

Secretariat of the 2001 Convention on the Protection
of the Underwater Cultural Heritage
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Report of Activities, 2016-2017
Society for Historical Archaeology

The Society for Historical Archaeology UNESCO Committee began 2016 with the annual Conference on Historic and Underwater Archaeology, held in Washington D.C, USA, from January 6-9. At the conference, the committee sponsored a panel co-organized with the Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology that focused on misconceptions surrounding the 2001 Convention. The panelists included representatives from SHA, ACUA, as well as other NGOs to the Convention (JNAPC, NAS, and ICUCH). The audience of approximately 45 represented 9 different nationalities. Notes were taken during the two-hour panel, and circulated to committee members for discussion and development of action items. In 2017, the committee will be drafting a one page fact sheet that addresses the primary misconceptions identified during the panel discussion. The fact sheet will be posted to the committee's website, and shared with the Secretariat and other NGOs to post and make available on their websites.

In spring of 2016, committee Chair Amanda Evans traveled to Paris to represent the SHA at the public Exchange Day, the 7th meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body, and the UNITWIN meeting. Several themes were highlighted at both the Exchange Day and STAB meetings, which were highlighted in notes circulated to the committee following the meeting. Possible action items were proposed that would follow on these themes, one of which is an organized session on climate change and archaeology to be developed during 2017 and held at the SHA conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, January 3-6, 2018.

In June of 2016, committee chair Evans and ACUA Chair Kim Faulk met with representatives from the US National Commission to UNESCO in Washington, D.C. to discuss possible efforts in support of ratification. The representatives were amenable to these discussions but warned that staffing at the commission (including their own positions) was subject to change depending on the outcome of the 2016 US Presidential election. Members of the SHA UNESCO Committee in the DC area have offered to host a meeting with National Commission members at the Smithsonian to provide additional information on the Convention and the benefits of ratification.

During the fall of 2016, the committee drafted text for the creation of a dedicated page within the SHA website (www.sha.org). The page is intended to provide commonly used links to the Convention text, Annex Rules, states parties, and other NGOs. The primary

audience for the webpage includes the SHA's approximately 2,000 members, however the page will be publicly accessible and suitable for public use. The webpage text was reviewed by the committee at the 2017 meeting, and is expected to be online by March 1, 2017.

The SHA UNESCO Committee had its annual meeting during the Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, held January 5-8 in Fort Worth, Texas, USA.

The committee reviewed previously drafted and executed letters written in support of ratification and endorsement of the Annex Rules as best practices. The committee will be preparing additional letters to send in support of ratification in 2017.

The committee continues to liaise with the Government Affairs committee.

In 2016, the committee wrote letters in support of two new proposed National Marine Sanctuaries that referenced the Annex Rules and the importance of both in situ preservation and public access to underwater cultural heritage.

The committee submitted a budget request, which was approved, to support travel to the Meeting of States Parties and STAB meeting to be held in May of 2017.

Respectfully submitted by Amanda Evans, Chair, UNESCO Committee, Society for Historical Archaeology