

To whom it may concern,

I (Mark Staniforth) wish to make a personal submission in support of Australia ratifying the "*Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage*" (UNESCO 2001). I believe the UNESCO *Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage* (2001) is the most important international development in the protection and preservation of underwater cultural heritage in the past fifty years. It provides a multilateral framework for countries to deal with, and control activities involving, underwater cultural heritage outside their own jurisdiction including co-operation between nations. This complements national, and state, legislation for the protection of underwater cultural heritage such as the Commonwealth's *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*.

Australia has been a leading nation in the development of both national and international mechanisms for the protection and preservation of underwater cultural heritage for many years. Australians, including myself, working through ICOMOS and UNESCO have been extensively involved in this work over the last thirty years. For example, I contributed the UNESCO *Manual for activities directed at Underwater Cultural Heritage* and have been active in collaborative efforts in the Asia Pacific region for UNESCO.

I strongly support Australia ratifying the "*Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage*" (UNESCO 2001).

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## **Background**

I have been involved in the investigation, protection and preservation of Underwater Cultural Heritage in Australia in both a professional and an avocational (amateur) capacity since 1974. I hold a PhD in Archaeology from Flinders University (1999) and I am currently an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Maritime Archaeology Program at Flinders University. I was the State government maritime archaeologist for the Victoria Archaeological Survey in Victoria (1982-1987) and curator of maritime archaeology at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney (1987-1993). I was the Convenor of the Maritime Archaeology Program (MAP) in the Department of Archaeology at Flinders University for 14 years (1997-2010). I have worked as a consultant for the Australian Commonwealth government (National Historic Shipwrecks Research Plan 1995) and the Canadian federal government (advice on national shipwreck legislation). I served for two terms on the international Advisory Council on Underwater Archaeology (ACUA 2000-2007) including three years as deputy Chair (2001-2003) and three years as Chair (2004-2007). In 2012 I was elected as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA). I am a professional member of ICOMOS and an expert member of two ICOMOS International Scientific Committees – ICOMOS-ICUCH (International Committee on the Underwater Cultural Heritage) and ICOMOS-ICAHM (International Committee on Archaeological Heritage Management).