



CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION OF THE UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE

Report to the Secretariat on the continuing activities of the Advisory Council for Underwater Archaeology.

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The ACUA serves as an international advisory body in the United States on issues relating to underwater archaeology, conservation of historic resources, and underwater cultural heritage management. It works to promote ethical standards, to educate scholars, governments, sport divers, and the general public about underwater archaeology and the preservation of underwater resources. The ACUA is an independent non-profit organization closely allied with the Society for Historical Archaeology.

The twelve-member ACUA Board is elected from the membership of the SHA, and represents a diverse, international cross-section of underwater archaeology professionals. The ACUA has for many years shared a number of members with the ICOMOS International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage (ICUCH) over the years and supports the concept that the 2001 Convention provides a framework and represents an international standard on the treatment of underwater cultural heritage (UCH).

The ACUA has regularly participated in the UNESCO Meetings of Experts and contributed to work on developing and implementing the 2001 Convention, particularly the Annex Rules, a detailed set of standards and requirements for managing activities directed at underwater cultural heritage based on the 1996 ICOMOS Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage. As an international advocacy group for underwater cultural heritage preservation, we have worked closely with both ICUCH and SHA to support implementation of the UNESCO Convention.

Purposes of the ACUA

To encourage the responsible stewardship, preservation and protection of underwater and maritime cultural heritage

To provide a forum for discussions and information sharing related to underwater and maritime archaeology

To advise individuals, organizations, and government agencies worldwide regarding ethical professional standards and promote archaeological best practices in the investigation, protection and management of underwater and maritime cultural heritage

To encourage the publication of the results of research into underwater and maritime cultural heritage, and to promote the interpretation of heritage to the general public

During the 2018 year the ACUA has actively pursued efforts to support and promote the UNESCO Convention through the following actions:

2019 Year End Report to the Secretariat of the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage

Submitted 28 January, 2019

Summary of Activities:

- The ACUA has been active in promoting the UNESCO 2001 Convention on Underwater Cultural Heritage protection through professional development programs and by fostering underwater archaeology capacity building. This has been carried forward by offering workshops on approaches to preservation at the Society of California Archaeology annual conference and the conference of the Society for Historical Archaeology. This event was highly successful and the ACUA was invited back to conduct another workshop for the 2019 annual conference. The ACUA has acted to foster the California Maritime Archaeology Committee, consisting of academics, Cultural Resource management professionals, and State agency representatives, including California State Parks, to promote maritime heritage and protections on the west coast, a long overdue initiative. The CMAC is currently engaged with the State Historic Preservation Officer to increase safeguards and oversight for maritime sites during surveys. CMAC has initiated a symposium focused on maritime archaeology at the Society for California Archaeology annual conference. ACUA has been assisting in the development of the group through consulting and has two members on the committee. These efforts have made the archaeological community aware of the cultural resources contained in more than 1800 miles of coastal and navigable inland waterways of California. The California State parks has just opened their first underwater State Park in August. ACUA involvement supports Convention Articles 5 (Activities Incidentally Affecting Underwater Cultural Heritage) and Annex Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35.

As the annual conference location shifts each year, a “local” module of the full-day class shifts to reflect local regulations and regional needs. In previous years the “local” module has been presented by archaeologists from Ireland, England, the state of South Carolina, Florida, and California and the US federal government, among others. The annual workshop complies with Convention Articles 5 (Activities Incidentally Affecting Underwater Cultural Heritage) and 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology), as well as the entire Annex Rules.
- In this same regard, the Chair collaborated with the Nautical Archaeology Society of the UK to verify the credentials of a commercial organization operating in the United States (California) offering certification as scientific divers. The NAS planned to partner with the organization and we were in a position to assist. The increased capacity for developing trained divers with legitimate credentials will facilitate increased participation in heritage protections among the diving community. Convention Articles 5 (Activities Incidentally Affecting Underwater Cultural Heritage) and 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology), as well as the entire Annex Rules.
- The Chair represented ACUA at the UNESCO STAB meetings in Paris in April of 2018 and participated in the first NGO meeting via internet. The UN declaration of 2021-2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science was announced and the Secretariat has urged that the NGOs communicate that underwater archaeology is an important underwater science. The ACUA presented the intention of assuming a leadership role in the forthcoming Ocean Decade within the United States to the Society for Historical Archaeology and has received the endorsement of the Board. Going forward the ACUA will take on an active role in promoting the Ocean Science Decade. These efforts comply with Annex Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35.
- The Chair participated in the UNITWIN meetings as an observer and noted the steady growth of maritime archaeology programs globally. It is noteworthy that some representatives within the UNITWIN network are also members of the ACUA Board.
- The ACUA has increased its international reach during recent elections adding two new international board members from Martinique and Mexico.
- Continuing to assist the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference committee by annually jurying more than 400 presentation abstracts dedicated to maritime archaeology in order to ensure that papers presented at the SHA annual conferences meet ethical standards and guidelines of best practice. The 2018 conference in New Orleans was extremely well attended and maritime papers

comprised 40 percent of presentations. This activity reflects both the SHA and ACUA's internal ethics policies, but also the Convention's Annex Requirement I: General Principles, Rules 1 and 2, as well as Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35. The Annual Proceedings efforts comply with Annex Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35. Proactive dissemination of a broad spectrum of research through partnerships in a co-sponsored print-on-demand publication program with SHA and separately with Springer Press that highlights articles, papers, and scholarly works related to the practice of underwater archaeology. The co-sponsored print on demand program complies with Annex Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35. The publications are used by the ACUA and SHA in discussions with decision makers regarding cultural resource legislation and best practices as a tangible reminder of the nature of professional archaeology. The effort to promote public awareness about underwater archaeological sites complies with Convention Article 20 – Public Awareness.

- Participation in forums centered on ethics at SHA conferences where best practices and the UNESCO Convention were integrated topics. The annual Ethics Bowl has become a highlight at the conference with students representing different universities arguing key ethical questions. ACUA members serve on the jury. This objective complies with Convention Articles 20 (Public Awareness) and 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology) as many of the participants in the forums are either students or archaeologists.
- The ACUA launched a mentoring program matching students with UW professionals in 2017 and was expanded in 2018. There was an overwhelming response with more students signing up than available mentors. The program has advanced from its pilot stage to a regular feature and will probably expand again next year after securing additional willing mentors. The outreach to students meets Convention Articles 20 (Public Awareness) and 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology).
- The ACUA sponsored the annual George Fischer International Student Travel Award program again to bring international students engaged in maritime research to the conference on Underwater Archaeology. The outreach to students meets Convention Articles 20 (Public Awareness) and 21 (Training in Underwater Archaeology).
- The ACUA maintains a standing UNESCO subcommittee to promote the Convention, and to address concerns as they are raised by the membership towards applying the Convention to work performed around the world. The standing committee works to explain and provide implementation recommendations for the Convention and Annex Rules as a whole for global practitioners.
- The ACUA has been a leader on the issue of Harassment in the discipline and promotes strengthening anti-harassment training, education, and forums. The issue has been taken up on the ACUA through website publication of authors expressing a variety of opinions and experiences on the issue. The issue was further addressed by the SHA with workshops conducted at its recent conference. The harassment policy developed by the ACUA, while not directly referenced within the Convention or Annex, is an important component of Annex Rules X: Safety. It represents a critical issue in American academia.
- ACUA continues to monitor the actions of museums, and supports actions of groups regarding marine sanctuaries or UWCH protections by writing letters of support or to express serious objections according to the matter. The unfortunate disposition of the Titanic collections is being closely monitored. The ACUA Ethics committee has been intimately involved in evaluating the actions of the Congress of International Maritime Museums concerning re-writing of ethical statements in their by-laws, and action that ultimately failed. A letter is being prepared by the committee commenting on what we perceive as unacceptable ethical loopholes.
- ACUA was represented by its new Vice-Chair at the Smithsonian Institution hosted conference, "Building Bridges: A Symposium on Global Cultural Heritage". This symposium was organized by the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee (CHCC), an organization of 12 Federal agencies chaired by Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Marie Royce. The CHCC includes the Department of State, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and Federal Bureau of Investigation among others. This two-day conference sought to build partnerships between the CHCC, academics, and NGOs to work together to stop international trafficking of antiquities and artifacts, as well as protect archaeological sites throughout the world. I was invited due to my expertise in underwater archaeology and as a director of the ACUA.

- ACUA sponsored the annual photography contest at the 2018 SHA conference. The calendar is made available for free at the SHA conference is a product of the contest. The distribution of the calendar promotes underwater archeology widely. This approach to public awareness promotes Annex Requirement XIV: Dissemination, Rule 35.

Summary of progress promoting goals of the Convention which overlap with the Goals of the SHA.

Looking ahead, the ACUA anticipates a leading role in promoting underwater archaeology as a critical ocean science during the 2021-2030 Ocean Science Decade. A Committee has been formed to develop initiatives and foster capacity building among partner organizations. Through its membership, state and federal agencies have been contacted to promote awareness of the declaration.

The ACUA will be launching a new Award of Recognition for Excellence in Underwater Cultural Heritage Preservation Education, and Research to further promote public awareness of our shared maritime heritage.

The ACUA promotes membership in SHA through its workshops at conferences (Goal 1). The ACUA provides leadership in underwater archaeological education and through collaboration with associations. Engagement in UNESCO initiatives and with certified NGOs provides opportunities for the ACUA to advocate for protection of cultural resources, for increased professional ethics, and in fostering public outreach (Goal 2 and Goal 5). The ACUA actively promotes and mentors students while focused on inclusiveness. The Board has strong international participation and its mentoring initiative is focused on minority and gender equity (Goal 4). Through ongoing letter writing efforts relating to issues of heritage protection, marine sanctuaries, and museum ethics; the ACUA advocates in the legislative process regarding maritime archaeology (Goal 6).

Respectfully submitted 28 January, 2019



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