

Provisional Agenda

International Meeting on Underwater Cultural Heritage and Site Protection

**In support of the implementation of the 2001 Convention on the
Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage**

UNESCO Headquarters, 22 – 23 September 2016, Room II, Fontenoy building



Context

An International Meeting on Underwater Cultural Heritage Sites Protection will be held on 22 and 23 September 2016 at UNESCO Headquarters (Room II, Fontenoy building) in support of the implementation of the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

It will focus on the issue of quantification and identification of human threats to underwater cultural heritage, especially by pillaging and commercial exploitation, and on preventive measures to be taken. International experts will present their experiences, followed by a round table which will allow the exchange of views regarding the effectiveness of the means used.

The meeting will bring together representatives of the States Parties to the UNESCO 2001 Convention and other States, and experts representing different national authorities (Culture and Foreign Ministries, Navy, Customs, Coastguards, etc.) and international organizations (UNESCO, INTERPOL, etc.).

Underwater cultural heritage has become increasingly accessible with the development of diving techniques, which allow not only scientists and archaeologists, but also treasure hunters and wreck explorers to reach greater depths. The looting of underwater archaeological sites and the destruction of their context has increased rapidly and threatens to deprive humanity of this heritage. The pillaging and dispersion of archaeological heritage is no longer restricted to land-based sites, with treasure-hunting now greatly increasing in underwater sites. Nevertheless, while many States have strengthened the preservation of their heritage on land, most underwater cultural heritage remains unprotected. Treasure-hunting is not the only issue. Sites have also been damaged by trawling, mineral extraction and the laying of pipelines.

The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage is aimed at providing States Parties with an international legal mechanism to protect their submerged heritage. However, ratification must be accompanied by the effective national implementation of the Convention and mobilization of the adequate means to support it.

The main objective of the international meeting is to continue to reinforce the implementation of the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, especially with regard to practical questions such as site preservation and monitoring, as well as existing measures to prevent illicit trafficking of underwater cultural heritage.

Provisional Agenda

22 September 2016 – Room II Meeting

10 am Welcome remarks by Francesco Bandarin, *Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO*

Welcome remarks by H. E. Mr Ahmad Jalali, *Permanent Delegate of the Islamic Republic of Iran at UNESCO, Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of States Parties to the 2001 Convention*

10:30 am - Current state of threats to underwater cultural heritage

Session Chair: Permanent Delegation of Cuba (tbc); 10 min per intervention

- The regulations of the 2001 Convention on site protection, *Ms Ulrike Guerin, UNESCO*
- An overview of the current state of Europe's pillaged sites, *Mr Michel L'Hour, Department of underwater archaeological research (DRASSM), France*
- The role of archaeology in major cases of pillaging concerning underwater cultural heritage - two case studies, *Mr James Delgado, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA*
- Statistics on treasure-hunting - the example of the Bahamas, *Mr Michael Pateman, Underwater Archaeologist, The Bahamas*
- The seizure of Underwater Cultural Heritage materials, *M. Jean-Luc Blachon, Direction des Affaires Criminelles, Ministère de la Justice, France*

Questions & Answers

11:40 am - Practical issues of sites monitoring

Session Chair: Ms Helena Barba Meinecke, President STAB; 10 min per intervention

- The challenges we face in regards to the protection of sites from treasure-hunting, *Mr Alexandre Monteiro, Universidade Nova de Lisboa , Portugal*
- Modern surveillance techniques, *Manuel Angel Sanchez Corbi, Chief of the Central Operative Unit, Civil Guard (Unidad Central Operativa, Guardia Civil), Spain*
- The challenges and details of large quantity coin finds, *Mr Peter Van Alfen, American Numismatic Society, USA*
- Opening site access while preserving site security, *Sebastiano Tusa, Sopra-Intendenza Sicily, Italy*

Questions & Answers

1 pm - Lunch break

3 pm - Facing difficult contexts in the protection of underwater cultural heritage

Session Chair: Augustus Ajibola, Scientific and Technical Advisory Body (STAB), Nigeria; 10 min per intervention

- The expertise of the Italian Carabinieri in the protection of underwater cultural heritage, *Gianpietro Romano, Carabinieri, Italy*
- Facing difficult contexts in the protection of underwater cultural heritage, *Mr Ricardo Duarte, E. Mondlane University, Mozambique*
- Consequences of a major pillage case for national authorities – case study of the *Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes* pillage, *Ms Elisa de Cabo, Deputy Director for Heritage, Spain*
- The chances provided by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the 2001 Convention, *Ms Helena Barba Meinecke, President STAB, Mexico*
- The responsibilities and potentials of the marine armed forces in the protection of underwater cultural heritage, *Mr Denis Bigot, Rear Admiral, NATO*
- The role of Interpol and international implications of trafficking of underwater cultural heritage artefacts, *Mr Corrado Catesi, Interpol*
- Preventive Archaeology: research as answer to the looting of underwater cultural heritage, *Mr Dominique Garcia, President Inrap, France*

Questions & Discussion

23 September 2016 Room IX – Working group of experts

10 am Practical protection of sites (installations, surveillance, inventory); *Moderator: Mr Michel L'Hour, France*

11 am Law enforcement; *Moderator: Mr Manuel Angel Sanchez Corbi, Spain*

12 am Implementation of the 2001 Convention in international waters; *Moderator: Ms Ulrike Guerin, UNESCO*

1 pm Lunch break

3 pm Possibilities of seizing underwater cultural heritage artefacts coming from pillage and commercial exploitation; *Moderator: Mr Marnix Pieters, Belgium*

4 pm Approach to traded artefacts exhibited in museums; *Moderator: Mr Caesar Biti, Kenya*

6 pm Adoption of Recommendation and Closure