



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



The Protection of the
Underwater Cultural Heritage

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LIBYA

National Report on underwater cultural heritage

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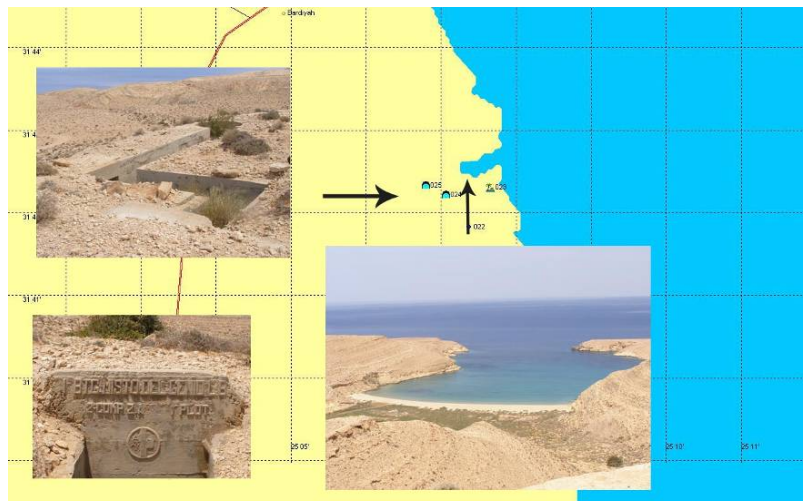
*Libya is a State Party of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection
of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*

The Libyan coast has a rich underwater cultural heritage. It consists of numerous archeological and historical sites extending from pre-historic times to the Second World War. This cultural heritage is hugely important in developing our understanding of Mediterranean history. But this heritage has been and still is threatened.

Libya is one of the countries that considers its heritage to be of great importance, and wants to protect it whether it is on earth or under water.

In addition to the Law 40 of 1968 - passed to increase the attention given to the archeological sites on earth -, Libya voted the new Law 3 of 1995 to extend this protection to underwater sites (in internal waters and in territorial sea).

Article 1 defines as underwater heritage all remaining traces created by humans. In addition, it should be related to the heritage of mankind, and over a hundred years old. The article also defines cultural heritage as the remnants of the human species, animals and plants, the remains of cities, hills, archaeological sites, obelisks, castles, fortresses, walls, mosques, religious buildings, schools, cemeteries and caves, and historical evidence and monuments; whether in the ground, on the surface or beneath the territorial waters. The Article corresponds to the Article 1 of the Act Issued in Paris in the second on November 2001", the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage". According to the Article 20 paragraph 12 of the Law 3 protecting the remains of buildings and monuments of historical interest, cultural heritage is protected even if it is not a hundred years old, such as remains from the Second World War (Figure1). Article 6 bans the development of human activities without first conducting an archaeological survey.



Gulf Wadi Kowif Fortification or Ditches from the Second World War (Figure1).

The survey informs on the site in order that we can record and protect the site from any potential disturbance, such as the establishment of petrol platforms and desalination sea water stations, pipelines, cables or ports.

However, the law alone is not enough and risks remaining a merely ink on paper without the sincere desire and commitment of people who want to protect cultural heritage (Fig. 2).



(Wadi Belgamel) returned ram which remained outside Libya for 44 years (Fig 2).

Mr. Charles kennet Oliver (the diver who brought back the ram)

Alongside man-made threats there are threats from natural and climatic impact, such as tectonic movements, earthquakes (Fig. 3), the erosion of ancient cities, the consequences of storms hitting the coast as well as the movement of tides and changes in sea-level rise (Fig. 4), leading to the removal of sand covering coastal archaeological sites (Fig. 5). This is in addition to the human activities that we have mentioned above.

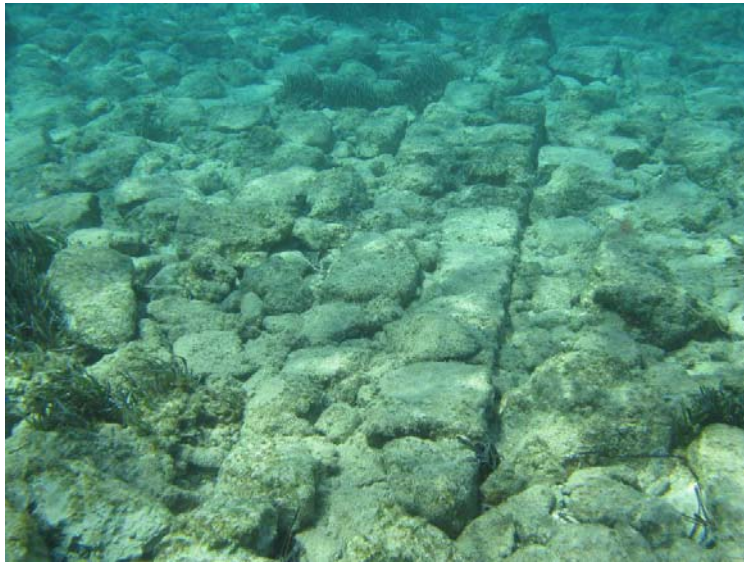
The Department of Archaeology by GICDF (Gaddafi International Charity And development Foundation) strongly supports the retrieval of archaeological objects and the protection of tangible and intangible Libyan heritage

We must all, without exception, make efforts to direct all techniques and modern scientific programs towards the protection of cultural heritage and human and natural threats, which have increased over time.

The Department of Archaeology of Libya is currently supporting the establishment of a Department of Maritime Archaeology and a underwater heritage museum.

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The wall of Chreronytio and the harbor are submerged (Fig. 3)



Changes in sea-level rise in Ancient Sprata port (Fig. 4)



Hunter bath of Leptice Magna, covered by sand (Fig.5)