



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



The Protection of the  
Underwater Cultural Heritage

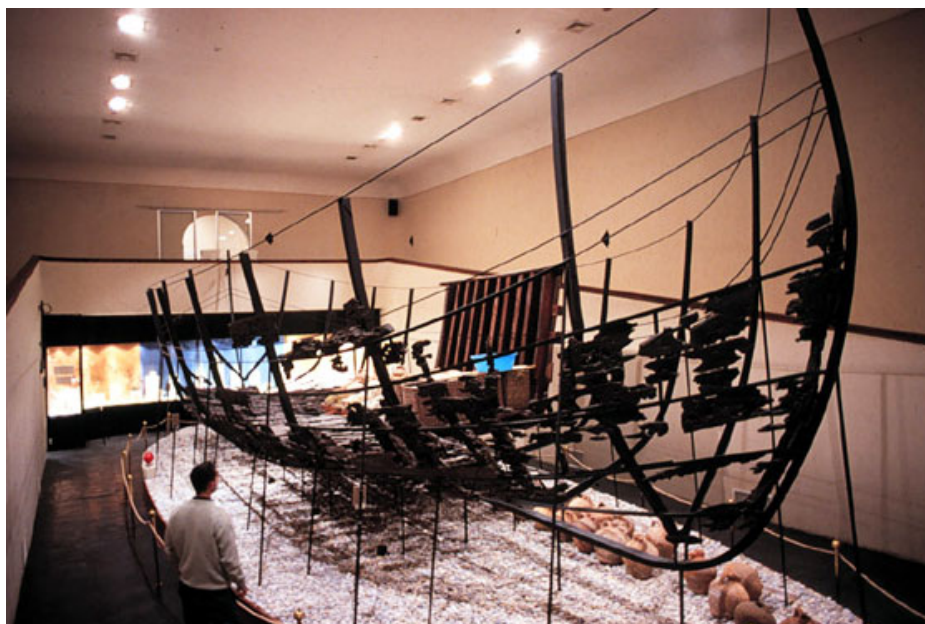
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## TURKEY

### National Report on Underwater Cultural Heritage

*Report made at the UNESCO Regional Meeting in Istanbul*

*25 -27 October, 2010*



*Underwater Archaeology Museum in Bodrum at the west coast of Turkey*

The Anatolian peninsula is one of the most important centers of civilization in history, undoubtedly due to its location in temperate Mediterranean Sea basin at the interface of Europe and the Near East. In early history, sea trade developed among the island settlements near the Anatolian coast as goods began to be traded between the islands and other settlements on the mainland. Some of this heavy sea traffic inevitably fell victim to the forces of nature and man, becoming today's underwater cultural heritage.

Since 2005, a Turkish team has been working to create an inventory and scientific archive of Turkey's underwater cultural heritage. This project, the Shipwreck Inventory of Turkey (SIT), was initiated with the support of the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey, and is currently sponsored by Turkish Underwater Archaeology Foundation (TINA), Dokuz Eylul University, Institute of Marine Sciences and Technology, and The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The SIT project is designed to research the underwater regions of Turkey's coastline from all angles of cultural heritage, covering the full range of historical periods. Once data has been gathered to provide detailed information about ancient seafarers and their ships, as well as about ancient harbours and harbour technologies, it will be possible to better understand the historical, economical, and political structure of the region as a whole. It is hoped that this project will fill in gaps in the history of ship evolution and provide a comprehensive overview for the history of the region, while identifying and documenting new shipwrecks, harbours, and other remains along the Anatolian shoreline for future research.

To date, 20 underwater surveys have been conducted by the SIT project team, which located several new shipwrecks along the Turkish Aegean coastline and gathered information regarding trade routes, shelter bays, and moorings for ancient ships. A national Underwater Cultural Heritage GIS system, map, and scientific database have been created in order to record this information.



*Antalya Underwater Survey Project © Hakan Öniz*

At the end of this research, management models for underwater cultural heritage along the Turkish shores will be an inseparable part of the SIT project. Within the scope of this project, some areas will be defined as pilot areas and management models will be reviewed for implementation on local, regional, national, and international levels. When the results of this project have been obtained, it will be possible to establish sustainable economical models for the preservation of underwater heritage in Turkey.

The SIT project team hopes that the Shipwreck Inventory of Turkey will become an important resource for the history of Turkey. During the course of this work, the SIT team is open to any kind or level of international cooperation.

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