UNESCO
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

The Protection of the
Underwater Cultural Heritage

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE

FOURTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY BODY

**Fourth Meeting
30 May 2013, Paris, UNESCO HQ**

Report, Recommendations and Resolutions

The fourth meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body (hereinafter '**the Advisory Body**') for the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (hereinafter '**the Convention'**) took place at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, on **30 May 2013**. It was attended by 11 of its 12 members, namely Ms Dolores Elkin (Argentina), Mr Jasen Mesic (Croatia), Mr Ovidio Juan Ortega Pereyra (Cuba), Mr Michel L'Hour (France), Ms Annalisa Zarattini (Italy), Seyed Hossein Sadat Meidani (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr Vladas Zulkus (Lithuania), Ms Maria Elena Barba Meinecke (Mexico), Mr Augustus Babajide Ajibola (Nigeria), Mr Constantin Chera (Romania) and Ms Ouafa Ben Slimane (Tunisia). One member, Mr Hugo Eliecer Bonilla Mendoza (Panama), was absent. Also present were Observer State delegations and representatives from ten accredited non-governmental organizations, namely the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology (ACUA), the Association for the Development of Maritime Archaeological Research (ADRAMAR), the Australian Institute for the Maritime Archaeology (AIMA), ARKAEOS, the Centre for International Heritage Activities (CIE), the German Society for the Promotion of Underwater archaeology (DEGUWA), the Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA), the Joint National Archaeology Policy Committee (JNAPC), the Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS), the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Committee on Underwater Heritage (ICUCH), as were observers from other non-governmental organizations. UNESCO representatives served as the Secretariat of the meeting. Simultaneous interpretation was provided in English, French and Spanish. As no Rules of Procedure had been adopted for the Advisory Body, the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of States Parties were applied *mutatis mutandis*.

I.   Opening, Election of the Bureau and Adoption of the Agenda

(Item 1 of the Agenda, *Document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/1*)

The session was opened on 30 May 2013 at 10 am with a speech by the Representative of the Secretariat. He welcomed the participants and reflected on the subjects that were to be discussed during the session, including a presentation on underwater sites and their accessibility to the general public, a study on underwater cultural heritage and its impact on sustainable development, the fostering of site access, site awareness and archaeological guardianship, the cooperation between non-governmental organizations and the Advisory Body and education with the aim of fostering youth involvement. He concluded by expressing the hope that the discussions would result in better ways to improve the access to and the enjoyment and preservation of underwater cultural heritage.

The meeting of the Advisory Body proceeded to elect its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, in accordance with Article 3(b) of the Statutes of the Advisory Body. The Secretariat recalled the prior Bureau of the Advisory Body. On the proposal of Mr. Jasen Mesic, former Minister of Culture of Croatia, the Advisory Body elected Ms. Annalisa Zarattini from Italy as its new chairperson by **Resolution 1 / STAB 4** and Mr. Seyed Hossein Sadat Meidani from the Islamic Republic of Iran as its new vice-chairperson. It also adopted the agenda.

II.   Presenting and Interpreting Underwater Sites for the General Public

(Item 2 of the Agenda, *Document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/2*)

The newly elected chairperson, Ms. Annalisa Zarattini, took the floor and thanked the Advisory Body for its confidence and trust, reminding it of its tasks. She asked the Secretariat to present a short report of the decisions of the Meeting of States Parties concerning the Advisory Body, the actions of the Secretariat in the implementation of the decisions made by the third Meeting of States Parties, and the accreditation of the non-governmental organizations.

Following this report, Ms. Zarattini opened discussions on Item 2 of the Agenda relating to presenting and interpreting underwater sites for the general public. To be discussed were the following **public access** related issues:

- a study in Underwater Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development;
- the fostering of archaeological site guardianship to increase site access as well as protection; and
- the collection of best practice examples from States Parties concerning access and identifying them to encourage following this example.

Before this meeting, an Exchange Day on Underwater Cultural Heritage took place on 27 May 2013 at UNESCO Headquarters. One of the recurring themes of that day was the issue of presenting underwater heritage to the general public, in order to enhance protection of submerged sites. Many representatives of non-governmental organizations and other institutes gave inspiring examples of good practices in their interventions that day.

The Advisory Body, bearing in mind the interventions of the Exchange Day, began the discussion with a debate on experiences with public access in various countries, emphasizing the need for public awareness and private-public partnerships. Jasen Mesic related that the Croatian Government has cooperated with the inhabitants of islands off the coast of Croatia for the protection of and access to hundreds of submerged archaeological sites. In addition to providing a legal framework, the Croatian authorities convinced the island inhabitants that the conservation of that heritage can contribute to sustainable development for generations to come. Because the local communities were involved in the decision-making process and their livelihood depended on it, they were committed to the continuing preservation of the submerged archaeological sites. Diving centres also played a major role in this scheme: some were given the privilege of diving in protected areas, in return for fees and reports on the situation of the sites or of new discoveries. This has led to the discovery of a dozen new sites. The issue of public involvement and providing access on the one hand and the sustainable development argument on the other ultimately resulted in 80 submerged sites that were protected and preserved *in situ*, in cooperation with the island inhabitants and 50 local diving centres.

Some members of the Advisory Body, in particular Michel L'Hour, drew attention to possible practical obstacles that might prevent or hinder public access to the sites: not everyone has the capacity to dive to see a wreck, and maritime conditions or visibility can be difficult. Many sites are covered in sediment and are only partially exposed. One proposed solution to these problems was to open sites to access during archaeological excavation, or to rebuild a replica of the site in a more accessible location; practices that have been tried, and have succeeded, in France and elsewhere.

After a lengthy discussion, the Advisory Body concluded that, in regard to the debate on how to best present and interpret underwater cultural heritage sites for the general public, three factors were of utmost importance:

1) *Legislation*. Projects and initiatives towards the conservation and presentation of underwater cultural heritage can only be viable if they are supported by an adequate legal framework. The 2001 Convention provides guidelines in this respect, but it is up to every State Party to promote and implement them in an effective manner.

2) *An educated public*. If a wider audience becomes aware of underwater cultural heritage, and the many dangers facing it, a sense of 'peer pressure' and shared responsibility and ownership will impede the pillaging of submerged sites. In order to heighten the sense of public ownership of underwater heritage, transparency, access

and inclusivity must be the main guiding principles when dealing with local communities and the general public, at all times.

3) *Access*. This is a prerequisite for point 2. If a site is easily accessible – either by direct or remote access – it will not only raise awareness among the general public of the site, but underwater cultural heritage in general. Public access is the only way to promote underwater cultural heritage and to make sure it is understood as being as important as land-based heritage.

Bearing these three key points in mind, the Advisory Body agreed, first of all, that although the protection and presentation of underwater cultural heritage ideally go hand in hand, priority must be given to the protection of the submerged sites. Taking this position as a starting point, they decided that secrecy towards the general public in all instances should in no way be an option.

On the contrary, the relevant authorities should make as many sites as possible accessible to the general public.

Access fosters interest and educates the public, which in turn will create a sense of public ownership, facilitating the protection of underwater heritage. The Advisory Body agreed that national governments and local communities must be convinced of the social and economic value of underwater heritage for sustainable development of their region, especially considering the current economic situation. When dealing with underwater heritage and the local communities, it is important to include them in the decision- making process, in order to keep them invested in the sites. To incite the different national authorities to protect their underwater heritage while making a **special effort to provide access**, the idea of a **Best Practice List** was put forward. It would, in line with the statutory task of the Advisory Body to identify best practices, demonstrate the best practices of the protection and presentation of underwater cultural heritage worldwide. A criterion would be the **special effort made to facilitate and enable public access** to the site. The promotion of these best practices and the special designation of the sites should encourage the repetition of the example on other sites, thus fostering the provision of public access.

The selected sites should be proposed to the Meeting of States Parties for approval and **designation**. The use of the logo of the Convention for the designation might be considered, the decision on this issue was however understood to be the prerogative of the Meeting of States Parties.

Several members of the Advisory Body pointed out that although models on how to best present underwater heritage to the public could thus be identified or even developed, the needs, circumstances, and problems facing each different submerged site should always be kept in mind.

Following this discussion, it was also mentioned that in addition to preparing a Best Practice List, it could also be helpful to conduct a study on the actual state of underwater heritage. The Secretariat offered to request of the newly created underwater archaeology UNITWIN-network to conduct a study to evaluate the current state of underwater heritage, and the various ways in which it is impacted.

The Advisory Body, confirming the objectives and general principles of the Convention to ensure and strengthen the protection of underwater cultural heritage, ultimately decided to review the draft Study on Underwater Cultural Heritage and Development as prepared by the Secretariat and to consider future action in this regard; to collect, until its next session, a Best Practice List of Underwater Cultural Heritage Sites regarding public access according to the criteria summed up in Recommendation 2 / STAB 4; and to review this list at its next session.

It furthermore wished to recommend to the Meeting of States Parties to make the final endorsed sites visible by according them a designation and to call on the States Parties to propose more sites to this Best Practice List. **Recommendation 2/ STAB 4** was then unanimously adopted by the Advisory Body.

Regarding the overall situation of underwater cultural heritage, the Advisory Body, by adopting **Resolution 3 / STAB 4**, decided to request the UNITWIN Underwater Archaeology Network to undertake a study on this matter, in cooperation with accredited non-governmental organizations assessing the negative impacts on this heritage and indicating solutions and potential preventative measures.

III.   Discussion on Non-governmental Organization Cooperation

(Item 3 of the Agenda, *Document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/3)*

During the third meeting of the Advisory Body in April 2012, Advisory Body members had stressed the importance of the non-governmental organization accreditations. The non-governmental organizations are working directly in the field with national authorities worldwide, and are therefore of great importance to the dissemination of the ethical principles and practical guidelines enshrined in the 2001 Convention. In reference to Resolution 9/MSP 3, the Bureau of the Meeting of States Parties decided to temporarily accredit a number of non-governmental organizations for consultation and collaboration with the Advisory Body. In its Resolution 3/STAB 3, the Advisory Body had invited all the temporarily accredited non-governmental organizations to submit proposals on the contributions they wished to provide to its work. A number of such proposals were received and were discussed at the present meeting.

At the fourth Meeting of States Parties on 29 May 2013, ten non-governmental organizations were officially accredited, namely ACUA, ADRAMAR, AIMA, ARKAEOS, CIE, DEGUWA, INA, JNAPC, NAS and SHA. ICUCH was understood to be accredited due to its mention in the Statutes of the Advisory Body.

The present and accredited non-governmental organizations then proceeded to introduce the work they were undertaking in the field of underwater heritage, and further explained their proposals for cooperation. The proposals concerned mainly the promotion, capacity-building and awareness-raising of the Convention and its ethics.

The Secretariat subsequently presented a summary of the discussion and of the propositions made by the non-governmental organizations. It had divided the different proposals into three categories: those proposals that could be a contribution to cooperation with the Advisory Body, those proposals that could be a contribution to cooperation with the Meeting of States Parties, and other issues they wished to finalize.

One of the first questions raised during the discussion of this issue was the ways that the Advisory Body could support the non-governmental organizations in a joint action plan for promoting ratification.

All non-governmental organizations are active in the promotion of the ratification on the Convention, but a joint approach could be more effective. Other remarks focused on the reasons States gave for not joining the Convention. It was proposed that, because the non-governmental organizations are in the privileged position of possessing expertise knowledge on the situation in a regional or national context, they could gather more information on this issue, and present their results at the next session, so that the issue of promoting the Convention could be better addressed.

Ultimately, the Advisory Body decided to recommend to the Meeting of States Parties to cooperate with the accredited non-governmental organizations in the promotion of ratification of the 2001 Convention, capacity-building activities and organization of events. It furthermore decided to join forces with the non-governmental organizations in organizing common public outreach activities regarding the general public as well as divers, identifying and assessing pressing questions of underwater archaeology, facilitating the communication between the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body, non-governmental organizations and the academic community, promoting and implementing the results of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body, reaching out to industries and harmonizing standards. It also wished to invite the accredited non-governmental organizations to cooperate with each other, under the supervision of ICUCH or a similar head-organization, to undertake common funding activities, and to elaborate a common action plan to promote the ratification and implementation of the 2001 Convention. The Advisory Body then adopted **Recommendation 3 /STAB 4**.

IV. Discussion on Education and Awareness-raising Activities

(Item 4 of the Agenda, *Document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/4*)

In its second and third meetings (UNESCO Headquarters, April 2011 and 2012 respectively), the Advisory Body had expressed its wish to foster youth education and awareness-raising. During this session, its aim was to decide on a more detailed initiative in order to educate youth on underwater cultural heritage.

The chairperson opened the debate by stating that youth education in underwater heritage, both at universities and secondary school-level, was paramount for the worldwide promotion of the principal ideas set forth in the Convention. Much had been done on the issue of education and awareness-raising, but she recalled that very young children must be included as well in these activities, referring to an underwater cultural heritage programme for children in secondary schools in Italy. Several other participants made proposals concerning the nurturing of education and awareness-raising activities on underwater heritage, which were subsequently discussed.

One proposal stressed the need for basic common standards for archaeological divers. It was felt important that different training courses share the same criteria, in order to safeguard the qualitative standards of underwater archaeology.

The debate turned to the question of what measures needed to be taken to raise awareness of underwater heritage in the classrooms, and to put it on a par with other subjects, like land-based archaeology or the underwater natural environment. The members of the Advisory Body agreed that underwater cultural heritage and the Convention should be integrated into the national curricula, but there were various opinions on how to reach this goal. One of the proposals suggested that underwater heritage could be introduced in history classes. Another emphasized the use of local submerged sites to generate interest. However, it was observed that many countries had strict national curricula that would not easily allow for such modifications. Several non-governmental organizations, who have acquired extensive experience in educational and awareness-raising activities, contended that these difficulties could be circumvented by approaching the subject of underwater cultural heritage in a more holistic way, meaning that instead of adding the subject to the curriculum as a single unit, underwater heritage could be used as an example in existing curricula, like in mathematics, physics, geometry and history, matching it to the local teaching targets. Special days like holidays, or special thematic celebration[2] ("Be an Archaeologist for A Day") could also be used as a way to introduce underwater archaeology to school children.

It was also proposed that the Advisory Body could devise a general kit, available in several languages, to provide each country with the necessary educational tools; a teaching module on underwater heritage that could serve as the starting point from which every country could design a national curriculum with the support of UNESCO. Another suggestion entailed the listing of good practices on education, which could be collected by the Secretariat and presented at the next meeting of the Technical and Scientific Advisory Body.

The Secretariat observed that there was very little flexibility in school schedules. So if the Advisory Body was to devise a common module and wished to introduce it into the national curricula, it would first have to be approved by the Ministry of Education of each country. The UNITWIN and non-governmental organizations could play an important role in the implementation of these initiatives, in that they could identify an entry point in each country.

UNESCO Associated Schools should also be encouraged to develop programmes on underwater cultural heritage. It would furthermore be a good opportunity for intersectoral cooperation, bringing together cultural heritage and education.

Another member suggested that the way in which the message of the importance of underwater heritage was conveyed to youth was as important as the message itself, and that specialists, like teachers, graphic designers or experts on early childhood education, should be consulted to make sure that the message be made clear and attractive.

It was also pointed out that although children were the primary target for these initiatives, it was important that teachers received proper training on how to teach underwater heritage as well.

Following the debate, the Advisory Body proceeded to recommend to the Meeting of States Parties to invite States Parties to introduce underwater cultural heritage into their national school curricula and to train teachers in this regard. It also decided to cooperate with the UNESCO Associated School Network in the education on underwater cultural heritage, in initiatives similar to the "adopt a wreck initiative" and to use special occasions for educational outreach, such as the Ocean Day, the Manila-Acapulco Day or other similar initiatives. It furthermore wished to invite the accredited non-governmental organizations to call the attention of the Advisory Body to appropriate public outreach occasions, and asked the Secretariat to prepare a **first draft of educational material**. It then adopted **Recommendation 4 / STAB 4**.

V.   Date and Venue of the next Meeting of the Advisory Body

(Item 5 on the Agenda, Document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/5)

According to Article 4(a) of the Statutes of the Advisory Body, the Meeting of the Advisory Body takes place at least once every year. It was therefore the last agenda item of the meeting to recommend when the next meeting should take place. The members of the Advisory Body were presented with two possibilities: they would meet either in April 2014 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris or in May 2014 in Turkey, in conjunction with the meeting of the UNITWIN-network, allowing the members of the Advisory Body to meet the representatives and experts from universities all over the world. There could, however, be some difficulties if the Advisory Body were to decide to meet in Turkey in May 2014 as interpretation services could not be guaranteed at that time, and it was uncertain whether the Turkish authorities would allow a meeting of an intergovernmental body in a country that was not a State Party. It was decided that before the Advisory Body could reach a final decision, the Secretariat should provide more information on these issues, and the decision would be made via electronic exchange. The Chairperson concluded the session by thanking all the participants, the Secretariat and the interpreters.

CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE

FOURTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY BODY

30 May 2013, UNESCO Headquarters, Room VI
7, place de Fontenoy, Paris
10 am – 6 pm

RESOLUTION 1 / STAB 4
The Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,

1. *Elects* Ms Annalisa Zarattini, Italy, as Chairperson of its fourth meeting;

2. *Elects* Seyed Hossein Sadat Meidani, Iran as Vice-Chairperson of its fourth meeting.

3. *Having examined* document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/1;

4. *Adopts the Agenda* included in the above-mentioned document.

RECOMMENDATION 2 / STAB 4
The Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,

1. *Having examined* document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/2 and recalling its Resolution 5/STAB2;

2. *Reaffirming* the objectives and general principles of the Convention to ensure and strengthen the protection of underwater cultural heritage;

3. *Decides* to review the draft Study on Underwater Cultural Heritage and Development as prepared by the Secretariat and to consider future action in this regard;

4. *Decides* to collect, until its next session, a Best Practice List of Underwater Cultural Heritage Sites regarding public access according to the following criteria:
   a. the site falls under the definition of Article 1 of the 2001 Convention;
   b. it is legally and practically appropriately protected;
   c. responsible, non-intrusive access is respected;
   d. the site has a framework to guarantee sustainable management;
   e. a special and outstanding effort has been made to make the site accessible to the public.

5. *Decides* to review this list at its next session;

6. *Decides to recommend* to the Meeting of States Parties to make the finally endorsed sites visible, by according them a designation and to call on the States Parties to propose more sites to this Best Practice List.

RESOLUTION 3 / STAB 4
The Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,

1. *Decides* to request the UNITWIN Underwater Archaeology Network to undertake a study on the situation of underwater cultural heritage, in particular, assessing negative impacts on this heritage in cooperation with accredited non-governmental organizations, indicating solutions and potential preventative measures.

RECOMMENDATION 3 / STAB 4

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,

1. *Having examined* document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/3;

2. *Recommends* to the Meeting of States Parties to cooperate with the accredited non-governmental organizations in the:
   a. promotion of ratifications of the 2001 Convention;
   b. capacity-building;
   c. the organization of events.

3. *Decides* to cooperate with the non-governmental organizations in:
   a. common public outreach activities regarding the general public as well as divers;
   b. identifying and assessing pressing questions of underwater archaeology;
   c. facilitating the communication between the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body, non-governmental organizations and the academic community;
   d. promoting and implementing the results of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body;
   e. outreach to industries,
   f. harmonizing standards.

4. *Invites* the accredited non-governmental organizations to:
   a. join, if possible, under ICUCH's or a similar head-organization;
   b. undertake common funding raising activities
   c. elaborate a common action plan to promote the ratification and implementation of the 2001 Convention.

RECOMMENDATION 4 / STAB 4

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage,

1. *Having examined* document UCH/13/4.STAB/220/4;

2. *Recommends* to the Meeting of States Parties to invite States Parties to introduce underwater cultural heritage into their national school curricula and to train teachers in this regard;

3. *Decides* to cooperate with the UNESCO Associated School Network in the education on underwater cultural heritage, in initiatives similar to the "adopt a wreck initiative" and to use special occasions for educational outreach such as the Ocean Day, the Manila-Acapulco day or others;

4. *Invites* non-governmental organizations to call the attention of the Advisory Body to appropriate public outreach occasions;

5. *Asks the Secretariat* to prepare a first draft of common educational material.