



Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology, Inc.

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17 March, 2022

Committee Secretary  
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: [jsct@aph.gov.au](mailto:jsct@aph.gov.au)

Dear JSCT,

**Re: UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (Paris, 2 November 2002)**

On behalf of the Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology (AIMA), I submit this response to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties strongly supporting Australia's ratification of the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage.

AIMA is an incorporated, not-for profit organisation dedicated to the preservation of underwater cultural heritage. Based in Australia, we have sponsored work throughout Australia, Asia and the Indian and Pacific Oceans. AIMA's objectives are to undertake scientific research within the field of maritime archaeology and publish the results of this work. AIMA engages with the public through a number of initiatives including maritime archaeology training courses and an annual conference.

AIMA is also an accredited non-government agency under the 2001 UNESCO Convention. The NGOs provide knowledge of current practices and issues in the field of underwater archaeology. In this capacity, we attend international meetings with other accredited NGOs around the world and assist the Secretariat of the 2001 UNESCO Convention. The accredited NGOs also cooperate with the Meeting of State Parties and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Body to the 2001 UNESCO Convention.

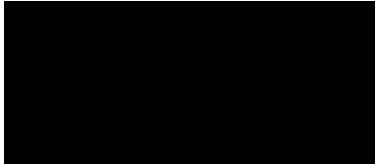
Our institute has long been a supporter of the 2001 UNESCO Convention and has been actively educating and implementing the principles of the 2001 UNESCO Convention within Australia and the Pacific. AIMA members include archaeological consultants, Australian State and Territory practitioners, researchers and academics that all reference the principles of the Convention as a standard of their work ethic and practices. Specialists from Australia were part of drafting the 2001 UNESCO Convention and we have been waiting over 20 years for Australia to ratify.

Ratification would strengthen our current standard of practice within Australia, but more importantly it would provide new protection for Australian heritage located in international waters. Currently, there is no general requirement to involve Australian authorities in the management of our internationally-located heritage. In addition, ratification would open new international cooperative opportunities with other States, particularly where we have shared heritage.

We strongly support Australia's ratification of the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage as being in the best interest of Australia's underwater cultural heritage across the world and the best interest of the Australian public.

AIMA urges the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties to recommend ratification of the Convention by the Australian Government.

Yours sincerely,



Danielle Wilkinson  
AIMA President