

B-13 : The Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, 2001

Name of the Convention: Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage

Acronym or short name: Underwater Cultural Heritage

International organization in charge of it: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Summary description (in plain language): This Convention aims to ensure and strengthen the protection of underwater cultural heritage (art. 1.1), i.e. all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years.

To ensure this protection States are obliged to comply with the rules annexed to this Convention. States have the responsibility to protect the underwater cultural heritage in their internal water, in the contiguous zone, in the exclusive economic zone, on the continental shelf and on the seabed beyond national jurisdiction.

Date of first approval: 2 November 2001

Date of coming into force: 2 January 2009

Applicability (condition for entry into effect): In accordance with its Article 27, this Convention entered into force on 2 January 2009 for those States that have deposited their respective instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession on or before 2 October 2008. It shall enter into force for any other State three months after the deposit by that State of its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

Stakes for ports: States Parties have the exclusive right to regulate and authorize activities directed at underwater cultural heritage in their internal waters, archipelagic waters and territorial waters (art. 7.1)

States party to this Convention shall take measures to prohibit the use of their territory, including maritime ports, in support of any activity directed at underwater cultural heritage which is not in conformity with this Convention (art. 15)

Links with other conventions: United Nations Conventions on the Law of the Sea (SOLAS),

Key-words: Underwater cultural heritage

Internet hyperlink with other website:

www.unesco.org

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