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The Protection of the
Underwater Cultural Heritage

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BULGARIA

National Report on underwater cultural heritage

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*Bulgaria is a State Party of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection
of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*

The presentation will focus on the protection, preservation and investigation of the underwater cultural heritage in Bulgaria and on the legislative framework developed in accordance with the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage.

The Centre for Underwater Archaeology is the competent authority in Bulgaria responsible for the protection and preservation of the Bulgarian underwater cultural heritage. It is a state cultural institute – a legal entity with a subsidiary budget to the general budget of the Ministry of Culture. The activities of the Centre for Underwater Archaeology are aimed at: investigation, recording and protection of the underwater cultural heritage of Bulgaria (the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, rivers and lakes) by applying multidisciplinary scientific research methods; scientific processing and interpretation of the data and finds acquired as a result of underwater archaeological research; scientific, informational and expert activities and consultancy in the field of underwater archaeological research; organization of national and international events in the field of underwater archaeology; organization of exhibitions, promotion of cultural heritage and publishing activities in Bulgaria and abroad; training in the field of underwater archaeology.





Attention will be paid to the underwater archaeological research of the Centre: diving surveys, geophysical prospecting, archaeological excavations (the first international underwater archaeological excavation of a sunken ship in the Black Sea in 2000-2003 in the southern bay of Kiten in collaboration with the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, Texas, USA; the most successful underwater excavations of inundated prehistoric settlements of Late Chalcolithic /end of the Vth. mill.B.C./ and Early Bronze Age /IIIrd mill.B.C./ discovered all along the Bulgarian coast (Durankulak, Shabla, more than 13 settlements in the Lakes of Varna, Atiya, Sozopol, the Ropotamo River outflow, Kiten). The problems they pose are related to the palaeoclimate changes of the Bulgarian Black Sea coast as well as to sea level changes and coastal migrations in time and require the application of a multidisciplinary approach in their study and the involvement of specialists from many different fields: geophysics, geology, geomorphology, micro-and macro-paleontology, dendrochronology, C14 dating, etc. Some of the main results will be presented, as well as the Centre's current projects and future perspectives.

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