

Sunken Memories

The protection of underwater cultural heritage



20 years after the signing of UNESCO
Convention (Paris, 2.11.2001)

9 Thursday
December 2021



International Conference on occasion of the **20th Anniversary of the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage**

Rome - 9th December 2021

On 2 November 2021, the international community celebrates the **20th anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage**, the important legal instrument that has brought the importance of humanity's submerged legacy to international attention, taking a considerable step further the principles sketched out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Italy played a significant role in the birth of this Convention, not only by its active role in its drafting, but also by its contribution to the development of modern underwater archaeology in the second half of the twentieth century. The 20th anniversary of the Convention provides thus an opportunity to make an initial assessment of the effectiveness of its application, also looking at the example of Italy and taking into consideration the limits and challenges States face at the moment of the launch of the *UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)*. The Conference will thus in particular debate the role of underwater cultural heritage for the sustainable development of the ocean and the important place culture and heritage should play in the Decade.

The year 2021 also marks the start of the next phase in the life of the 2001 Convention thanks to the start of the first multi-lateral cooperation process for the protection of an underwater cultural heritage area in international waters, the Skerki Bank in the Strait of Sicily, through the initiative of Italy. This bank is emblematic for its rich heritage, which has preserved a place of memory of the Mediterranean history for centuries, from Roman times to the present day.

The Conference will focus on the 2001 Convention and will allow participants to debate challenges and perspectives for the future of safeguarding and presenting submerged heritage. Speakers will be internationally recognized scientific experts from organizations and institutions involved in significant initiatives with regards to underwater cultural heritage. The Conference is promoted and coordinated as part of the activities of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Culture, Service II - UNESCO Office, and is addressed both to the technical staff of the Bodies involved, as well as to a wider audience of experts and stakeholders (Universities, Museums, Local Administrations, Maritime Authorities). It is officially supported by UNESCO.

Applicable Time-Zone: Rome, Italy (MESZ)

Provisional Programme

Institutional Greetings

09:30 AM– 10:30

Dario Franceschini, Minister of Culture of the Italian Republic

Ernesto Ottone Ramirez, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO

Peter Thomson, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Oceans

Enzo Angeloni, Director General DGSP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Carlo Zaghi, Director General for the Sea and the Coasts, Ministry of Ecological Transition

CV Francesco Iavazzo, Navy General Staff, Chief 7 ° Off. Inter-ministerial relations

Massimo Riccardo, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Italy to UNESCO – MAECI

Introduction

10:30 – 10:45

Presentazione del documentario

Il patrimonio subacqueo. Un'eredità per il mondo

MiC - Rai Cultura

Morning Programme

10:45 AM – 1 PM

Moderator – Donatella Bianchi, RAI journalist, host of Linea Blu, President of the Cinque Terre National Park

Speakers (10 min per intervention)

1. **Introduction to the Conference**, *Mariassunta Peci, Director of Service II - UNESCO Office of the Ministry of Culture*
2. **20 years of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage**, *Lazare Eloundou Assomo, UNESCO, Secretary of the 2001 Convention*
3. **The future of underwater archaeological research in Italy**, *Barbara Davidde, Chairperson of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body of the 2001 Convention, National Superintendent for Underwater Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Italy*
4. **The Superintendence of the Sea and the submerged archaeological parks of Sicily**, *Valeria Li Vigni, Superintendent of the Sea, Sicily, Italy*
5. **Submerged cultural heritage and current challenges for its protection**, *Arnaud Schaumasse, Director of DRASSM, Ministry of Culture, France*
6. **Current and future projects in the Netherlands**, *Martijn Manders, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, Head, Maritime Programme*
7. **Research, protection, and presentation of underwater cultural heritage in the eastern Adriatic**, *Mladen Pesic, Director, International Center for Underwater Archaeology, Zadar, Croatia*
8. **Greece and the access to submerged heritage**, *Katarina Dellaporta, Ministry of Culture, Greece*
9. **The submerged river heritage of the Ljubljana River: providing access for the public**, *Andrej Gaspari, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*
10. **Sacred Aech - Fish traps and community involvement**, *Andrew Viduka, Ministry of Culture of Australia, Bill Jefferey, University of Guam*
11. **Current and future projects of Chinese underwater archaeology**, *Damin Wang, SACH, China*

Q & A

Afternoon Programme

2 PM – 4.30 PM

Moderator – Tullio Scovazzi, University of Milano Bicocca

Speakers

12. **Sea Routes of Africa and the Island of Goree**, *Moussa Wele, Senegal*
13. **Building a regional underwater heritage centre in Mozambique Island**, *Celio Tiane, Director of Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Mozambique*
14. **Underwater Archaeology in Egypt**, *Emad Khalil, UNESCO Chair, University of Alexandria, Egypt*
15. **Underwater Archaeology and its Potentials for Saudi-Arabia**, *Ali Al-Ghabban Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, Saudi-Arabia*
16. **The Tren Maya research and underwater cultural heritage route projects in Mexico**, *Maria Helena Barba Meinecke, National Institute of Anthropology and History, Director of The Yucatan Peninsula underwater heritage programme, Mexico*
17. **The promises of underwater cultural heritage protection for the Dominican Republic**, *Pedro Morales, Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, Dominican Republic*
18. **The UNESCO international cooperation process: the Skerki Banks**, *Ouafa ben Slimane, INP-Tunisia, and Alessandro Asta, MiC-Italy*
19. **The UN Ocean Decade and Underwater Cultural Heritage**, *Athena Trakadas, ODHN*

Q & A

The Conference is organised by the General Secretariat of Ministry of Culture – II Service, UNESCO Office in cooperation with the UNESCO Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

The event is organised online.

Simultaneous translation is provided in Italian, English and French.

The Conference will be broadcast on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter through the Ministry of Culture's channel.

CLAN Communication SRL provides technical organization and event communication support to II Service – UNESCO Office.

For info and contacts: 20anni_convenzione2001@clan-group.com

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