

SUBMERGED PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPES OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF (SPLASHCOS)

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Submerged landscapes contain unparalleled information on early human populations and environmental change that is not preserved on land and is currently not well studied. However these landscapes are under increasing pressure from the marine industry and there is a growing need to assess the archaeological potential of large areas of seabed before development. Researchers from 19 different countries working within archaeology, geology and palaeoenvironment have come together to develop initiatives which will improve knowledge on the location, preservation, investigation, interpretation and management of evidence of prehistoric human activity and associated landscapes. Already more than 3000 prehistoric occupation sites are known on the European continental shelf ranging in age from 5000 – 80.000 years old and in depth from the shoreline to 145 meters.