

CIESM Congress Session : Underwater archaeology
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Moderator's Synthesis

The Archaeology Underwater session started with an introduction on the main research interests and challenges for the marine geoscientists in the fields of Deep water geoarchaeology (shipwrecks), Shallow water geoarchaeology (shallow submerged sites) and Continental Shelf Prehistoric Archaeology (Submerged landscapes).

Four presentations were delivered, three of them on submerged landscapes in the Aegean Sea and the fourth on ancient shipwrecks in shallow waters of the southern Black Sea. Here are the points emerging from the discussion that followed:

There is a large potential for deep water geoarchaeological survey in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, especially for ancient shipwrecks dating to the Roman, Hellenistic and Classic periods or even older. This differentiates the Mediterranean & Black Seas from the other European Seas where shipwreck archaeology is mostly concerned by medieval or younger shipwrecks. The involvement and contribution of marine geoscientists in the shipwreck survey and documentation can be very significant.

The reconstruction of the submerged prehistoric landscapes provides a new ground for marine geological research in close collaboration with archaeologists. It is a new, multidisciplinary field, across the boundaries between geosciences and archaeology. It also embraces the fields of sea-level changes and paleoenvironmental reconstruction, while the involvement of underwater technology and the need for science-driven technological progress is of great importance too.

The participants of the session on Underwater Archaeology agreed on the necessity to promote activities in this field and include Underwater (Geo)Archaeology among the interests of CIESM.

