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Final Report

Relaunch after Covid-19 hiatus: The international trade fair for fishing, fly fishing, and aquaristic attracts 18,200 visitors – Responsibility for project management of upcoming events handed over to Felix Klarmann

## **Fans of finned creatures converge on the Aqua-Fisch**

**Friedrichshafen – From March 3 to 5, dazzling aquariums, colorful fishing lures, and everything to do with scaly and finned animals were on display at southern Germany’s largest fish fair. In two exhibition halls, 18,200 visitors (2019: 21,230) enthusiastically pursued their passion for fishing, fly fishing, and aquarium building. “The positive mood in the halls and in personal conversations with the exhibitors once again confirmed that trade fairs offer something that can never be found online, including the opportunity to obtain information in person, talk shop with experts, try new things out, and do some hands-on shopping. After being postponed three times due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Aqua-Fisch made an impressive comeback, thus setting the stage for an excellent coming edition,” say Messe Friedrichshafen Managing Director Klaus Wellmann and Project Manager Petra Rathgeber.**

The importance of having exhibitors and the public come together was tangible in both exhibition halls. “The association thrives on engaging with people, so we’ve really missed participating in the show in recent years. We repositioned ourselves this year, with both the federal association represented with key contacts and our partner ‘Fishing-King’ offering online fishing license courses. The response to this was great, and we were quite

satisfied with our presence at the fair. In addition to our aquarium containing the 'Fish of the Year,' our 'Fish-on-Tour' project really reeled in the crowds. This exhibit allowed adults and children to learn a lot about all aspects of the world of fish," said André Schiwon, Public Relations Officer at the Baden-Württemberg State Fisheries Association.

Those involved in the aquarium industry also enjoyed getting together again. "To detect new trends, it's important for our publishing house to remain in close contact with aquarium experts and fans. We were all the more pleased to have had such fruitful discussions at the fair and to have received a great deal of positive feedback. The fair guests in Friedrichshafen always seem to be quite diverse, with many quite focused in their interests while others are looking for guidance and advice on how to get started. The visitors were also making many purchases, something we were also happy about. We are glad that the Aqua-Fisch is back in place as a platform that more than fulfilled our expectations," said Dähne Verlag Sales Manager Thomas von der Heyde, summing up his experience at the fair.

Thomas Eller, Chief Marketing Officer at Dennerle GmbH, also had positive things to say about the fair. "We were pleasantly surprised by the high level of interest we experienced at the show. The visitors were very knowledgeable as well as eager to make purchases at our booth. Due to rising energy prices, sales of small aquariums, particularly 'nano aquariums,' are now outpacing those of their large counterparts. We clearly see the Betta fish, which feels quite at home in a nano tank, as a fish experiencing a major upward trend in popularity in 2023. For us, the Aqua-Fisch was a successful event that once again demonstrated that contact with the end consumer was something that was sorely missed at trade shows held during the pandemic."

The good mood of the crowds was also reflected in sales: "It was really nice to finally have the Aqua-Fisch taking place again. We had many great conversations with customers, had the chance to meet up with our business

partners, and were quite satisfied with the business we contracted in general. Things almost felt like they did before the coronavirus. We will definitely be seeing each other again next year,” said Benedikt Götzfried, Managing Director of Topwater-Productions.

The date of the Aqua-Fisch now has a fixed place in the calendar of the ‘RISE Fly Fishing Film Festival’: “It was our first Aqua-Fisch, and we realized right away that this was exactly the right platform for our film festival. In the border triangle region of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, we were able to reach completely new customers and meet with a different target group every day. We would like to expand our presence here in the south and will be coming again,” said Cara Canzler, who is responsible for fair organization and guide planning at FLYRUS Fliegenfischen Rogowski & Stäblein GbR.

The next Aqua-Fisch will take place from March 8 to 10, 2024. In the future, Project Manager Petra Rathgeber will be concentrating on her other trade fair events, so she is handing over project responsibility for Aqua-Fisch to her Messe Friedrichshafen colleague Felix Klarmann. “As Project Manager of the Interboot fair, I am very much looking forward to looking after and further developing the Aqua-Fisch with my team. There are certainly some synergies that we can make use of here, as both events revolve around leisure activities spent in nature as well as on the water, in the water, and at the water’s edge,” Felix Klarmann explains. Further information and an overview of the lecture program are available at [www.aqua-fisch.de](http://www.aqua-fisch.de) and [www.facebook.com/aquafischfriedrichshafen](https://www.facebook.com/aquafischfriedrichshafen) and #aquafisch.