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Sustainable Food System in the Green Waves of Mega Sport Events: From the Diverse Perspectives of Stakeholders in the Olympic Games

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Introduction

- Sustainable Food System (SFS) is increasingly receiving attention as an important aspect of sport events' contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Various stakeholders are involved in the food system of the Olympic Games such as athletes, suppliers, spectators, and organizers and their perspectives and priorities regarding food system may differ.
- A better understanding of stakeholders' perspectives and priorities may contribute to a better design of sustainable sport events.



Expected Results and Implications

Results of the research can contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the SFS and its link to SDGs in mega sport events. The identified gap and limitations of current SFS and its link to SDGs in the Olympic Games from this study is expected to contribute to improved design of SFS in the future sport mega-events. Ideally, to pay more attention to primary producers (farmers) and end-consumers (athletes, spectators) whilst utilizing the visibility of the Olympic Games for presenting sustainable food systems at sporting events

Preliminary Findings

- Questionnaires were sent to Olympians either directly or via national federations. So far, 27 filled in questionnaires have been collected. Out of 27 respondents, 20 stated that they did follow special dietary practices at the time they competed at the Olympic Games.
- 5 respondents competed at 2012 London Summer Olympics and Paralympics Games (SOPG), 10 athletes participated at 2016 Rio SOPG, 11 competed at both 2012 and 2016 SOPG, and 1 athlete competed at 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games

Literature Review

- Since the 1980s, increased concerns have been paid to the environmental sustainability of mega sport events, including the Olympic Games, aligning with the UN's concept of SDGs (McCullough et al., 2016).
- An important component of sustainable events is food supply chain which had not been receiving that much attention until recently compared to energy sourcing and consumption, water and waste management, or recyclable construction materials (Casper and Pfahl, 2015).
- The food system in sport events has been examined on how it links with the sustainability of health, environment, and economy (e.g. Batty et al., 2016).
- As an important part of sport events, various stakeholders usually perceive and interpret SFS in different ways and the imbalanced relationship between stakeholders exists (Levermore, 2010).

Methods

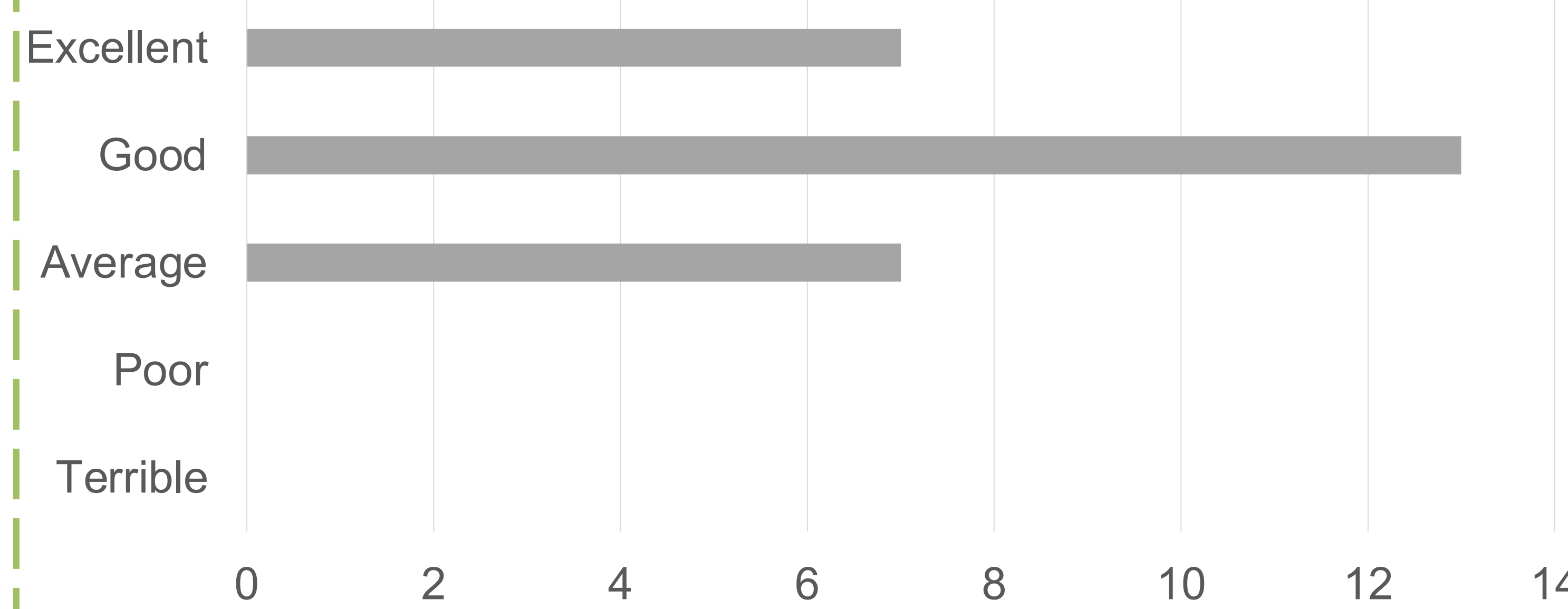
- Study focuses on the organizers, sponsors, farmers, and athletes in selected Olympic Games (London 2012, Sochi 2014, Rio 2016, PyeongChang 2018).
- Various stakeholders will be targeted and assessed through different methods:



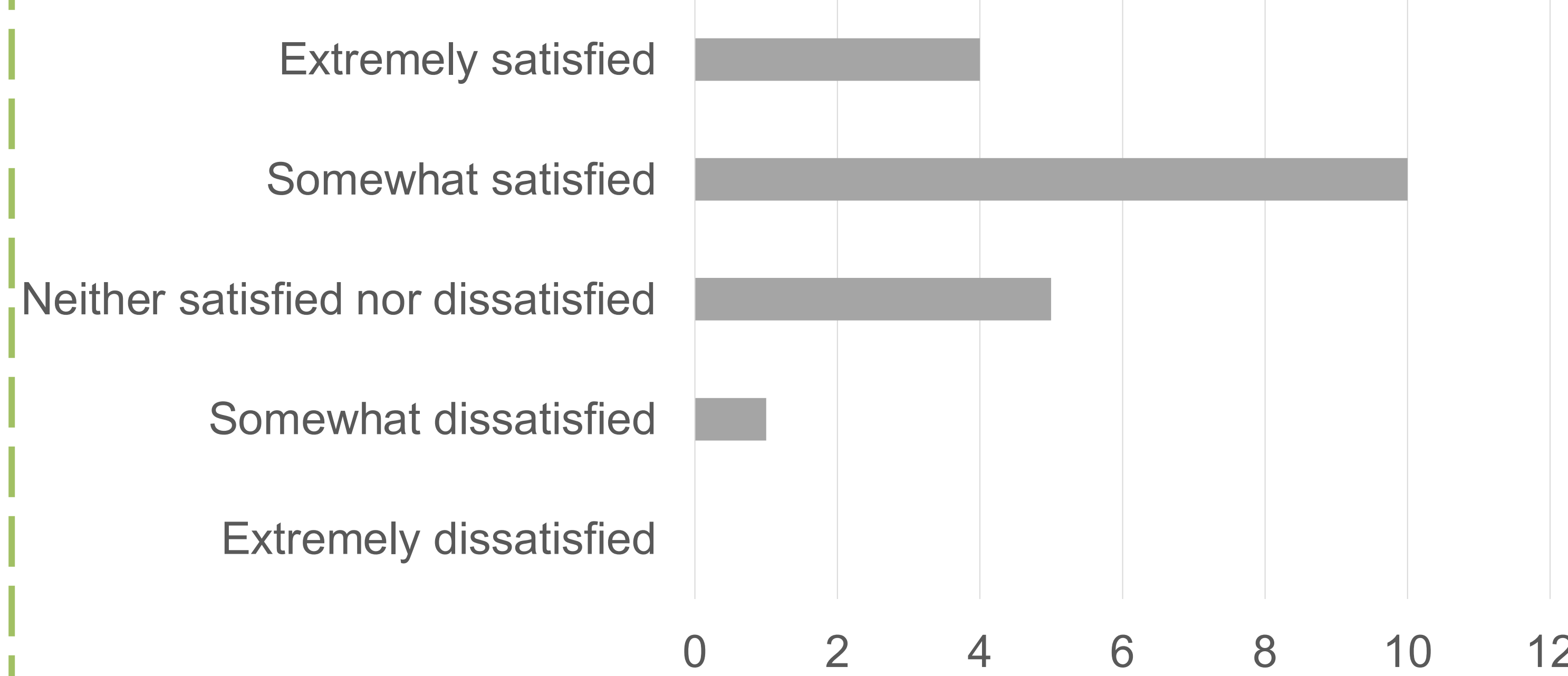
- Organizers – document analysis
- Sponsors – CSR analysis
- Athletes – questionnaires
- Farmers – questionnaires

The complexity of the food-supply chain

In general, how would you describe the quality of food regarding nutritious requirements for high-level athletes offered in the main dining hall in the athlete's village? (n=27)



Considering your dietary practice(s) requirements, were you satisfied with the food offered in the main dining hall in the athlete's village? (n=20)



- Athletes complained about low variety of drinks offered (mostly sweetened drinks from Coca-Cola company) and expressed concerns about McDonalds being somewhat in contrast with the IOC's Sustainability Strategy.
- Some respondents were concerned about the amount of food waste and its management. However, some mentioned that it is not a mistake of the organizer but rather athletes as consumers.

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