



THE COMPATIBILITY OF HERITAGE PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Nicolas Flemming – National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, UK

The global marine environment and seabed are increasingly exploited to gain materials, food, and services, and at the same time they are subject to increasing regulation, control, and research. Primary amongst the extractive industries are hydrocarbons, aggregates, and their supporting industries and contractors. Many countries are creating integrated regulatory frameworks which extend through the coastal zone, the intertidal waters, and offshore into the EEZ so as to control licensing and enforcement. The planning and resolution of potential conflicts between numerous interests requires a greatly increased flow of accurate data for decision-making. For several decades the need to protect submerged cultural heritage, whether shipwrecks or submerged occupied sites, has been partially recognised, but enforcement has been very patchy. The extractive industries share the common factor of disturbing or extracting substantial parts of the seabed substrate. It is increasingly recognised that the grant of licenses should be conditional upon pre-disturbance surveys, the avoidance of highly prospective archaeological targets or sectors, and a graduated reporting and monitoring system so that accidental finds are reported immediately to the cultural heritage authorities. While shipwrecks and historic buildings are usually detectable acoustically by their surface expression on the seabed, submerged prehistoric sites are often not detected in advance, and therefore academic collaboration with industry is essential.