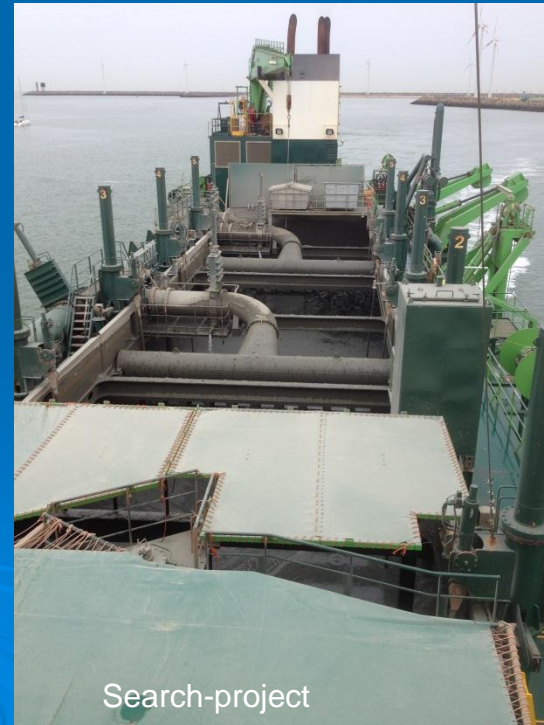


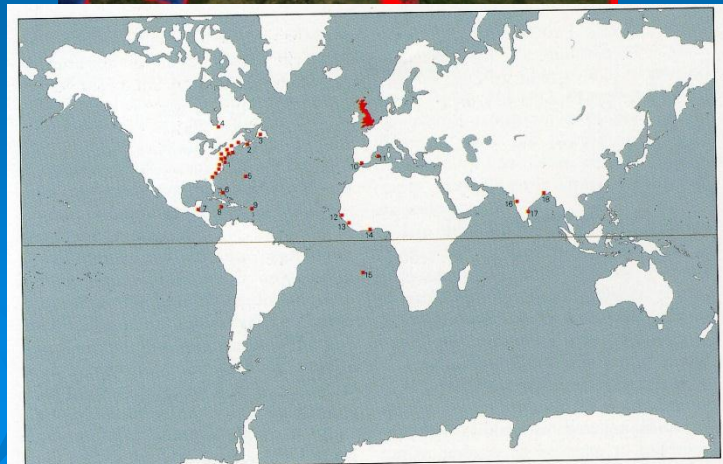
The Need for International Cooperation related to submerged heritage

**Dr. Marnix Pieters
Flanders Heritage
Agency
Marnix.pieters@rwo.
vlaanderen.be**

- **International cooperation is not an option but a must/a need: three good reasons**
- 1. submerged heritage is a very international or even **the** international section of heritage
- 2. The economic activities at sea such as aggregate extraction, fishing, dredging,... having an impact on submerged heritage are organised at an international level.
- 3. Cutting edge research in the field of submerged heritage is technologically challenging and very expensive.



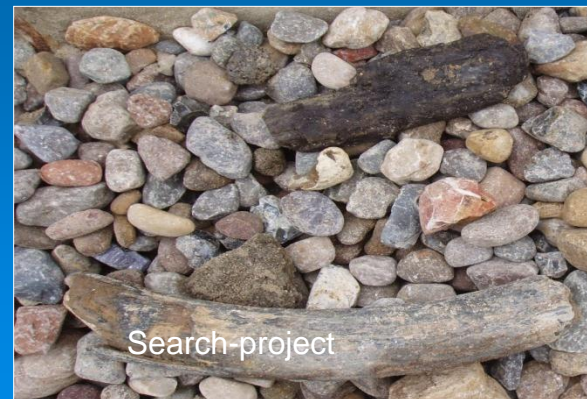
- International cooperation is not an option but a must/a need
- 1. submerged heritage is a very international or even **the** international section of heritage
 - Landmasses may have joined presently separate nations
 - Ships were built to cross maritime borders (in peace or at war): related to WWI
Belgian waters e.g. contain German, British, French and Dutch shipwrecks.
 - Searoutes were connectors instead of barriers



Londonier: Belgian ship, wrecked in UK-waters, chartered by France in 1918 and torpedoed by a German U-boat

- **International cooperation is not an option but a must/a need**
- 2. The economic activities such as aggregate extraction, fishing, dredging,... having an impact on submerged heritage are organised at an international level.

Sand and gravel extractions: no national match between the extraction zones and the landing places of the products: 'British' gravel/sand is frequently landed in Belgium and other countries and viceversa . Aggregate extraction has a strong impact on UCH and without international cooperation valuable cultural assets are sure to be lost. Not only at the level of research, but also in terms of management and policy there is a strong need to cooperate internationally.



- International cooperation is not an option but a must/a need
- 3. Cutting edge research in this field is technologically challenging and as a result of this very expensive.

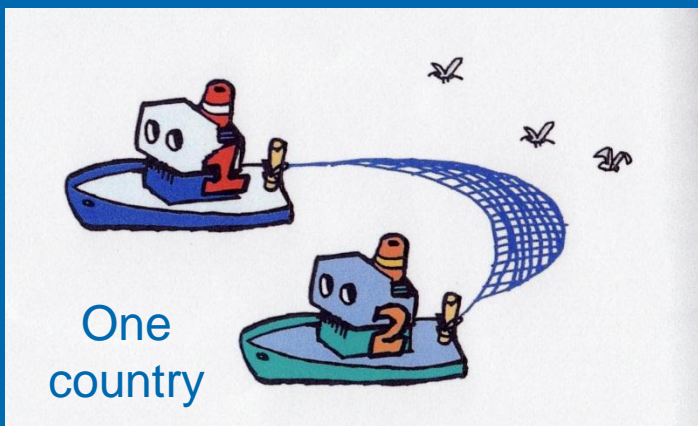
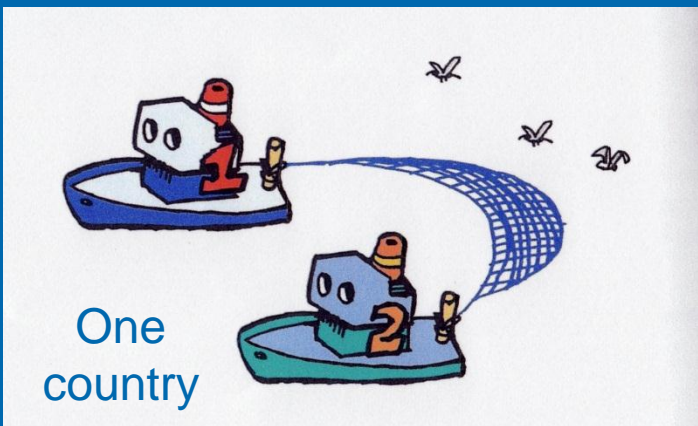


Research infrastructure, human resources (especially qualified divers), specific expertise: exchanges are beneficial economically as well as in research terms

➤ DGMare?

- Given the close relationship between people and the sea throughout its past, the submerged heritage of coastal and marine areas is one of Europe's greatest assets collectively, nationally and locally.
- Although often unremarked, submerged heritage already makes a massive contribution to character and distinctiveness, to identity and social cohesion, and to economic vitality.
- Submerged heritage still has great potential to add further to coastal communities, contributing to 'Blue Growth' in one of Europe's most important maritime sectors, recreation and tourism.
- Omitting submerged heritage from the scope of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries would be a lost opportunity for the European maritime economy.
- The key-word in this context is international cooperation at least at the European level but hopefully also worldwide and DGMare should ideally be the catalyst of it.

➤ International cooperation is not an option but a must/a need



International cooperation is about achieving more at a lower cost and Europe can be instrumental to stimulate this approach.

➤ Last but not least: An open invitation

- To raise the awareness for UCH UNESCO developed a multi-annual project related to submerged WWI heritage. The project will kick-off with an international conference in Bruges (Belgium), June 26-28, 2014 and will continue throughout the WWI centenary commemoration period (2014-2018). We sincerely hope that Europe could be convinced to join this project but above could foster initiatives beneficial for submerged heritage in general, as an important driver for the maritime economy.
- A cordial invitation for you to attend or to participate in this conference in Bruges which will have also follow-up conferences in Turkey (2015), Denmark (2016) and France (2018) and to which almost every European memberstate will take part.

