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From the FINA President: Celebrating Aquatics Worldwide

FINA Communication Department



Dr. Julio C. Maglione - FINA President

Some weeks ago, I addressed a letter to our 208 National Member Federations, inviting them to celebrate “FINA World Aquatics Day”. This is a new initiative that will take place on the first weekend of July in as many countries as possible in the five continents. Already in the FINA plans for a couple of years now, we have officially launched this project in 2017, some days before the start of our main event of the year, the FINA World Championships, in Budapest (HUN).

The challenge of a suitable date for this annual initiative was a difficult issue to resolve. The first idea was naturally to make it coincide with July 19, the date of FINA’s foundation in 1908. However, that day is normally part of the FINA World Championships schedule every second year, and very close to the start of the Games in an Olympic year. Therefore, most representatives and athletes of our member federations wouldn’t be available to run and develop their national programmes associated with this “FINA World Aquatics Day”. In the end, taking into account the summer season in the northern hemisphere – we want many of the scheduled activities to take place in open-air environments – we have chosen

the first weekend of July every year, so that there is some flexibility in the organisation of the events.

The main goal of these initiatives is to gather non-elite athletes – children, young swimmers, occasional or regular competitors in aquatic disciplines, the Masters enthusiasts – with a common objective: to enjoy aquatic physical activity! In many countries, these kinds of events already exist; in this case, FINA suggests associating these existing competitions with this “World Aquatics Day”, so that they can benefit from more visibility and impact. For the nations without mass events on their calendar, the possibilities continue to be immense: whether in pools (indoor or outdoor), rivers, lakes or open seas, the objective is to attract as many competitors as possible.

Moreover, this annual event is a chance to promote the aquatic sports on a national and international level and increase the rates of physical activity on all five continents. Thanks to the “FINA World Aquatics Day”, the aquatic sports’ visibility in the media and the attractiveness of Aquatics among youth will be significantly raised.

The philosophy being targeted at mass participation, this project will be an excellent opportunity to enhance and build on the work that is being carried out by FINA’s programme “Swimming for All, Swimming for Life”. As you know, our International Federation is now active in the promotion of learn-to-swim programmes.

On a global scale, so that the alarming numbers of lives lost by drowning annually can be reduced. The organisation of “FINA World Aquatics Day” will be a privileged way to raise awareness of the importance of this basic life skill, the capacity to swim.

In parallel with the staging of events in the water, many other initiatives may be organised within the framework of the Day: production of dedicated merchandising, drawing contests on this theme in schools, issuing a postage stamp, invitation to a local aquatics star to support the event, social media engagement, creation of mobile apps...

I am sure that many good and positive ideas will come from our National Member Federations. This initiative is a great example of how we can promote, together and in many different ways, our fantastic disciplines. It will show to the world, once more, why Aquatics is among the leading sports on a global scale.
