

**An overview of contemporary national marine sport management: A strategic mapping approach in Taiwan**

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Abstract 471**

Marine sports consist of surfing, wind surfing, sea canoeing, snorkeling, water ski, fishing, diving, speedboat, sailing and other maritime-based physical activities (Li, 2006). Marine activities are one of the fastest growing areas within the sport recreation industry (Michael, 2001). Island marine sports and tourism have been a subject of increasing interest to organizations and researchers in terms of their contribution to social and economic development (Conlin & Baum, 1995; Lockhart, 1995). According to the National Sporting Goods Association (2007), in 2007 Americans will spend almost \$2.684 billion on equipment purchases for fishing tackle (\$2.263 billion), skin diving and scuba gear (\$0.376 billion), and water ski (\$0.045 billion). Furthermore, in 2006, there were up to 139.8 million people participating in boating (29.3 million), canoeing (7.1 million), fishing (40.6 million), swimming (56.5 million), and water skiing (6.3 million). Windsurfing and whitewater kayaking, among the alternative sports are one of the fastest growing segments of sport in recent years. Therefore, marine sports have penetrated many nations that have coastline and islands, such as China, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, and Singapore. In 2002 the Taiwan Government introduced marine sports as part of the national policy in physical education and invented funds to promote and support these activities. Taiwan's natural resources are great and the country has a total of 1,566.3 kilometers of coastline and many islets for tourism, culture, recreation, and sustainable development.

The purpose of this study was to investigate marine sport management, to assay strategical maps, and to provide an overview of national marine sport management in Taiwan. Two types of qualitative research methods were utilized in this in-depth study: 1) historical research that focused on the records published by government institutions and public or private organizations from 2002 to 2007; and 2) literature review involved analysis and integration of the published literature (Yin, 2003).

Three sources of marine sports-related materials, collected between 2004 and 2007 from Taiwan central government and 25 local governments, were used in this research: 1) practical resources, official documents, records and communiques, announced by governmental institutions, public and private organizations in Taiwan; 2) published sport management articles on organization strategy, project promotions and executions; and 3) marine sports policies the researcher collected and compared from various Asian countries. As a result of this study, marine sport management and strategical mapping policies and procedures were developed.

Results of the study indicated that there are four functional levels of management: 1) the first level is the national policy-making level: the most effective mechanism for formulating integrated ocean policy and inter-agency coordination through the establishment of an inter-ministerial body at the highest bureaucratic level. The government is especially for providing leadership in setting policies in procedure as well as identify in policy priorities. Significantly, The premier announced "National Marine White Paper" in 2002 and "National Marine Affairs Development Project" in 2004, and empowered each ministerial departments to promote marine affairs.

2) The second level is planning level: the national planning authority was charged with an overall responsibility for the formulation and coordination of the national physical education, tourism, marine and economic plan including the utilization and management of the marine sector. There were eighteen ministerial levels marine sports related plans announced between 2003 and 2005.

3) The third level is practice and implementation level: extant or future instructional structures should be utilized in carrying out new marine sports-related activities. There are four inter-ministerial departments, overall 25 local governments and 26 private societies and associations conjoined together to promote swimming, surfing, wind surfing, sea canoeing, snorkeling, water ski, fishing, diving, and sailing for national. Most plans were developed by "Top-Down" measure from central government between 2002 and 2004; but after 2005, 80% plans came up with local governments and private organization by "Top-Down" measure. More areas included life education, marine rescue, water safety, theoretical and applied research, marine sports event and facility management were emphasized by the government.

4) The fourth level is educational level: marine sports were taught through overall schools system and merged to curriculum. The Ministry of Educational proclaimed "Marine and Water Sports Project" in 2002 and "Student Swimming Plan" in 2004 for whole educational institutions. Especially, the performance of student swimming ability and marine sports teaching incorporated in annual local government evaluation. In addition, the swimming learning rate of student increased from 23% (2002) to 75%

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(2006). The researches and publications for marine sports also grew up.

In conclusion, followed the four functional levels of national marine sport management, Taiwan gradually consolidated Taiwan's ocean and water sport resources and set up an evaluation system to advance a sustainable development framework and strategic mapping approach. Compared with related literature from China, Korea, Japan, Philippine, and Singapore, similar strategies were found. The author believed that this study will provide a direction for the leaders and administrators in the government and related organizations to promote marine sports in the future, and the implication of sports management practice in the marine sports will be discussed.