



EUROPEAN
CANOE ASSOCIATION



ECA

STRATEGIC PLAN

SPORT PROGRAM





SPORT PROGRAM

Marathon



PRESENT OUR DISCIPLINE

- **History**
- In 1995 was the first European championships in Murcia, Spain, (10 countries), first every 2 years, after 2013 every year.
- **Main evolutions.**
- Shortening the distance of competitions and adding juniors to the European Championships, more participating countries and masters were added to the competition week, so juniors, under-23, seniors and masters compete in one week. Para is likely to follow.

INTRODUCTION

- The aim of marathon canoe competition is for competitors to race each other in kayaks and canoes over a designated distance.
- Races are held on all types of water, rivers, lakes and regattas. Distances can range from 3.4 km to 225 km and even more.



THE DIAGNOSTIC OF THE DISCIPLINE

SWOT ANALYSIS

- STRENGTHS
- WEAKNESSES
- OPPORTUNITIES
- THREATS

DIAGNOSTIC

Areas of reflections

- Important evolution in the discipline
 - More youth paddle marathon, to get more training skills
- Analyze our European championship
- Competition venues
 - All types are possible which makes it attractive for our athletes and our audience
- Organizing countries
 - Struggling to get a balanced budget.
- Judges and officials.
 - There are many marathon ITOs on the ICF list with more than 85 in Europe alone that are used in international competitions only to a limited extent, yet new exams are needed, but training for all ITOs on the list should be for consideration. It would be better to do exams once every 4 years though, so you give more ITOs who are already qualified as ITOs this more of a chance to put their knowledge into park practice.
- The economic model of organizing events
 - Budget is not checked for feasibility and whether amounts match what needs to be delivered.
- The contract realization between the ECA and the organizer
 - Host agreement should be tailored to the discipline
- The hosting fees of the events
 - Race management, GPS and graphics should be included (as a fixed fee) so that no negotiation is needed every year.
- The television and streaming broadcast - production, audience –
 - As a non-Olympic discipline, it is difficult to get the best for TV production and in particular enough cameras which is a requirement for marathon
- The specifications of the events
 - All types of water, temporary installations often but also permanent facilities.

DIAGNOSTIC (2)

Areas of reflections

- The event attribution process
 - Is not clearly defined, host agreement too late.
- The link with other disciplines – calendar, multi sports events
 - There is at the moment no link with other disciplines, only with World Games
- The competition program
 - Is working well
- The discipline's training tools for coaches, judges, organizers and volunteers
 - There are no training tools for European coaches, organizers and volunteers and officials.
- The link with the ICF
 - Is good since the TD is also Chairman CAM, if not, the contact will have to be through the Technical Director.
- The link with the member federations
 - Communication comes from 2 sides and communication works, they find us and we find them
- The impact of global warming on the discipline
 - A global warming makes it difficult to organise events. The unpredictable climate does not make it easy but we have to deal with that, after all, we are a summer sport.

STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- All types of waters possible, not only ECH concept but also other kind of marathon races, river, lake and canals marathons.
- Same boat classes as Sprint
- **Well-organised European championships,**
- Short distance marathon maximum 15 minutes and for juniors and as well for seniors
- Attractive to watch, livestreaming popular Events masters, juniors, under 23 and seniors same period which keeps the total cost low. Para as demonstration sport
- All age groups together in one week of competition
- Start, portage and finish the same area.
- Enough bids for organize a European Championships
- International marathon competition around Europe

OPPORTUNITIES

- Side events to make the sport attractive to show non-canoeists what our discipline is all about.
- Combine championships with other who is a new disciplines
- Commentators; 1 marathon expert and a professional eader, narrator, analyst and key note speaker.
- European cup competitions
- More cooperation with other disciplines

WEAKNESSES

- Non-Olympic
- Same boats as Sprint, but marathon has lighter boats
- No long-term contract for Sports Presentation and TV production.
- Not enough marathon races with the concept of Continental Championships.
- No development budget
- No budget for Technical Delegates.
- Race calendar, not synchronized with the ICF and other disciplines
- All disciplines working separately from each other, so not strengthen the canoe sport..

THREATS

- If the ECA decides to hold the championships every two years, juniors and under-23s will not get a chance to develop in marathon, weakening the marathon and reducing sponsorship for marathon paddlers. Finding sponsor for athletes will be difficult.
- To become a good marathon paddler, you need to have competed at a high level for 3 years.
- Too many World Cup ICF races in Europe for all disciplines during the year on the calendar.
- International calendar ICF (no coordination with ECA and vice versa)
- Other watersports



THE MAIN AXIS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISCIPLINE

DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOP GLOBALLY OUR DISCIPLINES

OUR PRIORITIES

- Apply all classes in marathon and organise interesting races for spectators
- Strong countries is not a big problem, but the number of countries is important and the skills of athletes from new marathon countries should improve with the help of the knowledge of the strong countries.
- Marathon races are held all over the world in all countries, sometimes together with other endurance races such as recreational participation.
- Hold marathon races according to the rules Continental championships in all countries.
- Marathon organising at a low level, is cheap to organise
- Eastern Europe and Balkans should be developed more, budgets available only for Olympics in these countries they ensure that interest in marathon is not high.
- Create open seminars (online/meetings) for NF and athletes - introduce them to marathon - and explain it to them. (Long but promising solution)
- Combine local country competitions (local marathons) with the Master World Championships or other competitions.

ACTIONS

- We should have the intention of scrapping not so popular races if, despite all efforts, we fail to make this event not interesting for the public so other races such as relays and kids races should be chosen or mix races. Important that we become and remain a sport which are interesting to watch.
- Investigate what countries and athletes want to go for an interesting competition.
- During the year, organise TIP (coach and athletes) camps especially for paddlers who do not have the skills and support of their NF, for low costs.
- Conclude a Memorandum of Cooperation and Development in Canoe Sport Development between ECA and Eastern Europe/Balkan countries.



EVENTS AND CALENDAR

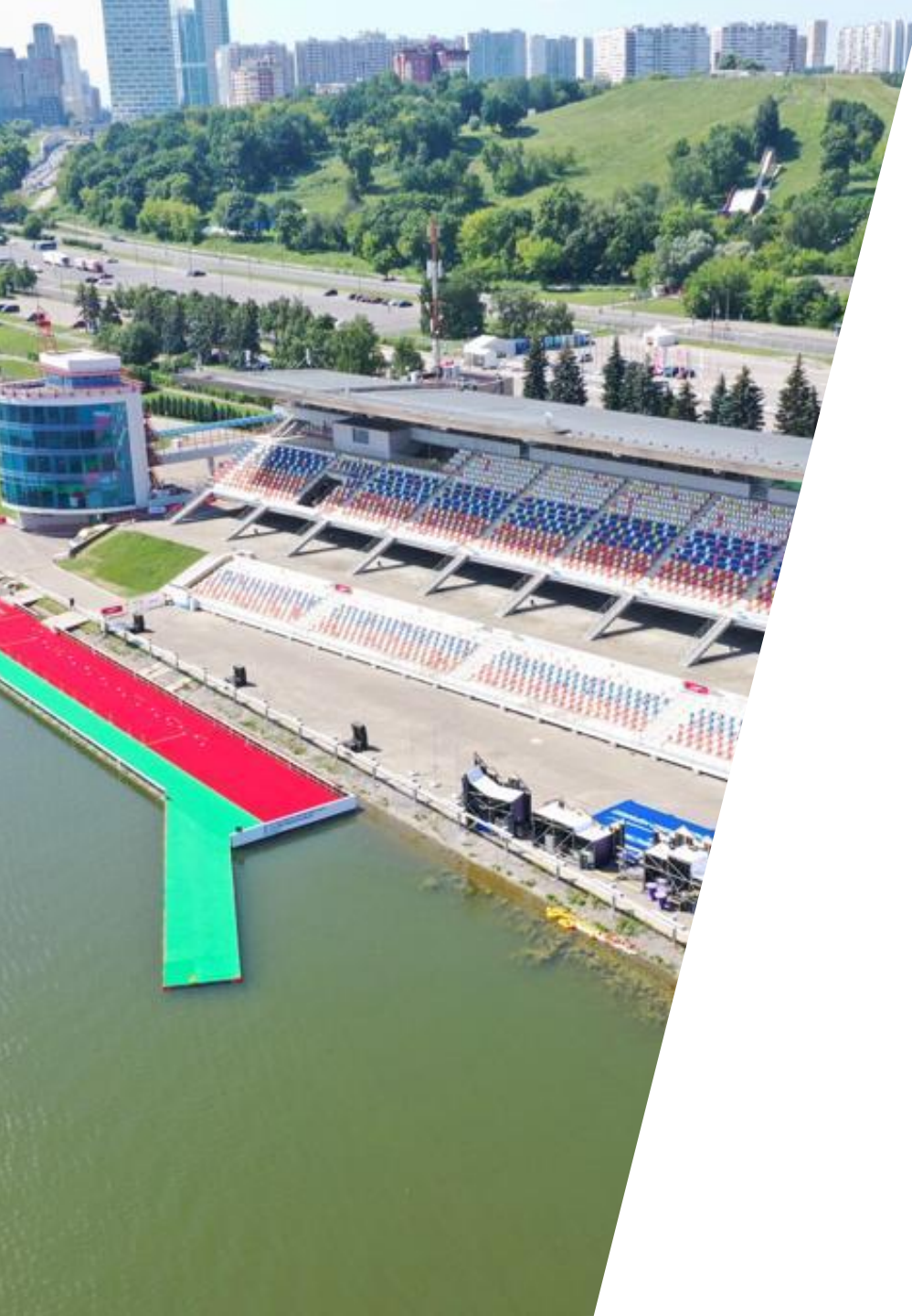
**HOW IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR
EVENTS AND CALENDARS ?**

EVENTS AND CALENDAR

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR EVENTS AND CALENDAR

- Races for all categories and in one week. Is good for sustainability (less travel, less transport and creates better team spirit among all categories).
- Side events, with kids races on the calendar.
- The bidding process should be more transparent and based on what is feasible and best for the athletes i.e. those making the show.
- For a non-Olympic sport, as low an accreditation fee as possible to give everyone a chance to participate, asking more money from paddlers makes it an elite sport. The athletes make the show.
- High-quality livestreaming should become mandatory for European championships, it must be possible that audience can follow what happen on the water,.
- Livestreaming cannot be successful if there are no good commentating and commentators.
- GPS and graphics must be of high quality
- Relay and para races ensure that everyone can compete.
- We do need to ensure that training of the athletes should be possible during training days, marathon courses are always different. Expanding the programme is only possible if training remains possible for the athletes

- First, determine what the protected competitions are
- 1) World and European championships
 - Set up a working group (consisting of all disciplines) to examine together the best dates for the events
- 2) Fixed dates for the events, with a change that could be, 1 week earlier or 1 week later.
- 3) Announce dates 2 years ahead.
- Those who make the show should not pay top dollar.
- Sponsorship of events is a must to survive, but then we must first make our product interesting to people outside the canoeing world for a sponsor to be interested.



VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

**HOW IMPROVE THE QUALITY, DIVERSITY,
OF OUR VENUES?**

VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

DEVELOP THE PLACES TO PADDLE FOR OUR DISCIPLINE

• **OUR PRIORITIES**

- Central location close to the city centre
- Hospitable spectator facilities, such as food trucks, bars and live music.
- Start, Portage and Finish centrally located Large grandstands (for all weather conditions)
- Tents for both spectators and paddlers in case of sun or rain
- Toilet facilities for spectators and paddlers
- Space for paddlers only incl. tents for all countries/teams, lunch, tables, benches, etc.
- Professional prize-giving ceremony
- Many side activities, especially aimed at families (also people not yet interested in kayaking), festival, entertainment of the public besides the races
- Many food and drink outlets for spectators
- Lots of attention for promotion of the championships (and side events), including social media, radio, newspapers, posters, info screens, display in shops, etc.

• Aimed at kayakers of many ages and levels, including "European kids cup", Masters, European championships

• Paddlers easy to follow via livestream, data, GPS tracking, multiple large screens at the venue, etc.)

• Merchandise, clothing The venue should be different every time to make it interesting for all types of paddlers (each course has a different feature, which is interesting for the athlete)

• **Actions**

• Be part of multisport event/championships (e.g. water sports only or also other sports like mountain bike, triathlon, etc.)

• Achieve a carbon-free organisation.

• Marathon holds its events with all age groups allowing all groups (athletes, coaches, referees and volunteers) to travel only once. Less transport for people and equipment.

• **Our weakness**

• Is budget for the above events and ECH itself, in this uncertain world and the priority for Olympic disciplines.



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ATHLETES-JUDGES-REFEREES-OFFICIALS-
COACHES-VOLUNTERS- ORGANIZERS

**HOW IMPROVE THE NUMBER, THE SKILLS
OF OUR ACTIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS?**

**HOW VALORIZE AND PROMOTE OUR
COMMUNITY MEMBERS?**

OFFICIALS

OFFICIALS

OUR PRIORITIES

- Explaining the rules in an understandable way
- Introduce them to the organisation of an international competition before they experience it during their practical internship at European Championships.
- Encourage them to think about the reasons and consequences of management techniques and situations to develop knowledge in this field.

ACTIONS

- We need to improve/amend the ICF rules, referring to the fact that the ICF itself can apply for ICF competitions 1st and 2nd level. Also, costs are no longer covered by NFs for each ITO). By changing this point in the rules, we give more opportunities for the Technical Chairman to choose the best ITO.
- The Technical Chairman could offer (by making a list of ITOs) by inviting the best ITO's without a say national association.
- Train NTOs to be active in European Championships
- Candidates Europe Championships, should be updated through a presentation on what is expected at the ECH. And we should prepare a test on the presentation/rules to test their knowledge and understanding for practice in the European Championships, what to focus on depends on many factors. This will help us save mutual understanding and time in the learning process.

Create a special presentation with a video and a test/quiz so that new ITOs can be trained easily (the test platform with a video of what the ICF slalom looks like).

Create a level group for level 2 (Filed of Play functions) and level 1 (key functions as described below).

Create process sheets for each of the key functions (Chief Official, Deputy Chief Official, Safety Officer, starter, Chief Course Umpire, Chief Finish Line Judge, person responsible for portage), summarising all the steps to be followed.

Create a help/question group for new ITOs, where they can ask questions they are unclear about - to develop their knowledge.

Create an online platform group where all ITOs are and where news, rules for changes and discussions can take place and experiences and suggestions can be exchanged.

At each new season, organise a seminar for all selected ITOs, via the internet, on remembering the rules or even explaining the new rules and a topic (e.g. what to do if you witness bullying, sports betting, etc.), and discuss the new rules.

We can use the same system as in canoe sprint, i.e. we send a presentation of each ITO position before the start of the season and they have to retake the ITO test (ITOs are tested every year) selected for this year.

We have too many officials in marathon, new exams are not needed, maa

ATHLETES-COACHES-VOLUNTERS- ORGANIZERS

ATHLETES -COACHES-VOLUNTERS - ORGANIZERS - AT THE CENTER OF OUR PROJECTS

- How can we make the European Championships interesting? + What can we add to the European Championships?
- Education at all levels.
- Training camps for everyone to train the skills of all athletes.
- Coach weeks, training sessions.
- Club competitions at European level.
- Promotion of marathons in Eastern Europe and former Balkan countries.
- Athletes are the ones making the show, costs should remain low for a non-Olympic discipline.

ACTIONS

- TIP camp
- Uniform award ceremonies for all disciplines with a protocol description that is the same for all disciplines. Guidelines for protocol (opening ceremony, prize-giving ceremonies and closing ceremony)
- Clothing (ITO's and Jury) for all disciplines the same, or provided by ECA. So that shirts can be used at multiple disciplines.



RULES & REGULATIONS

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO KEEP, CHANGE,
ADAPT IN A SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG
TERM, WHY AND HOW?**

RULES & REGULATIONS

IMPROVE OUR RULES AND REGULATIONS

- **OUR PRIORITIES to make it more attractive**
- European Club Championships
- Para races
- Relay races
- Plan so that the most interesting races for the audience are in the same session (time).
- Save the best for prime time.
- Audiences want to see the most exciting races.
- Give preference to innovations in marathon ECH.
- Create the C2 Senior Women category so that the following athletes can participate
- Crew members can come from any of the three age groups (e.g. junior, u23+ senior), giving participating countries more opportunities to form an eligible boat.

ACTIONS

Club races

- Each federation/country club may enter with a maximum of (4) clubs.
- Club enter for at least 4 female juniors and 4 seniors, and 4 male juniors and 4 seniors. (maximum 16 athletes, but can be less, but at least 8 athletes in each class by 2).
- The classes that will be paddled are C-1, K-1, k-2 and K-2 mix.
- (C1 class will be if it is written mandatory in the application, to participate, the club needs to bring at least 2-4 athletes from C class xx



MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ECA

**HOW TO IMPROVE OUR ORGANIZATION
AND ADAPT IT TO WHAT WE PLAN TO DO?**

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE ECA

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMITTEE

OUR PRIORITIES

- The technical delegate should be the contact between the organisers, athletes, team helpers and coaches. Currently, there is now a committee.
- It should be clear what the task of the technical delegate is.
- The link with the ICF is not important, we need good skills for the Technical Delegate.
- It is important to have a reliable "Technical Deliverables" and "Sport Presentation plan", which are the guidelines for the organisation.
- The skills of the Technical Delegate should be that there is a good link with all stakeholders.

ACTIONS

- Task description of the Technical Delegate
- A budget for the Technical Delegate



ACTION PLANNING

HOW TO PLAN OUR ACTIONS 2025-2028?

ACTION PLANNING

2025

- Going on with Demomstration Para European Championships
- Better bidding documents for the 2028 bids .
- Technical Deliverables
- European Club Championships
- Develop the C boats categories by active approach countries not yet participating in ECH.
- Develop marathon in East Europe and Balkan.
- Appoint 1 professional commentator and an expert, paid by organisation and ECA.
- Perfect livestreaming
- European Club Championships
- Talent Indification Programme during Euoepan Championships.
- To appoint a TIP coach

2026

- Implement Para European Championships
- Contract Race mangement, GPS and Graphics
- Continuing with the TIP programme
- Education existing ITO's
- Ranking races international races.
- To add the category C2 Women at the Canoe Marathon European Championships.
- Make programme interesting for the audience. Prime time best races
- Test events relay races
- Ranking races

2027

- Continue with plans as mentioned earlier.
- Adapt plans to the time in 2027.
- Prioritise calendar where disciplines come up with a unified plan together with the ICF.
- More collaboration with other sports and hold joint competitions.
- Prepare new policies for the next 4 years.

2028

- Combine Championships with Ocean Racing or Sprint (2029)
- Prepare new policies for the next four years.

