

**Open letter to the IFSC  
NEOM Beach Games and IFSC environmental and ethical policy**

Acts For Our Summits ([ACTS](#))  
and the sport climbing community,

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SPORT CLIMBING  
[www.ifsc-climbing.org](http://www.ifsc-climbing.org)  
IFSC, Corso Vinzaglio 12, 10121, Torino, ITALY  
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Dear Mr. Scholaris,

Dear IFSC Council members and executive board,

From the 22nd to the 24th of November, the International Federation of Sport Climbing organized the [IFSC NEOM Masters 2023](#) as part of the [NEOM Beach Games](#), a sequence of sporting events strategically organized for the promotion of the overarching [NEOM](#) project. It is with great sadness and disappointment that we, the undersigned, learned of this event and its implications.

NEOM is a \$500 billion futuristic megacity project being built on Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast. Greenwashing<sup>7</sup>, massive lobbying<sup>3</sup>, expropriations<sup>8,9,10</sup>,... According to Amnesty International and ALQST (independent Saudian human right NGO), NEOM is an ecological disaster and a violation of human rights<sup>6,9,10</sup>. The climbing community cannot accept that its federation is promoting a project of the sort from the Saudi dictatorial regime<sup>1,4</sup>. This project results in the violent expropriation of indigenous populations<sup>10</sup>, the killing of political opponents<sup>9</sup> and the irreversible destruction of ecosystems. What was the opinion of the [IFSC ethics commission](#) when it was decided that climbing would be part of the NEOM Beach Games?

Moreover, this leads us to a more global environmentalist critique: our attachment to nature and respect for human dignity, inherent in our practice, compels us to ask the IFSC to take its responsibilities in the ongoing fight against the destruction of all living species.

Through this event, we consider that the IFSC has not respected its proclaimed vision "to make the world a better place through sport climbing", its mission of "promoting

Sport Climbing through sustainable events", and its value of "preserving the environment in organizing and promoting activities"<sup>5</sup>.

In full awareness of the urgent need to act upon climate change and the current ecological and social crisis<sup>2</sup>, we, the climbing community, represented by the undersigned, call on the IFSC to readjust and respect its [strategic plan 2020-2028](#) in order to better integrate the environmental and social issues we are facing.

Our specific requests are outlined as follows:

- The creation and financing of an independent Environmental and Ethical Committee in order to ensure the IFSC truly respects its ecological values. This committee would set up the strategy of the federation for its ecological transition, and report with transparency on the concrete completed actions, with the aim of respecting the Paris Agreement (COP21) and the framework of "Sports for Climate Action" (Sports for Climate Action | UNFCCC). This committee would also have the mission of quantifying the carbon footprint, environmental and social impact of IFSC events.
- In terms of sponsoring and events, the renunciation of partnerships with companies that have a proven<sup>2</sup> significant negative ecological and human impact (sector with high GHG emissions: fossil fuels, aviation, automobiles; waste generators: single-use plastic; food products harmful to health, etc.). Thus, we ask the IFSC to end its partnership with "[Japan Airlines](#)" and "[Toyo Tires](#)".
- A requirement for all members of the IFSC board and its main stakeholders to participate in a substantial education program on the issues of the ecological and climate crisis, as well as a mandatory ecological awareness training module for international athletes and coaches. Guidelines and programs regarding the education and awareness of athletes and stakeholders from the different national federations should be created and implemented. .

As a community, we strongly believe that climbing should remain an ethically exemplary sport. Please remember that Sport Climbing won't be possible in a world "above 4°C"<sup>2</sup>.

The ecological crisis is the hardest climb we have faced, let's climb it together!

Sincerely,

[Here to sign the letter](#)

## First signatories:

Public figures who joined the signatories:

**Tommy Caldwell**, USA, Professional climber, conservationist, lobbyist.  
**Adam Ondra**, CZE, IFSC Athlete  
**Catherine Destivelle**, FRA, Climbing legend  
**Josune Bereziartu**, ESP, Climbing legend  
**Kilian Jornet Burgada**, ESP, Alpinist  
**Alexander Megos**, GER, IFSC Athlete  
**Paul Jenft**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Margo Hayes**, USA, former IFSC Athlete and professional climber  
**Campbell Harrison**, AUS, IFSC Athlete and Paris 2024 Olympian  
**Jesse Grupper**, USA, IFSC Athlete and Paris 2024 Olympian  
**Solenne Piret**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Hannes Vanduyssen** BEL, IFSC Athlete  
**Simon Lorenzi**, BEL, IFSC Athlete  
**Manon Hily**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Camille Pouget**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Julia Chanourdie**, FRA, IFSC Athlete and professional climber  
**Naïlé Meignan**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Nao Monchois**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Nicolas Collin**, BEL, IFSC Athlete  
**Jorge Díaz-Rullo Calvo**, ESP, IFSC Athlete and professional climber  
**Aidan Roberts**, UK, professional climber  
**Ties Vancraeynest**, BEL, IFSC Athlete  
**Diego Foubet**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Caroline Ciavaldini**, FRA, professional climber and former IFSC Athlete  
**Tina J. Hafsaas**, NOR, IFSC Athlete and Bsc Ecology  
**Thomas Joannes**, FRA, IFSC Athlete  
**Didier Berthod**, SUI, Climbing Legend  
**Lempereur Sven**, BEL, IFSC Athlete  
**Antoine Kauffman**, BEL, Youth Belgium national coach  
**Nicolas Favresse**, BEL, Professional climber  
**Julia Cassou**, FRA, Professional photographer  
**James Pearson**, UK, Professional climber

**Symon Welfringer**, FRA, Professional climber and Alpinist  
**Siebe Vanhee**, BEL, Professional climber  
**Anthony Gullsten**, FIN, Professional climber  
**Katherine Choong**, SUI, Professional climber and IFSC Athlete  
**Bronwyn Hodgins**, CAN, Professional climber  
**Robbie Phillips**, UK, Professional Climber and Filmmaker  
**Arnaud Petit**, FRA, Professional climber and High mountain guide  
**Lena Müller**, GER, Professional climber and ecologist  
**Emma Twyford**, UK, Professional climber  
**Lionel Daudet**, FRA, Mountaineer/adventurer/writer  
**Sofie Paulus**, GER, Climber, researcher, coach  
**Frank Kretschmann**, GER, Professional filmmaker and production company for outdoors  
**Christophe Dumarest**, FRA, Professional climber and High mountain guide  
**Xavier Cailhol**, FRA, High mountain guide

Organization (company, NGO, federation ...) or media:

**Patagonia**  
**Éditions du Mont-Blanc**  
**Kilian Jornet Foundation**  
**Protect Our Winter**  
**Le Camp de Base**  
**El Capp Fest**  
**Edelrid**  
**Mountain-Riders**  
**Allez! Podcast**  
**Game Earth Fund**  
**Yak Media**  
**Le pont de Monvert**  
**Kayoo Youtube channel**  
**Aroyo résilience**  
**The Enormocast**  
**Ecopoint Frankenjura**  
**Boulderhalle E4**

**GREENSPITS**

**Une bouteille à la mer**

**HORUS - sustainability consulting**

**CEO Sport 1.5**

**Fanatic Climbing**

**Squamish Earth First**

**Women's Bouldering Festival**

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<b>ACTS governing board</b>

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