



Press release

Chamonix (France), 29 June 2023

UTMB® Mont-Blanc 2023: new initiatives and more CSR innovations

- *Solidarity: Over €3 million raised for charities*
- *Inclusivity: a new pregnancy policy and other key measures coming soon*
- *Environment: Almost half a million euros invested in a transport plan to limit impact*

Since its creation in 2003, UTMB® Mont-Blanc has operated based on fundamental principles of fairness, respect, mutual aid, solidarity and respect for the fragile Mont Blanc ecosystem. From the outset, UTMB® Mont-Blanc initiated a collaboration with the 'Association des Amis de l'UTMB® Mont-Blanc'¹ to ensure the fair and committed development of the event across its social, environmental and economic obligations, while preserving its values.

Solidarity at the heart of our commitments

"Over the years, we've noticed that runners have become increasingly involved in charitable initiatives both through the 'solidarity race numbers', which are snapped up very quickly each year, and through runner donations that are made right up to the start of the event. Between 2014 and 2023, we raised over €3 million for 37 charities! It's a figure that makes us proud and motivates us to go even further in the years to come. That's the spirit of sport!" said Sylvie Barquant, Chair of the Solidarity Committee.

Since 2014, UTMB® Mont-Blanc has offered '**solidarity race bibs**' in support of French, Italian and Swiss associations defending various causes such as environment conservation and regeneration, aid for children, support for populations in difficulty, and medical research, etc. The principle behind these 'solidarity race bibs' is simple and effective: runners make a direct donation to one of the associations selected by the solidarity committee and receive priority access to register for the race of their choice.



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In 2023, **181 'solidarity race bibs'** were offered in support of 12 associations, **two of which are new this year**:

- The **NGO Humatem**, which works to provide medical equipment and build biomedical capacity in developing countries.
- **The French Haemophilia Association**, which provides information, mutual support and defends the rights of people with haemophilia, Willebrand's disease and other bleeding disorders.

This year, to expand their commitment and support more causes, **UTMB Group has created a new UTMB® Cares endowment fund and introduced 55 'Care Bibs'**, giving runners the opportunity to support the following four programmes: environmental projects designed to preserve and restore the natural mountain environment, a mentoring programme designed to encourage female participation in trail running, a programme that raises awareness of alternative forms of transport in mountain environments, and local associations.

Inclusion and equality: driving values

Equal participation and pregnancy policy: new measures introduced

*"We are proud to **have a fair allocation of race numbers for elite male and female athletes at our finals. We have over 22% female participation across all the UTMB® Mont-Blanc races this year**, a number that is slowly increasing," said Isabelle Viseux-Poletti, Director of UTMB® Mont-Blanc and UTMB® France. "We're very keen to encourage more women to take part and have made it our mission to offer a serene environment and developments that enable them to have a go at this fantastic discipline."*

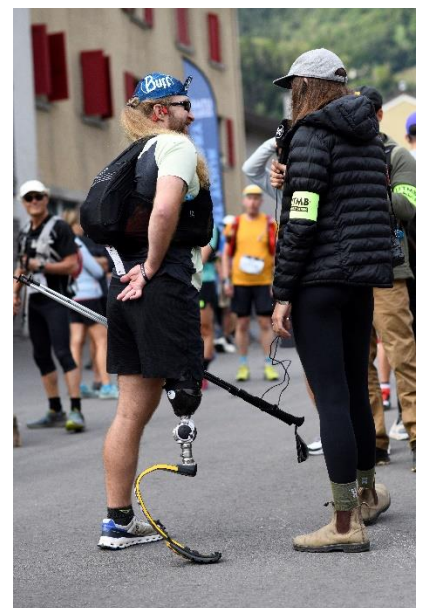
UTMB® Mont-Blanc has been applying **its new pregnancy policy** over the last few months which allows new parents to return to the trail in a safe environment and within a comfortable period after the arrival of a child.

This policy is for **pregnant athletes**, but also for **athletes whose partner is pregnant, as well as athletes in the process of adoption or surrogate motherhood**, in countries where this is permitted. The UTMB® Mont-Blanc, grants:

- Pregnant women full reimbursement or priority access within five years for races in the 50K, 100K and 100M categories, and within two years for races in the 20K category.
- Partners and parents in the process of adoption or involved in surrogate motherhood have the choice of postponing their registration for two years or receiving a full refund.

Transgender, non-binary: projects and initiatives under development

In addition to the pregnancy policy, other measures designed to promote greater equality in trail running, particularly for **athletes with disabilities or transgender and non-binary people**, will be introduced between now and the end of the year.



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Massive investment and daily measures to protect the environment

Since its launch, UTMB® Mont-Blanc has introduced **several measures aimed at preserving its playing field and raising awareness**. In 2017, the event increased its commitment to the environment becoming one of the first signatories of the GESI² Charter (Major International Sports Events) on the initiative of the Ministry of Sport and the Olympic and Paralympic Games and WWF France. This collective action involves organisers, local authorities, runners, supporters, partners and volunteers, and the Environmental Ambassadors.

Public transport and a new car-sharing platform: almost half a million euros invested in an enhanced transport plan

In 2023, the organisation is stepping up its mobility plan with an investment of almost half a million euros. The aims of this mobility plan are:

- To avoid the use of **over 5,000 individual vehicles** during the event.
- To **provide a collective solution to relieve congestion in the valleys** and make it easier for runners, companions and spectators to move around the Mont-Blanc region.
- To encourage the majority of people to **use the public transport provided by local authorities**, particularly in the Chamonix Valley.
- To **reduce air pollution**.

One of the **new features will be a car-sharing platform** to help people get to the event.

*"We are making a massive investment to protect the environment and limit individual travel in the valley. To reinforce the existing public transport in the region, we're adding **eight UTMB® Bus lines and increasing capacity by 50 vehicles more than last year, for a total of 200 buses**. Our target is to transport **100% of runners and 100% of their companions during the event**. By providing additional car parks and setting up base camps reserved for UTMB® Bus users, as well as closing roads and banning parking along the route, we are encouraging as many people as possible to use public transport,"* explained Thomas Boyer, UTMB Mont-Blanc Transport and Environment Project Manager.

Organic or regional products, zero plastic bottles and bio-waste collection – eco-responsible refreshment points

From the outset, UTMB® Mont-Blanc has aimed to reduce the amount of waste produced during the event to a minimum by adding reusable cups, cutlery, and bowls (BYO system) to the compulsory equipment list, and by waging a battle against over-packaging. **But in 2023, UTMB® Mont-Blanc is going a step further and organising refreshment points that are 100% plastic-bottle free** by installing carbonation machines for soft drinks, and by using tap water. This will avoid the use of 8,000 plastic water bottles, plus its transport!

Waste management at the French feed stations will also increase, with **six feed stations equipped to collect bio-waste** (compared with three in 2022), the **objective is to recycle over 700kg of bio-waste**.

In 2023 40% of products will be regionally sourced, limiting transport use and encouraging the involvement of local businesses. Most of these products are organic, Label Rouge, AOP or AOC.

Recently, UTMB® World Series and UTMB® Mont-Blanc joined forces with Näak, the nutrition and hydration brand for trail and ultra-distance runners. **Alongside Buff, also a B Corp³ brand, Näak** will provide participants with 'sustainable fuel' at all the refreshment points.



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Preserving the countryside: action on the ground all year round

With the support of Environmental Ambassadors, each year UTMB® Mont-Blanc teaches runners to respect the Mont Blanc ecosystem, for example by requiring them to remain on the marked trails at the risk of a time penalty (15 minutes to 1 hour applicable immediately). The event is fervently and passionately committed to conserving the areas it passes through in France, Italy and Switzerland, and to supporting local communities.

In 2023, at least four trail rehabilitation projects are planned:

- Les Contamines (Chemin de l'Anery): on the TDS route.
- Courmayeur (Tête de la Tronche): on the CCC® route.
- Beaufort (Passage du Curé): on the TDS route.
- Hauteluce (section between the Col de Very and the Col du Joly): on the TDS route.

Rehabilitation of a trail in Beaufort

The Passage du Curé trail, used for the TDS, will undergo rehabilitation this summer before the start of the 2023 edition of UTMB® Mont-Blanc by the Savoie Mont Blanc team, the Environment Commission, members of the UTMB® Mont-Blanc team, and the town's trail team.

"We are delighted to call on our community of Savoie Mont Blanc Ambassadors to join forces with the UTMB® volunteers. We share the same attachment to the Savoie and Haute-Savoie region, an incredible playground not only for trail running but also for a wide range of outdoor activities," said Clémence Cailles, Head of Partnerships at Agence Savoie Mont Blanc. *"We are aware of the absolute necessity of protecting the area and are working to conserve it, particularly through the Chantiers de la Transition organised by L'Agence Savoie Mont Blanc."*

Last spring, the Environment Commission got involved alongside the commune of La Thuile and the family of Edoardo Camardella, a young mountaineer and trail runner who tragically died in 2019, in **building the first solidarity and eco-responsible bivouac on the Ruitor glacier**. UTMB® has undertaken to finance the installation of the solar panels at the site. During the UTMB® Mont-Blanc, there will be more Environmental Ambassadors on hand than ever to raise awareness, and educate and support runners in sustainable mobility and environmental protection.

For more information on our environmental commitments, click here: <https://montblanc.utmb.world/fr/get-involved/take-action/environment>

¹ The association 'Les Amis de l'UTMB® Mont-Blanc', formerly known as 'Les Trailers du Mont-Blanc', collaborates with UTMB® Group to organise UTMB® Mont-Blanc, forming two teams that are indispensable to each other in developing this global event with its considerable social, environmental and economic challenges, while preserving the original values. The association affirms the tri-nationality of the event and its territorial roots. It brings together and mobilises all the UTMB® Mont-Blanc volunteers and runs the solidarity, environment, medical, volunteers and route committees.

² https://www.sports.gouv.fr/les-chartes-des-15-engagements-ecoresponsables-1156*

³ <https://www.bcorporation.fr/>

Editors' notes

UTMB Group

Since the creation of UTMB® Mont-Blanc in 2003 by a group of passionate friends, UTMB Group has been the driving force behind the development of trail running. The UTMB® Mont-Blanc is the sports pinnacle event, and every year, 10,000 runners earn their place on the start line. UTMB Group also pioneered the LiveTrail® technology, an innovative digital service that supports the management of endurance races. Revered by hundreds of thousands of athletes, UTMB® has become a global, premium, and leading brand. In May 2021, UTMB Group partnered with The IRONMAN Group to launch the UTMB® World Series, now in its second year, which brings together many of the best international events on the planet to provide exclusive access to the sport's pinnacle event, UTMB® Mont-Blanc. The UTMB® World Series is built on the founding principles of UTMB® Mont-Blanc: surpassing oneself; fair-play; respect for people and the environment; and solidarity. Find out more at www.utmb.world.

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A promotional graphic for the UTMB World Series. The background is dark blue with diagonal stripes in shades of blue and green on the left, and red, yellow, and orange on the right. At the top left is the 'UTMB WORLD SERIES' logo. In the center is a white silhouette of a runner jumping over the 'UTMB' text, with 'MONT-BLANC' below it. Below this, the text 'Are you ready for the UTMB® World Series adventure?' is followed by 'BE PART OF IT AT UTMB.WORLD'. At the bottom, there are several logos: HOKA FLY HUMAN FLY, DACIA, wahoo, CIRMONT MONT-BLANC, SAVOIE MONT-BLANC, Payot Pertin, SIDAS, COURMAYEUR, Valais, and MontBlanc.

UTMB®
WORLD SERIES

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Are you ready for the UTMB® World Series adventure?

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