



## Science Diver in the Blue Economy Era - International Conference

20-21 April 2023 – Valletta, Malta

### DOING RESEARCH UNDERWATER: ACADEMIC EDUCATION, DIVING SKILLS OR COMMERCIAL CERTIFICATION?

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**Keywords:** underwater cultural heritage; scuba-diving; scientific diving; underwater works.

#### ABSTRACT

In Portugal, the existence of a vague legislation and the lack of agreement about what “underwater work” actually is has subjected researchers to the arbitrariness of the authorities responsible for authorizing work in an aquatic environment and created doubts about who can do what underwater.

The survey and study of underwater cultural heritage find itself in a particularly ambiguous position where scientists must resort to volunteer scuba-divers without academic education in order not to be sanctioned or are imposed commercial divers, giving rise to a collaboration between those who have scientific knowledge and those who have diving skills.

Based on our experience, we share some examples of underwater work where researchers sought a balance between complying with legislation and, at the same time, finding an answer to their scientific questions, highlighting why diving is important for underwater research.