

# Chapter 12

## COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATION

Working in close cooperation with a range of partners - among them the Beijing Municipal Government, UNEP, environmental NGOs, sponsors and schools - BOCOG mobilized communities on a grand scale to promote the 'Green Olympics' vision, even engaging more than 400 million students in one programme alone.

The Beijing mascots in London spreading Olympic fever.

© Agence France Presse





To promote the 'Green Olympics' concept and raise awareness of environmental issues, BOCOG instigated various projects in the domains of communication and education. Working in close cooperation with a range of partners – among them the Beijing Municipal Government, UNEP, environmental NGOs, sponsors and schools – BOCOG mobilized communities on a grand scale and even engaged more than 400 million students in one programme alone.

BOCOG incorporated information about the 'Green Olympics' into general Games information and other publications, such as the China Environment Yearbook, and also produced a range of guidelines and other publications dedicated to environmental topics including:

- *Beijing 2008: Environmental Protection, Innovation and Improvement report;*
- *Environmental Protection Guidelines for the Olympic Projects;*
- *Environmental Protection Guidelines for the Temporary Projects;*
- *Environmental Protection Guidelines for the Beijing 2008 Hotel Services;*
- BOCOG Environmental Reports for the years 2003, 2004 and 2005/2006, and
- A series of six leaflets on environmental aspects of the Games, jointly produced with UNEP.

In addition, BOCOG showcased the three pillars of the Olympic Movement – sport, culture and

the environment – through art projects. The Construction and Environment Department of BOCOG coordinated much of the education and outreach activity.

### 12.1 COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

BOCOG developed several initiatives to spread environmental values among the general public and generated the enthusiasm of Beijing residents who wanted to have an Olympic Games experience. Highlights of the public information and outreach activity are listed below.

#### The Green Community and Green Home Campaign

The project was aimed at raising environmental awareness among Beijing families and communities. It developed initiatives related to water and energy saving,

reducing pollution, waste sorting and green consumption. The campaign was launched in Beijing and, according to BOCOG, more than 886 communities and 300 families were involved.

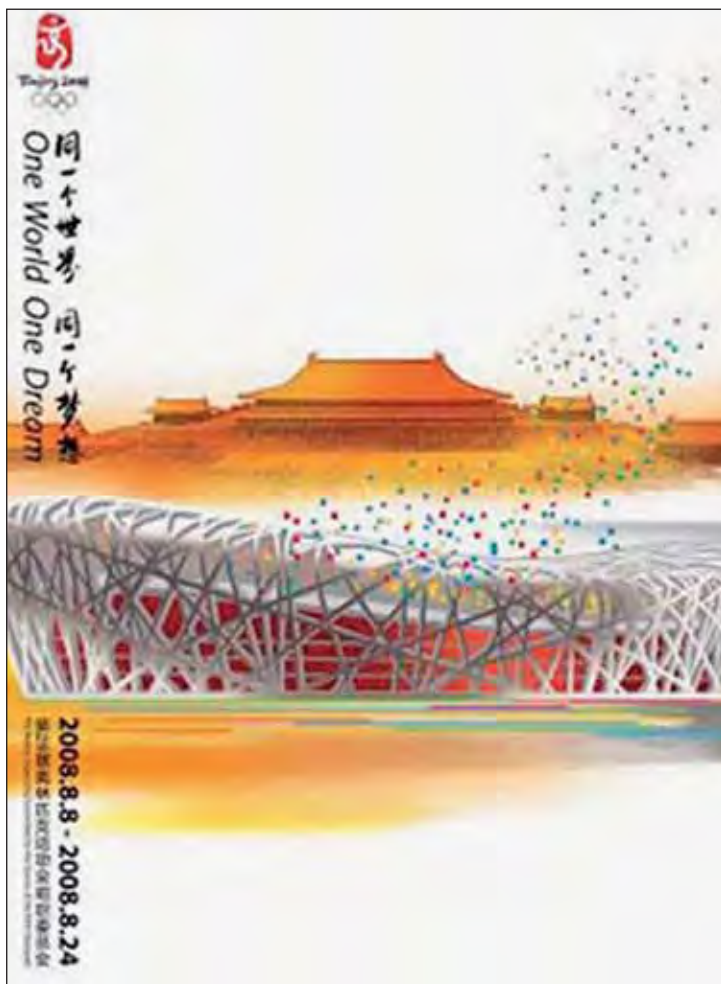
#### The 'One Day, No Engine Sounds' Campaign

The campaign encouraged Beijing citizens to use any means of transport other than cars. This raised awareness of air and noise pollution which are caused and can be curtailed by individual choice. 504 institutions, including 407 car clubs, joined the campaign. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in late 2006 was used as the campaign springboard.

#### Beijing Green Map Initiative

This project, developed by BOCOG and the Beijing Environment Protection Bureau,

Olympic promotional posters.



involved an initiative whereby Beijing residents participated in the labelling of the environmental and cultural facilities around their city. According to BOCOG, the project involved 8,000 people in developing China's first ever visual guide on environmental, ecological and cultural landscapes of the country's capital city.

**The Fuwa Exhibition**

The 'Close to the Nature Hand in Hand with Fuwa Exhibition' was a travelling display created by BOCOG and the Beijing Association for Science and Technology. The exhibition raised awareness about the four Olympic animal mascots, namely the fish, the Tibetan antelope, the flying swallow and the panda. Several environmental NGOs joined the exhibition, which enlightened viewers on each animal's habitat

and their uniqueness to their particular ecosystems.

**Internal communication**

BOCOG also actively engaged its staff in contributing to achieving the vision of a 'Green Olympics' by providing information sessions, updates on progress with environmental innovations and opportunities to get involved in campaigns. BOCOG reported that more than 1,000 of its staff received environmental protection training. Every year, BOCOG staff members also took part in a public Tree Planting Day and helped motivate other citizens to help in the greening of Beijing.

A proposal for a Commuter Challenge was a joint initiative of BOCOG, UNEP and the Vancouver Olympic Games Organizing Committee.

**Television advertisements**

The Centre for Environmental Education and Communication of Beijing, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNEP and BOCOG developed a series of television advertisements to promote public awareness on various environmental issues. The spots used famous Chinese sport personalities to communicate to the public. They were aired on several TV channels in China and on the Beijing metro prior to and during the Games.

**Joint BOCOG and UNEP leaflets**

UNEP and BOCOG cooperated to develop a set of six leaflets on the environment and the Games. Written in Mandarin and English, the brochures contained information on a range of environmental issues – in

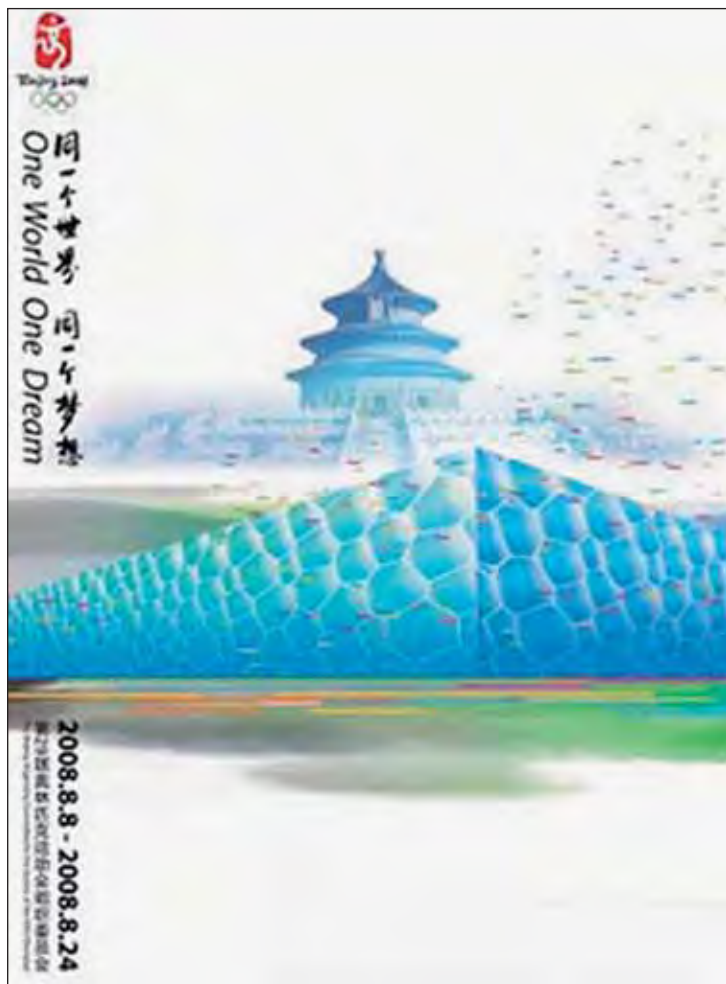
areas such as water conservation, renewable energy, air quality and green coverage – plus steps by BOCOG to address them, including during the design and construction of Games venues. The leaflets were distributed to the media and spectators during the Games.

**12.2 EDUCATION**

BOCOG targeted China's younger generation by organising projects in primary and secondary schools around Beijing and across the country. The major educational initiatives included:

The Beijing Primary and Secondary School Olympic Education Programme and the Green School Project

Communicating the message: collaboration was key.





Children at schools across China learnt about environmental issues through Olympic-linked programmes.

China's Ministry of Education implemented, at national level, a project that involved 400 million students. The aim was to establish Olympic Model Schools, where the Olympic values were taught, practised and promoted. The project encouraged students to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. Up to October 2006, 556 schools in China were nominated Olympic Model Schools, including 200 schools from Beijing.

In addition, a Green school project was initiated. Green schools are those that take environmentally friendly measures in their day-to-day activities and teach environmental values. The project was implemented in the city of Beijing and by October 2006 counted a total of 728 schools.

'Reserve a Barrel of Water this Summer' initiative

The project aimed to develop water saving initiatives while communicating the importance of water saving. It was implemented in primary schools around Beijing's 18 districts and counties. The driving forces behind it were the Youth League, Beijing Municipal Committee, the Young Pioneers Beijing Working Committee, Coca-Cola and BOCOG.

'Green Dreams, Colourful Olympics' Painting Competition

In 2005 and 2006 BOCOG, in partnership with the China National Youth Palace Association, organized a painting contest for students of Beijing's primary and secondary schools. In 2005, more than 2,000 students, from about 100 schools, participated in the competition. In 2006, the competition was extended to over 20 provinces, municipalities and

autonomous regions and nearly 8,000 drawings were received from students. The selected paintings were exhibited and used to decorate the Olympic Village.

The Green Olympics, Green Action Team

Members of this team held lectures and implemented promotional initiatives in different places such as in schools, factories, universities, libraries and communities. The Team was established in 2004 by BOCOG and the Beijing Environmental Protection Bureau to promote Olympic environmental values, sustainable development principles, good energy saving and water saving practices and environmental awareness in general.

### 12.3 COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the important area of environmental education and communication, it is clear BOCOG's efforts contributed to raising awareness of the links between sport and the environment through actively engaging the public.

Local communities were encouraged by BOCOG, the Beijing municipal authorities and Games sponsors to take part in tree planting, energy saving and other Olympic-related environmental programmes. The beauty of this approach is that it gave people of all ages and backgrounds an Olympic Games experience regardless of their sporting ability or access to event tickets.

© BOCOG



BOCOG promoted its environmental messages largely to a domestic audience, with a focus on youth.

BOCOG demonstrated how hands-on environmental activities could harness the enthusiasm of citizens who wanted to contribute to the success of a major international event, and help market the event to an audience broader than sports fans.

Given the sheer scale of public participation in Beijing's environmental programmes, this is a case study of which other major international sports bodies should take note, including the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, International Rugby Board and International Cricket Council.

UNEP concludes that increased awareness of environmental issues in China, particularly among Beijing residents and businesses, is a powerful legacy of the Games. However, without

detracting from this achievement, there is room for improvement for future Games organisers.

BOCOG did not have a comprehensive plan to engage the media in its environmental performance. Given that Beijing's air quality attracted a lot of negative media attention, BOCOG could have developed a comprehensive plan to highlight the other aspects of its work on greening the Games.

A perennial communication challenge for the Games is meeting the information needs of a worldwide audience within resource constraints. BOCOG's efforts focussed on promoting its environmental achievements to a domestic audience. There is scope to extend the reach of future Games-linked environmental education and public awareness

campaigns to a global audience. UNEP anticipates exciting possibilities for greater use of social marketing tools by Olympic Games Organising Committees.

BOCOG's style of communication was appropriate, for example providing environmental information on the BOCOG website rather than relying on hard copy information materials, and arming Games volunteers with information about BOCOG's sustainability initiatives so they could answer spectators' questions spectators face-to-face. However, the website's Environment section was not kept up-to-date.

A further recommendation for future Olympic Games Organising Committees is to conduct formal research to measure public awareness and

attitudes towards sustainability initiatives for the Games, to help target environmental education campaigns and gauge the extent of behaviour change as a result.

---

**UNEP anticipates exciting possibilities for greater use of social marketing tools by future Olympic Games Organising Committees.**

---