

The Role of ICOMOS, ICUCH and NAS in Underwater Cultural Heritage Protection in the Pacific

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Abstract

This paper outlines the role played by ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), which is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to the conservation of the world's cultural monuments and sites and specifically in awareness raising and training related to underwater cultural heritage protection. ICOMOS membership requires an individual to be a practicing cultural heritage professional or have professional qualifications in the fields of conservation or preservation such as architect, archaeologist, town planner, and engineer, administrator of heritage, art historian or archivist. ICOMOS International Scientific Committees (ISCs) (such as ICUCH) are the vehicles through which ICOMOS brings together, develops and serves its worldwide membership according to their fields of specialized interest. ICOMOS expects the ISCs to be at the heart of scientific inquiry and exchange in their domains and to share knowledge among them to foster multi-disciplinary approaches to heritage protection and management. ICUCH (International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage) was founded in 1991 by ICOMOS Australia to promote international cooperation in the protection and management of underwater cultural heritage and to advise ICOMOS on issues related to underwater cultural heritage around the world. ICUCH currently has ten members from the Asia and the Pacific region and this paper will discuss the role of ICUCH in the region. Furthermore ICUCH's mission will only be achieved in conjunction with other stakeholders, such as the Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS). NAS training aims to increase public awareness at local, provincial and national levels about the extent and nature of underwater and maritime cultural heritage as well as about underwater and maritime archaeology.

Key words: Training; Collaboration, Cooperation, Public awareness, Underwater cultural heritage protection

Introduction

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a global, professional non-governmental organization (NGO) established in 1965 that is dedicated to the conservation and protection of the world's cultural heritage monuments and sites (see <http://icomos.org/en/>). The Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) is a global non-government organization (NGO) based in the UK that had its beginnings back in 1964 (see <http://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/>). Non-

government organisations, such as ICOMOS and NAS, are often dependent on membership fees for the majority of their funding and therefore tend to have limited funding available to conduct 'activities' on a 'paid' basis. They also often have a very small number of paid staff and therefore it is up to the membership, working collaboratively, and individual members, usually working with other partners, to volunteer their time (usually at no cost), find funding and conduct activities 'under the auspices' or 'on behalf of' a particular NGO. Clearly ICOMOS, NAS and other 'membership-based' NGOs depend on their membership to take a proactive role in initiating, and contributing to, collaborative activities often volunteering their services *pro bono* (at no cost).

This paper considers ICOMOS and one ICOMOS ISC - ICUCH (International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage) together with NAS and the NAS Training Programme. It discusses a range of activities conducted by ICOMOS and NAS members, in relation to raising public awareness and conducting training about the management, preservation and protection of underwater cultural heritage in the Asia and the Pacific region. Unlike the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage had no fund to pay for activities included in the original convention although an account has now been established to allow for pooling donor donations to support certain projects and programmes (Jeffery, 2006; Parthesius and Jeffery, 2011: 281). This lack of funding as well as inadequate numbers of trained and experienced maritime archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers in many countries in the Asia and the Pacific region are recognized as significant problems.

The 2001 UNESCO Convention, nevertheless, has two articles related to public awareness and training. The first is Article 20 - Public Awareness that states:

Each State Party shall take all practicable measures to raise public awareness regarding the value and significance of underwater cultural heritage and the importance of protecting it under this Convention.

and the second is Article 21 - Training in underwater archaeology, which states:

States Parties shall cooperate in the provision of training in underwater archaeology, in techniques for the conservation of underwater cultural heritage and, on agreed terms, in the transfer of technology relating to underwater cultural heritage

The need for raising public awareness about, as well as training and teaching (capacity building) in, maritime archaeology and underwater cultural heritage management in the Asia and the Pacific region have been identified as important issues for more than a decade including during at least three UNESCO supported regional meetings and in their resultant action plans or recommendations. The first arose from the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on the 2001 UNESCO Convention held in Hong Kong in 2003 (Prott, 2006: 158-160). The second was from the 2010 International Meeting on Protection, Presentation and Valorisation of Underwater Cultural Heritage held in Chongquig in China (Shuguang, 2011: 433-434). The third was the Asia-Pacific Meeting on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage held in Koh Kong, Cambodia in 2012.

ICOMOS

ICOMOS has more than 11,000 members, over 100 National Committees and nearly 30 International Scientific Committees. International Scientific Committees (ISCs) focus on specialist areas of heritage conservation and are made up of ICOMOS members drawn from those specialist areas. ICOMOS expects the ISCs to be at the heart of scientific inquiry and exchange in their domains and to share knowledge among them to foster multi-disciplinary approaches to heritage protection and management see <http://www.icomos.org/en/about-icomos/committees/scientific-committees>

ICOMOS works for the conservation, protection, use and enhancement of cultural heritage monuments, sites and places including buildings, historic cities, cultural landscapes and archaeological sites. ICOMOS is dedicated to promoting the application of theory, methodology, and scientific techniques to the conservation of the world's architectural and archaeological heritage. Its work is based on the principles enshrined in a number of ICOMOS Charters including the 1964 *International Charter on the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites* (the Venice Charter), the 1996 *Charter on the Protection and Management of the Underwater Cultural Heritage* and the 2000 *International Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage* (see <http://icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts>).

ICOMOS works closely with UNESCO, ICOM, ICCROM and other partners, across a wide range of areas in relation to cultural heritage protection, preservation, management and training. ICOMOS is primarily composed of its National

Committees (NCs). Within the Asia and the Pacific region (as defined by UNESCO and comprising of 50 nations) there are more than 20 National Committees at present plus ICOMOS Pasifika which covers all of the island nations of the Pacific Ocean. Many of these National Committees have websites and for a complete list of National Committees with contact details and website addresses see <http://icomos.org/en/network/national-committees/list-of-national-committees>.

ICOMOS Pasifika was created in 2007 and aims to further the conservation and protection of heritage places in the Pacific Islands, with a focus on the cultural and natural specificities of the region. In particular, ICOMOS Pasifika aims to raise awareness with regards to the conservation of heritage places in the Pacific Islands amongst local, national and regional cultural organizations in the region (see <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Icomos-Pasifika-International-Council-on-Monuments-and-Sites/357945310963424>). ICOMOS holds a General Assembly (Congress or Conference) every three years – the 18th ICOMOS General Assembly with the main theme of “Heritage and Landscape as Human Values” will take place in Florence, Italy from 10 to 14 November 2014 (see <http://www.icomos.org/en/about-icomos/governance/general-information-about-the-general-assembly/18th-general-assembly-florence-2014>). To date the only ICOMOS General Assembly to be held in the Asia and the Pacific region was the 15th General Assembly held in Xi’an, China in 2005 (see http://www.international.icomos.org/xian2005/home_eng.htm).

ICOMOS membership requires that an individual be working as a practicing cultural heritage professional and/or to have formal qualifications in one of the fields related to cultural heritage conservation/preservation such as architects, archaeologists, historians, town planners, engineers, administrators of heritage, art historians, geographers, anthropologists or archivists. The author, for example, has been an ICOMOS member for more than two decades. Individuals, and institutions, can apply for membership through their National Committee and there are more than 100 ICOMOS National Committees. If there is no National Committee in a particular country, however, then membership requests can be made through the ICOMOS International Secretariat for approval by the ICOMOS Executive Committee (see <http://www.icomos.org/en/get-involved/join-icomos>). The author encourages all underwater cultural heritage professionals in the Asia and the Pacific region to join ICOMOS and to get involved in ICOMOS ISCs.

ICOMOS provides a network of experts that benefit from the interdisciplinary exchange of its members and who are available to provide assessment and advice on cultural heritage matters. ICOMOS publishes reports and special editions on cultural heritage topics such as the Heritage at Risk – Special edition titled *Underwater Cultural Heritage at Risk* (2006) which can be downloaded from the ICOMOS website (see <http://www.icomos.org/en/component/content/article?id=195>). In addition ICOMOS supports open access, free and unrestricted, to scientific publications, through the project *ICOMOS Open Archive: EPrints on Cultural Heritage* (see <http://openarchive.icomos.org/>). Part of the ICOMOS mission is to help to raise public and government awareness about cultural heritage protection and cultural heritage issues. It also encourages ICOMOS members to volunteer and participate in capacity building and training activities. These parts of the ICOMOS mission provide the general basis for members of ICOMOS ISCs to undertake, and be involved in, awareness raising, training and capacity building activity, which is the main focus of this paper.

ICUCH

ICUCH (International Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage) was established as an ICOMOS scientific committee in 1991 to promote international cooperation in the protection and management of underwater cultural heritage and to advise ICOMOS on issues related to underwater cultural heritage around the world (see <http://icuch.icomos.org/the-icomos-international-committee-on-the-underwater-cultural-heritage/>). ICUCH has a global membership of professionals and focuses on international cooperation, legislative issues, and quality standards for interventions and training and closely cooperates with regional and international NGOs, including NAS, in raising public awareness. In the early 1990s ICUCH developed the ICOMOS *Charter on the Protection and Management of the Underwater Cultural Heritage* which was ratified by the 11th ICOMOS General Assembly in Sophia, Bulgaria in 1996 see: http://www.international.icomos.org/charters/underwater_e.pdf ICUCH also assisted in the drafting of the UNESCO *Convention for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* (2001) and continues to lobby for its ratification (see <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/underwater-cultural-heritage/2001-convention/official-text/>).

The aims of ICUCH include to: stimulate international interest in the conservation of the world's underwater cultural heritage among government and private institutions,

practitioners and the general public; establish standards for the training and qualification of practitioners involved with the conservation and management of underwater cultural heritage sites; and share experience and expertise in the conservation and management of underwater cultural heritage sites. For more than a decade ICUCH membership was restricted to one member from each country but this situation changed as a result of the Eger-Xi'an Principles for the International Scientific Committees of ICOMOS adopted by the 15th General Assembly of ICOMOS at Xi'an in October of 2005, as amended by the Scientific Council in July 2008 (Eger-Xi'an Principles, 2008) see: <http://www.icomos-uk.org/committees/international-scientific/>. Since 2009 ICUCH can, and does have, more than one member from a number of countries including Argentina, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Lebanon, South Africa and the USA. In addition, over the past five years, ICUCH has considerably expanded its membership from about 20 to 48 members. The Asia and the Pacific region (as defined by UNESCO) currently has 10 ICUCH members (one from each of Japan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Thailand, India, Indonesia and China and three from Australia). It is clear that, just as ICOMOS need more members in the Pacific, ICUCH needs one, or more, members from the Pacific. ICUCH membership is not simply an issue for the Asia and the Pacific region, for comparison, the Europe and North America region has 19 members while the Africa region has just 5 members and the Arab States just 4 members. Fortunately in 2014 ICUCH will be considering an expansion of ICUCH membership as part of the flow-on effects from the Eger-Xi'an Principles. The author has been a member of ICUCH since 2009 and for a full list of ICUCH members see: <http://icuch.icomos.org/icuch-members/>

ICUCH's Vision, Mission and Strategy for the period 2009-2012 were formulated at the Annual General Meeting of ICUCH in Québec in 2008 and include the following missions:

- To assist other stakeholders in the field of maritime archaeology to manage, protect, carry out sound study, and share knowledge on underwater cultural heritage.
- To raise public awareness of the existence of the world's archaeological underwater cultural heritage.
- To promote the protection and management of underwater cultural heritage through facilitating development of national and regional cooperation, programmes, and legislation.

- To encourage an inclusive approach in underwater cultural heritage.

These particular missions were to be carried out using the following strategies:

- Promoting and actively assisting in capacity building in all the roles mentioned in the Annex of the 2001 UNESCO Convention.
- Promoting education in underwater cultural heritage at all levels.
- Being strongly involved in raising public awareness.

These ICUCH missions and strategies, specifically those that encourage ICUCH members to undertake, and be involved in, awareness raising, training and capacity building in underwater cultural heritage protection and management, are the main focus of this paper. ICUCH, for example, is an official partner of UNESCO Underwater Cultural Heritage Partners in Asia and the Pacific see: <http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/uch/partners/>

As part of the Asia-Pacific Regional Capacity-Building Programme in Underwater Cultural Heritage several ICUCH members, including the author, were invited to contribute to three UNESCO Foundation Courses and two Advanced Courses on Underwater Cultural Heritage between 2009 and 2011 (Staniforth, 2010). These courses were primarily funded by the Government of Norway with support from the Government of Thailand but they have not been run since 2011 as a result of a lack of available funding. These courses were primarily held in Chanthaburi (Fig. 1) in Thailand see: <http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/uch/capacity-building/courses/foundation/>

One valuable product of this particular collaboration has been the development of the *Training Manual for the UNESCO Foundation Course on the Protection and Management of Underwater Cultural heritage in Asia and the Pacific* (UNESCO Bangkok, 2012).

This training manual can be downloaded (for free) at: <http://www.unescobkk.org/culture/uch/uch-publication/>. Another publication that a number of ICUCH members contributed to is the *Manual for Activities directed at Underwater Cultural Heritage* published by UNESCO in 2013 (Maarleveld, Guerin and Egger, 2013) which is available to be downloaded (for free) at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/underwater-cultural-heritage/>

In addition to involvement in awareness raising, training and capacity building individual ICUCH members have been involved in collaborative research and

underwater cultural heritage management projects in the Asia and the Pacific region (Kimura et al., 2014; Lê et al., 2011; Manders, 2010).



Fig. 1 First UNESCO Foundation Course on Underwater Cultural Heritage in Chathaburi, Thailand in 2009. (Mark Staniforth)

NAS

The Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) was formed to promote interest in underwater cultural heritage and is dedicated to advancing education in nautical and maritime archaeology for everyone – its members, the general public and across the global archaeological sector. NAS membership is open to everyone regardless of qualifications and NAS publishes a quarterly member's newsletter as well as a peer reviewed academic journal twice a year – the highly respected *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* (IJNA). The NAS International Training Programme has been delivering courses in maritime archaeology and underwater cultural heritage for nearly 30 years see: <http://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/content/what-nas-training-programme>

The NAS Training Programme has a modular structure, starting with a one day Introduction course and working through the Part I, II and III Certificates and finally the Part IV Diploma. The NAS programme has a published handbook available, now in its second edition (Bowens, 2008) and is open to everybody with the Introduction course requiring no prior learning or qualifications. The NAS Training Programme is designed with courses in a wide range of topics and subject areas within nautical

and maritime archaeology. The author has been involved with the NAS Training Programme since the mid 1990s when the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA) introduced NAS training into Australia (Moran and Staniforth, 1998). From 1997 AIMA tailored the NAS Training programme to suit Australian conditions and sites and the author served for five years as the first AIMA/NAS Senior Tutor in Australia. Over the last fifteen years or so, dozens of AIMA/NAS Training courses have taught hundreds of people in all states of Australia about underwater cultural heritage and maritime archaeology (see: <http://www.aima-underwater.org.au/parts-i-iv/>).

In addition AIMA/NAS Training has also been successfully incorporated into university level studies in maritime archaeology, for example, those conducted at Flinders University (Staniforth, 2008). In 2012 the Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS) gave permission for a pilot program of NAS training to be conducted in Vietnam (at no cost) on a “one-off” basis. NAS Training was conducted at the Institute of Archaeology building in Hanoi, over a three-day period during November/December of 2012. Early in 2013 NAS granted a free NAS International license to the Institute of Archaeology (IA) in Vietnam and the author was appointed as the NAS Senior Tutor for Vietnam for a five-year term. With support from the Nghe An province an NAS Introduction to Maritime Archaeology training course (1 day) was held in Vinh city on Thursday 16 October 2013. Thanks to the Hoi An People's Committee, which agreed to sponsor NAS training at Hoi An in November 2013, an NAS Introduction courses (1 day) took place on 7 November followed by an NAS Part 1 course (2 day) on 8 and 9 November 2013 (Fig. 2).

The NAS Training programme in Vietnam has been designed to increase awareness at local, provincial and national levels about the extent and nature of Vietnam's underwater and maritime cultural heritage as well as about underwater and maritime archaeology. With the assistance of partners, sponsors and contributors, NAS training has been provided free of charge to more than 100 Vietnamese students, government agency personnel, archaeologists and others in order to raise awareness about underwater cultural heritage and maritime archaeology in Vietnam. Hopefully, this should help Vietnam to preserve and protect its underwater cultural heritage see: <http://www.themua.org/vietnam/nas.php>



Fig. 2 NAS practical training at the Nghe An Museum in Vinh City, Nghe An, Vietnam. (Mark Staniforth)

University level teaching

UNESCO has suggested that the minimum qualification for an archaeologist is: “A degree in archaeology or similar qualification recognized by the country in which the archaeologist is working” see:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/underwater-cultural-heritage/underwater-heritage-tutorial/tutorial/>

Throughout the world, tertiary qualifications at some level from undergraduate degrees through to Doctoral level degrees from a fully accredited university are usually seen as the basic qualifications required for professional underwater or maritime archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers (Staniforth, 2008a; 2008b; 2009; 2010). Unfortunately university level teaching in maritime archaeology is both limited and expensive in the Asia and the Pacific region, which means that only a limited number of maritime archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers have been able to benefit from this level of training. One of the few examples where university level training has been made available at no cost to participants, was organized partly using ICUCH networks, when the Maritime Archaeology Program (MAP) at Flinders University was awarded funding from Aus AID, the Australian federal government’s overseas aid organization, to bring 11 mid-career professionals involved in maritime archaeology from the Asia-Pacific region to Australia for a 6 week training program (Staniforth, 2011). Mid-career professional

training like this goes some way to fulfilling social justice and equity aspirations to make university level teaching in maritime archaeology available to more people in the Asia and the Pacific region (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Opening ceremony of the Flinders University Intensive Program on Underwater Cultural Heritage in Adelaide, South Australia in 2009. (Jun Kimura)

Language of Instruction

There is no doubt that for training courses with participants who come from a number of different countries, such as the UNESCO Foundation courses, there is a need for a single common language. One result is that most previous training activities in the Asia and the Pacific region have been conducted in English. Nevertheless, in order to successfully conduct public awareness raising and training within an individual country, the content really has to be interpreted and translated into the national language.

The language of instruction was seen as one of the key issues for NAS Training in Vietnam, for example, where it was clear that we needed to have the training both interpreted into spoken Vietnamese and translated into written Vietnamese. Fortunately the Institute of Archaeology (IA) has been able to provide interpretation services for NAS training and, in addition, the entire content of the NAS Introduction course (11 sessions) has now been translated into Vietnamese. One of the benefits of this approach has been to increasingly involve IA archaeologists in NAS training with the stated aim of allowing NAS training to be primarily taught by Vietnamese archaeologists within five years. In 2013 IA was also able to establish an Underwater

Archaeology Department, headed by Dr. Le Thi Lien, which was, in a small part, as a result of the NAS training initiative and will aid NAS training over the next few years.

Conclusion

ICOMOS, ICUCH and NAS can and do provide networks, advice, support and training programmes but they are by no means the only ways of conducting these activities. It is hoped that some approaches outlined in this paper can be adopted and adapted by other countries, organizations and individuals in the Asia and the Pacific region as the basis for effective collaboration and co-operation in awareness raising, training and teaching of underwater archaeologists and underwater cultural heritage managers.

Acknowledgements

I would like to particularly thank my colleagues in ICUCH, NAS and at Flinders University for their contributions to, and support for, the networks, programmes, projects and field schools that this paper discusses. Also the enthusiasm and interest of the trainees and students has helped to make these activities productive as well as enjoyable to conduct. I hope that they enjoy their involvement with underwater cultural heritage as much as I have.

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