



Safeguarding the Underwater Cultural Heritage

World Underwater Federation (CMAS) developed international Underwater Cultural Heritage signs for a better understanding and safeguarding of our cultural treasures.

Underwater Cultural Heritage is fascinating because of the mystery of its location underwater, its historical context, and the wealth of information it can provide us. The discovery of an underwater object, a wreck or a ruin makes it possible to dive into the past. It is the memory of a time long before us and sometimes of human tragedy such as shipwrecks and wars.

As soon as underwater cultural heritage emerges from the water and is exhibited on land, for example, objects from underwater archaeological sites are deprived of their context and lose some of their meaning. Therefore, in recent years, there have been many efforts to let visitors experience the cultural heritage underwater. These include dive trails, underwater tours for non-divers and underwater museums. "This is the right way to make everyone aware of the importance of the underwater cultural heritage and the need to protect and safeguard it", says the President of the Scientific Committee, Prof. Dr. Ralph O. Schill.

For a better communication, leading experts on Underwater Cultural Heritage in CMAS have now developed hand signals in cooperation with Prof. Emad Khalil from the Centre for Maritime Archaeology & Underwater Cultural Heritage, Alexandria University, Egypt; Professor Dr. Hakan Oniz from the Department of Restoration and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Faculty of Art, Akdeniz University, Turkey and Magdalena Nowakowska from the Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw, Poland. The implementation was carried out by a team from the Mediterranean Civilizations Institute of Akdeniz University, Turkey. These Universities are full members of UNESCO UniTwin Underwater Archaeology Network.

With these new signs, which will be introduced individually over the coming weeks, better communication is possible to understand and safeguard our cultural treasures. (<https://www.facebook.com/CMAS-World-Underwater-Federation-757271837760946>)

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Underwater Cultural Heritage sign - *amphora*



Developed by CMAS Scientific Committee in cooperation with the Centre for Maritime Archaeology & Underwater Cultural Heritage, Alexandria University, Egypt and the Faculty of Archaeology, University of Warsaw, Poland. The implementation was carried out by the Department of Restoration and Conservation of Cultural Heritage, Faculty of Art, Akdeniz University, Turkey. These Universities are full members of UNESCO UniTwin Underwater Archaeology Network. Illustration: Metehan Samet Gül, Ercan Soydan, Halil Akkus & Oktay Eser Orman. Pictures: Emad Khalil.



Picture: Underwater Cultural Heritage sign for amphora.
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