

UNESCO Regional Meeting (Jakarta, Indonesia, 6-7 December 2023)

“World War Shipwrecks in Southeast Asia – threats of marine pollution and looting”

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The representatives of Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Timor Leste, and Viet Nam (hereinafter “the participants”) met from 6 to 7 December 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia in the UNESCO regional meeting to discuss protection of the underwater cultural heritage, with particular focus on the World War Shipwrecks in Southeast Asia and its threats of marine pollution and looting. The meeting was also attended by a number of regional and international experts associated with maritime and underwater cultural heritage. After deliberations and discussions on the topic, the participants,

1. **Recognize** that the World War Underwater Cultural Heritage (WW UCH) in Southeast Asia not only holds invaluable knowledge of historical, scientific, archaeological, social and cultural significance but also presents the potential for further supporting community livelihoods and sustainable development;
2. **Underline** the importance and need to foster dialogue and cooperation in Southeast Asia on the issue of the identification, significance, protection and preservation of WW UCH, and
3. **Acknowledge** the significance of the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (hereinafter the UNESCO 2001 Convention) as the most important international legal instrument that facilitates the protection and preservation of underwater cultural heritage including WW UCH, for the benefit of humankind and future generations;
4. **Express** gratitude to UNESCO and the Government of Indonesia for the organization of this Regional Workshop to discuss protection of the underwater cultural heritage, with particular focus on WW UCH in Southeast Asia
5. **Recognize** the importance of the underwater cultural heritage which in many cases is the living heritage of peoples in Southeast Asia highlighting the cultural identities of communities, as well as the challenges and threats it faces from climate change, natural and human-induced hazards;
6. **Recognize further** the importance and need to foster dialogue and cooperation in Southeast Asia on the issues of the identification, significance, sustainable management, protection and preservation of underwater cultural heritage including WW wrecks
7. **Encourage** considering the ratification of the UNESCO 2001 Convention that sets the international legal and scientific standard for the protection of underwater cultural heritage and that facilitates the preservation of WW UCH, for the benefit of humankind and future generations;

8. **Express concern about** the growing natural disasters and human threats to WW UCH, including climate emergency and looting, as well as the potential environmental threat from this heritage including pollution from oil and hazardous and noxious substances, such as unexploded ordnance (UXO);
9. **Underline** the need to enhance regional and international cooperation to build inventories of WW UCH, including inventories of all known UCH and reported losses of WW UCH, WW dump sites and shore-based facilities and to collaborate on a regional approach through bilateral and multilateral means in developing these inventories and to address the potential marine pollution threats;
10. **Underline further** the need to build provincial, state, national and regional capacity building programmes in cooperation with local communities, NGOs and government agencies to survey, manage, monitor and assess the significance of WW UCH and the threats posed by, and emanating from, WW UCH;
11. **Recommend** further engagement with the local communities and other stakeholders in all aspects of surveying, managing, monitoring, and raising awareness about the significance of WW UCH, particularly the significance of this heritage from their perspectives.

The participants agree to take these Recommendations to their authorities, as well as to their National Commissions for UNESCO and Permanent Delegations to UNESCO in order to be considered in the discussions of the meetings, for their consideration in their regional and national strategies and policy frameworks.

Jakarta, Indonesia

6-7 December 2023