



Monitoring Group on Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea States

FINAL VERSION

Code of good Practice for the management of the Underwater Cultural Heritage in the Baltic Sea Region (COPUCH)

Preamble

1. The overall objective of COPUCH is the management and preservation of the unique Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH) in Baltic Sea. Therefore, the delimitation of the Baltic Sea is defined by the parallel of the Skaw in the Skagerrak at lat. 57 44.43' N, which is in accordance with Article 1 of the Helsinki Convention (*Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1992*).
2. COPUCH is an agreed set of principles that seeks to establish:
 - a. a common ground for the protection, recognition, understanding and management of the UCH in the Baltic Sea Region,
 - b. that archaeological surveying and excavation are undertaken in a scientific manner,
 - c. the prevention of any unprofessional interference or excavation of the UCH.

Subsections

1. "Underwater cultural heritage" means all cultural, historical and/or archaeological traces of human existence which have been under water for at least 100 years, or which otherwise are regarded as historically significant or protected by heritage legislation.
2. COPUCH is applicable to the entire Baltic Sea, including internal and territorial waters.
3. The UCH in the Baltic Sea is recognised as an invaluable source for knowledge, experience and understanding.
4. Preservation *in situ* of the UCH shall be considered as the first option. Other alternatives shall be motivated and actions, if taken, professionally performed.
5. By professional performance is meant such action that is conducted and led by educated and trained underwater archaeologists.
6. Professional competence in the engagement with the UCH is essential to ensure the proper recording of its cultural, historical and archaeological information.

7. All professional action regarding the UCH shall be done within a proper project design. This project design may vary between nations, but should include research objectives, expected results, planned efforts, means of documentation, treatment of eventual artefacts and publication measures. It is also recommended that it includes a budget, the means of financing, a time table and an occupational and safety plan.
8. Activities directed at the UCH shall avoid physical interference that is not motivated by the research objectives. Non-destructive methods shall be preferred before actions which affect or disturb a site or an object and/or its context.
9. In the management of the UCH, preventive planning and other efforts shall aim at avoiding or minimizing destructive interference.
10. Public access to good and relevant information and experience of the UCH is an important goal and shall be promoted.

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Helena Edgren
Chairman of Monitoring Group

National Board of Antiquities
P.O. Box 913, FI-00101 Helsinki,
FINLAND

Björn Varenus
Chairman of the Working Group of
Underwater Heritage

Swedish National Maritime Museums
PO Box 27131, SE-102 52 Stockholm,
SWEDEN