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The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage: how do we make it work?

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Cultural Heritage Agency
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Protection of the underwater cultural heritage of Sri Lanka through international cooperation

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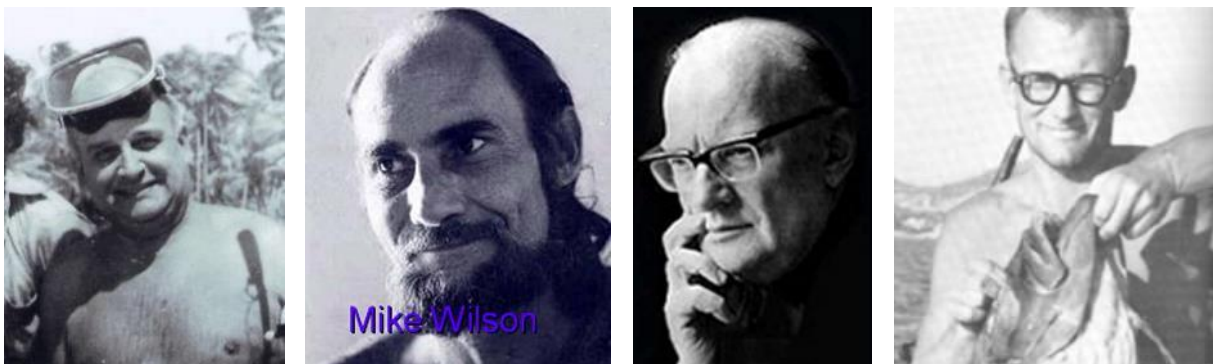
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Legislations

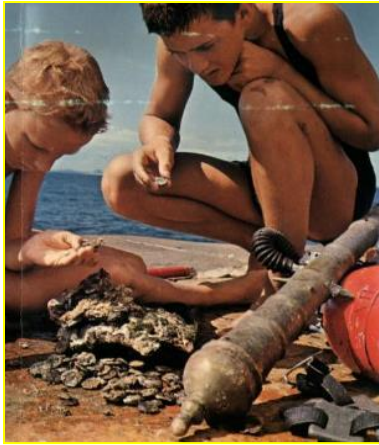
The underwater cultural heritage in Sri Lanka is legally protected by stating archaeological heritage as: *"that part of the material heritage of mankind in respect of which archaeological methods provide primary information and includes all vestiges of human existence and places relating to all manifestations of human activity, abandoned structures and remains of all kinds (including subterranean and underwater sites), together with all the portable cultural material associated with them"* in the Antiquities Ordinance of Sri Lanka. Although the Antiquities Ordinance, from its very inception in 1940, had the power to conduct underwater archaeology– in lakes, rivers and lagoons – it was only in 1998 that the Department was accorded jurisdiction over the territorial waters of Sri Lanka.

Early attempts

The first exposure of Sri Lanka to underwater archaeology was in the very early 1960s, when a team of sports divers, including the late Rodney Jonklaas, the late Mike Wilson, and the late Arthur C. Clarke, discovered an unknown wreck in the "Great Basses" (a rocky outcrop off the southeast coast, topped by a lighthouse). Since Sri Lanka Archaeology Department was unacquainted with maritime archaeology, was informed by Clarke and Wilson that the respected maritime archaeologist Peter Throckmorton was available to assist with research, invited him to conduct an underwater survey, an invitation was accepted. This project, however, did not herald a beginning of a substantial program of maritime archaeology, remaining an isolated incident.



From left to right: Rodney Jonklaas, Mike Wilson, Arthur C. Clarke, Peter Throckmorton.





In 1984, the first national workshop on maritime history and maritime archaeology organized by NARA, gathered so much of archaeologists, historians, lawyers and divers where they discussed and concluded the importance of protecting and conserving the maritime cultural heritage and bringing down newly implemented legal concepts was also explored in the work shop. Also "A theoretical framework for maritime archaeology and the maritime history of Sri Lanka"; the research paper presented by P.U Weerawardena at "The First National Archaeological Congress" organized by Post Graduate Institute of Archaeology (PGIAR), took attention of the Director of the PGIAR towards the Sri Lankan maritime cultural heritage. In this congress Arthur C. Clarke and Mike Wilson also participated and appointed representatives from the organizations such as: Maritime Heritage Trust Sri Lanka (MHT), and in Sri Lanka Sub Aqua club (SLSAC) in order to create an action plan to commence maritime archaeological activities around Sri Lanka.

One of the first attempts of substantial maritime excavation in Sri Lanka was the Colombo Reefs Archaeological Survey of 1989, the initiative of P. U. Weerawardena of the Department, Mark Redknap of the Nautical Archaeological Society and the National Museum of Wales, and Devendra, representing the nongovernmental Maritime Heritage Trust (MHT). This project inadvertently helped to demonstrate the challenges of undertaking research in Sri Lanka in this period. Briefly described as "a survey of underwater archaeological sites within a context of reef environment and geomorphology" the project won funding from the Royal Geographical Society, the British Academy, and the British Museum. The lack of regulations covering archaeology in territorial waters and the volatile security conditions worked against this initiative. The team and equipment arrived in the country, but only the use of a magnetometer was permitted: diving on the site was not. Thus, when part way through the exercise the magnetometer malfunctioned, the project had to be abandoned.

In the latter part of 1980s, an Inter – ministerial committee under the involvement of NAARA was established. 15 ministries got involved with this committee directly or

indirectly to build up a legal background towards maritime cultural heritage; ministry of justice took the priority. In relation to the activities of maritime cultural heritage, the dominant ministry was the Ministry of Cultural and Religious Affairs and under it was the Department of Archaeology and Central Cultural Fund. PGIAR coordinated the activities. The Maritime Archaeology Department of Western Australian Maritime Museum acted as the resource provider in the progressive of activities. The Galle Harbour project was implemented as a result of collective insolvent of the above institutions. All those institutions were coordinated by the maritime archaeologist Lt. Com. Somasiri Devendra who one of the person in Sri Lankan trained in the activities of maritime cultural heritage for a considerable time.

1992-1999 Galle Harbour Project

In 1992 the Department of Archaeology (DOA), the Central Cultural Fund (CCF), Sri Lanka's Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology University of Kelaniya (PGIAR), and the Maritime Archaeology Department of the Western Australian Maritime Museum (MADWAM) pooled their resources to set up a multipurpose pilot project to train maritime archaeologists, provide conservators with skills specific to maritime archaeology, and, additionally, compile a database of shipwrecks in Galle Harbour. Project management and recruitment of volunteer counterpart divers were undertaken by the MHT and the Sri Lanka Sub Aquatic Club (SLSAC).

The project was initiated by Jeremy Green and other maritime archaeologists from Australia with the Sri Lankan counterpart team of amateur divers from SLSAC (Sri Lanka Sub-Aqua Club) led by late Gihan Jayatilake and a team of naval divers coordinated by Green and Devendra (Maritime Heritage Trust). The target of this project was to create a few professional maritime archaeologists in Sri Lanka and waterlogged artefacts conservators. The initial aim was targeted to obtain interest of a number of under graduates of archaeology in maritime archaeology with the project and in 1992 this target couldn't be reached as only a handful of archaeology students were interested. However few conservators who had been working in the conservation laboratory of DOA and CCF were joined with this project and Vicky Richards & John Carpenter, the two conservators from the Western Australian Maritime Museum thought the methods of conservations to local conservators using the artefacts found from the Galle Harbour in the explorations done during this year in the great sunken ship wreck, Hercules (1661). Large number of moving artefacts were found including the bell of the vessel. Training was also carried-out in the conservation of water-logged objects, scientific recording, underwater photography and the setting up of a conservation laboratory with the positive achievements reached in 1992, DOA, CCF and PGIAR with the assistance of (MADWAM) were able to create plans for 1993.

Accordingly at the first part of 1993, a group of 08 people who are being able to swim were interested out of them 06 belonging to the DOA, 02 from the University of Kelaniya and the other 02 from the PGIAR. A few more trainee conservators apart from the previously trained ones were also been called for the trained activities in conservation methodologies in relation to the Galle Harbour Project for the above two teams. While giving theoretical and practical trainings in maritime archaeology and artefact conservation, the undergraduates were trained in swimming and diving activities which were conducted by the team of western Australian divers.



The First Training Maritime Archaeologist Team in 1993.

For the purposes such as unstable artefact registration, classification and preparation of databases, Dr. Moira Tampoe from the University of Peradeniya got involved. Also, in conservation of waterlogged artefacts, Nereena de Silva got engaged as a full time volunteer during the project. The team of trainee maritime archaeologists had a very low fluency in English language and in the meantime the above mentioned volunteer officers helped with the spoken language issues created in between the Western Australian divers and the trainee divers. Conduction of the Galle Harbour Project was successful in this year than the previous year as Jeremy Green used side scan sonar technology with magnetometer and to find relative placement of date found by the above technologies, GPS technology was used. The Galle Harbour Project happened in 1993 consisted of 02 seasons and at the latter part of the second season 11 sites which were archaeologically valuable were around the Bay of Galle. From all the sites that were explored and identified in 1993, most precious valuable exploration was the Dutch East Indiaman "Avondster" shipwreck (Green, Devendra, Millar, 1993). At the middle part of the second season of the Galle Harbour Project, Director General of the Archaeological Department requested Jeremy Green and S. Devendra to make an urgent research over the silver coins shipwreck at great basses and to present him a report over that. In a day by doing a few turns of dives, he was able to find around 600 silver coins and also several beads, glass and earthen ware shards from the archaeological site.

During the period of 1994 and 1995, due to the lack of funds in Sri Lanka and Australia, work was suspended, however Green and Devendra continued on a modest scale with whatever funds they could gather the idea of carrying out an archaeological impact assessment was discussed but was not put into action. Finally, a rescue project was carried-out.

The first turning point

Though the Galle Harbour Maritime Archaeology Project didn't get continued due to the lack of funds in the years 1994 and 95, at the end of 1995, the Sri Lanka Ports Authority

had decided and was making plans for a developmental project to convert the Galle Harbour to a major container yard and transshipment port. Hon. Lakshman Jayakody, then Minister of Cultural Affairs, realised the harbour development project would have an adverse effect and instructed that the Galle Bay be surveyed for shipwrecks before a new port was built there. Since there had been a number of maritime cultural heritage sites which were identified during 1992 and 93 Ministry of Cultural Affairs was educated by the by the Director General of the Archaeology, Director of PGIAR and by the Director General of CCF, the implementation of the above project was highly debated in the Parliament of Sri Lanka. Due to that fact it was decided that before implementing Galle Port Developmental Projects as a first step an Archaeological Impact Assessments (AIA) study was to be conducted to explore the archaeological sites in development areas and bring any artefacts found from the effected sites and conserve them by using shared budgets. Galle Harbour project which was pioneered by the DOA was conducted with the involvement of the trained maritime archaeologists under the supervision of CCF. National Museum Department of Sri Lanka contributed more closely with this project than the previous instances. MHT, SLSAC; the institutions who took part with the previous projects and the volunteers; Dr. Moira Tampoe and the artefact conservator Nereena De Silva also involved with the project as they did in the earlier project. The funds were allocated; the work was undertaken by a Sri Lankan-Australian team. CCF provided most of the conservators, archaeologists and the facilities for this work.

Before the rescue archaeology project commenced in 1997, all trained maritime archaeologists were inclined to the diving centre and under the supervision of archaeological department, they obtained their PADI open water diver licenses.

Galle maritime museum agreed to support the project by providing their premises to carryout conservation of the aquatic artefacts explored in the maritime sites. Sri Lanka Navy agreed to provide the Magalle Navy base to house the boats and other transportation services in order to support the project. At this movement, the MADWAM has been developed and designated as "centre of excellence", and they agreed to provide expertise and equipment that are necessary for the project. 1997 Galle Harbour Maritime Archaeology Project commenced bit different to the previous years and the main objective was the training and data collection. The specialty of this project was there were expertise not only from Australia, but also from Netherlands, England an America. (Devandra, Muthucumarana, Unpublished, 2013. P. 7- 8). The remote sensing survey carried out in this project, could explore three modern shipwrecks consist of 21 archaeological sites. In the meantime while the survey was ongoing, team divers dived into those target sites and using buoys, those sites were re-marked. Among the artefacts there were; individual artefacts abandoned European type anchors, non-European type stone anchors, iron wrecks and wooden shipwrecks.



Team of the Galle Harbour Exploration Project in 1997.

The rescue maritime archaeology project was implemented around the Galle Harbour under several stages. Training, surveying, data collecting and archival researching were among the functions. The collections of artefacts explored at the end of the exploration project and also the shipwrecks and other archaeological sites that were embedded on the Galle Harbour sea bed, were explored. In order to study the artefacts and to define them, it was essential to research the information analytically, historically, archaeologically.

K.D. Paranavithana; Department of National Archives Sri Lanka, Robert Parthesious and Lodewijk Wagenaar - Amsterdam Historical museum, co-operatively examined and researched these historical documents. Dutch Historical records which were related to the Galle harbour were supported with the researchers by Algemeen Rijksarchief of the National Archives, Netherlands. In reference to those historical records, it could have been able to uncover facts that there had been five shipwrecks sunken around the Galle harbour during the Dutch period. They were The "Geinwens" (1776), The "Dolfijn", The "Barbestijn" (1735) the "Hercules", (1661) and the "Avondster" (1659). The historical records of the above sunken shipwrecks were being very useful not only to re-create their history but to ensure the guessing the sites of those sunken ships to be correct. For instance; though the magnetometer survey shows a higher degree of magnetic value around the site "G", no evidence of archaeological value was found during the exploration on the sea bed. Anyway, after referring to the historical documents, it was uncovered that it was guessed that this is the place where Dutch East Indiamen "Geinwens" (1776) had been wrecked. After carrying out few short time excavations, a large number of copper alloy nails and a few wooden frame parts, which were belonging to a wooden wreck was found. This test excavation became the first underwater archaeological excavation experience obtained by the trainee maritime archaeologist.



The 1997 Galle harbour project consisted of two seasons and during the second season it was directed in unloading some stone anchors that were on the sea bed. Among these anchors, one of the most especial fact that was founded was two wooden flukes that were fixed to the Arabian type stone anchor. After landing these wooden flukes in the earth surface, they were put in to a safe container and after while analysing, dating and referring to the chemical conservation section of the Western Australian Maritime Museum to look in to further conservation processes was commenced. There the conservator; Ian Godfrey checked samples and identified as "Calophyllum" species (Godfrey, 1988). Thereafter, a wooden sample was sent to the University of Waikato for the C14 dating and accordingly date was given was, the time period is not later than 1000 BP. But Dr. Mohan Abeyrathne from CCF, again took consideration over the dating report given by the University of Waikato, and he himself calculates those records through Oxcal program and concluded that those wooden samples were belonging to the 1390-1650 AD. At the final sessions of the second season it was identified that the trainee maritime archaeologists and the trainee waterlogged artefact conservators who lively took part with the project, had been widely improved in their knowledge and skills.

In the archival research done during the year 1997, most attractive finding was identifying "Avondster". At the galley of the Avondster shipwreck, there was a Dutch type

brick structure which helped in confirming one of the myths related to Archival research. During both the seasons in 1997, objective of every expert was to explore paying more attention towards Avondster. Unloading movable artefacts, collecting, sketching and stabilizing the wooden parts which had been raised from the sea bed by using sand bags, were among the activities carried out during the second season. However, at the end of both the seasons, maritime archaeologists were able to postpone the proposal of the Large Scale Developmental Project of Galle Harbour, by presenting an assessment report with regard to a possible damage.

Though some tasks had been continued in 1998, centring the Galle harbour, due to limited funds and limited conservation laboratory facilities, interfering in to excavation activities was not materialised. But unloading some artefacts which would be affected by the treasure hunters or by currents, or through swelling, and also site documentation, making the training programs more effective, were some targets that were planned to be reached in the year 1998.



Archaeological Sites in the Galle Harbour

2001-2006 Avondster Project

After maritime archaeological activities around Galle harbour in 1998, the need to establish an institution in case of doing researches over maritime cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, safeguarding it and management of the processes. These issues were understood by all the institutions and officers of the institutions concern. Though there had been diving archaeologists and conservators to carry on maritime archaeology fieldwork, there wasn't a proper place for them to work and no one was attentive to the matter. Also accessing funds was not in a strong basis at that period. According to the amendments of the Antiquities Ordinance in 1998 the ownership of the movable and immovable marine cultural heritage in the territorial sea of Sri Lanka was given to DOA and thereby the need to provide an authority to implement powers over above functions became increasingly urgent. Close to the old port premises which belonged to the Sri Lankan Port Authority, an abandoned Jetty was assigned to the DOA and constructing a permanent

building on this Jetty considering the need of an institution for the maritime archaeological tasks was commenced. After the completion of the construction of the building in 1999, all the authoritative powers in related with the management of maritime cultural heritage of Sri Lanka above mentioned building was handed over to the CCF by the DOA. With that, the movable artefacts which were explored during 1992 to 1998, which were conserved in the main artefact conservation laboratory at Anuradapura and the artefacts discovered during the Archaeological Impact Assessment Project in Galle Harbour in 1997, was transported to the new maritime archaeological building at Galle. For taking care over the artefacts, CCF appointed two permanent artefact conservators to the Galle Maritime Archaeology Centre.

Meanwhile the discussions occurred among the local institutions in relation to the commencement of the maritime archaeological activities became a failure due to several reasons. However, finally the Government of Netherlands and Amsterdam Historical Museum agreed to offer funds for the project. In addition to funds, they agreed to provide more training and to donate equipments. In light of Netherlands Government's support, Sri Lanka had to provide with staff premises, infrastructure, equipments available and also counterpart financial support.

In order to manage the situation and planning future projects several discussions were held among the institutions such as Mutual Heritage Centre of CCF, DOA, Department of National Museums, PGIAR of the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and the University of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam Historical Museum and National Museum of Ethnology from Netherlands and Western Australian Maritime Archaeology Museum.

As the final outcome of those discussions all the institutions agreed to commence a 03 years project related to the Avondster shipwreck which was explored during Galle Harbour project and decided to commence excavation and conservation activities aimed as a training project and all institutions agreed to name this project as "Avondster Project". With the commencement of the Avondster project, and under the approval of DOA, CCF laid the foundation to the birth of the "Maritime Archaeology Unit (MAU) in Sri Lanka" in order to safeguard and manage maritime cultural heritage in Sri Lanka.

On 14th November 2001, Avondster project commenced centring the new MAU building premises and for this project a group of maritime archaeologists and a few waterlogged material conservation experts took part. The trained maritime archaeologist who were trained in Galle Harbour project were working at the land excavation sites of CCF, were attached to the MAU as permanent employees and employees of the DOA and the National Museum Department (NMD) were also participated.

Excavation & research project of the Avondster Shipwreck site is situated in Galle Harbour. The wreck was belongs to VOC Company which was shanked in Galle Harbour in 1659. The government of Netherlands provided funds though the Mutual Heritage Foundation and the excavation project was carried out from 2001 to end of 2004. Under the project the Maritime Archaeology Unit of Sri Lanka (MAU) was established and local archaeologists and conservators were trained for this new field of study (underwater archaeology).



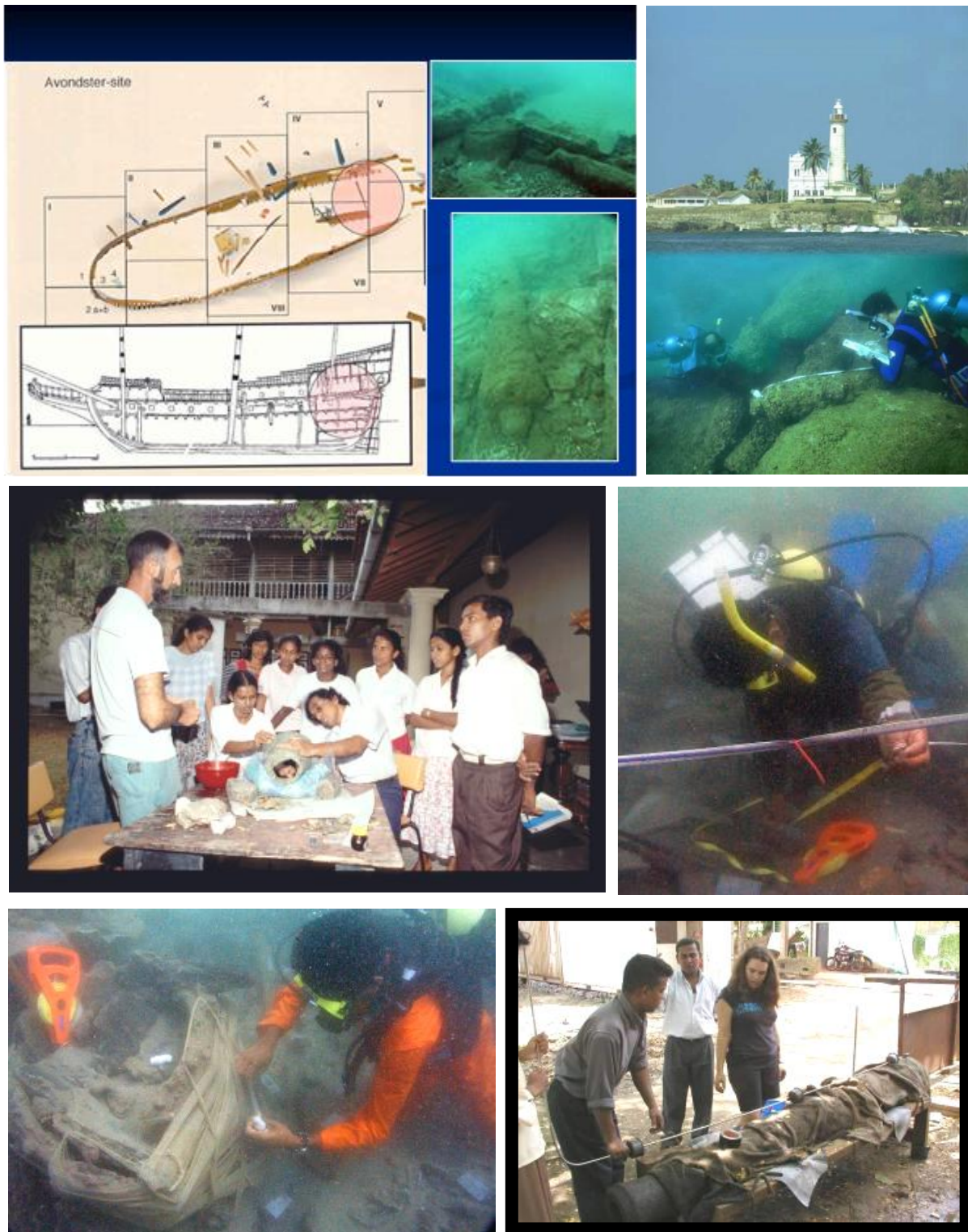
Project team of the Avondster Project.

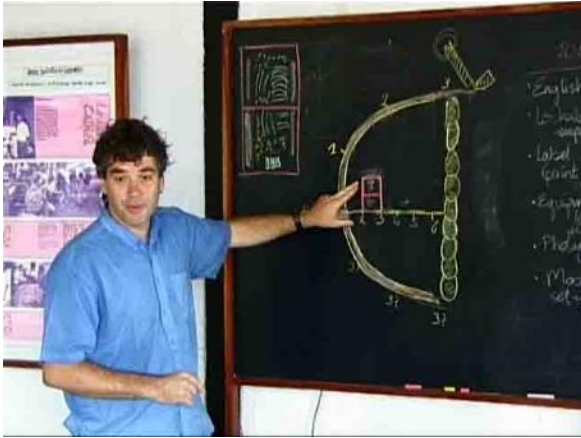
The Avondster (1659)

The Avondster was originally a British ship, captured and modified by the Dutch. After a long life span of long distance trans-oceanic voyages it was assigned to short-haul coastal runs. The vessel was 30 meters long and constructed with two decks. The Avondster was wrecked on 2nd July 1659 while anchored in the Galle harbour. The choice of the Avondster for excavation was however based mainly on the physical condition of the site rather than the identity of the ship. After the ship was discovered in 1993 the site was monitored; it became clear that the wreck was increasingly exposed through changes in the dynamics of the seabed, and it was considered important to implement a rescue archaeology project on the site to safeguard this important collection. From 2001 till the end of 2004 important sections of the ship have been excavated and conserved in-situ. The Avondster project which was consisted of 03 major excavation namely, Bow section, Mid-ship Area and Stern Section of the ship.

Under the Avondster project the Sri Lankan team of archaeologists and conservators were trained to implement effective and professional maritime archaeology. The site was surveyed and recorded systematically. It was a slow process. The aim, however, was not only to survey but, it was through this process that the team was trained in different methods and theories. After the surveys and the recordings, the team was set up to do the first excavation.

During the execution of the project a group of well skilled and talented team of maritime archaeologists and conservators who was able to safe guards and manage maritime cultural heritage of Sri Lanka individually was created. It was very special that in the Avondster project, maritime archaeologists from South American countries such as Argentina, Mexico, Uruguay were also took part and gained training in maritime archaeology. The Avondster project was closed on the 23rd December 2004 and the group of foreign specialists who handed over the destiny of maritime cultural heritage of Sri Lanka in hands of Sri Lanka Team, departed on the same day to their motherlands.







Just after 03 days of the closing of the project on the 26th December 2006 the tsunami disaster was hit the bay of Galle thereby taking back 60% of the artefacts explored and conserved from Galle Harbour back to the sea bed. When the tsunami was hitting Galle, there had been a huge amount of fully conserved and partially conserved movable artefacts in the new MAU building. Not only that diving equipments, computers, still cameras, video cameras and a large amount of drawings which had been drawn for years were taken to the sea by the disastrous tsunami waves. Only the roof of the MAU building was remained and the luckiest thing was that any of the human resource who was trained in the previous projects was not affected at all. However, 03 publication were published in relation to the Avondster Project.

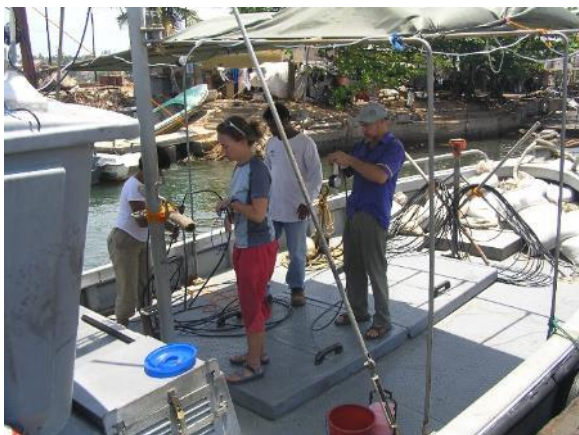
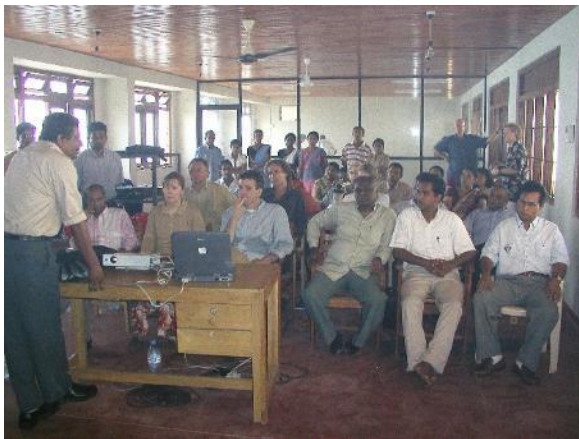


After the tsunami.



After tsunami

Due to the hazard happened and to reduce the damage occurred, maritime archaeologists and conservators team of got together as soon as possible and commenced collecting the non-damaged and the partially damaged artefacts eagerly and requested a proper place from the Government of Sri Lanka to carry out conservation processes in related to the artefacts. Government provided the team with a suitable place for the establishment of the MAU. After tsunami disaster, aids were provided by Australian Institute of Maritime Archaeology (AIMA), Cultural Emergency Response (CER) of the Netherlands, The Netherlands Cultural Fund, and Amsterdam Historical Museum eagerly provided relevant equipments and funds to commence the conservation activities of the cannon and anchor of the Avondster near the new building premises and the diving section, administrative section, library and the Data Processing Unit were also established with in the same building, with the support of the foreigners who came in as a relief teams. Nearly three months after the tsunami destroyed the facilities, the team were in a position to resume their activities.



On 24th March 2007 the new building for the MAU was officially opened and the basic infrastructure was restored and the recovered artefacts placed back in conservation. At this time reconstruction actions of the former building of MAU was handled by CCF and after the reconstruction were completed that building was used as MAU diving section and also as a wet material conservation section. Meanwhile the rest of the sections were established in the new building that was gained after tsunami. Since then the MAH is continuing its operation around Sri Lanka with 10 underwater archaeologists led by Rasika Muthucumarana.

After the tsunami disaster, some of the officers in MAU team requested them to be attached to the surface archaeological projects of the CCF and transferred themselves to those projects while some of the officers who were appointed to MAU from DOA and NMD were also made request and transferred themselves to their mother departments. There by it remained a few members with the MAU team. The team was limited to 04 maritime archaeologist and 02 conservators, therefore most of the field works were limited only to Galle Harbour. Among them, before the tsunami disaster during the Avondster project, the Avondster shipwreck was applied with *in-situ* preservation treatment and monitoring this was done by this small team. Also surveying and sketching the site J, Site E, Site A, site N and site O was also included to the tasks done by this small team.

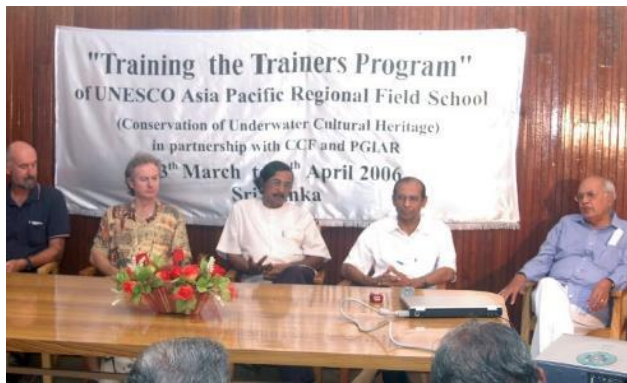
2006-2008 UNESCO Field School Project

First Field School Programme

In November 2003, during the UNESCO Asia Pacific regional meeting held with the experts of ICOMOS International Committee on the Underwater Cultural Heritage (ICUCH) at Hong Kong a decision was taken to establish a field school within the zone to train maritime archaeologists, conservators and heritage managers who are needed for the zone. At the end of that meeting, ICUCH decided their annual meeting to be held at Galle. During the meeting the experts visited Galle the MAU premises and admired the tasks carried out by the maritime archaeologists and conservators and also paid a visit to Avondster shipwreck. Accordingly they unanimously decided that Galle is the best place to establish a maritime archaeology field training school in the Asian pacific region. As a result, with the allocations provided by UNESCO with support of Norwegian Government for a short training program (Initial Training) for the team members of the MAU to prepare them for the future field school project. After obtaining money from the UNESCO, the field school was commenced in Galle which was to be continued for whole 04 weeks in 2006.

As participants for this field school, 12 Sri Lankan's participated; who were both maritime archaeologists and conservators and one Chinese maritime archaeologist was also participated. The main objective of this field school was to make the participants as Training of Trainers (TOT) of the forth coming field school, expertise were given from India, Netherlands, Australia and from Nautical Archaeological society of UK. As the field school was structurally organized with theoretical and practical programmers, the participants' knowledge was upgraded considerably.





Field School Programme in 2007

UNESCO and ICCROM organized a "Cultural Impact Assessment and Maritime Archaeology" Field School in Galle, Sri Lanka from 1-9 April 2007, under the Asian Academy for Heritage Management (AAHM). The training was implemented in partnership with the PGIAR of the University of Kelaniya, the CCF and the Flinders University of Australia. Eighteen participants from eight countries (Australia, United Kingdom, Malaysia, Japan, Philippine, Pakistan, Thailand, and Sri Lanka) were offered the opportunity to study heritage conservation under the guidance of leading experts in this field. The curriculum of the nine-day training program consisted of lectures on topics ranging from conservation legislation to underwater archaeology, group work, field trips to heritage sites in Galle as well as diving sessions at several underwater heritage sites in the bay of Galle.



Second Field School Programme in 2008

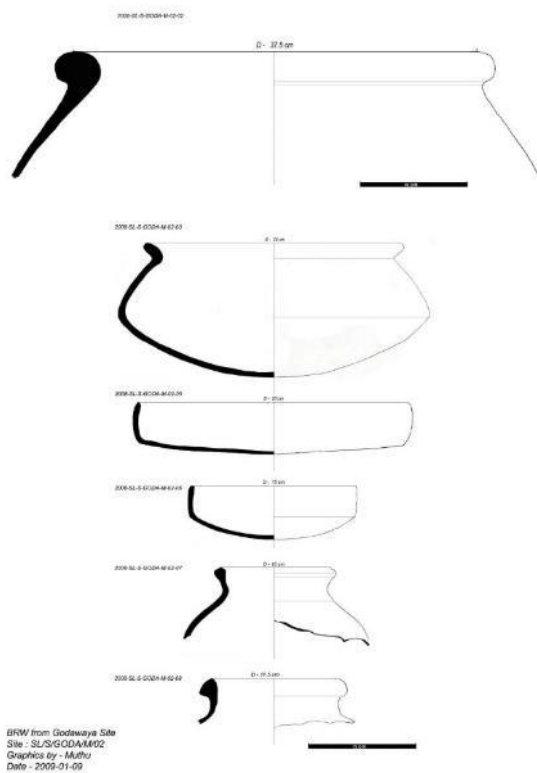
As a result of the proposed regional field school program, the second field school was organized in Galle in the year 2008 according to the instructions provided by UNESCO and that was named as the "Advance Training of the Trainers program" an exploration was carried out to find suitable shipwreck for training purposes. It aims to find a wooden wreck with regional/ Asian shipbuilding features, rather than a European sailing ship or an iron wreck. The short term exploration was partly funded by the UNESCO and carried out by MAU-CCF. The exploration was proposed to carry out from Kirinda to Galle. During the exploration at Godawaya (between Hambantota & Ambalantota) MAU found a wooden wreck in 32m depth, looks more older than the colonial period and ideal for the training purposes. The wreck is known as the Godawaya wooden wreck and later it was dated back to 1st century BC and as the oldest wreck site in the Asia Pacific region.





UNESCO Maritime Archaeology Field School Program 2008.





Field School Program 2008 - the exploration at Great Basses and Godawaya.

Although the second field school ended successfully, unfortunately due to the terrorism background at the impermanency created through that made UNESCO changed their mind, so Asia Pacific regional field school for maritime archaeology was shifted to Bangkok. Thereafter, organizing that field school was recommended to the Underwater Archaeology Division (UAD) at Chanthaburi, Thailand.

Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) Project of Galle

At the beginning of 2007, the project proposal for upgrading Galle Harbour as a commercial service Harbour which was planned in 1997, but failed to progress due to the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) done in the meantime, came up again and as a result of the influence made by the MAU team over the concept, ports authority agreed to allocate funds to the DOA implementation of an AIA project. In order to activate this AIA project, DOA invited MAU and the MADWAM as a consultant to undertake a maritime archaeological survey of Galle Harbour as part of an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) process. The scope of the consultancy was to carry out a maritime archaeological survey, and provide a report to the DASL outlining the impact of the proposed Galle Port development on the underwater cultural heritage of Galle Harbour. The survey took place between 14 November and 2 December 2007.

Related to the proposal of Port Developmental Project, the areas or the archaeological sites which directly affected by the constructions were examined in detail by carrying out a detail survey by using remote sensing equipment was the main objective of conducting AIA. Maritime archaeologists from MADWAM, Green, Anderson, Souter, participated in handling technical equipment such as; modern side scan sonar, magnetometer, GPS, and the local team dedicated and helped with the above team to succeed in their missions of AIA.

During this AIA project, a bigger attention was paid to the Hercules (1661) shipwreck, which was sunken close to Gibert Island which was to be buried due to the constructions done for the express way entrance of Galle Harbour developmental project. As a result of the explorations carried out around this site, the amount of canons that had been found from the Hercules (1661) shipwreck got increased from 32 up to 36. As a result of the excavations, few wooden frames that belonged to the shipwreck were also discovered which were totally covered by sand. Also a large number of cannon balls and more movable artefacts had been explored during this project.

At the end of the AIA project, the final report prepared was handed over to the Ports Authority of Sri Lanka by the DOA and of its copy which was recommended by the archaeologists, was handed over to UNESCO. According the second AIA project also got succeeded thus UNESCO influenced Sri Lankan ports Authority to make Galle Harbour a "Leisure port", not a "commercial port". Being agreed to that concept, Ports Authority of Sri Lanka is now being examining the needed abilities to upgrade Galle Harbour as a "Leisure Harbour".

Godawaya Collaboration Project in 2010

As a part of the regional field school project and as an expert exchange program 06 regional maritime archaeologists from 04 countries came to Sri Lanka for a joint field work session (two weeks) to survey on the Godawaya ancient shipwreck site. The program was hosted by the CCF, UNESCO and the Netherlands Cultural Fund. 03 from Indonesia, 01 from Malaysia, 01 from Philippines and 01 from India came to work with

MAU team. The field work was carried out successfully and few international publications were done after that.



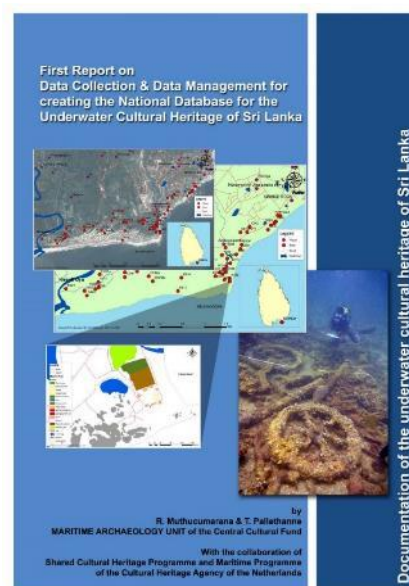
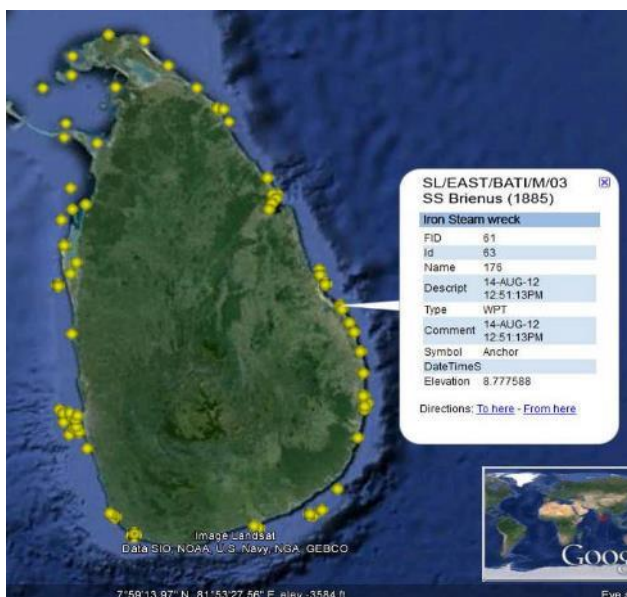
NIO Collaboration Project/ NW Exploration - 2011

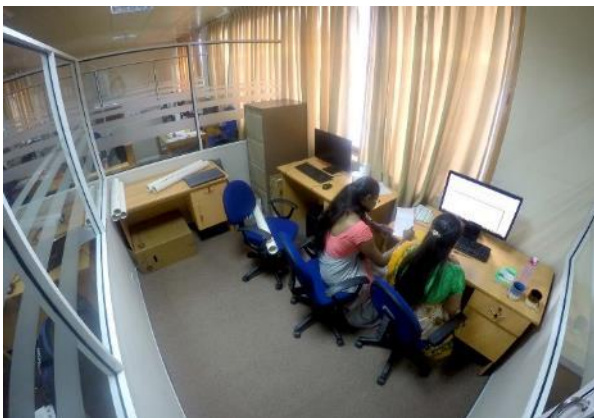
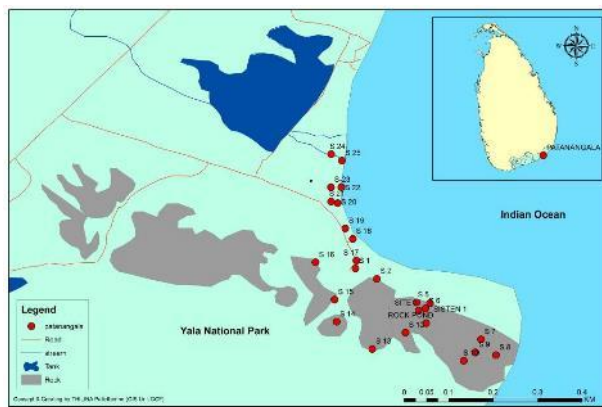
In 2011 two marine archaeologists from India (National Oceanographic Institute of Goa) came to Sri Lanka and again they participated to the exploration carried out by MAU team along the Northwest coast. The exploration was also partly funded by UNESCO. Halawatha and Kalpitiya areas was explored and a joint publication was done afterword.



Netherlands funded project for GIS

Netherlands Cultural Fund (NCF) and the MAU of CCF did signed a MOU to carry out a joint research and GIS project to build a database for the Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH) of Sri Lanka. Netherland is partly fund for the project and the MAU carried out the project. GIS unit was established in 4th floor of the Sethsiripaya, Colombo and it is functioning as the data collecting (making data base) hub with the other institutes dealing with the UCH. The joint work will remain till 2019 and the database will be maintain by MAU-NCF afterword.







Korean Exchange program

In 2013 MAU of the CCF and the National Research Institute for Maritime Cultural Heritage of South Korea came to an agreement for an exchange expertise program for 05 years. According to the agreement one or two participant from each institute goes to the other for a month and work with that institute. From 2014 the exchange program is in progress.





China-Sri Lanka Joint Project in Search for Wreckages of Zheng He's Fleets off the Coast of Sri Lanka

According to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Institute of Acoustics Chinese Academy of Sciences (People's Republic of China) and The CCF (Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka) in the Search for Wreckages of Zheng He's Fleets off the Coast of Sri Lanka, the two sides have agreed to carry out the first season survey off Sri Lanka in March and April 2015. The ship presently owned by the National Aquatic Resources Agency (NARA) of Sri Lanka was commissioned for the survey. On Chinese side, scientists from Institute of Acoustics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and National Museum of China, attended this survey. On Sri Lankan side, officers from CCF, officers from DOA and officers from Sri Lanka Navy did attended the survey.

Survey was restricted to Sri Lankan coastal waters, basically surrounding the Beruwala harbour and the area demarcated by 10 nautical miles seaward from Waskaduwa and 10 nautical miles seaward from Ahungalla as sector I, and the area 10 nautical miles seaward from Ahungalla and 10 nautical miles seaward from Dodanduwa as sector II. Sometimes, there are a lot of fishing nets in the survey area, especially in night which was dangerous to the equipments. The beds on board were limited. Therefore, the survey was conducted only in daytime. In order to be efficient, the ship departures at 5:30 in the early morning, and came back to harbour at 18:30, before dark every day. Besides the time for ship to go to the survey point and back, there are about 11 hours to survey per day for 20 days.

The first and second season surveys were successfully completed in March and April 2015 and April 2016. According to the Memorandum of Understanding between Institute of Acoustics Chinese Academy of Sciences (People's Republic of China) and The Central Cultural Fund (Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka) in the Search for Wreckages of Zheng He's Fleets off the Coast of Sri Lanka, the two sides have agreed to carry out the sea survey of Sri Lanka. The first season was successfully completed in March and April 2015. It is proposed to continue this survey till the year 2020.



Participation of Members of MAU in international training programmes, workshops and conferences

After Maritime Archaeology Field Schools conducted by UNESCO and ICCROM in the years 2006, 2007 and 2008, three members from MAU received scholarships on 2009 under Australian awards fellowship program, to participate in a six weeks maritime archaeology internal program at Flinders University, South Australia. During this program, participants had the chance to engage with theoretical and practical sessions for three weeks to get involved with the maritime archaeology field school for one week and the rest of the placement of maritime archaeology related institution there for two weeks.

UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Field School Program on Underwater Cultural Heritage, Chanthaburi, Thailand - 2009-2011

Due to the war situation, some diplomatic problems and lack of SL government support the UNESCO field school project was moved to Thailand. From 26th October 2009 to year 2012 the UNESCO field school on Underwater Cultural Heritage held at the Underwater Archaeology Division Training Centre in Ban Tha Chalaeb, Bangkok Municipality, Chanthaburi, Thailand.

As a result of this field school and as one of the leading countries in the region, who carry out maritime archaeology field work every member of the MAU team had the opportunity to participate these field school programs. The organizers held foundation courses, advance courses, field work sessions and few symposiums during this period.

This course was part of the UNESCO regional project, funded by the Royal Government of Norway, entitled "Safeguarding the Underwater Cultural Heritage of Asia and the Pacific: Building Regional Capacities to Protect and Manage Underwater Archaeological Sites through the establishment of a Regional Centre of Excellence Field Training Facility and Programme of Instruction".

During the years of 2009, 2010 and 2011, foundation courses organized by Thailand Underwater Archaeology Division (UAD) for UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Maritime Archaeology Field School, all the MAU members did participated. Also, for the advance course of Geographical Information System (GIS) Field school which was organized by the same institute, one MAU member did participated while other MAU member did participated in the advance course on *in-situ* preservation organized by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Field School.





Members of the MAU did participated the below mentioned international workshops and conferences such as:

- UNESCO Convention for Underwater Cultural Heritage Ratification workshop held in 2012 at Cambodia,
- Society of Historical Archaeology conference (Historical Archaeology and Maritime Archaeology- London) in United Kingdom in 2013
- AIMA conference in Australian National University at Canberra-Australia in 2013,
- 2nd Asia pacific regional conference for underwater cultural heritage at University of Hawaii in 2014,
- ICUA 6th conference on underwater archaeology at Western Australian Maritime Museum in 2016.
- At the first Asia pacific regional conference for underwater cultural heritage at Philippines in 2011, three research papers were presented representing MAU, Sri Lanka.

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