



# VOICES OF IFSC LEADERS

## Part 2: Member Federations



# Introduction

After *Voices of IFSC Leaders: Part 1, Board Directors in 2020*, where the IFSC Ethics Commission interviewed twelve leaders of IFSC about who they are, what their challenges are, and how they could perform better, we have advanced our approach with the leaders of the IFSC Member Federations.

We sent an invitation for all Member Federations and we received 26 respondents. In a context of the growth of our sport, especially in this Olympic year mixed with the pandemic crisis, we wanted to give to the Member Federations the opportunity to testify about their relationship with the IFSC and offering them the opportunity of sharing, of giving space and time to values.



# Table of contents - 1

## 1. Where we come from? Our diversity as member federations.

- The diversity of heritages.
- The diversity of activities.
- Geographical and geopolitical diversity.
- Diversity of representatives.
- Diversity of members.
- Diversity of financial means.

## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

- Human development through sport.
- Development of sport climbing.
- Organisational development.
- National development.
- Continental development and international recognition through the prism of competition and Olympism.



## Table of contents - 2

### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

- Existential sustainability.
- Environmental sustainability.
- Cultural sustainability of climbing values.
- Diversity (gender, race, disability)
- Ethical issues.

### 4. A recognition that gives national and regional legitimacy.

- A recognition that gives national and regional legitimacy.
- The organisation of international events.
- Common rules and values.
- A source of knowledge and the possibility to exchange with other countries.
- The new additional recognition of the Olympic etiquette.



## Table of contents - 3

### 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved

- Lack of transparency and communication in decisions and voting.
- Lack of diverse representation.
- Lack of support.
- Lack of funds.

### 6. What vision for the future?

- The IFSC may evolve its governance to be more collaborative, more transparent and less patronizing towards emerging countries.
- Combining volunteers and professionals.
- Should the IFSC remain focused on the organisation of international competitions?

**Conclusion: our relationship with the IFSC in one sentence...**

**Appendix 1: List of Member Federations Interviewed**

**Appendix 2: Interviewing Team**



# Who are we?

# Our diversity as member federations.

## Chapter 1



# 1. Who are we? Our diversity as member federations.

## The diversity of heritages.

Some of the organisations in charge of sport climbing in their countries are historical institutions: « *Our federation is more than 70 years old, so it's a long time organization attached to our national government.* »

With the growing popularity of our sport, many federations are much newer, « *We are a very young federation, working with the IFSC less than one year. We are just a team of diverse people working together with the same goal.* »

Some expressed strong ethical values « *We already set 6 values that we are following: community, transparency, pursuit of excellence, integrity, inclusion and athlete's entraide.* » Some are federations emancipated from prior institutions: « *We are the new version of our global rock climbing federation, following ethical and corruption issues with the former sport climbing one.* »



# 1. Who are we? Our diversity as member federations.

## The diversity of activities.

The spectrum of activities of Member Federations can be very broad, «*We are the leading mountaineering (including sport, ice and ski mountaineering) association in our country*», «*We promote sport and reunite people interested in the mountain world with sustainability*», «*Our federation speaks for everything related to climbing: ice, ski mountaineering as well than sport climbing in indoor and outdoor. We are mostly focused on outdoor activities*», «*All the ski and mountaineering sports are under our umbrella, covering winter and summer sports.*» Even for the smallest and newest, the diversity is present, «*We are a small federation only with club members, 250 people englobing also mountaineering and sport tourism (vertical fitness)*», «*We are a multiple sport federation based on urban sports for young people.*»



# 1. Who are we? Our diversity as member federations.

## Diversity of representatives.

Organizational structures show a corresponding diversity. From fully mature organizations: « *We have different internal departments for every activity: climbing, mountaineering, accesses* », « *we have around 30 employees, working in 4 divisions: sports, marketing and communications, finance and membership administration* », « *we are a non-profit organization which takes interest in everything related to climbing. We elect a board established for eight years* » to the smallest ones: « *We represent various climbing clubs which just one full-time person and the rest with volunteers and our fundings mainly come from our government.* », « *for the moment we are a young federation ruled by old people (26 years old average age!) and we are looking for younger people going to climb with the ability to challenge themselves.* »



# 1. Who are we? Our diversity as member federations.

## Diversity of members.

Similarly, not all members are necessarily climbers: *« Most of our members are hill walkers, so climbers are a minority. But with the increase of commercial indoor walls, we see a spectacular growth of indoor climbers for the last 10 years », « we are both a sport climbing and a mountaineering association and member of our national olympic committee. Our goal is to contribute to the healthy development of the body, mind and spirit of our members. »*

*The core values remain the same, « we have around 60.000 members. Our core values: sustainability, involvement, safety », « we started just last year, so at this stage we are just a team of climbers meeting together, discussing how we can develop our sport. »*

On the sport climbing side, the position of the climbers is often favoured: *« Our core value as an organization is athletes first and we do our very best to deliver that. We create the safest environment for all our athletes. »*



# 1. Who are we? Our diversity as member federations.

## Diversity of financial means.

Not all members federations enjoy the same level of financial resources: « *the beginning was not easy with very little money* », with the need of an official status, « *we are a Civil Association of a sports nature, with legal personality and its own patrimony, non-profit, which is registered and recognized by our National Institute of Sports* », « *we are still quite a young federation (2005) but recognized by our government, so we are entitled to receive some official fundings and to emancipate from our alpine club, focusing on climbing competitions.* »

For some, scarcity of financial resources creates additional creativity and motivation: « *Of course, we could do more with more resources, but we already do a lot with very few resources. So it depends how well you organize yourself. Even if you are tight on a budget with volunteers, things can be done on a shoestring, depending how you manage them. Not to have a lot of ressources can even be a strength.* »



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# What are our objectives?

**Our passion for  
development.**

## Chapter 2



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

### Human development through sport.

The personal realization of climbers is at the centre of the concerns of all federations and their leaders: *« We want to promote the culture of climbing and improving the education of our members, and also protecting the rights and the interests of our athletes », « we want to be fair and give everyone a chance to be good at what they are doing », « The heart of our federation is our athletes, and we build everything around them. This is always in development. »*

This is even truer for youth: *« Sport climbing can become a reference in our area for the youth. », « Climbing and more generally sport could be a way to unite our country, especially with creating happiness to our youngest people. »*



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

### Development of sport climbing.

Development involves promoting climbing in all its diversity, « *we try to get everyone together, all the climbing community (sport and outdoor) working together. We aim to build this community, we have all the pieces and we have to put them together and make it work.* »

As « *sport climbing can be a very good showcase for all the sports, it helps to grow the mind, the body and in general in your life.* », many leaders search to « *definitively growing indoor climbing as only outdoor is very popular in our country for the moment. We want to increase indoor and competition sides with good walls and route setting.* »



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

### Organisational development (1).

These changes are reflected in the internal development of federations: *« we are not trying to do more than what we can deliver, it's what we have to keep in mind »*, *« It's a challenge to do all we have to do for our athletes and our sport with the resources we have »*, *« As we are very young, we need to learn a lot how works this sport and its organization. We try to learn from what the other federations are doing and take information from the IFSC.*

The notion of service is fundamental: *« it is always members interests first »*, *« serving our members, first in terms of accesses and conservation and on the Sport Climbing side to support our athletes to get in competitions with IFSC »*, *« It is to offer the best services to our members and our sections, helping and supporting them, and develop the mountain activities in a sustainable way. »*



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

### Organisational development (2).

This can be « *a tough balance as some of our members don't always to expand and still, we have to grow. The growing popularity of sport climbing can create access issues on outdoor sites, with private properties and also with birds and nature preservation. It is a constant debate in our federation.* »

Nevertheless, “we are all passionate », « *It is a 24/7 job, it is my life! The most important is to have the most democratic leadership and understanding. We never take important decisions without discussions and debates* », regardless of background: « *I am not coming from the climbing community and I try to bring from the outside some values, good processes and best practices.* »



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

### National Development.

Beyond domestic specificities « *our objective is to try to push people outside and doing things that they are not used too* », « *promoting the interests of everybody. As an example, the climbing gyms are some private businesses, but they are also important for our federation, we need them.* »

Being able to bring the message to the community is an objective in itself: « *we focus on improving the level of communication towards our clubs and our climbers. We want to adress more directly to the climbers* », « *As a president of my federation for the last 2 years, I am really passionate* », « *I want to contribute to a better access for all our activities and to succeed in our competitive achievements* », « *Team work is fundamental for me.* »



## 2. What are our objectives? Our passion for development.

Continental development and international recognition through the prism of competition and Olympism.

Access to international connections is a must, « *we are looking for cooperation with other people abroad* », « *we look for international collaborations to have some workshops and develop the skills of our officials and our athletes.* », especially at a regional level: « *we want to be leader at the IFSC, inside our continental council, being transparent and active, creating a fresh and new environment for everybody involved.* »

Success in international competitions is one of the keys to future development, both for the athletes « *I would like to have some athletes going to Paris 2024, it would be a success for me, finding male and female athletes able to achieve their goals.* » and the federations: « *getting our top climbers to the top level of international competitions will make easier to get some fundings for the whole federation. To have at least one athlete in the 2028 Olympic Games will open doors to raise more money.* »



# What are our challenges?

## The search for sustainability.

### Chapter 3



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Existential sustainability.

For some federations, to remain in existence is not a given: « sustainability of our activities and our growth is our main concern », with the wish to create « a sustainable organization, reaching this point where we don't have to worry about if we'll still be alive in two or three years. »

Money is a critical element: « *we have a very very limited budget and we cannot spend as much time as we want to develop all the aspects of sport climbing in our country.* » and the diversity of its members : « *we have to manage different sports with mountaineering. As an Olympic sport, we got funds from our government and we have to wonder how to spend this money? To top athletes or to more people? To one big national event or to more small competitions we also have to support?* »

According to the importance of their government's assistance, some have chosen « *to run our federation like a private company.* » Others are wondering « *sometimes facing tensions between professional and volunteers. Are we just money makers or do we love this sport because we want to be together?* ».



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Environmental sustainability.

Sustainability is expressed with strong values: *« environmental and human rights are top priority and sport climbing must always to be a sustainable activity. »* Because *« with the sport growing, we as an organization are creating many many more climbers, especially kids and they have an impact on our outdoor climbing environment. »*

And this, regardless of age and size: *« As we are a very young federation, we have to take care of the sustainability side when we'll build our first facilities. »* *« Big part of our work is also to manage and preserve all the rocks, the outdoor ones, in our country. »*

By also taking on the importance of our educational role: *« We need to educate people how to climb respectfully when in the nature, in protected areas, sharing useful information to the climbing community. If no, we are at risk of closures. », « getting everyone together, all the climbing community, sport and outdoor, working together. We aim to build this community; we have all the pieces and we have to put them together and make it work. »*



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Cultural sustainability of climbing values.

Sustainability is also a cultural evolution : *« we need to keep balance between traditional and modern sport climbers having different interests. », « encouraging the teaching and the practice of climbing, in all its forms and variants, as a sports discipline at the national level. », “Maintaining and stimulating the sports mystique, the ideals of the Olympic Charter, and its Anti-Doping Code, among sports leaders, technical personnel, coaches and practitioners. », in the way « of the olympic spirit: to stay together within an olympic peace, with different cultures coming together. ”, “I aim for this idea of equality and multicultural activities. »*

Cultural concerns are expressed across levels of power: *« as a leader of my federation, I try to have contacts with the political world in order to communicate more and represent us at an international level. And staying neutral, avoiding conflicts of interests. »* Especially in new territories, where *« we are aware that this sport will not be culturally accepted in all the areas and we have to deal with that and open the mind, especially on the safety side. »*



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Diversity (gender, race, disability).

This is a topic where much progress remains. With respect to gender equality: *« we try to have an equal ratio of male and female ratio and also try to improve our racial ratio in order to follow our demographic standards. »* *« As sport climbing competition manager, I want to encourage more women to compete and create more women models. »*. At all decision-making levels: *« we also need more female members in our national board. »*

Diversity is a challenge clearly expressed: *« it is still a sport for white and educated people. We also need to part of the social improvements. As example, paraclimbing is a good way and we want to develop it. »*, *« we want to have more diversity (70% of white people right now) and for that, we need to build more indoor facilities in various places as schools and communities. »*



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Ethical issues (1).

There are ethical issues which have been expressed as challenging :

- corruption : *« we live in a country where corruption and lack of transparency are common, so you always have to keep that in mind when you are working with national institutions and the government », “some look for the position, the status, and do not really contribute to the governance of the federation”.*
- doping: *« in order to be sure to avoid doping issues, we have to educate our athletes and stay always updated (especially for cross-country ski and sport climbing).*
- sexual abuses : *« long trips for competing internationally mixed with lack of money means that some athletes, male and female, and coaches spend a great amount of time in promiscuity and we have to take care of that and possible ethical issues and harassments. » « We were confronted to sexual and inappropriate contents between a coach and an athlete becoming public. It was a complex case with an adult athlete and not easy to deal with. »*



### 3. What are our challenges? The search for sustainability.

#### Ethical issues (2).

- Conflicts of interest: *« We are a small community where conflicts of interest, with private businesses connected to sport climbing, can occur. Some of board members have personal interest and we should avoid that. »* As an example, *« when our presidency and his board came to their end, some people started to collaborate commercially with other institutions, creating some conflicts of interests. », « probably, almost everybody involved in the sport has conflict of interests: athletes, parents, officials. We manage that in an open way. »* Because *« there are commercial interests in indoor climbing, we have to care how we deal with them and not create some conflicts of interests. We need a larger vision. », « we need to be aligned with our national code of conducts and anticorruption strategy, in order to make sure that we are building something that will meet our global ethical standards. »*



# What does the IFSC bring to us?

## Legitimate recognition and international events.

### Chapter 4



## 4. What does the IFSC bring to us? Legitimate recognition and international events.

A recognition that gives national and regional legitimacy.

The IFSC is a strong sign of recognition: « *as we are brand new, IFSC brings us some legitimacy in the sport and in our country. It really raises our profile.* », « *We have the challenge to bring Africa to the next level and the IFSC credibility helps us a lot* », « *our collaboration with IFSC improved a lot and we think that sport climbing could be even more improved in this part of the world (Middle East and Western Asia) with an added support of the IFSC.* »



## 4. What does the IFSC bring to us? Legitimate recognition and international events.

### The organisation of international events.

All the federations praise « *the possibility for our athletes to compete in international events, which is great.* », “*We try to send the biggest team we can, as the more athletes we send, the better it is.*”

For many, this is the starting point of IFSC partnership: « *today, it is mainly to have the opportunity to participate to international competitions.* » and « *it helps us to have an international and official recognition and to participate in international competitions like World Cup and the Olympics gives us the opportunity to be part of something bigger.* »

Those events « *and contact with the other federations are very important for a small and isolated country like we are. It brings participation and inspiration.* » Much more than that, this inclusiveness « *brings some opportunities for all our athletes and they are different depending on their levels from beginners to Olympic ones. We also need that voice at the highest level when representing us at the IOC.* » and « *the IFSC strategic plan and its coaching plans inspire us.* »



## 4. What does the IFSC bring to us? Legitimate recognition and international events.

### Common rules and values.

There is a consensus that *« IFSC has the leadership to unite all the sport climbing federations and provides guidelines that lead to the development and advancement of sport climbing and participation in international events. »* For example, amongst many, *« to be affiliated to the IFSC when you are in Africa is a strong sign. It brings us the structure in which we can develop ourselves, especially on the competition side. »*

More generally, *« IFSC is helping to apply to everybody common rules and values and ethics. »* With this in mind, the IFSC needs to continue to deliver new values: *« there is a real aim that IFSC considers not only the political and commercial sides but will be driven by core values. »*

*« IFSC is the roof of the whole organization, which shows the way to go. It's a guidance. »*



## 4. What does the IFSC bring to us? Legitimate recognition and international events.

A source of knowledge and the possibility to exchange with other countries.

IFSC is very much sought for providing knowledge: *« we need to learn, how to organize the sport, how to rule, how to develop it », « Beyond the competitions, we expect from IFSC to be an international booster of the sport. IFSC gives us experience and knowledge, a way to learn at an international level. »*

IFSC is a bridge for connecting Member Federations, *« so we can look different ways to organize and managing our system, and also creating more opportunities for our athletes », « To meet some big federations in the meetings and communicate and exchange with them is very helpful for our future growth. », « IFSC brings the global community together and it is its beauty, this global experience. The world becomes a much smaller and better place. »*



## 4. What does the IFSC bring to us? Legitimate recognition and international events.

The new additional recognition of the Olympic etiquette.

Because, « *the more sport climbing is internationally exposed, the more we can develop at our national level.* »

It is also a question of money, as « *our solid relationship allows us to be more involved in the international competition world and with the Olympic dream becoming reality it is easier to find some fundings.* »

This inclusion also offers opportunities: « *thanks to the IFSC, paraclimbing offers us a new sport in the Olympics.* » « *It also raises the values of Sport Climbing and helps the sport to grow with new climbing gyms everywhere.* »



# What are our challenges with the IFSC?

## Coordination to be improved.

### Chapter 5



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of transparency and communication in decisions and voting.

The growth of sport climbing produces challenges: « *since it became Olympics, IFSC has grown tremendously and it is more difficult that our opinions could be heard. We see less transparency. The IFSC is extremely defensive, not so open when you suggest things. They often should be more neutral.* »

Voting influence is a challenge: « *the IFSC just have been very interventionist in our continental council elections with personal and political conflicts of interests regarding the nationalities of some persons.* »

Olympism and its rules can be misunderstood: « *this is the first time IFSC and our federation have an Olympic system and we didn't hear enough from IOC and IFSC regarding the qualification rules.* »



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of diverse representation (1).

The diversity of membership lacks representation: *« it's not easy to be understood by everybody, to represent the sport and balance with the national interests of the federations. », “The IFSC doesn't seem diverse right now: this is Europe with a little bit of America.»*

The different levels of membership challenges the smaller federations: *« we do not have the right to vote at the Plenary Assembly, we do not have ways to influence critical decisions. », “This is not a democratic process. Because we are very small it is difficult to speak loudly. »* In the same way, *« the IFSC Gold membership status seems unclear and unethical. There are needs for funding but there is a balance with how you can get this money. »* A similar challenge occurs at the level of continental councils: *« we are a small continental council and we feel a lot the difference of attention with biggest councils. »*



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of diverse representation (2).

Communication is a key factor: « *when you go to the IFSC Plenary Assembly, it's obvious that some big federations already know things we were not informed.* » Even if some federations will not be able to host events because they cannot afford to, « *that doesn't mean they shouldn't be able to be associated with and participate.* »

Diversity also means paraclimbing which « *needs to be more included in our global community and we have to make sure we are doing all we can* », « *There was a setback last year when paraclimbing was taken off of the world Championship.* »



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of support (1).

Member Federations are craving for technical knowledge and educational support: *« we really need to be helped to educate our officials, judges, coaches, route setters », « We would like to get more technical help from professionals sent us by the IFSC in order to help us to improve: judges and coaches or workshops which today are not available, as some examples. », “We need to benefit of more international skills and knowledge.”, « IFSC should produce some educational material to train our officials to the official rules. It would be much more efficient than our local training. », “IFSC could help us to connect with other federations with word class coaches and routes setters coming to help us to improve and support our athletes », « this is IFSC duty to help us in these matters. »*



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of support (2).

Route setting and walls are a particularly sensitive area: *» We need more international route setting courses and partnerships in organizing international competitions. Today, the hold manufacturers have to pay to become official suppliers which is not fair. And paying just to have a certified speed climbing wall is crazy and should not happen. »*

There is a need for more attention: *« At our continental championship, not one official from the IFSC came... »*. Which also means to facilitate the communication: *« we need more translations in Spanish, not only in English, of all the official and educational documents coming from the IFSC. It is their responsibility. »*



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of funds (1).

Some federations lack everything: *« the financial support, as we don't have any from our government, is a challenging topic when you are a new and young federation. », « we lack some infrastructures and training programs in our country and IFSC budgets are too limited. Sometimes, our top athletes keep training regardless of their safety, just because this lack of fundings. »*

Lack of money is obviously a hindrance to development, as *« there is a huge disparity of resources between small and big federations. There is a need of more understanding and flexibility according to the sizes and the economic situations. IFSC could help to bridge the gap. »*



## 5. What are our challenges with the IFSC? Coordination to be improved.

### Lack of funds (2).

The debate also focuses on the distribution: *« the funds to help the development of sport climbing in each continent should be divided equally which is not the case right now, handling the situation with a geopolitical perspective. »*, *« we want to run more events in our country, to be more on the international calendar and because of lack of funds, a financial help from the IFSC to this purpose would be beneficial, as we do not get enough money from our government. »*

The main challenge is *« the culture of differences, accepting that governance and engagement can be seen in different ways according from which part of the world you come. It can create difficulties when finding a consensus and a balance. »* But, *« when something is important, we have to take our time and put our efforts into it »* without ever forgetting that *« we need more technical expertise and educational support than money. »*



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# What vision for the future?

## Chapter 6



## 6. What vision for the future?

The IFSC may evolve its governance to be more collaborative, more transparent and less patronizing towards emerging countries (1).

Leaders of Member Federations shared constructive responses to these challenges:

*« We are part of IFSC, we make IFSC. We need to value each other and what we bring on the table. But talking about our real inclusive structure, I feel a barrier with the less developed continents and countries, with a lack of resources and it brings to a feeling of lack of trust. We need to really work on that. »*

Sometimes, small things can make the difference, such as *« in terms of scheduling the meetings, IFSC has to take care of all the different councils, even the smallest. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

The IFSC may evolve its governance to be more collaborative, more transparent and less patronizing towards emerging countries (2).

Coming to votes, *« small federations should be treated the same way than the bigger ones. Each federation must be given a vote. For the moment, we are just separating federations. We need to be more informed and involved in the decision process. »* Even if *« elections were not always transparent enough by the past, although it has improved »* and *« the IFSC communication is not always right but this interview shows that they want to improve. »* *« I would like more proactive communication and transparency: board meetings, reports and information available to the members. »*, *“To accept a decision, we need to see the arguments, the debates, the questions, what led you to have this decision been made. »*

Because of many different perspectives *« even if you are a very successful country you don't have to patronize those who are trying and doing their best to improve. »*

Finally, *« IFSC shouldn't be afraid to ask and learn from all the federations, creating more synergy and partnerships. We should be more encouraged to help IFSC on various topics. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

### A youth-oriented governance, particularly for emerging countries.

For many federations, whatever their size and their age, *« the most important is our youngest people, the future of our sport. Within our long-term plan, we started to work with children hoping they will participate in the Olympics in the future. »* Because *« we want to give to our young athletes the opportunity to challenge themselves »* avoiding in the same time *« to push them too much in terms of training and results. We have to be sure they stay well protected and treat them in a responsible way. »*

This is particularly vital in emerging countries where *« we aim to provide knowledge and opportunities to educate our young climbers and more generally to all the students at school. As climbing is a challenge with yourself and an opportunity to grow up as a person »*. In new territories such as Africa, where *« we have to focus more on the youth and black people, finding a balance and in a safe way »*, *« we want to make sport climbing more popular. For example, we built a wall in a very poor place and it helped a lot the education and the integration of out-of-school children. With climbing, they have to face challenges to overcome, and it teaches them effort and discipline. »*

Indoor walls and competitions are very useful to introduce kids to the sport, *« then we have a great responsibility to educate them when some will move to the outdoors: security, environment respect and sustainability. Sport climbing is a great example and key to social transformation in our country and internationally. Our contribution to the new generation of young people is important. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

More diversity and first and foremost more women at all levels and especially in leadership (1).

First of all, « *we need more women in every places if sport climbing to become stronger. If we could have more female athletes than male, it would be great, because it is still a challenge in my country. We also need to encourage more women to be involved in federations, at the IFSC and at the plenary assembly.*

On the field, proposals abound such as « *having more workshops, on ethical issues for example* » or « *including paraclimbing more in the IFSC and investing in female routesetters.* »

Diversity is known to be in the strategic plan « *and it has to become a core piece in our strategic process. We need to focus on it, everyone should have the possibility of having a voice both in our federation and in the IFSC.* » Because « *the only way is to create actions where everyone is involved.* »



## 6. What vision for the future?

More diversity and first and foremost more women at all levels and especially in leadership (2).

At the IFSC level, there is a need that the current leaders *« search this diversity and inform us, they need to educate themselves and identify the gaps. », “I don't believe that IFSC board needs to be 100% representative of any single member. », “We should appoint various human resources for officials regardless of their gender » and « we could have an executive board more representative of the diversity of all the Member Federations. »*

It sometimes starts with simple attentions : *« I was just appointed as president of my federation and I noticed that even at a continental level, we use different languages and IFSC should communicate more in different languages and not only in English, in order to feel more inclusiveness. »*

Because, yes, diversity *« is looking at things from different perspectives and we have to take advantage of that. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

### Combining volunteers and professionals (1).

Everywhere, volunteering remains the foundation on which the entire system evolves towards more professionalism: « *Volunteering is the standard but we are evolving more and more to professionalism* » and « *we want to be sure that all the volunteers coming to us are coming with passion for the sport. They are great but they need to be chosen.* »

So we need « *to find a balance between a strong profesional staff with operational tasks and a strong volunteer side which moves people from being a casual spectator to a pasionate lifetime servant to the sport.* » « *As a professional full time employee of my national alpine club, I am focused on cooperation, working together with some volunteers facing their passion for the sport and the day to day reality.*



## 6. What vision for the future?

### Combining volunteers and professionals (2).

*On the other hand, « we need a professional organization as you cannot ask too much to volunteers in terms of time and commitment. As we are becoming Olympics, we work more and more with professionals. » « We need to use money when professionals are needed, route setters masters as an example. On the other hand, volunteering is obviously very important. So this cohabitation is one of the biggest challenge right now. »*

*It's not always a problem of money and lack of fundings, « even if you definitely need some money. Our insititution became much more professional in the last years. Nowadays, there is a part which needs to be ruled by pros and not volunteers. You have to find how to combine both. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

### Should the IFSC remain focused on the organisation of international competitions? (1)

This question shows different perspectives. Some believe that « *the IFSC must be just about competition and indoor climbing and not about the outdoors* », because « *IFSC is fundamentally the framework for competition. It should remain its main focus.* » They say that the organization « *is already at the scale it needs to be the more efficient* » and that « *if the IFSC broadens too much, it will lose this focus.* »

Nevertheless, many feel that « *we have the challenge to connect the core and historical climbing values and culture with the Olympic world* » because « *climbing is not just another sport on the CIO's agenda and should not be just about medals.* »

With Tokyo coming, « *the Olympics will offer to people who know nothing about climbing an opportunity to discover the sport, a showcase for sport climbing. IFSC can help to convert that locally, especially with the climbing walls.* » All the way to olympism « *was a very tough work, focusing on this goal, and now it is very well achieved. It is also related to the values of sport: not only competing but also it has to be about trust.* » As we existed before becoming Olympic, « *it is not our prime identity, our roots. Outdoor values and climbing culture need to be honoured and maintained. We must show that sustainability and diversity remain our core values. Olympism is a tool but it will not change the spirit of our sport. It represents one part but not everything.* »



## 6. What vision for the future?

### Should the IFSC remain focused on the organisation of international competitions? (2)

Some express that *« we should work to enforce the respect for the climbing culture and the nature »* For example, *« as Vice President of my federation and in charge of sport climbing development, I want to work for the future, connecting somehow indoor and outdoor climbers, bringing them to the contact of nature. »*

This difference in point of view is not irreconcilable: *« I don't see that to be involved in outdoor climbing as a threat. The background and the culture of this sport are a strength. »* Even if *« in the future, we would have to expand to the outdoor community but right now, we do not have the resources for that. »*



## 6. What vision for the future?

### Should the IFSC remain focused on the organisation of international competitions? (3)

And we already have to look beyond : *« we should not dream only about olympism but to becoming a strong sport. », “Olympism is currently a useful tool for recognition but we have to see further.”, “ IFSC spent a lot of time to become olympic but we need to also take care of the other aspects of climbing.”, “Keeping the climbing spirit and not only been focused by the 4 years olympic agenda.”, “We want to promote that climbing is a lifestyle which can be enjoyed at any age and at any level. »*

Everyone agrees that *« the IFSC has to continue the amazing work of Olympic inclusion because on a global standpoint, this is one of the most important things that IFSC leadership can do to help all the Member Federations to grow. »* It is true that *« as an Olympic sport, we still have a long way to go before being established. Thanks to the IFSC work, this legacy will affect all the other aspects of sport climbing. »*



# Conclusion:

our relationship with the  
IFSC in one sentence ...



## Conclusion (1)

*“I firmly believe in achieving objectives of growth and development by making diversity a genuine strength that allows us to feel part of the team.”*

*“We want to create a productive and equal relationship between other countries and our federation in order to use the possible talents we have here.”*

*“There are so much optimism in the industry and we are all moving forward. IFSC is a big part of it and climbing brings the world together.”*

*“We want to be partners and growing the sport, sharing best practices, having a beneficial partnership for the best of our athletes.”*

*“The IFSC has to ensure the astronomical growth of the sport and the challenge of a very small group of people to manage this Olympic inclusion and everything coming with.”*



## Conclusion (2)

*“I strongly believe in system alignment where everybody works in the same direction. IFSC is our original and primary partner and we have to work together.”*

*“We are going faster than we can follow and IFSC is at high speed, preparing for the Olympics. An ideal relationship would be to communicate about everything which is happening in a real transparency.”*

*“We all are in the same boat and we want the same things. When a federation has a different view at a national level, it should not be seen as a critic, but just as a way to try to improve things.”*

*“We are all working for the development of sport climbing and we need to keep together, even at distance through our screens.”*

*“Thanks to the pandemic crisis, we feel more communication, more in the loop. Dialogue is the basis of a better understanding.”*

*“IFSC is growing our sport extremely fast and we are proud to be part of it. It's like being married. Sometimes, it can be rocky but you'll stick to it!”*



# Appendix 1: List of Member Federations Interviewed

- Guatemala – Federación Nacional de Andinismo de Guatemala
- Australia – Sport Climbing Australia
- Mauritius – Mauritius Sport Climbing Federation
- Malta – Malta Sport for All
- Puerto Rico – Federación Puertorriqueña de Escalada
- New Zealand – Climbing New Zealand
- Austria – Austria Climbing
- USA – USA Climbing
- Uganda – Uganda Sport Climbing Federation
- Singapore – Singapore Mountaineering Federation
- Latvia – Latvia Alpinist Association
- Peru – Federación Deportiva Peruana de Escalada
- Japan – Japan Mountaineering and Sport Climbing Federation
- Israel – Association for Sport Climbing and Mountaineering in Israel
- Belgium – Climbing and Mountaineering Belgium
- Sweden – Svenska Klätterförbundet
- Czech Republic – Czech Mountaineering Association
- Great Britain – British Mountaineering Council
- Canada – Climbing Escalade Canada
- Iran – Iran Mountaineering and Sport Climbing Federation
- Ireland – Mountaineering Ireland
- Argentina – Federación Argentina de Ski y Andinismo
- Venezuela – Federación Venezolana de Montañismo y Escalada
- Switzerland – Swiss Alpine Club
- Netherlands – Koninklijke Nederlandse Klim- en Bergsportvereniging
- South Africa – South African National Climbing Federation



## Appendix 2: Interviewing Team

Marc Le Menestrel – Ethics Commission

David Chambre - Consultant