

THOMAS KONIETZKO

Candidate for ICF President Position



SHAPING THE FUTURE OF OUR SPORT
- TOGETHER -

My vision for the future of our sport



INNOVATIONS

COOPERATION

TRANSPARENCY

INVOLVEMENT

SUSTAINABILITY

will be the key principles of focus
should I be elected as President.

Profile:

Date of birth: 6. November 1963

Curriculum vitae:

1982	graduated from high school
1984 - 1988	Studying as Coach at Training Institute for Teachers and Coaches Weißenfels
1984 - 1990	full time coach in the Junior division of a local Canoe club
1990	founded my first company
currently	owner and manager of several companies in the field of outdoor marketing and property services with more than 500 employees

Experience in Canoe and sports administration

1978 - 1984	Athlete in Canoe
1984 - 1990	Canoeing coach
1999 - 2006	President of a County Sports Federation
2000 - 2006	Vice President of a Federal Canoe Association
2006 - 2010	Vice President of the German Canoe Federation
2010 - 2021	President of the German Canoe Federation
2011 - 2016	Member of the High-Performance Committee of the German NOC
2011 - 2016	ECA Board member
2012 - 2021	ICF Board Member
2016 - 2021	ICF Vice President

Awards

2009	Honorary President of the County Sports Federation
2011	Gold badge of honour of the Federal Sports Association Sachsen-Anhalt
2016	Honorary member of the ECA Board
2018	Bundesverdienstkreuz (Medal of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany)

My commitment to our Sport

It has been my great honour and privilege to serve you as an ICF Board member for almost 10 years including 5 years as ICF Vice President.

In that time, I believe together we have achieved a lot to improve the standing of our Sport.

Included in the many responsibilities relating to my work, I would like to highlight activities such as:

- Achieving a gender equality at the Olympic program for 2020 in my role as Chairmen of the ICF Olympic Program Commission
- The help and support in developing Canoeing around the world and
- Working on strategic decisions to strengthen our sport, all of which have been focuses of my engagement

Together with all of you - my dedicated friends in our National Federations, the ICF bodies, our staff team, and countless supporters, we have worked tirelessly to promote and develop our sport.

Now as a candidate standing for election as ICF President, I would like to continue the successful work of our current President Jose Perurena, and together with you, I want to concentrate all my efforts to further development of our sport.

You have my absolute and unwavering commitment that I will carry out the promises I make to guarantee the ICF goes from strength to strength and that Canoe thrives for generations to come.

As President of a National Canoe Federation, I know the challenges, opportunities, and the problems of the daily work of a NF. As a member of several international Canoe bodies since 2011, I know the challenges we are facing and the hurdles we will have in the future and truly understand the support each one of our NF`s needs to develop and succeed.

If you elect me as the new President of our proud Federation, I will be completely focussed on the role as ICF President and will not allow myself to be distracted from my main objective which is to promote and develop our sport to a higher level.

That is why I will resign as President of the German Canoe Federation at the end of my term on November 2021.

If I am bestowed the honour of being elected President of the ICF, my term in office will be guided by the principles of collaboration with all our stakeholders, openness for all problems, and constructive dialogue with all our dedicated officials, athletes and staff.

The key pillars for my work as a President will be based on the following principles:

- ***Innovations and Changes***
- ***Cooperation***
- ***Transparency***
- ***Involvement***
- ***Sustainability***

Our sport and our athletes must be at the heart of our work. We do our job for them and as officials we must do everything in our power, in order to improve the perception of our sport and the conditions for our athletes.

Innovations and changes

We must conquer new markets, engage our audience and fans with more exciting digital opportunities, as well as attract new younger fans to our sport. Parallel with supporting the well established market at Europe and Oceania our sport must grow in the future, especially in Asia, America, and Africa.

We need to become more flexible in the way we are running our competitions and have to bring our sport to the people in the cities.

We must also integrate worldwide activities in recreational Canoe sports more strongly into our work and use them as a link to our competitive activities.

We have to maximise our commercial and marketing opportunities using more „new way“ like digital and influencers opportunities. We have to look and find new sources of income for our sport.

We have to continue looking for ways to save costs within the administration without endangering the quality of the work.

We have to help the Continents to increase the importance of Continental and regional Games. Increasing the importance of the Continental Associations through the allocation of Olympic quotas is one of my main objectives.

If I am elected, I intend to start a discussion on how we award events in the future - My idea is to approach potential organizers and avoid an expensive bidding battle. In future we must strive for a more equal distribution of big ICF events in all parts of our world.

I intend to strengthen the structures of our NF`s. - A special budget for the education of coaches, officials, and for activities to improve the administration skills of the NF`s in the respective Continents can be provided after the drawing up/submission of an appropriate proposal by the responsible ICF Exco member subject to a Board decision.

I will work to ensure increased financial support of online educational and training activities and a bundling of online educational activities together with our Continental Associations with support of the ICF.

More than in the past development activities must be shifted to the responsibility of the Continents. The overall strategy must be decided by the ICF Vice President, who is in charge of the development programme in close cooperation with the Continental Associations, but the implementation should be carried out by the Continents.

Depending on the income from the IOC for the past Olympic cycle, we should look for opportunities to increase the development budget.

In the future, development activities will be granted on the basis of our sport being strengthened rather than individual athletes benefiting.

In addition to supporting athletes, the focus of development will be on providing equipment for the grassroots work of our NF`s.

I intend to launch a program "NF`s help NF`s" – as a sort of mentor program.

That means, I wish to start an initiative to convince strong NF`s to fix partnerships with other NF`s in supporting their development. This partnership might include some of the following:

- donation of used equipment
- education and training of coaches and officials
- joint training for talents over a long period

Cooperation

For me, cooperation means that decisions are discussed and prepared where the experts and parties affected are located. Sporting related issues should be discussed in the respective disciplines and continental related issues on the respective continents. Athletes must be involved in all discussions.

ICF staff, in close cooperation with those directly affected, should help to prepare the discussions and outcome.

If you elect me, I would like to introduce a regular exchange with the NF representatives about the current work and the challenges in the future.

Therefore, I intend to organize:

- at least one presence or virtual meeting per year with representatives of all our NF`s
- at least one meeting between elected officials in charge of a Canoe discipline and athletes to update and involve the athletes on developments, as well as discussions regarding their respective discipline and on issues in general
- We should use our Technical ICF Congress to offer workshops involving external experts and together discuss important developments and strategic issues of our sport

We must find ways to enable all our NF`s to participate in ICF Congresses, even if this means a budget needs to be set.

Transparency

Setting the highest standards of governance, responsibility, integrity, and transparency is one of my main goals.

One member of the Executive Committee must be made responsible for each of the following areas:

- Olympic Sprint
- Olympic Slalom
- Non-Olympic Flatwater disciplines
- Non-Olympic Whitewater disciplines
- Development programme and cooperation with Continental Federations
- Financial issues
- Strategic issues with regard to the Olympic programme
- Cooperation with other Canoe related IF`s and bodies

Ongoing information exchange must be facilitated between the staff, the Board members, as well as with our NF`s with the main objective of bringing everyone to the same level of knowledge on all topics.

I intend to organize regular meetings virtual or by presence with the SG/Staff and Exco members with the following agenda:

- information on what is going on in daily work
- overview of the financial situation
- overview of ongoing discussions with the IOC/ASOIF and other international sports bodies
- exchange relating to the Continental projects
- exchange relating to the Discipline projects
- update on development projects

At least four times a year, I would like to publish a letter to all of our NF`s and the ICF Board with a summary report about the work of the Exco including information on the main issues, topics of recent work, and the important topics discussed in the previous 3 months, as well as an overview of the current financial situation.

Involvement

Future not standing temporary Commissions should consist of Exco or Board members and representatives of NF`s. Cooperation with NF`s must be strengthened in order to implement important ICF projects together. Important strategic decisions for the future of our sport must be made with the involvement of our NF`s.

ICF has to hand over more responsibility for all Continent related issues to the Continental Associations. The financial responsibility remains with the ICF office, but the continents should be empowered with responsibility to carry out their tasks as long as the activities remain within the available budget. ICF staff can help them if required.

We must make greater use of the opportunities, skills, and relationships with the national Olympic movement offered by our NF`s. We have to create on a personal level a strong network of supporters for our sport with the Involvement of IOC members, politicians, and NOC`s around the globe.

Sustainability

In addition to our existing commissions, I intend to create a Sustainable and Environmental Commission.

This commission is to deal with the following topics, among others:

- reducing competitions and actions overall climate impact
- promote with all our stakeholders a greater environmental responsibility
- promote sustainable and responsible consumption
- advocate climate actions through communication
- introduce a climate education program for all our stakeholders around the world

For every newly built sports facility for Slalom or Sprint before the construction begins, we will offer our help as the ICF to develop a sustainable use concept in close cooperation with the owners and the NF`s.

Our sport is a nature sport and we have to analyse each of our competitions and each of our actions to ensure that a sustainable use of our playing field is guaranteed.

Besides all the general things I want to keep and change, for me the following main goals, behind which we should all gather, remain

- We have to do everything to protect our 16 Olympic events.
- We have to do everything to protect our Olympic quotas.
- We have to fight to increase the Para events to 10 by 2024 and to 12 by 2028.
- We have to put our future focus on supporting and developing our current and traditional Olympic and Non-Olympic disciplines.
- We have to end the fight with other IF`s, which can mean that we must move away from our current positions.
- On a personal basis, we have to use the relationships with all our stakeholders to create an even better network of supporters for our sport around the globe – good relationships are the key to our continuance as a strong Olympic Sport.
- We have to fight to keep or include as many of our disciplines as possible in the Continental and regional Games or big Multi Sport events.

A FINAL REMARK:

The ideas above are just my ideas. I will not be a President who pushes through any lonely proposals alone. I will be a President to engage all our stakeholders around the world to contribute good ideas and to work together on the future of our sport. Only in that way we will be able to secure the future of our sport. Therefore, I invite all our comrades to participate in the development of our sport with good ideas. I promise I am open to all good ideas.

Success is only possible as a team and progress is only possible if we all work together to create an atmosphere of cohesion and mutual trust as the basis for successful work in the future.