

UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORY OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE

An underwater cultural heritage event, with the following talks:

Ulrike Guerin, UNESCO
Underwater cultural heritage
research and protection: key to
understanding sea level rise

Garry Momber, Director, Maritime
Archaeology Trust, UK
Underwater cultural heritage research:
essential to understanding the
development of climate change

Dr. Nicholas Flemming, National
Oceanography Centre, UK
Global distribution of submerged prehistoric
sites as indicators of rising sea level

Nan-Chin Chu, European Marine Board
Projecting the climate future by
understanding the past: Rescue historical
data through maritime cultural heritage

UNESCO Pavilion, Climate Generations Area, Le Bourget

03 December 2015, 10:30 am - 1 pm



The Protection of
the Underwater
Cultural Heritage

Underwater Cultural Heritage: A Record of Changing Sea Levels

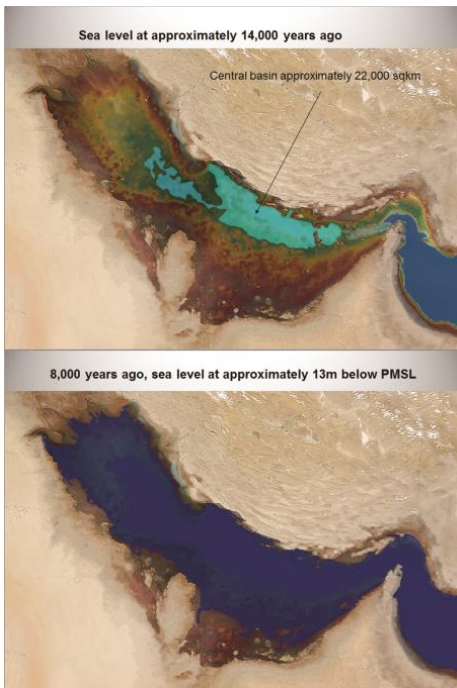
Underwater Cultural Heritage is an essential source of information for understanding the history and the consequences of climate change.

Scientists warn that sea levels will increase due to rising temperatures. This phenomenon however, has taken place before. For over 90% of the existence of humankind, the sea was about 40-130 meters lower than the level of today. A substantial amount of prehistoric and historic evidence of the life of our ancestors is now submerged. These remains are now underwater heritage, and provide an extremely important source of information about the first human civilizations, human origins, and also about climate change and its impact. Today, as we face sea level changes again, this heritage can help us put our current challenges into a wider context.

Much work still needs to be done. Underwater archaeological research is still in its infancy and the potential of such studies is only beginning to be understood. However, it is clear that we need to invest more in research.

The UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage plays an important role. It raises awareness of underwater cultural heritage, improves protection and research, and allows for scientific exchange and cooperation. It is vitally important to protect underwater heritage from the many threats that it faces and to recognise its importance in research on climate change. It is also vitally important to support the 2001 UNESCO Convention.

You are cordially invited to attend the UNESCO COP 21 Event on Underwater Cultural Heritage and Climate Change on 3 December 2015, 10.30 am – 1 pm, at the UNESCO Pavilion, Le Bourget.



The sea level in the Persian Gulf has changed dramatically over time. Research of its submerged heritage provides a source of vital information about human dispersal from Africa and the impact of climate change on humanity. © R. Cuttler