

# Sunken memories

*The protection of the  
underwater cultural heritage*



20 years after the adoption of UNESCO  
Convention (Paris, 2.11.2001)

**9** Thursday  
**December 2021**



*Photo archive ICR: author Gabriele Gomez de Ayala.*

## International Conference

on the occasion of the

## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

Rome - Ministry of Culture  
9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

9:30 AM – 4:30 PM

On 2 November 2021, the international community celebrates the **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage**, the important legal instrument that has brought the importance of humanity's submerged legacy to international attention, taking a considerable step further the principles sketched out in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Italy played a significant role in the birth of this Convention, not only by its active role in its drafting, but also by its contribution to the development of modern underwater archaeology in the second half of the twentieth century.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention provides thus an opportunity to make an initial assessment of the effectiveness of its application, also looking at the example of Italy and taking into consideration the limits and challenges States face at the moment of the launch of the *UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)*. The Conference will thus in particular debate the role of underwater cultural heritage for the sustainable development of the ocean and the important place culture and heritage should play in the Decade.

The year 2021 also marks the start of the next phase in the life of the 2001 Convention thanks to the start of the first multi-lateral cooperation process for the protection of an underwater cultural heritage area in international waters, the Skerki Bank in the Strait of Sicily, through the initiative of Italy. This bank is emblematic for its rich heritage, which has preserved a place of memory of the Mediterranean history for centuries, from Roman times to the present day.

The Conference will focus on the 2001 Convention and will allow participants to debate challenges and perspectives for the future of safeguarding and presenting submerged heritage. Speakers will be internationally recognized scientific experts from organizations and institutions involved in significant initiatives with regards to underwater cultural heritage.

The Conference is addressed both to the technical staff of the Bodies involved, as well as to a wider audience of experts and stakeholders (Universities, Museums, Local Administrations, Maritime Authorities).

The Conference is organized by the Ministry of Culture and it is supported by the UNESCO Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

## Programme

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### *Institutional greetings*

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9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

**DARIO FRANCESCHINI**, Minister of Culture of the Italian Republic

**ERNESTO OTTONE RAMIREZ**, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO

**CECILIA PICCIONI**, Deputy Director General/Principal Director for Promotion of Italian Language and Culture

**CARLO ZAGHI**, Director General for the Sea and the Coasts, Ministry of Ecological Transition

**FRANCESCO IAVAZZO**, Navy General Staff, Chief 7° Off. Inter-ministerial relations

**ELIA DEL CARMEN GUERRA JURADO**, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Panama to UNESCO

**MASSIMO RICCARDO**, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Italy to UNESCO – MAECI

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### *Introduction*

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10:30 AM – 10:45 AM

Presentation of the documentary

#### ***The underwater heritage. A legacy to the world***

MiC - Rai Cultura

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### *Morning Programme*

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10 AM – 1 PM

#### **Moderator**

**DONATELLA BIANCHI**, RAI journalist, host of Linea Blu, President of the Cinque Terre National Park

#### **Speakers**

**MARIASSUNTA PECCI**, Director of Service II - UNESCO Office of the Ministry of Culture  
*Introduction to the Conference*

**LAZARE ELOUNDOU ASSOMO**, UNESCO, Secretary of the 2001 Convention  
*20 years of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage*

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**BARBARA DAVIDDE**, Chairperson of the STAB 2001 Convention, National Superintendent for Underwater Cultural Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Italy

*The future of underwater archaeological research in Italy*

**ARNAUD SCHAUASSE**, Director of DRASSM, Ministry of Culture, France

*Submerged cultural heritage and current challenges for its protection*

**MARTIJN MANDERS**, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, Head, Maritime Programme

*Current and future projects in the Netherlands*

**MLADEN PEŠIĆ**, Director, International Center for Underwater Archaeology, Zadar, Croatia

*Research, protection, and presentation of underwater cultural heritage in the eastern Adriatic*

**BILL JEFFERY**, University of Guam

*The Yapese aech: an Underwater Cultural Heritage combining Living Heritage and Traditional Ecological Knowledge*

**ANDREW VIDUKA**, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Australian Government

*Australia's regional engagement in underwater cultural heritage*

**DAMIN WANG**, National Cultural Heritage Administration, NCHA, China

*Current and future projects of Chinese underwater archaeology*

Q & A

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## Evening session

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2:00 PM – 4:30 PM

### Moderator

**TULLIO SCOVAZZI**, University of Milano Bicocca

### Speakers

**MOUSSA WELE**, University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal

*Sea Routes of Africa and the Island of Goree*

**CELIO TIANE**, Director of Heritage, Ministry of Culture, Mozambique

*Building a regional underwater heritage centre in Mozambique Island*

**EMAD KHALIL**, UNESCO Chair, University of Alexandria, Egypt

*Underwater Cultural Heritage in the Arab Region: development and scope*

**PEDRO MORALES**, Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, Dominican Republic

*The promises of underwater cultural heritage protection for the Dominican Republic*

**MARIA HELENA BARBA MEINECKE**, National Institute of Anthropology and History, Mexico

*The Tren Maya research and underwater cultural heritage route projects in Mexico*

**KATARINA DELLAPORTA**, Ministry of Culture, Greece

*Greece and the access to submerged heritage*

**ALESSANDRO ASTA**, Ministry of Culture, Italy

*The Skerki Banks – The birth of the UNESCO international cooperation process*

**ATHENA TRAKADAS**, ODHN, Denmark

*The UN Ocean Decade and Underwater Cultural Heritage*

**VALERIA LI VIGNI**, Superintendent of the Sea, Sicily Region, Italy

*The Superintendence of the Sea and the submerged archaeological parks of Sicily*

Q & A

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### Closing speech

**LAZARE ELOUNDOU ASSOMO**, UNESCO, Secretary of the 2001 Convention

### Final institutional greetings

**LUCIA BORGONZONI**, Ministry of Culture, Under-Secretary of State

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### Technical information

The Conference is organised by the Ministry of Culture  
(General Secretariat – II Service, UNESCO Office and DG-ABAP - National Superintendency for Underwater Cultural Heritage),  
in cooperation with the UNESCO Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

The event will be held online

Simultaneous translation is provided in Italian, English and French

The Conference will be broadcast on  
YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter through the Ministry of Culture's channel:

[http://www.youtube.com/MiC\\_Italia](http://www.youtube.com/MiC_Italia)  
<https://www.facebook.com/ministerodellacultura>

CLAN Communication SRL provides technical organization and event communication support to II Service – UNESCO Office.

For info and contacts: [20anni\\_convenzione2001@clan-group.com](mailto:20anni_convenzione2001@clan-group.com)