

Lewis Hamilton says governing body should decide Formula One rules, not teams

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Five-times world champion Lewis Hamilton said decisions about Formula One's rules should be left in the hands of the governing body rather than teams with vested interests.

**Formula One F1 – “ French Grand Prix – “ Circuit Paul Ricard, Le Castellet, France – “ June 23, 2019
Mercedesâ€™™ Lewis Hamilton celebrates with a trophy on the podium after winning the race REUTERS/Vincent Kessler**

London: Five-times world champion Lewis Hamilton said decisions about Formula Oneâ€™™s rules should be left in the hands of the governing body rather than teams with vested interests.

Speaking after his victory in a procession French Grand Prix on Sunday, the Mercedes driver felt the sport was in a mess and drivers could play their part in getting it back on the right track.

Hamilton attended a meeting of teams, Formula One Management, the governing FIA and tyre supplier Pirelli in Paris on June 13 along with Renault driver Nico Hulkenberg and Grand Prix Driversâ€™™ Association head Alexander Wurz.

It was the first time the Briton, winner of 79 races, had attended and he said he realised the responsibility he had as multiple champions.

He was also critical of the current decision-making process.

â€œThe way it is set up, just from watching when I was there, itâ€™™s not good,â€• he said. â€œItâ€™™s really not good. They wonâ€™™t like me saying that. I see the mess that weâ€™™re in, I see it every year.

â€œI think ultimately the FIA, theyâ€™™re the governing body and they need to make all the decisions,â€• added the 34-year-old Briton.

â€œThe teams shouldnâ€™™t be involved in that, in my opinion, because the teams will all want to do something for themselves.

â€œItâ€™™s the same in football; If all the football teams sat in a room and said the sport should be like this, they would push and pull for their own benefit,â€• he said.

â€œWhereas if you get a central group of people telling us, like the FIA for example, that their sole job is to make the sport great againâ€¦ they should just have the power and they should make the decisions.â€•

RISK OF BIAS

Hamilton said those running the sport should come from outside because of the risk of bias.

There has been speculation for some time in the paddock that Mercedes principal Toto Wolff could replace Formula One chairman Chase Carey after 2020. The Austrian has said he is not contemplating any change. FIA president Jean Todt was Ferrari team principal in the era of Michael Schumacher.

Formula One is planning major rules revamp from 2021 but presentation of the new sporting, technical and financial regulations has been pushed back to the end of October.

Commercial rights holders Liberty Media want to level the playing field with a budget cap and a more equal distribution of revenues among the 10 teams and say there is now broad agreement on that.

Ross Brawn, a former Mercedes team boss and Ferrari technical director as well as a title winner with his own eponymous team, has been overseeing the process.

Only the top three teams – Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull – have won races since the V6 turbo hybrid era started in 2014. Hamilton felt he had been listened to at the meeting and described it as “really constructive”.

“We need to be at the next meeting. Part of the next chain of emails is happening, even if it’s just small things,” he said. “I’d love to be able to look back and say I was a part of helping that positive change for the fans that are watching Formula One – not just a driver and the titles, but someone who actually cared about the sport.”

Brawn said he was happy Hamilton had confirmed his willingness to contribute.

“We know well that Formula One needs to make an important change in direction if it wants to maintain its position as one of the most followed sporting spectacles in the world,” said the managing director for sport.

“It will be great to have input directly from the drivers.”

- Reuters