

Underwater Cultural Heritage Focussed Avocational Archaeology and Citizen Science Groups – The Need for More!

Organizer

Name: Andrew Viduka
Affiliation: GIRT Scientific Divers Pty Ltd
E-mail: girtscientificdiver@gmail.com

Session Description

While legislation in some countries restricts public participation in diving on underwater cultural heritage (UCH), in Australia, the objectives of the Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018 (UCH Act) and other various state-based legislation enshrine the rights of the public to access their UCH patrimony and to be involved in the research of these sites. To ensure the public can participate ethically and in line with legislative requirements, the Australian Underwater Cultural Heritage Program (AUCHP) has a focus on creating an informed and engaged public through annual training, education, and communication activities. Such activities helped create most early avocational archaeological organisations in Australia including the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA). In more recent decades, avocational archaeology groups in Australia have emerged that were not developed with any support of management agencies, including GIRT Scientific Divers a UCH focussed citizen science programme. All these groups help create an informed and engaged public who have an active and positive underwater archaeology role. This session seeks to highlight the role and importance of all avocational archaeology and citizen science groups for the management and protection of UCH globally and asks of potential contributors what more can be done to help sustain and energise these organisations in their activities.

Keywords

Citizen Science; Avocational Archaeology; Underwater Cultural Heritage Management; Condition Monitoring; Conservation