





ECA

STRATEGIC PLAN

SPORT PROGRAM

EUROPEAN
CANOE ASSOCIATION



SPORT PROGRAM

(discipline name)



PRESENT OUR DISCIPLINE

- **History:** Stand up paddling is the newest discipline of the European Canoe Association. Although the first ECA SUP European Championships is going to be held in 2024, the discipline has a very strong recreational base in Europe. From the 4 ICF SUP World Championships, 2 were organized in Europe (2021-Hungary and 2022-Poland), which indicates how strong stand up paddling is on the continent.
- **Main evolutions:** By creating a Working Group in 2023 for the development of the discipline, ECA made a huge step forward to boost stand up paddling and with the cooperation of several nations, start building the foundations of this discipline within the ECA. A very important milestone will be the first ECA SUP European Championships in 2024.
- **Definition:** Stand up paddling is the only canoeing discipline where athletes are not sitting, but standing on the board. Athletes use one-bladed paddles to navigate themselves forward on alternate sides.



INTRODUCTION

- Stand up paddling is a very popular outdoor activity throughout Europe. It has diversified from a variation of racing, touring, yoga and whitewater.
- It can be practiced on different water surfaces: lakes, oceans, rapid and calm rivers. Depending on the location of a country, different types of waters are preferred for paddling: e.g. Central European athletes paddle on lakes and rivers, while nations having a sea coast prefer paddling in open water.
- The global stand up paddle board market size was valued at USD 1.52 billion in 2022 and is poised to grow to USD 2.39 billion by 2030. Europe accounts for a significant part of this amount.



THE DIAGNOSTIC OF THE DISCIPLINE

SWOT ANALYSIS

- STRENGTHS
- WEAKNESSES
- OPPORTUNITIES
- THREATS

DIAGNOSTIC

Areas of reflections

- Important evolution in the discipline
- Analyse our European championship
- competition venues
- Organizing countries
- Judges and officials
- The calendar
- The economic model of organizing events
- The hosting fees of the events
- The television and streaming broadcast - production, audience -
- The contractualization between the ECA and the organizer
- Gender equity
- The specifications of the events
- The event attribution process
- The link with other disciplines – calendar, multisports events -
 - The competition program
 - The discipline's training tools for coaches, judges, organizers and volunteers
 - The link with the ICF
 - The link with the member federations
 - The material used
 - The impact of global warming on the discipline
 - The link with leisure practices
 - etc

STRENGTHS

- One of the most impressive, popular and rapidly developing sports all over the world.
- Attractive for spectators , social media and TV.
- Competitions can be organized at any lake, sea, port (with or without beach start).
- Access to existing venues in Europe for events.
- Experience of running large participation events with spectators.
- Large network of European Federations to link in with.
- Most SUP races are held in Europe.
- Access to race timing, judges, competition documentation etc - Established competition experience.
- Strong links and relationship with the ICF.

OPPORTUNITIES

- New discipline so starting with a clean slate.
- Many athletes may move from recreational to competitive style.
- ECA CUP for ages 10-15 - development is the most important thing.
- Continuous revision of the rules so that it is clear for judges and athletes.
- More publicity through the organization of big competitions (European and World Championships).
- Linking in with existing European SUP races already established to enhance participation of elite athletes.
- Developing a competition pathway from national recreational paddler to world championships .

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of entry level events to encourage, female and junior racers.
- No established connections/networks between ECA and the European SUP Community.
- The SUP race scene is well established in Europe and has had 10 plus years developing.
- Enticing SUP athletes who identify more with the surfing community could be a barrier.

THREATS

- Heavy schedule of SUP Races in Europe (World Cups, Euro Tour, and individual countries selection races).
- Equipment logistics with 14' long boards.
- European SUP Championships already established on the SUP race calendar (every year) with the European Surfing Federation.



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**THE MAIN AXIS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE
DISCIPLINE**

HOW DEVELOP GLOBALLY THE DISCIPLINE

?

DEVELOPMENT

Our strengths
example

- Some strong nations on which we can rely to develop the discipline
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- Few budget allocated by the national federations for the disciplines
- Number of federation
- xx

Areas of reflection

- Number of nations / athletes / ITO / in the European championships
- The organization of the discipline in the national federations: number of nations, , clubs, athletes, national events, geographical analysis
- Obstacles to the development of activity within clubs, federations, ECA, ICF
- The budget allocated by the national federations to the discipline
- The tools for judges, officials, referees, volunteers, organizers
- The link with the other disciplines
- The economic model of the discipline
- ...

DEVELOP GLOBALLY OUR DISCIPLINES

OUR PRIORITIES

- Increase number of participating athletes
- Improve the quality of events
- Develop race outside the canoe sprint venue
- Keep junior, open and masters age categories
- Attract the best paddlers in Europe
- Broaden the range of participants at events

ACTIONS

- Contact national federations of ECA to send athletes to ECA events
- Support hosts throughout the whole organizing period
- Ask interested national federations where other SUP races are held
- Create the timetable of the ECA SUP European Championships to fit all age categories
- Asses the possibility of prize money at ECA events
- Organize fun races for recreational paddlers

GUIDELINES

- Develop the number of nation represented in our championships, number of athletes, ITO, Officials, referees.
- Develop the discipline within our national federations – program of local, national competitions, national championships
- Promote our discipline – communication –
- Reinforce the link between the member of the community members of the discipline



EVENTS AND CALENDAR

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

EVENTS AND CALENDAR

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR EVENTS AND CALENDAR

Our strengths
example

- Skills of the technical delegates
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- Lack of organizers
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The calendar – number of events, locations - planification
- The link with the other disciplines and ICF calendar.- Optimization of the calendar
- The bidding process
- The hosting fees and the economic model of our events
- How cut costs and increase revenues
- The quality of the events
- The evaluation of the events – reports
- The program of the competitions
- Innovating program and paddle sports of tomorrow
- The broadcasting and streaming of the events
- The sponsors and partners
- Link with recreational activities

OUR PRIORITIES

- Organize more ECA SUP event in a season
- Avoid other well-established SUP and canoeing event in the calendar
- Be part of multi-discipline canoeing events
- Provide more opportunity for people who are interested to race

ACTIONS

- Introduce other ECA SUP events (e.g. European Cup, European Ranking Event)
- Investigate the dates of other SUP and canoeing events
- Negotiations with organizers about the possibility of multi-discipline events
- Organize all race formats (sprint, technical, long distance) and all age categories at the European Championships

GUIDELINES

- Consolidate our presence at the Olympic, Paralympic and European Game and the major international events
- Consolidate our international leadership in terms of our results
- Aim for excellence in the organization and media coverage of our events - European Championships - Continental Qualifications and generate more revenues from our events
- Develop the number of nations and athletes in our competitions
- Strengthen cooperation between nations, transborder cooperation
- Reinforce the accessibility of our competitions for people with disabilities and develop the paracanoe
- Define a clear and transparent application and event allocation process that better associates the technical delegates and the authorities.
- Develop events and activities that generate partnerships and revenue.
- Reduce the impact of our competitions on our environment and biodiversity by gradually introducing sustainable development criteria into the awarding of our events.
- Participate in the development of e-sport
- Built the paddle sports of tomorrow
- Develop the cooperation with the other disciplines – eg multisport events -



VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

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

VENUES & EQUIPMENTS

DEVELOP THE PLACES TO PADDLE FOR OUR DISCIPLINE

OUR PRIORITIES

- To show the continent the beauty of stand up paddling and the events of ECA
- Help people better understand what is happening at a race
- Not to build new venues, but use already existing ones to avoid huge financial commitments of organizers
- Provide equipment (board, paddle) for national federations, that need it

ACTIONS

- Require organizers to provide online streaming of the races
- Contract experienced commentators for events
- With the help of national federations search for suitable event locations
- Find opportunities of development fundings

Our strengths
example

- Natural and artificial venues
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- Few venues to host our events
- The global warming and its impact on our venues
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The location of the venues in Europe
- The quality of the venue
- Label the venue according to its quality -- e.g.: 1 to 5 stars –
- The support by ECA to the national projects
- How to develop new venues
- How accompany the federation in the creation of new venues
- Assist the federation for the construction of new venues
- The specifications for the venues to host a championship
- Etc.

GUIDELINES

- Increase the number of sites and nations capable of hosting European championships
- Define an infrastructure and equipment plan and implement a support policy: political, technical, legal for project leaders - Project assistance on opportunity studies -
- Identify and promote the venues
- Improve the quality of the venues
- Define specifications for the sites hosting our championships
- Carry out a map of the sites hosting our championships
- Take global warming and environmental protection issues into account for our competition venues and the organization of our competitions
- Support the projects of national federations
- Facilitate the cooperation between nation – share the venues and organizations -



**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?**

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

Our strengths
example

- Nations with good organizers
- Many judges
- xx

Our Weaknesses
example

- The number of official
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The courses for our coaches, referees, judges, organizers
- The observer program in the organization of our competitions
- European judges committee
- How to show recognition to our community members
- How to improve the skills of our community members?
- The link with ICF programs – eg TIP – clothing line for the officials, judges, volunteers, organizers
- How to confort the link between the members of our community
- Training tools for our stakeholders – eg europaddle pass –
- The ITO'S nomination
- Athletes ambassadors
- ...

THE JUDGES-REFEREES-OFFICIALS-COACHES-ATHLETES –VOLUNTERS - ORGANIZERS - AT THE CENTER OF OUR PROJECTS

OUR PRIORITIES

- Have trained and experienced ITOs at events
- Update ITOs about rule changes and frequently occurring problems
- Help potential organizers to better understand what is needed to organize an event

ACTIONS

- Organize ITO seminars during events
- Create questionnaires for ITOs
- Organize observer programme during events, where main points can be explained

GUIDELINES

- Improve the skills and knowledge of our judges, coaches, athletes, organizers and volunteers
- Promote the stakeholders of our community – medal ceremony, recognitions –
- Develop the cooperation between the nations for the athletes for high performance and development – training camps / competitions / Talent Identification Program –
- Identify our community members and reinforce the links between the members of our community

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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 create fair rules
- Do not interfere in the ,natural' flow of a race
- Review the rules from time to time to deal with the challenges of the environment
- Help athletes and coaches understand the rules

ACTIONS

- To review the existing ECA SUP rules
- Make difference from ICF SUP rules if/when needed
- Consult the stakeholders – athletes, coaches, national federations, organizers, ITOs etc – what rule change should be made
- Prepare education materials (online and offline) to explain rules and requirements

Our strengths
example

- The link with ICF rules
- xx

...

Our Weaknesses
example

- the adaptation of certain rules to the specificities of the European continent
- lack of innovation strategy
- ..

Areas of reflection

- Carry out an assessment of our rules
- what developments to consider for the discipline in the short, medium, long term
- what strategy to change the rules if necessary
- How make our discipline more attractive
- How to create the conditions to be more innovative
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GUIDELINES

- Identify what to keep, what needs to be changed, what needs to evolve
- Identify the changes to be made in the short term, medium term and long term
- Associate the national federations and their committees in the reflection
- Propose a strategy to change the rules
- The calendar – march 2025 -

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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

Our strengths

Example

- Skills of the technical delegates
- xx

Our Weaknesses

Example

- Insufficient number of technical delegates
- xx

Areas of reflection

- The duties of the chairman and the technical delegates members of the committee
- The link with: ICF committees / the other committees / The board
- The organisation and the functioning of the committees
- The communication
- The relations with the other federations, the national committees and the chairman of the disciplines of the national federations

ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMITTEE

OUR PRIORITIES

- To bring SUP to the level of the other disciplines
- Better organize the work of the ECA SUP Working Group
- Develop the future strategy based on the opinion of more people
- Make the discipline and the events more visible

ACTIONS

- Prepare manuals and other documents
- Create a document about the duties of each member of the Working Group
- Involve more people in the development of stand up paddling
- Cooperation with ECA marketing expert

GUIDELINES

- A more shared governance, gender equity, transparency eg: publication of the reports –
- A structured organization – roles and missions defined -
- An organization and functioning mindful on its economic impact on member federations and organizers.
- An organization and functioning mindful of the impact of its activities on the environment, biodiversity and global warming
- A modern administration



ACTION PLANNING

HOW TO PLAN OUR ACTIONS 2025-2028?

ACTION PLANNING

2025

- Drawing the conclusions of 2024, modify requirements – if needed - for the next editions of the ECA SUP European Championship
- Keep in contact with athletes/teams that participated during the first European Championship
- Organize lower ranked ECA SUP events
- Introduce the ECA SUP Ranking Series

2026

- Find proper host for the European Championship
- Include more events in the ECA SUP Ranking Series
- Manage to have participants from all ECA member federation countries at the SUP Europeans
- Introduce kids races (age category under junior) at ECA SUP events

2027

- Further develop ECA SUP events
- Prepare the introduction of entries by national federations
- Add more the fun/recreational races at ECA SUP events

2028

- Introduce entry by national federations for the European Championships
- Introduce prize money at ECA SUP European Championships
- Reach 500 participants at the European Championships

