

Eurosea 8 – Sea Scouting Environmental Scan

Strengths

1. Program – Sea Scouting is strongly based on Baden-Powell’s concept of patrol Scouting. It teaches life skills and values including leadership methods, project management, interpersonal relationships, and teamwork.
2. Organization – Sea Scouting has strong organization and a strong sense of identity where teamwork is highly prized.
3. Equipment – Sea Scouting has vessels and equipment that support the program well.
4. Attitude – Sea Scouts are open, happy, proud and have a positive attitude.

Weaknesses

1. Expense – Sea Scouting can be expensive to implement. It is resource intensive and activities are often unaffordable for some. Some perceive that Sea Scouting is limited to the rich, and may be “posh” or non-inclusive.
2. Leadership – Sea Scouting is very specialized and training intensive. It’s effectiveness is compromised by a scarcity of appropriate training and lack of continuity of national and international leadership. Because Sea Scouting requires more training that is often absent or difficult to find or deliver, it is sometimes difficult to recruit and retain new leaders. This also makes it difficult for experienced leaders to keep their skills current.
3. International issues – There are varied national interests and little international Sea Scouting coordination. This problem is compounded by the lack of national Sea Scout leadership in some countries and ineffective Sea Scouting support from one country to the next.
4. Communication – Sea Scouting does a poor job of communicating within itself and with the outside world. Because of this, many youth don’t understand what Sea Scouting is and they are susceptible to group pressures when considering whether to join.

Opportunities

1. Communication – It is easier than ever to communicate with others in other places. Because of this, resources can be combined and networked, thereby bringing badly needed help to those who need it most.
2. Regulation – Sea Scouts can play an important role in developing and implementing new safety regulations.
3. Social issues – As the social safety net deteriorates, Sea Scouting has an opportunity to plan a more important role in the lives of our communities.
4. Education – Sea Scouting can provide important career training, as well as helping young people develop social skills.
5. The world of water – Sailing is seen as becoming more and more “cool.” More people than ever want to get out on the water.

Threats

1. Health & safety issues – Sea Scouting carries inherent dangers. Without sufficient leader training and safety awareness, accidents can happen, which could have a devastating effect on the future of the program and may also trigger debilitating regulation.
2. A busy world – Young people have more opportunities than ever. As a consequence Sea Scouting must work hard to get their attention. This also makes it difficult to convince adults to become effective leaders.