



Confédération Internationale de la Pêche Sportive

C.I.P.S.

fondée en 1952.

THE PRESIDENT

Association déclarée, Tribunal de Rome n. 606/2008

CIPS Congress
Cape Town, April 19th 2024

Report of the CIPS President

After the CIPS Congress held in Rome on 28th April 2023 unanimously decided to reject the application for affiliation to CIPS (FIPS-Mer) of North Ireland Federation of Sea Anglers ('NIFSA') and to maintain that of the Irish Federation (IFSA), a federation that includes and acts on behalf of the 4 Irish provinces, i.e. of the whole of Ireland, in the second half of 2023 we received a letter from a law firm reiterating the application for affiliation of the Northern Irish.

In this regard, since the problem between IFSA and NIFSA is clearly a political issue that can and must be resolved at the local level and not by a sporting structure such as CIPS, which does not want to be authorized to make political decisions or intervene in matters concerning the internal structures of national federations affiliated to CIPS, we have decided not to follow up on this further request. To date, there is no news on the matter, so hopefully the matter has been resolved for the time being.

Last year CIPS was faced with a new issue relating to the possibility of transgender individuals competing in women's events. This came to a head because a trans woman was selected to compete for the England women's surf casting team at the 2023 World Championships in Italy. On that occasion, the trans woman's teammates refused to take part in the World Championship believing that it was "unfair" to allow transgender women to compete in the tournament.

Subsequently, following a request from Ms. Emma Nicholson, Baroness of Winterbourne, who is responsible for the issue of gender equality between women and men, President Matteoli responded with a letter dated 29 September to clarify CIPS position on the issue. The letter stated that after extensive discussion, the CIPS Praesidium had concluded that allowing transgender people to participate in women's competitions could be considered discriminatory, particularly in disciplines where physical strength is a determining factor. It has been decided that transgender individuals will no longer be allowed to participate in the women's championships of four different disciplines: surfcasting and long casting (FIPS Mer), carp fishing (FIPSeD) and fly fishing (FIPS Mouche). As a result of this unanimous decision, the 3 International Federations will include a ban on the participation of transgender people in the competition regulations of the above-mentioned women's disciplines. CIPS *Praesidium* has decided that birth certificates may only be requested for these

disciplines in cases of doubt. To this end, an official letter was sent to all national federations. The Baroness, who was officially informed by letter, informed CIPS of its complete agreement.

The issue of Russian and Belarusian team participation in the Championships continues to persist because the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has upheld its 2022 decision. Athletes from these countries may only participate individually, not as a team, and must not be military personnel. Additionally, they must not wear clothing that identifies their origin and cannot play the Russian or Belarusian anthem. Currently, there are no significant changes, to the extent that even at Olympic level there are many doubts about the participation of Russian or Belarusian athletes.

Regarding the recognition of fishing as an Olympic sport, which the Honorary President, Ferenc Szalay, also mentions in his report, progress is moving at an exasperatingly slow pace. The dissolution of GAISF (Global Association of International Sports Federations) and the subsequent transfer of all International Federations to SportAccord has concluded. GAISF was liquidated after a complex year-long process that ended in 2022. Subsequently, all the International Federations that were part of it, both Olympic and non-Olympic, merged into SportAccord. In the latter Association, all International Sports Federations are grouped into four different sub-associations: ASOIF (Association of Summer Olympic International Federations), AIOWF (Association of International Olympic Winter Sports Federations), ARISF (International Sports Association of the IOC Recognized International Sports Federations) and finally AIMS (Alliance of Independent Recognized Members of Sports) of which CIPS is also a member. We are currently waiting for the SportAccord management establish a new procedure for the eventual recognition as an Olympic sport for those International Sports Federations that have applied for it but have not yet obtained it. This would allow us to join the ARISF, the family of Olympic Federations. Our contacts with SportAccord's top management continue and we remain vigilant, waiting for an opportunity to arise in which we must be ready to enter. Unfortunately, this requires a great deal of patience.

There is one topic in CIPS, which is very important and needs to be discussed also in this Congress, namely the recognition by CIPS of new national federations from countries where fishing is not recognized as a sport. Therefore, if we are very taxing and restrictive, we will not be able to expand as desired. Otherwise, we could permit their participation in the championships while waiting for them to obtain the recognition we demand, giving them the opportunity to show, through active participation, that they have a real interest in being part of our Confederation. On the other hand, being too restrictive would allow only those countries that officially recognise fishing as a sport to join CIPS and, as a result, would lead to a net reduction in the number of national federations that can join us, weakening our political position vis-à-vis SportAccord.

On this topic, the CIPS *Praesidium* held a long discussion at its meeting in Vicenza (IT), which produced some final considerations that I would like to share here and, perhaps, discuss at this Congress.

Firstly, at the end of the discussion, all the members of the *Praesidium* agreed that CIPS should adopt an inclusive and non-exclusive policy towards National Federations applying for membership.

In order to achieve this goal, various solutions were initially envisaged, but finally merged into a single proposal, which was accepted by all members of the *Praesidium*. Currently, the CIPS Statutes allow two types of members to participate in CIPS competitions: Ordinary members (annually paying the full membership fee and having voting rights at the Congress and FIPS Assemblies) and Candidate

members (annually paying a reduced fee, but increasing over the years, and excluded from voting rights). The proposal formulated by the entire *Praesidium* would be to make an amendment to the CIPS Statutes to introduce a third category of members. These members would be authorized provisionally to participate in competitions pending a certificate from their government authorizing them to represent their country and use the national flag and anthem in official CIPS competitions. Obviously, these members would not have the right to vote and would have to become Ordinary members, within a certain number of years (2 or 3).

During the 'Pescare Show' in Vicenza, the CIPS *Praesidium* organized a conference entitled "Towards a legislative restriction on the use of lead and plastic in recreational fishing?" as news had reached us that the European Community was planning to pass laws banning the use of these materials in recreational fishing, which would cause quite a few problems for both companies and fishermen. To this end, the leading Italian producers of plastic fishing materials, and leads used in fishing, have been invited to the Conference, together to representatives of Italy's largest fishing equipment manufacturers. The Conference was opened by Jan Kappel, the lobbyist who works in Brussels on behalf of EFTTA and follows the work of the European Commission; three Italian members of the European Parliament from different political parties then spoke, including Mr Fiocchi who produces hunting cartridges, and is therefore familiar with the lead issue. Since the new European law aims to reduce the use of single-use plastic objects, it was concluded that this new law does not concern equipment used for fishing, but rather that used as packaging, so the action needed is to raise awareness among fishermen about the proper disposal of plastics and the demand for manufacturers to make more and more biodegradable plastics. With regard to lead, on the other hand, the problem is more complex since no material has yet been found to replace it. Tungsten, for example, presents considerable problems due to its cost and also its excessive hardness, which makes it difficult to use in small leads. However, the law on the subject is still being discussed, so there should be a few years to look for alternative solutions.

At the last meeting, we discussed the possibility of the CIPS having an official anthem to represent it being played at official ceremonies. To this end, we contacted a composer who sent us a dozen short pieces to choose from. The choice, by a majority vote of the *Praesidium* members, fell on one of the songs which, following some suggestions made by the President of the FIPS-Mouche, was revised by the composer. This new version of the anthem was submitted to the members of the *Praesidium* who unanimously accepted it, so that today, at this Congress, the official CIPS anthem could finally be heard.

This report concludes with some brief but important announcements:

- a) Through the South African Federation, CIPS has received an expression of interest from Columbia, a world-renowned sportswear manufacturer, to sponsor the FIPSeD World Bass Fishing Championship and later also the FIPSeD Carp Fishing Championship. In addition, should this cooperation be successful, Columbia could also open up to sponsoring FIPS Mer and FIPS Mouche championships. There is nothing concrete yet, but we will of course keep you all informed of any developments.
- b) From this year, the CIPS *Praesidium* has decided to have patches to be given to the individual world champions and team champions (including captains) of all disciplines of the 3

International Federations, so that they can boast of this title during the year in which they obtained it.

- c) As every year, I am reminded of the problem of doping controls. In fact, even in 2023 we unfortunately had one case of positivity. In this regard, I will never tire of repeating that it is the duty of the National Federations to ensure that their Athletes are in compliance with anti-doping regulations and it is also the duty of the National Federations to ensure that Athletes, who need, due to documented physical problems, to take drugs considered doping or masking, such as diuretics, have applied to ITA (International Testing Agency) for the appropriate exemption to control (TUE).
- d) Lastly, I must mention that the Dutch Federation has requested that the Congress discuss the possibility of changing the way the Congress itself is held, giving more space to discussions on topics of common interest or to in-depth studies on reports that should be taken as already read by the Delegates.

At the end, it only remains for me to thank all the members of the Praesidium for their continuous and fundamental contribution in the running of our Confederation and all the National Federations, all the Athletes, Technicians and Managers who allow the championships of the three International Federations to run smoothly. Finally, allow me to say a special thank you to the staff of the International Secretariat for supporting me and putting up with me with great patience. Thanks to Barbara Durante and a special thanks to Paola Altobelli, who for family reasons had to change jobs so that she could be closer to her home.