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Australia International Dive Expo: Scuba Diving Will Become Mainstream

The Australia International Dive Expo (AIDE) predicts that scuba diving will not remain a niche market for too long as interest continues to grow rapidly year after year.

Organiser and director of AIDE, Ness Puvanes, says recreational scuba diving is a sport that is widely accessible to people of all walks of life, young and old and even the disabled; and it continues to open up a host of opportunities to those who are ready to take the plunge.

In recognising the continuous growing interest and potential of this sport, she observes that not only are there more tourism bodies promoting their pristine underwater destinations and more dive tour operators on the radar today than ever before, but there are also more dive schools and classes available.

Evidence of this consistent growth was again recorded during the fourth installment of AIDE this year. During their first ever collaboration with the Sydney International Boat Show (SIBS), Ness Puvanes notes that the number of water lovers expressing interest in learning and exploring new activities both above and below the water is undeniable.

Welcoming more than 63,000 visitors over the five-day event from 3-7 August, event exhibitors across four floors of the ICC and on the marina shared their latest and greatest products, services and experiences with the ever-expanding water-loving community.

AIDE recorded a 30% increase in individuals and families participating in this year's try-dives at the Expo's on-site pool. That along with the number of new dive holiday destinations and hi-tech underwater gadgets being introduced to the market present a small but significant sample of proof that interest in underwater related activities is increasing.

For dive education, the Expo's long line-up of speakers enjoyed wide attention from visitors hungry to learn about marine life, conservation practices, photography and filmography, art, spearfishing, cutting-edge underwater technology, disabled diving, dive destinations and a host of other underwater-related topics. Visitors have also reportedly asked for more shark and marine education to be included in next year's program.

"It's well known that Australians are explorers and adventurers, often enjoying discovering new, lesser-known or emerging destinations," says Ness. "This no doubt contributes significantly to the increasing interest in scuba diving and other underwater related activities including snorkeling, photography, marine conservation and others, as there is a lot more areas to explore underwater.

"Our key objective to grow this industry remains a priority. We observed from this year's show that enthusiasts and exhibitors from both the boating and diving sectors are interested in each other's prospects. Not only is this great business opportunity for our exhibitors in terms of reaching a wider market, but it's also a great opportunity for our visitors to learn more about both niches.

"As such, together with SIBS, we hope to further encourage more people to explore this sport and grow a deeper love for our waters, marine life and also see the diving world from a different perspective."

AIDE will once again be part of the SIBS show next year at the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour from **2 – 6 August 2018**. Bookings for **AIDE2018** can be made from **1 November 2017 to 31 May 2018**. Please direct all booking inquiries to info@australiadiveexpo.com