



Title: Malta: a roadmap towards a global Convention.

Theme 2: The Valletta Convention: the next 25 years

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The European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage, or Malta, Convention can be regarded as a watershed in the European management of archaeological heritage. The Convention was a reaction to prospering Europe that made way for numerous infrastructural and development projects that had serious consequences for the archaeological heritage. The Convention defines a standard for the way in which states should manage the archaeological heritage and provides a frame of reference also in countries that have not ratified the convention yet. It has placed archaeology firmly in the world of spatial planning and public decision making.

In 1990 the Charter for the Protection and Management of the Archaeological Heritage, better known as the Lausanne Charter, prepared by the ICOMOS International Committee for Archaeological Heritage Management (ICAHM), was approved by the 9th ICOMOS General Assembly in Lausanne. This Charter lays down principles relating to the different aspects of archaeological heritage management. At the moment ICAHM is working on Guidelines for the Management of Public Archaeological Sites. These will be suggestions made to local stakeholders, should they decide to open an archaeological site to the public.

Now 27 years after Lausanne and 25 years after Malta new economies are rising and building projects and infrastructural activities are increasing in regions where there is no proper, if any, archaeological management infrastructure in place. The urgent issues relating to the management of archaeological heritage that Europe was facing in the 60's and 70's, as well as other issues, are now cause for concern in many other parts of the world and especially developing countries.

In this session we would like to take the opportunity to examine how the ICAHM draft Guidelines correspond with the Malta Convention and management practice in Europe. Furthermore we would like to discuss the influences the Malta convention has had outside of Europe and to explore the possibilities of taking the Malta Convention and the Lausanne Charter as a frame of reference for creating a global Convention for the Protection and Management of Archaeological sites.