



OSES

OCEAN SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH
EDUCATION AND SPORT

GOOD PRACTICES HANDBOOK

6 | Good Practices in Professional Sports

A benchmark of educational tools
and environmental activities already
implemented in Europe and beyond.

Ocean Sustainability through Education and Sport (OSES)

Water sports offer humans a unique connection to the marine environment. As opposed to “leisure tourists” water sports enthusiasts take advantage of this unparalleled ecosystem all year round, and many times regardless of air and water temperature. This makes water sports enthusiasts highly susceptible to environmental degradation, be it from pollution hindering water access or shifting hydrological conditions disrupting their activities.

These enthusiasts often evolve into professional athletes, ocean advocates, or water sports business owners contributing significantly to local economies. Consequently, education and awareness among water sports practitioners at all levels of engagement are essential for protecting and improving our marine environment. Sports can be a powerful tool for fostering eco-responsible actions and environmental awareness. Activities like waste collection, biodiversity awareness, coastal preservation, and oceanic issue discussions can be seamlessly integrated into sports, and help create an ocean-literate community dedicated to safeguarding our waters.

The OSES project aligns with the broader goal of supporting education through sport. We believe that sports can play a pivotal role in educating youth about environmental protection. Addressing ocean preservation serves as a pilot initiative that can be expanded to other sports in the future.

Nautical sports, including surfing, sailing, scuba diving, and kayaking, have specific environmental concerns tied to marine area preservation. One unifying value across these sports is the imperative to protect their playground.

Sport, with its educational and exemplary values, has the power to raise awareness and drive behavioral change in environmental protection. The «green sport» dimension in the European Union's Work Plan for Sport emphasizes the sector's potential to combat climate change and become more sustainable.

OSES seeks to strengthen the role of sports actors in addressing ocean conservation through three dimensions:



Education for sustainable sport: Developing tools and methodologies to instill eco-responsible actions and environmental awareness in youth through sports.



Environmentally friendly sports practice, facilities, and events: Gathering expertise to integrate environmental aspects into all sporting activities, including events, competitions, and organizational management.



Evolution of sport and its practice in the context of climate change: Focusing on ocean health and preservation by addressing activities significantly impacted by ocean challenges such as pollution, coastal development, and water quality issues.

The OSES Good Practices Handbook seeks to compile impactful actions and projects across Europe and beyond, serving as a benchmark for environmental awareness and ocean protection education.

GOOD PRACTICES IN PROFESSIONAL SPORT

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Pro windsurfer advocates sustainability, educates on ocean conservation

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Yachting Association builds green community, and adopts sustainable practices for events and office work

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SPORTS

Sports organizations and professional athletes may play a crucial role in steering water sports toward sustainable practices. These entities often spearhead the development of their disciplines, influencing trends in sports and environmental approaches.

Many sports organizations and associations serve as nurturing grounds for aspiring athletes, providing support, training, and management. Professional athletes and practitioners, along with coaches and representatives of sports organizations, are deeply committed to their disciplines, dedicating themselves to sports practice year-round, regardless of weather conditions. Their frequent and intimate interaction with the natural environment makes them the first ones to experience any environmental degradation. Given that their careers, major income sources, and well-being depend on water conditions, sports organizations, and professional athletes are particularly vulnerable to environmental challenges. Therefore, they are often the “first responders”, actively supporting and implementing initiatives to protect their “playground”.

With substantial recognition within the water sports community, both sports organizations and professional athletes possess the potential to reach vast audiences of sports enthusiasts. They serve as inspirational figures, encouraging others to adopt sustainable water sports practices and participate in marine conservation efforts.

This section highlights initiatives from professional athletes and sports organizations that drive positive change, sustainability, and ocean conservation. Through setting examples and advocating for ocean protection, these entities contribute significantly to the broader goal of preserving our marine ecosystems.

ADVOCACY

PRO WINDSURFING 

TARGET AUDIENCE  general public

Led by *Federico Morisio - professional windsurfer*

Pro windsurfer advocates sustainability, educates on ocean conservation

« I was born and raised in Turin, Italy, but I was lucky to travel internationally from a young age thanks to my parents' passion for traveling and sports. In fact, my dad taught me how to windsurf when I was 8 years old in Corsica, France, and since then every summer holiday was dedicated to windsurfing. Besides my passion for traveling and sports, I'm also really grateful to my parents for the education they gave me; they taught me to respect the environment through simple but powerful actions like never throwing something on the ground, always recycling, turning off lights, saving energy, saving water and most of all realizing that resources aren't infinite. When at 19 years old I decided to go all-in on my dream of becoming a professional windsurfer, I started traveling around the world to train and compete, and I thought that this type of education





and way of doing things were normal; I thought that everybody felt connected to the planet, that everybody wanted to protect it and respect it. But soon enough I realized that it wasn't the case. I could see that people didn't know the impact of their daily choices and actions; that they didn't understand how everything on this planet is connected, making what's harmful to land, ocean, and animals, also harmful to us. Through the years, I got to educate myself more, have powerful conversations with experts, and become part of environmental organizations that had my same mission: raise awareness on this topic, educate people on the impact of their actions and decisions, and inspire them to change through action.

First of all, I believed that if I wanted to be a leader in this topic, I had to lead by example. So I worked on making my lifestyle more sustainable, analyzing the main areas of my life: food, transportation, energy, and clothing to start with. My goal is to reduce my impact in each one of them, that's why

I started a plant-based diet that reduces my food carbon footprint by about 70-90%; then I get all my transportation emissions compensated by my windsurfing sponsor through the planting of mangroves; I mostly buy used clothes and try to get my older ones repaired; and finally I aim to stay in houses (while I'm traveling to train and compete) that get energy from renewable resources. Besides these things that I do on a personal level, my overall goal is to raise awareness and educate people on the importance and functions of the ocean for life on Earth, make them understand how interconnected to it we are so that we can all together take action «from the bottom» and push institutions, governments, and companies to make better laws and agreements. At the same time I work with NGOs «from the top», supporting their campaigns, in order to put pressure on governments and institutions by proposing laws, stopping acts, and making them feel more accountable.

With my work, I hope to educate millions of people and inspire them to change their perspectives, and consequently their actions. While also pressuring institutions, governments, and companies towards more responsible and positive policies that can protect the ocean. As a windsurf athlete, I'm so grateful for all that the ocean provides me and I feel a duty to do my best in order to preserve its health, which at the end of the day, also directly means our own health as human beings and societies. »

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EARTHBOUND

SAILING



TARGET AUDIENCE



sailing practitioners, general public

Led by *Polish Yachting Organization (Polski Związek Żeglarski)*

Yachting Association builds green community, and adopts sustainable practices for events and office work.

In early 2023, the Polish Yachting Association (PYA), started implementing a sustainable development strategy accepted by the PYA Board. Our primary objectives revolve around promoting pro-environmental activities and sustainable practices. This encompasses a range of initiatives such as reducing water pollution, limiting CO₂ emissions, minimizing raw material consumption, and fostering environmental education, particularly among the younger generation. The strategy is implemented in three key areas: office spaces, sailing events, and the green society of «watermen». Our overarching goal is to highlight the significance of the green transformation.



Sailing Events:

Our sustainable development strategy for sailing events entails the establishment of strict guidelines that are consistently followed during regattas. These guidelines encompass waste segregation, the provision of drinking water dispensers, and the elimination of plastic dishes and bottles. The regatta office follows accepted standards, including the use of electronic announcements, communication via a WhatsApp group, and minimizing paper documentation.

Notably, during the 24th edition of the Gdynia Sailing Days festival, we received the prestigious «Clean Regatta» certificate for organizing the Junior European Championships in the ILCA 6 class with a commitment to sustainable development. The certification, awarded by the Sailors of the Sea organization, attests to our dedication to environmentally conscious regatta organization.



Gdynia Sailing Days Green Zone:

Beyond basic eco-activities integrated into the sailing regatta organization, we implemented additional initiatives during the Gdynia Sailing Days. This included competitions, lectures by WWF Blue Patrol professionals, serving meals in biodegradable dishes, marking bicycle parking spaces, and conducting a major cleaning effort at the beach and marina.

Green Society:

Our vision for an ecological sailing society is centered around building a community committed to environmental care. The PYA aims to engage clubs, associations, competitors, amateur sailors, and external partners in ecological activities, fostering a collective expansion of sustainable development strategies. In November, we established the PYA Green Team, a group of green ambassadors who serve as a public face for green activities.

Promoting Green Steps:

Regular promotion of pro-environmental activities is conducted on our social media under the «EarthBound» hashtag, which serves as a showcase for all environmental initiatives undertaken by the PYA and our green ambassadors. Additionally, we actively contribute to ecological education by creating guidelines based on observations, interviews, conversations, and scientific research. These guidelines are tailored for various sailing groups, including clubs, coaches, competitors, judges, organizers, and partners.

All these valuable resources are available for download on our website.

Office Work:

Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond public events to our day-to-day office operations. Aligned with our strategy, our main goal is to reduce energy, water, and paper consumption. We have adopted principles such as electronic document circulation, and communication within the company using online tools and email.

We've introduced waste segregation, practices to save drinking water through the use of filters and reusable dishes, and a conscious reduction of paper consumption and sustainable printer use. This includes reusing paper and setting printers to double-sided and black-and-white printing. Sustainable behavior is actively promoted in both social and office spaces through dedicated signs reminding individuals to save energy. We also prioritize suppliers who share our commitment to sustainability.



POLSKI ZWIĄZEK
ZEGLARSKI
POLISH YACHTING
ASSOCIATION

www.pya.org.pl/polski-zwiazek-zeglarski/page/kurs-na-ziemie-ekologiczne-zeglarnstwo-pzz/

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GOOD PRACTICES HANDBOOK

The OSES Good Practices Handbook serves as a reference point for assessing our progress as a society in terms of connecting water sports with OL, environmental awareness, and marine education.

It is aimed at people and organizations at different stages of their journey towards a cleaner, more sustainable ocean, and covers a number of themes :

1. **Connecting schools, water sports, and ocean literacy**
2. **Environmental cleanups**
3. **Citizen science, environmental data collection, and monitoring**
4. **Sustainable practices in water sport tourism**
5. **Engaging with local communities**
6. **Good Practices in Professional Sports**

**Discover the other sections of
the handbook on :
www.oses-project.org**

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