

# UNESCO UCH

<b>Official reference</b>	UNESCO 2001 Convention on the protection of the underwater cultural heritage and its context	
<b>Official website</b>	www.unesco.org	
<b>Relevant dates</b>	Document	2/11/2001
	Entry into force	2/01/2009
	Ratification by Belgium	6/07/2013
	Ratification by Flanders	16/07/2010
<b>Policy level</b>	International	
<b>Type of instrument</b>	Convention	
<b>Geographical reach</b>	Sea and ocean bottoms, including the subsoil, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction	
<b>(Legal) coverage in the BNS</b>	Internal waters, territorial sea, exclusive economic zone, continental shelf	
<b>International contact point</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	
<b>Competent authorities in Belgium</b>	Flemish authorities; policy domain Spatial planning, Housing policy and Immovable Heritage; Agency Immovable Heritage	
<b>Federal ratification</b>	Wet van 6 juli 2013 houdende instemming met het Verdrag ter bescherming van het cultureel erfgoed onder water, aangenomen te Parijs op 2 november 2001	
<b>Flemish ratification</b>	Decreet van 16 juli 2010 houdende instemming met het verdrag ter bescherming van het cultureel erfgoed onder water, aangenomen in Parijs op 2 november 2001	

## // abstract:

The objective of this convention is to protect the underwater cultural heritage. This heritage is defined as all traces of human existence having a cultural, historical or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years. The convention stipulates the core principles for the protection of the underwater cultural heritage, offers a framework for the cooperation between states and provides practical rules for the treatment and the research of this heritage. The main principles of this convention are:

- An obligation for the Contracting Parties to protect their underwater cultural heritage, and to take measures in this context;
- (In situ) conservation of underwater cultural heritage;
- The ban on underwater cultural heritage being commercially exploited for trade or speculation;
- The importance of cooperation and information exchange between states, inter alia with regard to education and awareness regarding underwater cultural heritage.