 2020:* Deadline for feedback, Reference group handed in the proposal to the RACC.
- *September 2020:* The rule group started the work with formalising the text for the rule book
- *February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021:* Collection of experiences from the tested rules
- *February 2021:* Reference group to evaluate the tests
- *March 2021:* Asking for feedback IFF RC, RACC, IFF Office and Athletes Commission on the final book
- *May 2021:* Deadline for feedback from IFF RC, RACC, IFF Office and Athletes Commission
- *September 2021:* IFF CB to make a final decision and new IFF Rules of the Game to be sent to all member Associations
- *December 2021:* RACC to organise a seminar for Interpretations of the Rules of the Game. All member Associations will be invited to participate on their own cost
- *July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022:* The new edition of the IFF Rules of the Game will become valid

## 11. ANTI-DOPING

Protecting the sport and clean athletes is one of the major tasks of the IFF. In 2003 the IFF became a World Anti-Doping Code signatory and has implemented the World Anti-Doping Code ever since. The “Code” is the fundamental and universal document upon which the World Anti-Doping Programme in sport is based. The updated World Anti-Doping Code and all the International Standards will come into force 1 January 2021, and the IFF Anti-Doping Rules 2021 have been approved by WADA. 2021 will be the implementation year, and the IFF will need to adjust its activities to be Code compliant.

In co-operation with the National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs), the IFF will continue to implement the IFF Anti-Doping Education Programme with the primary education target groups being U19 teams and any new nations entering IFF events.

## 12. DEVELOPMENT

### 12.1. Floorball Development Program

The success of international Floorball is based on the development of the IFF, the National Associations and the extended Floorball family. This is the ideal which shapes the overall development work. IFF will continue with the Floorball Development Program which has, throughout the years, turned out to be a very good way to get more people and more countries to be involved with Floorball in a proper and sustainable way.

### 12.2. Each One Teach One

The Each One Teach One (EOTO) initiative, which has been running since 2014, will still be an option in the future but will concentrate on more tailor-made solutions for bilateral partners. The experience has proven that the most efficient EOTO programs have been in the field of refereeing

and coaching projects, especially where those which have involved neighbouring countries who share the same sports culture or language. The IFF development function will act more as consulting partner to find the suitable education programs for the Member Associations and match them with the most appropriate mentor.

### **12.3. Regional development**

The IFF needs to continue growing, both in the number of players as well as in the number of Member Associations, as this is one key factor for increased visibility, awareness and increased market value of the sport. Continental and regional development is key to this. The prospects in Africa are very positive and therefore IFF will continue our close co-operation with the most active members in Africa, working to lower the barrier for the existing non-Member Associations to apply for the membership of the IFF. The actions which were planned for 2020, will be postponed to the upcoming year/years depending on the situation. Webinars will take place for Africa countries in the beginning of year 2021.

### **12.4. IFF Material Board**

The cooperation between the IFF and the Floorball manufacturers has, since 2001, been directed through the IFF Material Board which consists of representatives from the largest Floorball material manufacturers and the IFF. The main task of the Material Board is to focus on what types of technical changes are needed for Floorball material and evaluate the direction of development. The board is also making proposals to the IFF concerning revision of the IFF Material Regulations 2022.

The other task of the Material Board has been to find ways for how the manufacturers and IFF can cooperate in different ways to promote Floorball worldwide. The usage of the surplus from the material approval system is being discussed within the board and will be decided on by the IFF in the coming period.

The process of the changes of the actual technical requirements continues, and eventual changes take place every second year, next time in 2022, with proposals sent in by manufacturers in February 2021. The IFF has re-signed the contract with the technical institute RISE, in Sweden, for the coming three-year period, 2020-2022, which concerns the administration of the material testing of new material and the materials in the retail markets.

## **13. COMMUNICATION**

The IFF aims to continuously improve the quality of communication as part of its overall commitment to promote the sport and increase participation levels among all ages, genders, cultures and abilities. The IFF publishes a variety of different content and utilises different digital marketing and communication channels. We also assist our Member Associations and other stakeholders by spreading and promoting their activities through the IFF channels. As the IFF's official language is English, and in an effort to treat all members equally, we focus on news that is sent to us in English from the IFF stakeholders.

Starting from 2021, the IFF Communication planning will take the new IFF Strategy into account, and the communication planning needs to be in-line with the objectives set and work towards implementing the strategy.

We communicate news and information about:

- Internal IFF matters (decisions, rules, meetings, CB, committees)
- IFF events
- Member Associations
- National Leagues
- International Floorball tournaments
- Other stakeholder information
- International player transfers
- Sponsors & Partners
- International Partner Organisations (IOC, IWGA, GAISF, WADA, FISU, Special Olympics etc.)
- Emphasising strategic priorities like equality, co-operation, sustainability

We use a variety of communication channels, including: IFF & Event websites, social media (Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn), newsletters, and the IFF Events Mobile App. We are continuously looking for how we can use new technologies and channels.



The steady growth of the IFF YouTube channels continues. It is now a requirement that all IFF events be livestreamed to the IFF channel and many international weekend event organisers also choose to stream via the IFF. The future aim remains as having every international match available on an IFF video channel – whether this be YouTube or another platform, such as a pay-per-view system. YouTube now offers the possibility for channels to have paid memberships and the use of this will be pursued by the IFF. It is possible for IFF Member Associations to access the YT channels to stream their own events free of charge, depending on the availability of the channels.

## 14. EQUALITY

The efforts to raise the level of equality in all areas of the IFF will continue in the coming period. The updating of all regulations to use non-gender specific language will be finalised and the IFF Strategy for 2022-2032 will include some clear objectives for equality, especially in the area of representation in administrative bodies, both of the IFF and Member Associations.

The IFF GoGirls! Floorball project continues with the proposal of expanding the Ambassador programme to include all countries participating in the WFC qualifications, not just the final round event. The GoGirls! Ambassador programme was first introduced in 2017 and has for the 2017 & 2019 WFCs asked each of the teams to nominate a player as their GoGirls! Ambassador. In the lead-up to each WFC a series of stories based on interviews and materials from these ambassadors is used to showcase female floorball in each of those countries. The expansion of this project to include the qualifications is aimed to begin with the WFCQ in 2021.

The GoGirls! Floorball materials, available online from the IFF website will be reviewed over the next year, with updated information and new documents. The aim of the project remains the same – to help increase the number of females in Floorball, teaching them how to play, and keeping them playing. The project focuses not just on players, but also female coaches and referees.

The IFF encourages all National Associations to use the materials provided by the IFF and implement programs that are suitable for their particular development stage. Since its inception, many

associations & clubs have used the GoGirls! Floorball idea for camps and integration programmes. The IFF will continue to support all requests for materials and promotions.

## **15. SPECIAL OLYMPICS & PARAFLOORBALL**

The IFF will continue to actively cooperate with the Special Olympics organisation, which has proven to be a good path chosen for developing Floorball in new parts of the world. The IFF will also start preparing for the next Special Olympics World Winter Games, that were moved from 2021 (in Sweden) to 2022 (in Russia) co-operation with the Special Olympics. The Floorball tournament in Kazan, will be the largest in SOI Winter World Games history with over 50 countries participating. The tournament leader is Mr. Steen Houman, IFF CB Member and Special Olympic Floorball Resource Team chair.

The IFF will also continue to co-operate with the International PowerChair Hockey (Floorball) organisation, which currently is a member of IWAS and the organisation for Manual Wheelchair Floorball.

## **16. FINANCE**

The key for IFF's financial success is an increase in external funding, which can best be reached through sponsorship sales. We will continue to work to find a Title and a Main sponsor for the IFF and look upon how the marketing rights will be distributed with the organisers of IFF events, in order to strengthen the finances of the IFF and the Local organisers.

In relation to the requirements of the Licence system, the IFF will, during the period 2021-2022, continue to follow up on the issue of the outstanding debts of the IFF member associations, in accordance with the guidelines given by the IFF auditor. The situation with the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the IFF and the members negatively, further straining the financial situation. At present the IFF is suffering low liquidity which could cause operational disturbances for the organisation in the future.

The CB will have to find new funding sources for the IFF as the present models clearly are not adequate for the continued growth of the organisation and additional services that we need and/or wish to provide. As a priority, the IFF will focus on supporting the establishment of membership licensing systems in our member countries where it currently does not exist or is limited. This will provide the opportunity for the Floorball community to increase the level of funds in the total sport and thereby relieve some pressure on the IFF budget with more members becoming financially self-sufficient to continue their development.

The Budgets and Financial Reports will be published on the IFF web site. As in the past, IFF will look for a healthy financial situation and strive for a breakeven financial result.

## **17. MARKETING**

Floorball is growing with several measurements. There is growth in licensed and recreational players (the IFF member statistic survey), as well as spectators in events and viewers on TV and the internet (Sportcal GSI Survey) which gives momentum in marketing the sport. In addition, the inclusion into well-recognised multi-sport events like The World Games and the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games gives more credibility and leverage on the international arena.

The future strategy "Strengthening the foundations" will set the tone for marketing. Once the strategy is approved, it will be evaluated to see how the strategy is implemented in marketing. There is a further

need to evaluate if the slogan “*One World, One Ball, Floorball*” still supports the core values and message of the IFF. A project closely connected to the strategy and overall work of the federation is development of a substitute program for “Say No To Doping”, replacing it with one or more programs that encompasses several ethical topics, including work against doping, racism, and irregular betting, as well as incorporating activities striving for equality, fair play and sustainability.

The Floorball fan survey conducted in late 2018 early 2019 presented the IFF a benchmark of how the sport is perceived, the results being: “Fast. Modern. Energetic.”. The results confirmed many aspects about the target group and their habits. A following survey, concerning the IFF brand, commenced in the second half of 2020 with the results available in early 2021. The execution of the survey will be by students at the Glion Higher Institute of Education. This new survey will investigate possibilities to increase the awareness of Floorball and how sustainability can be harnessed for this purpose. National Associations will separately be surveyed about the IFF brand renewal, how it is perceived and how successful it has been in comparison to the set goals.



Based on the findings of the survey the development of new models will continue in 2021 and IFF will work closely with the Core Country Marketing Network Group (CCMNG) to further develop the new models. The work to collect and distribute nationally proven models to other Floorball markets will also continue. There are several potential development projects which would improve the engagement elements, visibility and measurability of our sponsors. Many of these projects are in the digital area and include, for instance, branded fan activation, joint social media campaigns and video content marketing. The IFF is also investigating new tools for measuring the results of sponsor actions. However, the investment in these is coupled with securing new sponsor deals and revenue.

As the key channels in IFF marketing and communications are digital, it will continue to build the well-established social media channels, which will not only serve the fan community, but also increasingly our partners. On top of working with our current SoMe channels there will also be efforts put into building a stronger presence in LinkedIn to target the B2B-sector. Part of this development was the renewal of the IFF website which was launched in October 2018. The new website coincided with the GAISF .sport domain initiative, which meant taking up the .sport domain (floorball.sport). This was part of GAISF's larger project to increase the awareness of sport and federations with the use of a sports-associated domain name. The domains can in the future also be utilised for subprojects. The newly developed World Virtual Freestyle Floorball Cup is a way to activate the floorball community online and presents new sponsorship opportunities.

To attract further interest in sponsors (and potential host cities) we will utilise the findings from the Sportcal GSI Event Studies conducted in each of the adult WFC's since 2016. The outcome of the studies has proven the strong economic impact the WFC has on the local economy and businesses. The survey also collates the visibility of the events on TV, media and social media. Future LOC's have already set some good examples by structuring their offering not as a one-off event but a long-term project which makes it much more interesting for the partners. For example, "The Road to Helsinki (WFC2020)" concept included activations and visibility for 2019 and 2020 and therefore also spreads the customers investment over two year's budgets. Further, the WFC 2022 organisation is well prepared to start its sales and marketing efforts already in 2020 with a strong emphasis also on sustainability. A proposal was prepared by Quantum Consultancy for 2020 – 2022 events studies which would produce the same kind of information as the previous Sportcal GSI studies, which further helps to evaluate the success of the Events. The situation is now monitored based on the changes imposed by the pandemic and the arrangement will take effect once it is confirmed the adult events can take place as planned.

The cooperation with Protocol Sports Marketing is expected to contribute to sales and marketing. They are discussing with several broadcasters about airing video material we have provided them to increase visibility and attract interest in WFC events. In addition, the Sales Coordinator will actively contact companies in the Scandinavian area. The overall aim is to have two new sponsors by the end of 2021 (them being either Main or Title) and further increase the number with at least one more in 2022. The target is to close long-term, four-year agreements.



The IFF has also in cooperation with the marketing agency i2 created a new product called Floorball Hat Trick. This project was initiated in the absence of international events during 2020, to create incremental revenue and help the IFFs financial situation. The concept was built to align with corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs/strategies in companies. With the support of the on-boarding companies the aim is to encourage kids and adolescents to play floorball anywhere, anytime. The core values of the initiative are: Joy of exercise, Friendship and Equality (indirectly this also aims to fight sedentary behaviour and increase exercise levels).

## 18. SUSTAINABILITY

The development of IFF sustainability efforts in the future years will be based on two elements:

1. Collaboration and participation in the UN Sports for Climate Action Group (S4CA)
2. Partnership with the myclimate climate fund

IFF has representatives in two working groups of S4CA which collaborate on outlining best practices, working methods and measurement principles for signatories (Working Group 2: Reducing climate impact / Working Group 4: Educate and advocate for Climate Action). The S4CA also encourages its members to join the Race to Zero (RTZ) initiative which is a similar action group made up of cities, regions, companies, investors, and universities. This will be evaluated separately based on the ambitious targets laid out for participants which are as follows:

A sport organisation will be required to:

- Measure emissions associated with its operations (all scopes / see below)
- Reduce GHG emissions by 4.5% year on year / 45% by 2030 (all scopes included) against an agreed baseline
- After reduction, offset as much as possible remaining emissions, using credible offsetting (recommended: UN backed credits)

- Report publicly on progress with climate goals



In order to meet future requirements and reporting standards, the IFF will need to invest some money to put in place measurement tools. The tools and know-how are available from myclimate. To meet the required measurement criteria the IFF will need to present numbers for three different standardised areas:

**Scope 1 – All Direct Emissions** from the activities of an organisation or under their control. Including fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers, fleet vehicles and air-conditioning leaks

**Scope 2 – Indirect Emissions** from electricity purchased and used by the organisation. Emissions are created during the production of the energy and eventually used by the organisation

**Scope 3 – All Other Indirect Emissions** from activities of the organisation, occurring from sources that they do not own or control. These are usually the greatest share of the carbon footprint, covering emissions associated with business travel, procurement, waste and water.

To facilitate and support its Member Associations, and also impact the scope 3 emissions, the IFF is in cooperation with the WFC 2022 LOC and myclimate preparing a Sustainability Guide for event organisers. This will help the organisers to focus on the right things and present concrete examples of what has and can be done.

Sustainability will play a big role not only in general IFF work but also in marketing and product development. Sustainability will be a major contributor to meet the values of potential sponsors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; corporate social responsibility is a must have. The IFF will continue to create new ideas on how incorporating sustainability can increase the attractiveness of floorball as a sport and as a potential partner.

## 19. CLOSING REMARKS

Recovery will be the early focus in the coming period, as the IFF work to get the international events schedule back on track and the Member Associations restart their competitions. A lot of planned development work has been on hold and it will be important to get this back to full strength as soon as possible. The development of some Member Associations will have suffered during 2020 and it will be crucial to support their work in the coming years. The implementation of the new IFF Strategy will begin in 2021, setting the direction for Floorball for the next decade.

It will be important to work together to get Floorball back to where it was before Covid-19 hit and move forward again. Our major event schedule for 2021-22 is full, with some amazing events to look forward to – 3 adult World Championships, 3 U19 World Championships, including the first ever final round event in New Zealand. There are enormous opportunities offered by the debut of Floorball in the Asian Indoor & Martial Arts Games in Thailand in 2021 and The World Games 2022 in Birmingham, USA. We are confident that together the Floorball family will continue to grow and strengthen. There are exciting times ahead.