



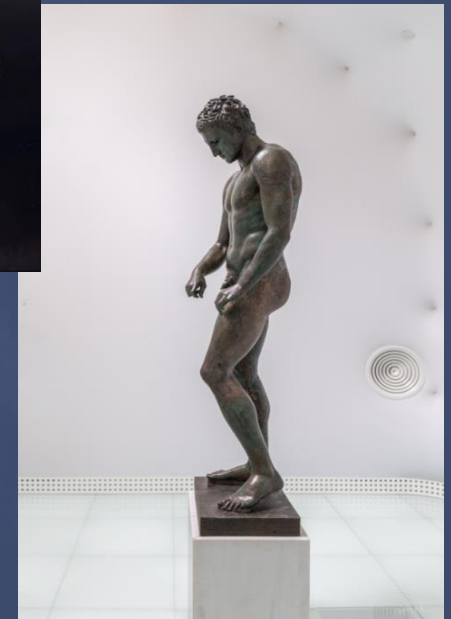
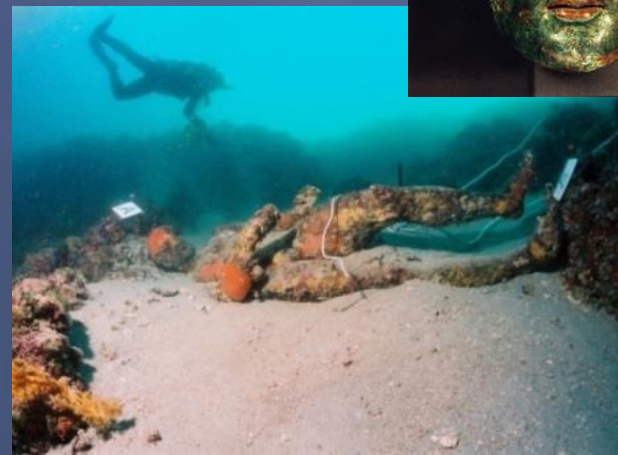
Underwater archaeological landscape and heritage protection in Croatia

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**22nd Meeting of the workshops for the implementation of the
European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe
Workshop 2 – Water landscapes: international experiences
14-15 March 2019, Seville, Andalusia, Spain**

Beginnings

- The richness of the underwater cultural heritage (UCH) is attested to by more than 300 Graeco-Roman wrecks documented beneath Croatian waters.
- Archaeological sites in Croatia's shallow waters are mentioned in written sources from the 16th century: at the end of the 18th century the first Roman shipwreck in Croatian waters was reported.
- The Adriatic Sea was in a way the intersection of two main navigation routes - the western and eastern routes.
- The accidental discovery of the ancient bronze sculpture of Apoxyomenos in 1996 (*island Vele Orjule near Lošinj, dated to 2nd or 1st century BC*) brought a final decision to establish the ICUA in Zadar.



Founding of the ICUA Zadar

- In 2007 the ICUA Zadar was opened formally as part of the Croatian Conservation Institute and is located within the St Nicholas church and monastery complex;
- In 2008 an Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and UNESCO for the establishment of the ICUA Zadar was signed;
- In 2009 it became a separate legal entity and gained the status of a **category 2 centre, under the patronage of UNESCO**.
- It is the only Centre specialising in underwater archaeology and conservation of UCH in the region; it has a significant regional dimension, with an emphasis on the countries of central and SEE, and the broader Mediterranean region;
- Mission - to develop international professional and research collaboration and education in the field of underwater archaeology, to present and popularise underwater heritage among the public at large, and to promote the principles of the UNESCO 2001 Convention.

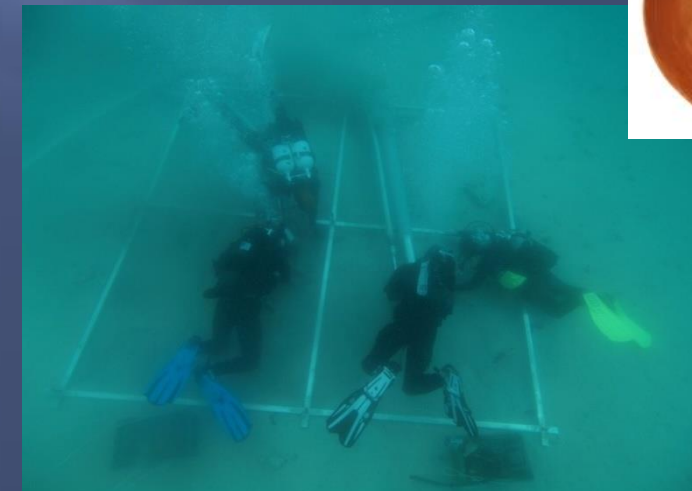
ICUA Zadar

- ICUA delivers training to private and public sector clients and has a range of technical courses in underwater archaeology and underwater photogrammetry;
- ICUA organises workshops for archaeologists and conservation specialists, nationally and internationally, practically and theoretically (conservation and restoration of metal, organic and archaeological finds from underwater environments);
- ICUA owns an exhibition gallery of underwater finds and a scientific and specialist Harald Von Petrikovits Library in the former St. Nicholas church (a space for public events, concerts and lectures), a dormitory and a lecture hall for education programmes.



UNESCO / ICUA courses

- Member of the UNESCO UNITWIN Underwater Archaeology Network;
- Representatives of 28 different countries participated in the courses;
- ICUA has been a NAS training partner since 2012 - different modules can be studied, depending on experience, in UWA;
- Many young specialists have gained practical experience through internships or volunteering at ICUA during field excavations and also working on-site as restorers or conservators.



International Law and UCH

- The first step in effective heritage protection is legal protection;
- The importance of this heritage was first recognised by Recommendation 848, as a result of an Assembly Debate held by the **Council of Europe** in 1978;
- In 1985 the Recommendation resulted in the Draft **European Convention on the Protection of underwater heritage**, which recognised:

“all remains and objects and any traces of human existence located entirely or in part in the sea, lakes, rivers, canals, artificial reservoirs or other bodies of water (...) shall be considered as being part of the underwater cultural heritage (...).

International Law and UCH

The most relevant international treaties for UCH are:

UN Convention on the law of the sea (UNCLOS), Montego Bay, 1982, Art. 149&303

- global treaty on jurisdiction at sea;
- it only marginally touches upon UCH without specifying how countries are to proceed in doing so;
- entered into force in 1994; more than 160 States Parties;

The ICOMOS Charter on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural Heritage from 1996

- it is not a binding international treaty.

European Convention for the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, La Valetta, 1992, Art. 2

UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, Paris, 2001

The 2001 Convention



UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, adopted by the 31st General Conference of UNESCO, Paris, 2001

- The first comprehensive international instrument dealing with UCH;
- 60 States Parties ratified it (less than one third of the nearly 200 UNESCO Member States);
- **Croatia was the third country** to ratify it (1 December 2004);
- It stands as *lex specialis* while the LOS Convention remains the authoritative *lex generalis* for the whole of the law of the sea and all issues pertaining to it;
- Two main objectives: to increase the protection of UCH and to enhance co-operation among State Parties;
- It is the only UNESCO Convention not to have been adopted unanimously, while it nevertheless entered into force in 2009.

The 2001 Convention



The Convention defines underwater cultural heritage as:

“all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years” (Art. 1)

- Harmonises the protection of UCH with that of cultural heritage on land;
- Guarantees co-operation among States, and also among scientists worldwide;
- Its 35 Articles and 36 Annex Rules provide a framework for UCH protection, research, and preservation;
- *In situ* preservation will always be considered the first option, unless there is a good reason to recover heritage (i.e. protection, research or public education);
- **The Convention will only be effective if it is binding.**

UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda



- In 2015 the UN General Assembly formally adopted the universal, integrated and transformative **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (+ a set of 17 sustainable development goals and 169 associated targets).
- The SDG 14 - Conserve and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- The UN has proclaimed a **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)**.

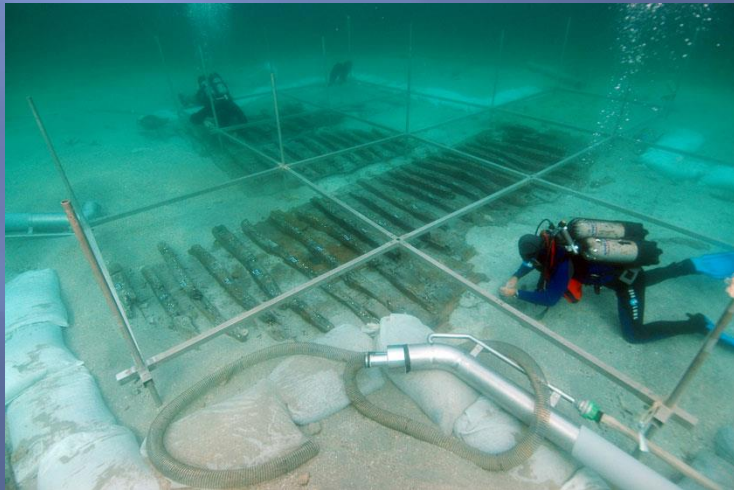
Legal framework for underwater archaeology in Croatia

- Main legislation act:
 - Law on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Goods (1999).
- Protection is carried out through the Ministry of Culture and its network of conservation departments (20).
- Different institutions under the Ministry conduct research and protection:
 - Croatian Conservation Institute - Department for underwater archaeology
 - University of Zadar
 - Archaeological museums in Zadar, Pula, Split, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, Umag, Hvar, Lošinj
 - ICUA Zadar



Protection of the UCH in Croatia

- Numerous remains of shipwrecks from prehistory to modern times represent an interesting and attractive direct evidence of seafaring, trade, cultural exchange and political situations;
- To date over 600 sites have been registered from all historical periods;
- 175 sites are currently inscribed on the List of protected cultural heritage.



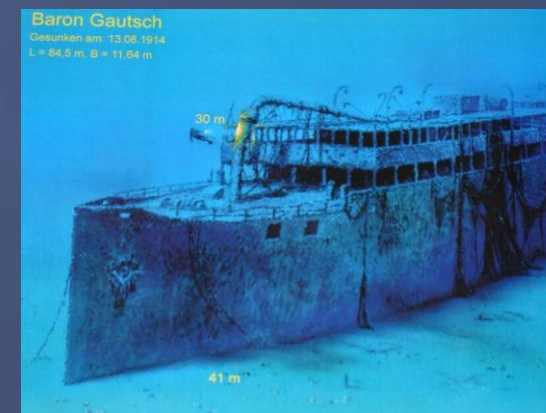
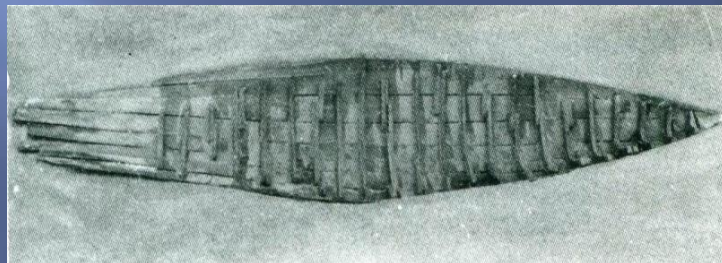
Veli Školj, Pakoštane, shipwreck, IV. century



Uljeva, Roman shipwrecks, I. BC-XVII. century

Croatia's underwater cultural heritage

- *Condura Croatica* – 2 Croatian ships from the 9th – 12th centuries discovered in Nin lagoon during 1960s, excavated in 1970s;
- WWI shipwrecks, WWII remains.



Underwater museums and in situ protection in Croatia



- Diving in the protected sites and areas is controlled by special regulations.
- There are 31 sites or areas where diving is regulated by permissions, prohibitions and obligations for the concessionaires.
- There are 8 ancient sites which are preserved with special steel cages - the so-called **underwater museums** - which keep valuable cultural heritage *in situ*, “on site” and enable co-existence between cultural-historic heritage and mass tourism.

How to improve the safeguarding of UCH ?

- Strengthen educational capacities in the field of underwater heritage;
- Increase allocations for underwater archaeological research and procurement of technical equipment;
- Intergovernmental meetings, regional training;
- Interministerial meetings - raising awareness of other competent institutions about the extent and nature of UCH;
- Change the public perception of UCH to make it better known and appreciated as what it is – a unique legacy of humanity.



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