



INTERNATIONAL TENNIS COMMITTEE

A Strategic 10 Year Plan

to strengthen and grow
Jeu de Paume
Court Tennis
Real Tennis

December 2023

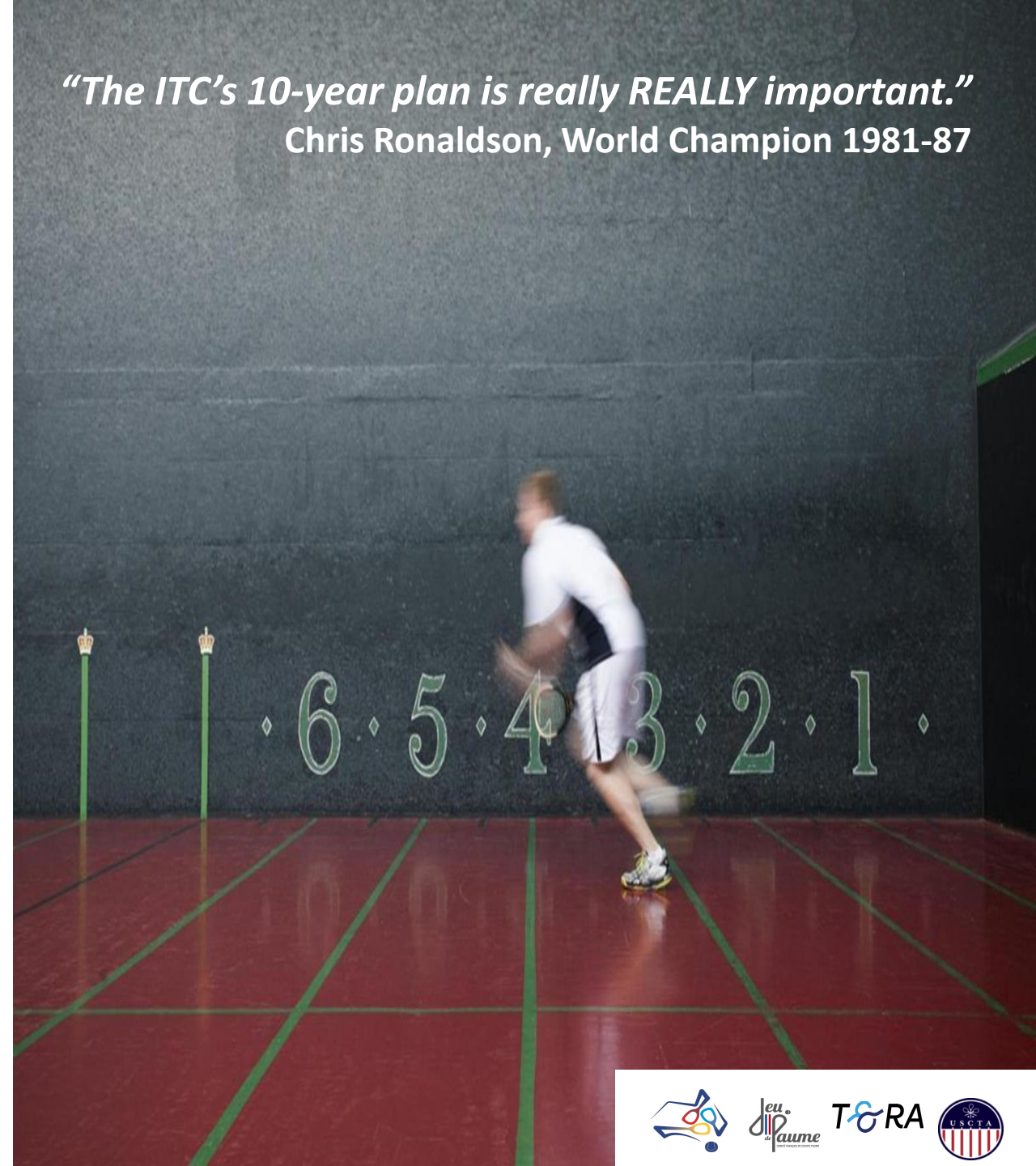
BACKGROUND

- In 2022, the International Tennis Committee (ITC) – comprising representatives of all four National Associations - discussed options to focus on more than just the everyday management of the sport's operational issues.
- The National Associations agreed it was important for them to consider and **plan for the game and its future**.
- The ITC acknowledges that, while the game is made up of c55 individual clubs along with four National Associations and the International Real Tennis Professionals Association (IRTPA), the ITC is best placed (along with other key stakeholders) to look at our game both globally and strategically, and to work with Associations on high level priorities for our game.
- Our goal is to firstly ensure we don't 'sleepwalk' towards a crisis and, secondly, to secure the future of the game by working together.

The opening of the new court at Westwood in Washington in November 2022 provided a starting point to begin these discussions.

"The ITC's 10-year plan is really REALLY important."

Chris Ronaldson, World Champion 1981-87



A male and a female tennis player are shown in action on a court. The male player on the left is in a white shirt and shorts, swinging his racket. The female player on the right is also in white, wearing a headband, and is in a similar swing. The background is a dark, textured wall.

56.5

Average handicap
55 for men, 71 for women

THE GAME TODAY

12.3%

Only 12% of
players are women

Less than 5,000
active players
worldwide.

We need to grow
the game.

Average age
of active players

49

Players under 30
years of age

19%

KEY STATISTICS

	AUST	USA	UK	FRA	TOTAL (INCL ALL NATIONS)
	489	978	2908	201	4,727*
% WOMEN	17.3%	11.8%	11.7%	9.0%	12.3%

- * NB based on at least 1 game in last 12 months and includes 96 professionals*
- Player participation has consistently trended down in the past 10 years; the amount of play in clubs is directly linked to organised play, ie matches, tournaments, leagues.
 - The average age of players has increased c.6 years in the past 12 years. It's now 49.4 (49.9 men, 45.8 women), and less than 20% of players are under 30 years of age (19.5%).
 - The average handicap is 56.5 (54.6 for men, 71.0 for women).
 - Women are only 12.3% of all players.
 - Elite play is getting weaker. In 2008, 25 players were 'plus' handicaps; today, only c10-12 players are 'plus' handicaps. Only 2.9% of all players are better than handicap 20.
 - Our game requires thriving clubs and successful professionals. As our pros retire, we will need roughly 35 new pros to come into the sport over the next 15 years. Is it an attractive career option for young people?
 - Prize money globally has not kept pace with inflation over the last eight years, making travel and supporting tournaments more onerous on professionals.
 - Finally, the game and our clubs need to ensure a sustainable supply of affordable rackets and balls to ensure access and secure the future of the sport.



WESTWOOD COURT TENNIS CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 2022

The conference was well attended by a wide range of players and professionals from all four playing countries, including representatives from all associations.

It was facilitated by Alistair Curley (ARTA), Mary Livingston & Jim Zug (USCTA) and Haven Pell from Westwood.

We thank Westwood for their vision in hosting the conference.

The agenda included discussions on:

The Game Today

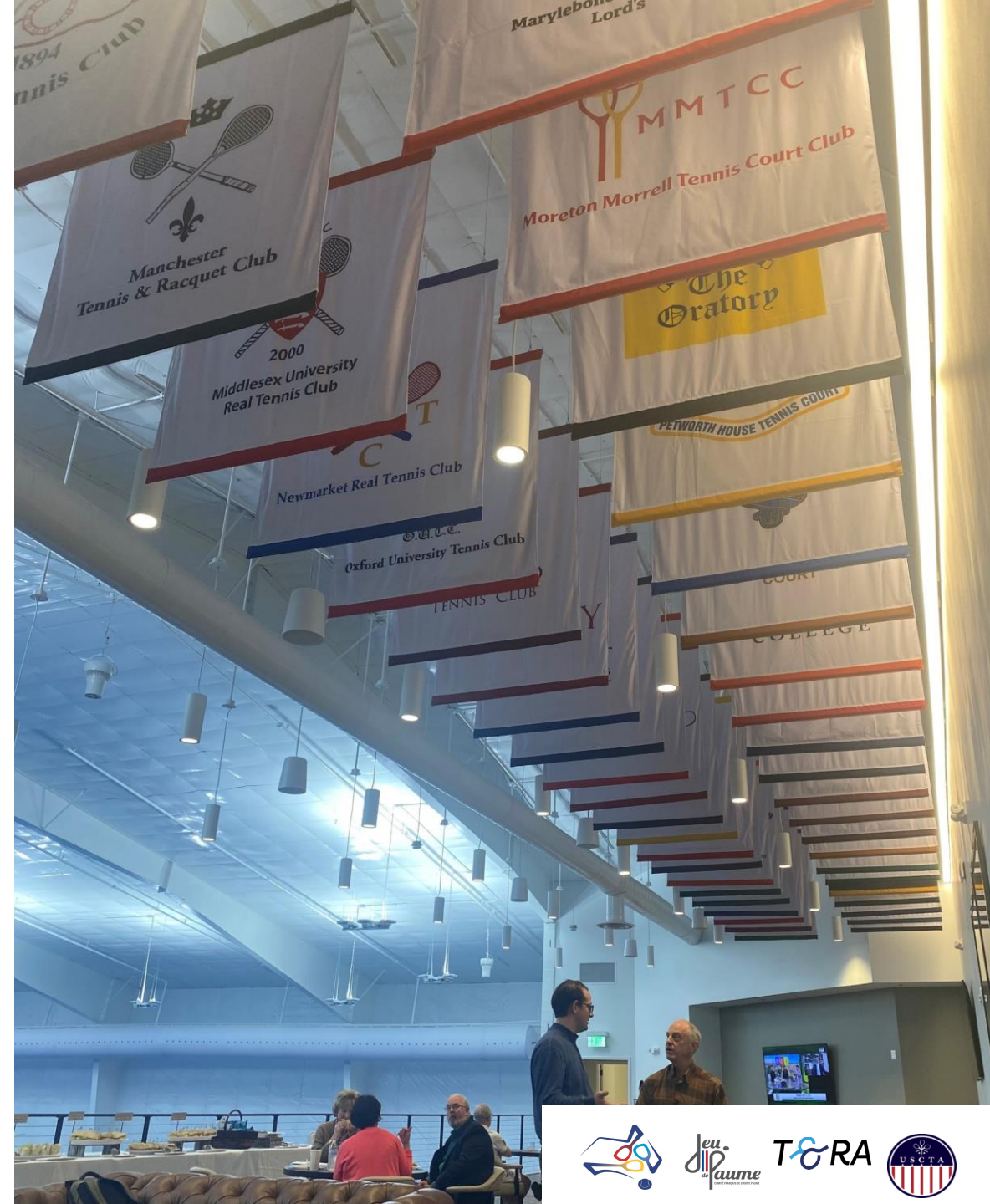
How Do We Grow The Game

Communications & Brand

Investment and Priorities

As part of the process, suggestions and feedback were captured in each section and grouped into two 'buckets':

- 1 **Strengthening the game today** and
- 2 **Growing the game for the future.**



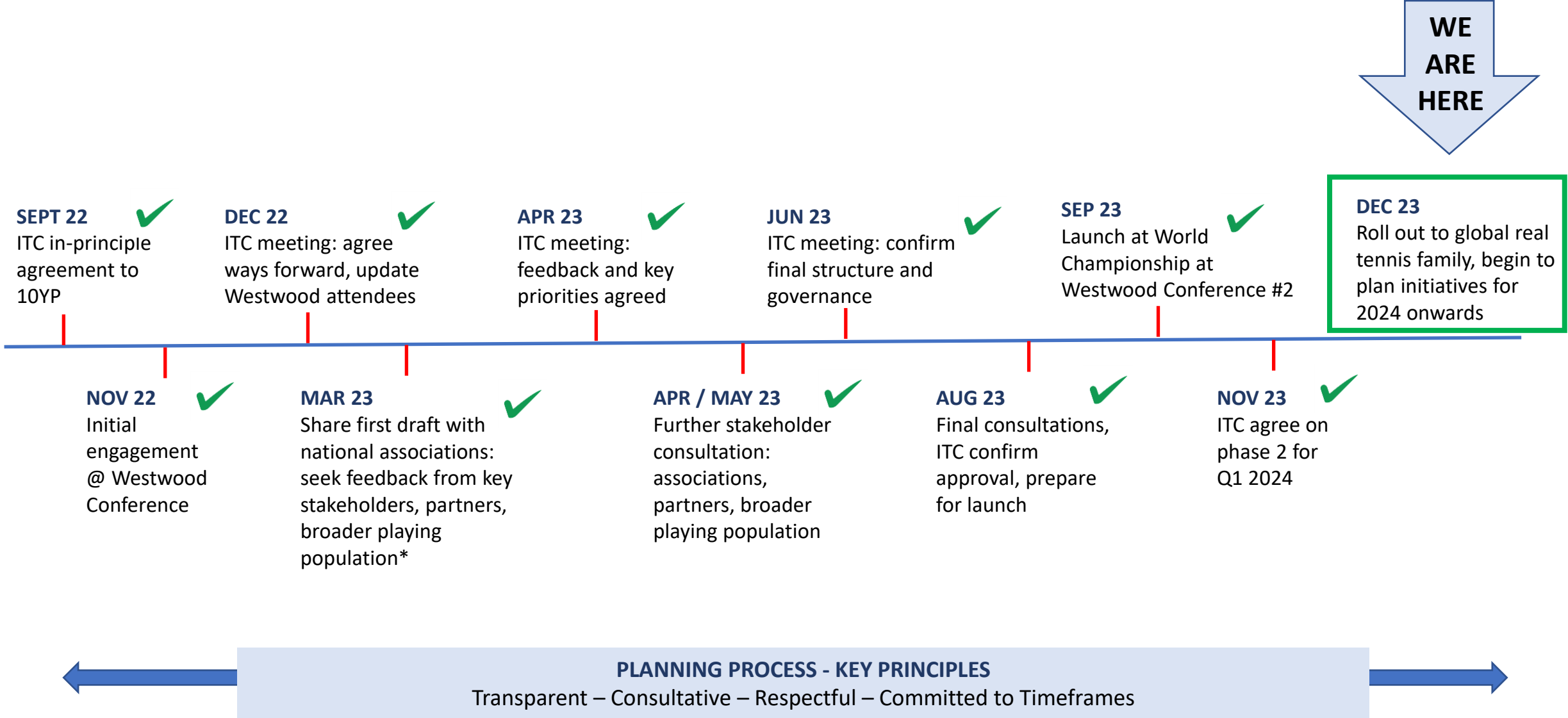


AFTER THE CONFERENCE

- Following the Washington Conference and analysis of the feedback, it was agreed by the four National Associations to take the plan to the next stage of its development.
- Alistair Curley (ARTA), Jim Zug and Mary Livingstone (USCTA) were asked to develop a high level plan.
- During 2023, the Plan was refined and discussed with National Associations.

In addition, with our game's Professionals as critical stakeholders, the International Real Tennis Professionals Association (IRTPA) was engaged to seek their input and support. This has been exceptionally helpful and we thank them for their constructive advice.

TIMELINE TO DATE / NEXT STEPS



SO WHAT ARE OUR KEY GOALS?

**1 STRENGTHEN THE GAME
NOW TO PROTECT OUR
FUTURE**

**2 GROW THE GAME OVER
THE NEXT TEN YEARS**

Key point to note:

The ITC appreciates that each country will take their own approach to these priorities, to reflect their own situation. **But we also seek to agree and work together on areas of common focus.**



STRENGTHEN THE GAME NOW TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE

Aligning our key priorities



FRANCE TOP 4

- 1 Development of more youth and women players
- 2 Develop French tennis professionals
- 3 Court Preservation & Development
- 4 Create a library / resource of the game's history, enable access by all



UK TOP 4

- 1 Investing in both Tennis & Rackets Professionals
- 2 Improve participation through level tournament play
- 3 Court Preservation & Development
- 4 Equipment: Eye Protection, Graphite / stable racquet supply



USA TOP 4

- 1 Support tournaments via National Fund & sponsorships
- 2 Professionals' playing and management skills development
- 3 Invest in communications to build player engagement
- 4 TBD



AUSTRALIA TOP 4

- 1 All clubs successful and secure
- 2 A thriving group of young & women players
- 3 Develop more Australian professionals
- 4 Build long term funding of the game in Australia



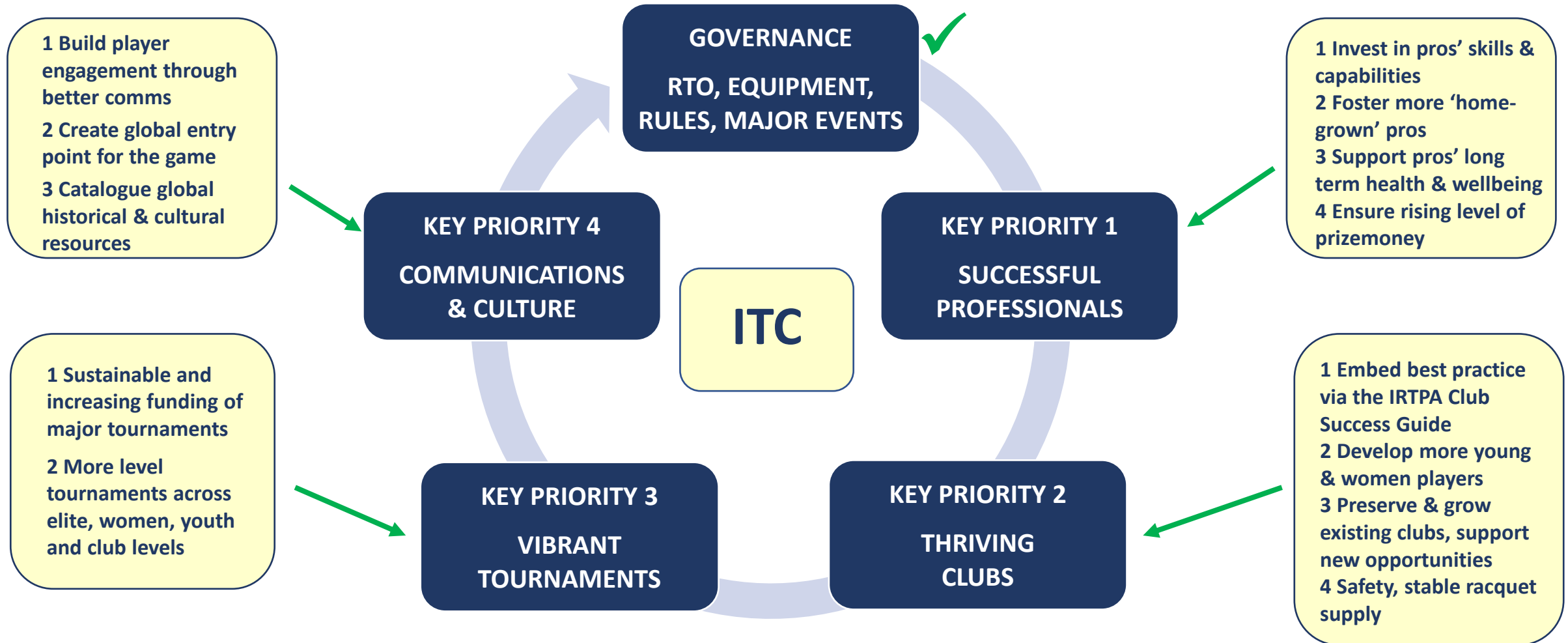
IRTPA TOP 3

1. IRTPA Club Success Guide to support club professionals and club committees
2. Increased Prize Funds of tournaments globally
3. A program to support the lifelong health and wellbeing of the IRTPA's members and their immediate families

The ITC appreciates that each country will take their own approach to these priorities, to reflect their own situation, but we will work together on areas of common focus

ITC UNIQUELY PLACED TO TAKE A GLOBAL VIEW

A Strategic Plan to support and grow the game we love



HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

NEXT STEPS: QUARTERLY FOCUS TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM

PHASE 1 - BY DECEMBER 2023

- ✓ Launch at Westwood during the World Championship
- ✓ Benchmark our key data points to enable us to track progress going forward – work under way
- Set up Working Groups for our Key Priorities
- Launch Plan to broader tennis community via each Association’s websites



WORKING GROUPS TO BE ESTABLISHED

PHASE 2 BY MARCH 2024

WORKING GROUP	Q1 2024 DELIVERABLES
1 Successful Professionals	Two best practice sharing sessions Initial Lead – A Curley
2 Global Sponsorship	Set up international expert working group and conduct initial brainstorm Initial Lead – M Livingstone
3 Communications & Culture	Set up international expert working group and conduct initial brainstorm Initial Lead – J Zug
4 Thriving Clubs	Review and then prepare launch plan for IRTPA Club Success Guide Initial Lead – A Curley



Delegates from each Association and IRTPA will be sought, plus members of wider tennis community with suitable skills

HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

NEXT STEPS: QUARTERLY FOCUS TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM

PHASE 2 - BY MARCH 2024

- Working Groups propose specific actions for 2024-26 to ITC for approval
- ITC sets up ongoing governance & progress reporting for the Plan
- Agree our key *Ten Year Goals* to achieve by 2034
- Begin regular updates on Plan's progress to all players worldwide...
it's our plan for our game.



THANK YOU

Do you have skills and expertise in marketing
& sponsorship, communications & IT?
Or do you just want to get involved and help our game?
All support is welcome.



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