



## CUPRA heads to Dakar for the second round of the all-electric racing series Extreme E

- > The Ocean X Prix will be held on the shores of the Lac Rose, in Senegal, where the Dakar Rally finishing line was located.
- > Extreme E series will increase CUPRA's electrification research while promoting electrification, sustainability, and equality
- > The CUPRA Formentor e-HYBRID is joining the event, supporting the championship staff

**Martorell, 28-05-2021** – The great Extreme E electric adventure reaches its second round, the Ocean X Prix, taking place this weekend (29-30<sup>th</sup> of May) at the mythical Lac Rose in Senegal. The ABT CUPRA XE team will compete with a winning mentality and the target of scoring as many points as possible.

Despite the series of incidents in the first round of the Extreme E season, The ABT CUPRA XE team finished the first round with 13 points, enough to place the team in seventh position in the championship. It was the prize for the strength and spirit of improvement shown, and never giving up in the face of adversity.

"I think Extreme E is the craziest thing I've done in my sporting career", says Mattias Ekström, who fondly remembers when in Saudi Arabia he gave the mechanics a hand when needed. "The guys seemed scared when I picked up the tools, but later they realised that I had some knowledge and could be of help," jokes the Swedish driver, two-time DTM champion and World Rallycross Champion, as well as CUPRA ambassador. "In the first race we had fun and we did well, but we still missed out on a trophy. We are going to Africa to fight for the win", he adds.



His team-mate Claudia Hürtgen adds: "Senegal is a new start to the season for us. I think from a championship point of view the first race was a success. Extreme E manages to excellently combine issues such as racing and environmental awareness. I have received a lot of positive comments." The German driver points out that the inspection of the track before the competition will be key, because "we have very little time to learn the track. After the track analysis we have a short test session and, after that, comes the qualifying".

Between the first and second rounds of the championship, the e-CUPRA ABT XE1 has crossed the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean aboard the Saint Helena before reaching the West Coast of Africa. During its journey the Saint Helena ship, in charge of transporting everything necessary for the competition, made a logistical stop in Valencia, where a CUPRA Formentor e-HYBRID was taken aboard, which will support the championship staff, joining the caravan in Senegal.

Since the inaugural event, Mattias Ekström and Claudia Hürtgen have analysed the data collected in the first race and have continued training to reach the highest level at the second round of Extreme E.

### **Driving the CUPRA Formentor e-HYBRID: "You have to trust your instinct to win in Extreme E"**

Before the on-track activity began, Ekström took to the roads of Senegal in the CUPRA Formentor e-HYBRID, where he was interviewed by brand ambassador Daniel Abt, who is accompanying the team this weekend in the Lac Rose. For Mattias, the Formentor e-HYBRID is a very special car, as the Swedish driver has been involved in the model's development. "I know this car very well, as I have been part of its development from the very beginning", says.



The differences between the Formentor e-HYBRID and the e-CUPRA ABT XE1 are evident at first sight: The Extreme E car is much wider and higher, and its all-electric powertrain is silent. The handling, of course, is also very different: "You have to control the steering a lot at all times, and it's also a much heavier car. In a road model like the Formentor, that doesn't happen; the steering reacts very precisely", he adds. To make a difference in the race, Mattias says the drivers must adapt quickly to the track. "You have to rely on your instinct to understand how fast you have to go over a jump or through a corner. Here it's key to learn to go fast immediately, because we only do a practice session".

### **Target: reaching the finale**

In this renowned place, Extreme E drivers will face an unprecedented route, located between Lac Rose and the Atlantic Ocean, with tracks of sand, gravel, rocks and dunes. This track will be a real challenge for the competitors. As seen in the Desert X Prix, the adaptability of the drivers and teams will be key to reaching the semi-finals and qualifying for a place in the grand finale, as practice time is very limited. The e-CUPRA ABT XE1, with all-wheel drive and 400kW (544PS) of power, will feel in its natural habitat in this setting.

The work of each driver to reach the final round is key. The teams are composed of a male and female driver, racing in absolute equality.

### **Lac Rose: from the Dakar finishing line to environmental awareness with Extreme E**

The second round of the season is called the Ocean X Prix and it is held in an iconic place for motor racing fans: Senegal's Lake Retba, also known as Lac Rose, where in the past the Dakar Rally's finishing line was located. It is one of the



country's main attractions because of its characteristic pinkish colour. Created due to the presence of a halophilic micro-alga called *Dunaliella salina* in its waters, that are rich in carotenoids, red and orange organic pigments found naturally present in plants, algae, and various types of photosynthetic organisms. Along with the high level of salinity of the lake, reflecting the sun's rays, this type of micro-algae is responsible for creating that beautiful postcard that gives its name to Lake Retba.

The lake is also an important boost for the local economy, since over 3,000 people work in its waters, in charge of collecting around 38,000 tons of salt each year. Extreme E has chosen this lake, located about 30 kilometres from Dakar and just over a hundred meters in a straight line from the Senegalese shores of the Atlantic Ocean, to illustrate the worrying impact that climate change has on marine ecosystems.

As well as in motorsport, CUPRA also shows its commitment to environmental care in its road cars. The CUPRA Born, the brand's first 100% electric model, reinvents contemporary design through the use of recycled materials, in collaboration with the company SEAQUAL INITIATIVE. The CUPRA Born's standard seats are produced with SEAQUAL® YARN recycled polymer fibre fabrics, sourced from material collected by fishermen and local communities in oceans, rivers, estuaries and seas such as the Mediterranean.

**CUPRA** is an unconventional challenger brand based on stimulating style and contemporary performance that inspires the world from Barcelona with progressive cars and experiences. Launched in 2018 as a stand-alone brand, CUPRA has its own corporate headquarters and a racing car workshop in Martorell (Barcelona), in addition to a network of specialized points of sale around the world.

In 2020, the brand maintained its upward trend with an 11% growth and 27,400 vehicles sold, thanks to the strong performance of the CUPRA Ateca and the CUPRA Leon as well as the market entry of the CUPRA Formentor, the first model uniquely designed and developed for the brand. In 2021, CUPRA aims to prove that electrification and sportiness are a perfect match with the launch of the plug-in hybrid versions of the CUPRA Formentor and its first 100% electric model, the CUPRA Born. The CUPRA Tavascan will be the brand's second all-electric model and will reach the market in 2024.

CUPRA will participate this year in the off-road electric SUV's competition Extreme E. Moreover, it is also FC Barcelona's official automotive and mobility partner and World Padel Tour's premium sponsor. The CUPRA Tribe is



made up of a team of ambassadors who share the brand values , such as the German goalkeeper Marc ter Stegen, the football rising star Ansu Fati, Hollywood actor Daniel Brühl, Swedish driver Mattias Ekström and four of the best padel players in the world, among others.

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