



## **World Sprints and World Distance Championships – Beyond 2026**

The International Va'a Federation's Board has been reviewing the sustainability and viability of running a World Championship every year. It has identified some weaknesses in the current schedule and begun discussion of two new options. The Board wants to give our member federations the opportunity to provide feedback as we move forward to make the IVF and our sport stronger and more sustainable.

The IVF Board has identified two alternate options to our current schedule. They are explained below and have been analyzed for their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. (Available as an appendix to this memo)

### **2027**

The IVF Board has determined that reviewing and restructuring of our championships is vital to the future sustainability of our sport, events and participation pathways.

We have made the decision that regardless of the outcome of this consultation and decisions made, we will not be hosting a World Championship event in 2027.

### **Fiscal Reassurance**

The IVF Finance Committee has reviewed projection of net income under the proposed options over a 7-year timeline. Should no additional revenue stream occur, the resulting cash flow will be lower than current, but as long as expenditures are managed, it will not put the International Va'a Federation at financial risk.

The IVF Board is currently developing a revenue strategy to increase our revenue streams through other avenues, not just events. There are opportunities via - sponsorships, grants, broadcasting rights, merchandise, advertising, philanthropy etc.

### **Background**

The World Sprint Championships were founded in 1984 by the International Polynesian Canoe Federation (IPCF), with Tahiti, California, and Hawaii as its founding members. Their vision was to unite the Pacific and beyond through the spirit of competition in the Va'a. For 32 years, the World Sprints stood as the sole international va'a sprint event in existence.

In 2016, the International Va'a Federation (IVF) expanded the global va'a racing calendar by introducing the World Distance Championships. The following year, the Championship Programme was launched, creating a one-of-a-kind event where member federations compete head-to-head in distance racing. This international distance va'a format remains unmatched anywhere in the world.

However, holding back-to-back events has presented challenges for both member federations and the IVF Board. The IVF Board believes that the current schedule of World Championship events, held every year is unsustainable. As a solution-based Board, we are currently exploring several options to address possible "event fatigue."

Below are two alternative event schedules (Options) as well as the current race schedule (Status Quo) for comparison. We ask that you weigh the strengths (pros) and weaknesses (cons) and opportunities of each option through the lens of what works best for your member federation, your paddlers, and IVF's mission. Your participation in completing this survey will help guide the Board in choosing an option that is in the best interest of our membership and the future growth and development of va'a.

We have provided the following questions for your consideration and to aid you in this process.

- Which schedule would work best for your member federation and your paddlers?
- Which option would have the most positive impact on your member federation and paddlers (Option 1, Option 2 or Status Quo)?
- If Option 1 or Option 2 were implemented, what new opportunities might arise for your member federation?
- What would the negative impacts of any change be on your member federation and paddlers?
- Are there other options or suggestions that your member federation would like the IVF to consider?

It is important that your member federation takes the time to engage with your membership through this process.

Please share your feedback with the Board by completing the survey on the following link <https://forms.gle/UYop1F3DFKaa63G16> by **12 September, 2025.**

Once we have received your feedback, we will hold a Zoom meeting for all Members. We will share feedback, answer questions and talk through next steps.

#### **Timeline**

- Restructure memo to go to membership 4 August 2025.
- Membership to provide feedback via [survey link](#) by 12 September, 2025.
- Board to review feedback
- Zoom meeting with membership to discuss options and feedback in September/October
- Final proposal (with any amendments after feedback) to go out to membership for consideration.

## Comparison of Options: Two New Options and the Current Status Quo

During years of “No IVF Events\*,” countries could focus on other multi-national regional events such as the Pacific Games, European Championship, Pan American Championship, Asia Championships etc. Events in Orange represents years when conflicts occur with the before mentioned events.

Option 1 – One “off year” every 2 years. Distance Championship every 4 years Sprints Championship every 4 years.		Option 2 – One “off year” every 3 years. Distance Championship every 3 years Sprints Championship every 3 years.		Option 3 – Status Quo ( Current Schedule for comparison) IVF World Championship each year Distance once every 2 years Sprints once every 2 years.	
2026	IVF World Sprints - Singapore	2026	IVF World Sprints - Singapore		IVF World Sprints - Singapore
2027	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2027	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2027	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events
2028	IVF World Distance -	2028	IVF World Distance -	2028	IVF World Sprints -
2029	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2029	IVF World Sprints – Multi-national regional events	2029	IVF World Distance – Multi-national regional events
2030	IVF World Sprints -	2030	No IVF Event*	2030	IVF World Sprints -
2031	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2031	IVF World Distance – Multi-national regional events	2031	IVF World Distance – Multi-national regional events
2032	IVF World Distance -	2032	IVF World Sprints -	2032	IVF World Sprints -
2033	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2033	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2033	IVF World Distance – Multi-national regional events
2034	IVF World Sprints -	2034	IVF World Distance -	2034	IVF World Sprints -
2035	No IVF Event* Multi-national regional events	2035	IVF World Sprints – Multi-national regional events	2035	IVF World Distance – Multi-national regional events
2036	IVF World Distance -	2036	No IVF Event*	2036	IVF World Sprints -

## Appendix:

## Option 1

### (Comparisons of Options with the Current Status Quo)

“1 year on - one year off” - an “off” year every 2 years (Sprints once every 4 years; Distance once every 4 years)

Strengths (Pros) compared to Current Schedule and Option 2	Weaknesses (Cons) compared to Current Schedule and Option 2	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This schedule would ensure that IVF Worlds Sprint Championships will not fall on an Olympic year and neither the World Sprints or World Distance Championships will fall during a Pacific games and Pacific Mini games year which is a big focus and priority or the majority of our Pacific member countries.</li> <li>• Enable more time for member federations to prepare for events</li> <li>• opportunity for regional events in ‘off’ years or for paddlers to participate in other world class events all around the world.</li> <li>• Membership – growth of our sport around the world lacks attention due to focus on the events each year taking the majority of resources.</li> <li>• Officials – Increase time for the education and training of officials around the world to improve local and regional racing in addition to feeding support to our international event hosts.</li> <li>• Enable more time for execution of World Class World Championship events (At IVF and member federation host level). 4 years between each distance championship and 4 years between each sprint championship.</li> <li>• Provide more time for planning and execution of the IVF Strategy</li> <li>• Allow more time to Develop Sponsorships and partnerships that would benefit all members around the world</li> <li>• Development – plans to develop coaching programs, sharing of ideas and processes across our membership has moved slowly. Less events will allow more time for Development.</li> <li>• Create windows of opportunity in ‘off’ world championship years for regional events like Pacific games (2027, 2029 etc.), European Championship, Asian Championship, other ‘regional championships’</li> <li>• More time for member countries to secure funds for travel to IVF Championship events than the current schedule.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paddlers who will be most impacted by a 4-year event cycle will be Juniors. They are the only age category that is not a 10-year age division. So, they may only be able to take part in 1 Sprint and 1 Distance event while they are in a relevant age category (J16 or J19)</li> <li>• Moving to fewer World Championship events will decrease event income for the IVF significantly. This is due to there being half the number of events compared to the current schedule (status quo).</li> <li>• Sponsorships – Compared to the current schedule, this option will reduce the number of events that can be sponsored by 50%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This allows IVF to review current Junior categories and ensure the pathway for Junior participation is fit for purpose and encourages growth.</li> <li>• IVF will explore opportunities that focus on Youth Development.</li> <li>• More time for countries to build a development program for youth. So that more countries have youth participating in our World Championship events (Currently less than 10 countries have youth participation)</li> <li>• IVF will review our current World Distance Championship with a view to increasing participation.</li> <li>• This will allow for the development of competition pathways that are regionally based, that can take place in years where there are no World Championship events. For example - European Championship, Asia Championship, Pan American Games etc.</li> <li>• Time to offer educational programs, such as official training.</li> <li>• New format will enable more time to focus on growth and other aspects of our Strategy.</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for development.</li> <li>• Although we would not have the income from an event every year, we would have more time to generate sponsorship and grants and more time to spend on development and other activities that help to grow our sport. Currently, with an event every year, there is very little time to do anything else.</li> <li>• Time for member federations to develop Internal initiatives.</li> <li>• Time for member federations to create realistic strategic plans.</li> <li>• Enable more time for execution of World Class World Championship events (At IVF and member federation host level).</li> <li>• IVF events are much bigger now than they were before the World Distance Championship starting in 2017 – We need to review the format to maintain healthy (manageable) numbers at our events and grow the number of countries participating at the events.</li> </ul>

## Option 2

### (Comparisons of Options with the Current Status Quo)

“2 years on – 1 year off “ - an “off” year every 3 years (Sprints once every 3 years; Distance once every 3 years)

Strengths (Pros) compared to Current and Option 1	Weaknesses (Cons) compared to Current and Option 1	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, there are conflicts between IVF events and other multi-national regional events. With this option there will only be 3 such conflicts in the next 10 years, though this may not be significant for many paddlers.</li> <li>This will enable more time to prepare for events. Each race host will have 2 years to prepare.</li> <li>There will be an opportunity to limit conflicts with regional events. Every 3 years there will be no IVF events to create conflicts.</li> <li>Membership – Having an “off” year every 3 years will provide a predictable time for focusing on membership, while also ensuring that championships will be frequent enough to maintain the attention of paddlers to va’a in both distance and sprint races.</li> <li>Sponsorships – This option will provide a balance between the current schedule and Option 1 in that it will increase the number of events that can be sponsored and will keep sponsors more engaged than if there were 4 years between events.</li> <li>Officials – Increase time for the education and training of officials around the world.</li> <li>Enable more time for execution of World Class World Championship events (At IVF and member federation host level). 3 years between each distance championship and 3 years between each sprint championship.</li> <li>Provide more time for planning and execution of the IVF Strategic Plan, though less than Option 1.</li> <li>Development – plans to develop coaching programs, sharing of ideas and processes across our membership can be focused on the “off” year every 3 years.</li> <li>Create windows of opportunity in ‘off’ world championship years for multi-National regional events.</li> <li>More time for member federations to secure funds for travel to IVF Championship events than the current schedule.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compared to Option 1, there will be some conflicts between IVF events and multi-national regional events - such as the Olympics, Pacific Games and Pacific Mini Games. There would currently be 3 such conflicts in the next 10 years</li> <li>Paddlers who will be most impacted by a 3-year event cycle will be Juniors. They are the only age category that is not a 10-year age division. So, they will likely only be able to take part in 1 Sprint and 1 Distance event while they are in a relevant age category (J16 or J19 once)</li> <li>Moving to fewer World Championship events will decrease the income for the IVF – though less than Option 1. This is due to the fact that there will be no income from race events every 3 years.</li> <li>Sponsorships – Compared to the current schedule, this option will reduce the number of events that can be sponsored by 33%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This allows IVF to review current Junior categories and ensure the pathway for Junior participation is fit for purpose and encourages growth.</li> <li>IVF will explore opportunities that focus on Youth Development.</li> <li>IVF will review our current World Distance Championship with a view to increasing participation.</li> <li>This will allow for some development of competition pathways that are regionally based. that can take place in years where there are no World Championship events. For example - European Championship, Asia Championship, Pan American Games etc.</li> <li>Time to offer educational programs, such as official training.</li> <li>New format will enable more time to focus of growth and other aspects of our Strategy.</li> <li>Greater opportunities for development.</li> <li>Although we would not have the income from an event every year, we would have more time to generate sponsorship and grants and more time to spend on development and other activities that help to grow our sport. Currently, with an event every year, there is very little time to do anything else.</li> <li>Time for member federations to develop Internal initiatives.</li> <li>Time for member federations to create realistic strategic plans.</li> <li>Enable more time for execution of World Class World Championship events (At IVF and member federation host level).</li> <li>IVF events are much bigger now than they were before the World Distance Championship starting in 2017 – We need to review the format to maintain healthy (manageable) numbers at our events and grow the number of countries participating at the events.</li> </ul>