



QUEENSLAND MUSEUM NETWORK

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Committee Secretariat
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021 Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Via email: jsct@aph.gov.au

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in support of Australia ratifying the *Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2001).

Queensland Museum Network (QMN) has a long history of research, management and collaborative projects relating to the unique and significant underwater cultural heritage of Queensland. Our iconic HMS *Pandora* collection and gallery at Museum of Tropical Queensland in Townsville are the direct result of extensive research and public interest in the wreck site of this British naval vessel and the extraordinary tales from the surviving crew.

UNESCO 2001 provides a multilateral framework for countries to deal with, and control activities involving, underwater cultural heritage outside their own jurisdiction including co-operation between nations. In addition, UNESCO 2001 complements national and state legislation for the protection of underwater cultural heritage, such as *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* (C'th).

For more than two decades, QMN was the delegated authority for managing historic shipwrecks along the coastline. Since then, QMN has played a significant role in the development of standards and guidelines for management of underwater cultural heritage. QMN would not have such a unique collection without legislation and proactive support for our underwater culture heritage.

Adopting UNESCO 2001 ensures that we maintain our high standards in heritage protection. Our national expertise in underwater cultural heritage also means that QMN can support our neighbouring nations to promote and preserve their own endeavours in this field.

Australia has always played a leading role in the development of both national and international mechanisms for the protection and preservation of underwater cultural heritage – we should continue to do.

I urge you to support ratification of UNESCO 2001 for our future generations.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jim Thompson PSM
Chief Executive Officer
Queensland Museum Network