

Proposal for a "Charter of Preventive Archaeology"

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Abstract:

Regarding Preventive Archaeology, there is no standard code such as that established by the "European Convention on Restoration", also known as the Valletta Charter. As the papers in this session indicate, the current situation in various countries – both from a technical/operational and legislative standpoint – is diverse and heterogeneous, and Preventive Archaeology is often confused with Emergency Archaeology, i.e., the analysis linked to a single project involving excavation for construction, land reclamation, or road construction on a limited territory, often confined to a territorial subdivision that certainly did not exist in past eras. Therefore, a broad-based initial assessment is necessary before each individual project can be incorporated. This also requires consideration of the training process for those working in this field. Not just specialists, but super-specialists, because Preventive Archaeology requires knowledge not just of a single type of material culture remains or a specific period, but rather a breadth of knowledge from Prehistory to the Middle Ages, from the study of Landscape Archaeology to the analysis of ancient roads, trade, and so on. It is certainly not possible to assess the presence of flint, leaving aside ceramics or bronze or bones. The analysis of the aforementioned data and comparison with the training process for the "Prevention Archaeologists" will be the basic principles for developing a "Charter of Preventive Archaeology" that can be ratified by various nations.