



OFFICIAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

12-13 NOVEMBER 2026 | ATHENS, GREECE

Galateia Saranti Amphitheatre

Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports

37 Andrea Papandreou Street

Marousi 151 80, Athens, Greece

DAY 1 | Thursday, 12 November 2026

Greece on the Global Freediving Stage

09:30-10:00 **Registration / Welcome**

10:15-10:45 | OFFICIAL OPENING

10:15-10:45	Giannis Vrotsis Greek Minister of Sports	The State's strategy for the development of freediving and Greece as an international destination.
10:15-10:45	Dimitris Koumoulos President, Diving Greece	Diving Greece: The vision and strategy for the development of freediving in Greece.
10:15-10:45	Anna Arzhanova President, CMAS	The future of freediving and the role of CMAS in its international development – safety first.

10:45-11:30 | SESSION 1 — FREEDIVING AS A GLOBAL SPORT

10:45-11:30	Round Table	Round Table – Freediving as a global sport Radosław Gaca; Anna Arzhanova; Alexey Molchanov; Mirela Kardsevic; Guillaume Bourdila; Kateryna Sadurska; Kirk Krak; Prof. M. Baranowski
11:30-12:00	Coffee Break	

12:00-13:30 | SESSION 2 — FREEDIVING MEDICINE

Approx. 15 min.	Prof. M. Baranowski Ph.D, DSc Full Professor of Physiology · Medical University of Białystok · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Freediving physiology: what happens to the human body at extreme depths
Approx. 15 min.	Juani Valdivia MD FAANS, MBA, FMHC · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Decompression illness – in water recompression for severe DCI personal experience
Approx. 15 min.	Prof. Costantino Balestra Ph.D. Full Professor of Physiology · Haute Ecole Bruxelles-Brabant · Université Libre de Bruxelles	Blackout, hypoxia, nitrogen narcosis and loss of consciousness: prevention and management
Approx. 15 min.	Prof. S. Sumen Ph.D, MD Associate Professor · Underwater and Hyperbaric Medicine, University of Health Sciences Türkiye · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Pulmonary complications and immersion-related injuries

Approx. 15 min.	Prof. D. Cialoni Ph.D Associate Professor · San Raffaele Rome University · Vice President, Apnea Academy Research · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Medical fitness to dive: screening, prevention and return to sport
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13:30-14:30 Lunch Break

14:30-16:00 | SESSION 3 — SAFETY · RESCUE · EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Approx. 15 min.	Spyros Papanikolaou - EKAB Director, Hellenic National Emergency Medical Service (EKAB)	Emergency management in freediving and the role of EKAB
Approx. 15 min.	Olga Balaoura	Organization of medical coverage for major international sporting events
Approx. 15 min.	Dr. Marios Polyzois	Decompression illness: from the incident to hyperbaric treatment
Approx. 15 min.	R. Butera Head, CMAS Freediving Safety Team and Safety Academy · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	International safety standards in competitive freediving
Approx. 15 min.	R. Gaca, Ph.D. Director, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission · CMAS ITO Instructor Trainer · President, Polish Freediving Sport Federation	Rescue procedures, medical team and emergency response

16:00-16:30 Coffee Break

16:30-17:30 | SESSION 4 — GREECE AND MAJOR INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Approx. 15 min.	Dimitrios Galinas President, Greek Federation	Greece's experience in hosting World Championships
Approx. 15 min.	International CMAS Representative	Hosting major international freediving events
Approx. 15 min.	Karellos Christos Athlete · World Championship medalist · National record holder · Freediving instructor and coach	Why Greece? The athlete's perspective
Approx. 15 min.	Open Discussion	Can Greece become the global centre of freediving?

17:30-17:45 Coffee Break

17:45-18:45 | SESSION 5 — TRAINING · PERFORMANCE · HUMAN LIMITS

Approx. 15 min.	Ivan Drvis Ph.D Freediving researcher, coach and educator · Croatian Olympic Committee, High-Performance Sports Training Research and Development	Modern freediving training methodologies
Approx. 15 min.	Guillaume Bourdila Multiple-time record holder and World Champion	Training for depth and performance
Approx. 15 min.	Prof. Costantino Balestra Ph.D. Full Professor of Physiology · Haute Ecole Bruxelles-Brabant · Université Libre de Bruxelles	Adaptation to extreme depth and hypoxia
Approx. 15 min.	International Sports Psychology Expert	Mental performance, stress management and overcoming limits

DAY 2 | Friday, 13 November 2026

From Performance and Science to the Future

09:00-10:30 | SESSION 6 — NEW SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

9:00-10:30	Dr. Papoutsidakis Vaggelis Professor of Exercise in Clinical Populations / Lifestyle Medicine · University of Thessaly	Cardiovascular Changes in Freediving: From Physiology to Clinical Practice
9:00-10:30	R. Butera Head, CMAS Freediving Safety Team and Safety Academy · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Technology, monitoring and safety systems in modern freediving
9:00-10:30	Prof. G. Sakkas Director, Hyperbaric Medicine Department, UTH-CSI, Barcelona · Sports and Hyperbaric Medicine specialist · DAN Europe medical consultant	Deep Sleep, Deeper Dives: The Hidden Power of Sleep in Freediving
9:00-10:30	Prof. D. Cialoni Ph.D Associate Professor · San Raffaele Rome University · Vice President, Apnea Academy Research · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission	Monitoring the freediver before, during and after the dive
9:00-10:30		The preliminary results of the CMAS Scientific and Medical Commission internet survey
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break	

11:00-13:00 | SESSION 7 — EDUCATION · TRAINING · THE NEXT GENERATION

11:00-13:00	Kirk Krak Freediving coach and educator · President and founder, Performance Freediving International	The future of freediving education
11:00-13:00	Giankos Manolis Athlete · World Championship medalist · National record holder · Freediving instructor and coach	Training, certification and a culture of safety
11:00-13:00	Mirela Kardsevic Multiple-time record holder and World Champion	Inspiring the next generation of freedivers
11:00-13:00	Georgios Karavias	Insurance companies and freediving
11:00-13:00	Fayrouz El Mehdawi Freediving athlete · National record holder · Freediving coach	Static Apnea Training as a way of improving and enhancing athlete's mental health
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break	

14:00-15:30 | SESSION 8 — FUTURE OF FREEDIVING · CLOSING SESSION

14:00- 15:30	Round Table - International & Greek Experts	Greece Freediving Hub 2030 – How Greece can become a global centre of freediving
14:00- 15:30	Dimitris Koumoulos - Diving Greece	Greece in the Future of Global Freediving – Conference conclusions, proposals and Final Declaration

SPEAKERS & AFFILIATIONS

Speaker credentials supplied in the conference working schedule.

Giannis Vrotsis

Greek Minister of Sports

Dimitris Koumoulos

President, Diving Greece

Anna Arzhanova

President, CMAS

Prof. M. Baranowski Ph.D, DSc

Full Professor of Physiology · Medical University of Białystok · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission

Juani Valdivia MD

FAANS, MBA, FMHC · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission

Prof. Costantino Balestra Ph.D.

Full Professor of Physiology · Haute Ecole Bruxelles-Brabant · Université Libre de Bruxelles

Prof. S. Sumen Ph.D, MD

Associate Professor · Underwater and Hyperbaric Medicine, University of Health Sciences Türkiye · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission

Prof. D. Cialoni Ph.D

Associate Professor · San Raffaele Rome University · Vice President, Apnea Academy Research · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission

R. Butera

Head, CMAS Freediving Safety Team and Safety Academy · Member, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission

R. Gaca, Ph.D.

Director, CMAS Freediving Medical and Scientific Commission · CMAS ITO Instructor Trainer · President, Polish Freediving Sport Federation

Spyros Papanikolaou - EKAB

Director, Hellenic National Emergency Medical Service (EKAB)

Dimitrios Galinas

President, Greek Federation

Karelos Christos

Athlete · World Championship medalist · National record holder · Freediving instructor and coach

Ivan Drvis Ph.D

Freediving researcher, coach and educator · Croatian Olympic Committee, High-Performance Sports Training Research and Development

Guillaume Bourdila

Multiple-time record holder and World Champion

Dr. Papoutsidakis Vaggelis

Professor of Exercise in Clinical Populations / Lifestyle Medicine · University of Thessaly

Prof. G. Sakkas

Director, Hyperbaric Medicine Department, UTH-CSI, Barcelona · Sports and Hyperbaric Medicine specialist · DAN Europe medical consultant

Kirk Krak

Freediving coach and educator · President and founder, Performance Freediving International

Giankos Manolis

Athlete · World Championship medalist · National record holder · Freediving instructor and coach

Mirela Kardsevic

Multiple-time record holder and World Champion

Fayrouz El Mehdawi

Freediving athlete · National record holder · Freediving coach

Programme based on the supplied working schedule. Speaker participation and final details are subject to organiser confirmation.