Underwater cultural heritage – opportunities to use synergies and current political framework

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Legal Framework

  • Articles 136, 149 and 303:
    • The Area and its resources are the common heritage of mankind
    • All objects of an archaeological and historical nature shall be preserved for the benefit of mankind
    • Rights of the State or country of cultural, historical and archaeological origin

• UNESCO Convention on the protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001):
  • Seeks to improve international collaboration and conservation practices
  • Sets common principles such as the in situ preservation of CH when possible and prohibits the commercial exploitation of CH
  • Obliges to use best practicable means (for example MSP?) to prevent/mitigate incidental effects on CH
  • Annex Rules concerning activities directed at UCH

• World Heritage Convention (1972):
  • Requires to integrate the protection of CH into comprehensive planning programmes
Legal Framework

  - Requirements for the protection of archaeological heritage whether situated on land or under water
  - Requirements to establish inventories, archaeological reserves and reporting of new sites
  - Requirements that archaeologists and planners consult each other on archaeological issues
  - The total cost of archaeological operations are to be provided for in major public or private development schemes

- Example: Finland: The Antiquities Act (295/63) applied in territorial waters:
  - The planner of public land-use projects or the party responsible for a public or a large private project must examine the effects of the plan on antiquities and is required to fund the research work caused by the project
Legal Framework

• Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

• Nord Stream 1-2
• Baltic Connector
• Marine wind mill parks
• Shipping lines
• Harbour developments

Pori, Kallonlahti wreck, photo: NBA

The wreck of Sofia Maria, photo: T. Salminen

Tornio, Röyttä wind farm area, an underwater landscape of a saw mill island of Kuusiluoto
Legal Framework

• Council of Europe: Landscape Convention (2000)
  • "Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors
  • Includes land, inland water and marine areas
  • Actions to identify and assess landscapes
  • Requires to integrate landscape into planning policies
  • The idea of underwater landscape

• Faro Convention on the value of CH for society (2005)
  • Addresses CH in a comprehensive way
  • Requires to utilise heritage aspects of CH to enrich the process of landuse planning
  • Recognises the role of all citizens and civil society through shared responsibility
Management measures

- MSP as tool for protection, management and sustainable use of UCH sites
- CH setting conditions
- MSP and maritime history: both deals with the relationship between people, society and the sea
Synergies with other sectors

• With Blue Growth/economic/tourism: museums, exhibitions on Europe’s maritime history, telling the story of the seas, publications etc.

• Blue Growth/recreation and leisure: underwater parks and dive trails, opportunities for divers and non-divers in situ and online, the lure of the sea shores, seascapes, maritime landscapes and old maritime buildings

• With nature/ecology: shipwrecks and other archaeological artefacts as artificial reefs

• With social aspects: identity building, well-being, sense of belonging, place making, meanings, narratives, values of people, citizens own data etc.

• With MPAs: Presence of UCH protects marine environment from other uses like trawling

• With data sharing: ships wrecks as a source for history, ecology, environmental history, spatial planning etc.

Maritime CH sites as multifunctional sites
Nordic Blue Parks Project: underwater cultural heritage and nature

Photo: Metsähallitus
Vrouw Maria simulation at the Maritime Museum of Finland
World Heritage site of Suomenlinna Sea Fortress, making UCH landscape visible for the visitors.

Still photo of a multibeamsonar video by E. Salo
A shiptrap area of Jussarö

Nord Stream 2 Project: a 1800th century shipwreck in the Finnish EEZ