

A bronze sculpture of a boat with several figures, set against a dark teal background. The sculpture depicts a group of people in a small boat, with one figure in the foreground looking out towards the left. The background is a solid dark teal color.

# Sea change: Marine cultural heritage and the world ocean

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A diver in a red and black wetsuit is holding a large, ancient, and heavily encrusted object underwater. The object appears to be a large, curved piece of metal or stone, possibly a sword hilt or a large bracelet, covered in a thick layer of coral and other marine growth. The diver is looking at the object with interest. The background shows a rocky underwater environment with some coral and a blueish tint from the water.

# What is marine cultural heritage?

**“All traces of human existence having a cultural, historical, or archaeological character which have been partially or totally under water, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years”  
2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage**

# Outline

- What is the ocean?
- A multiple and global ocean
- Changing views of the ocean
- Marine cultural heritage as a frontier?
  - Material/spatial
  - Knowledge
  - Governance
- Conclusion: Frontiers of heritage

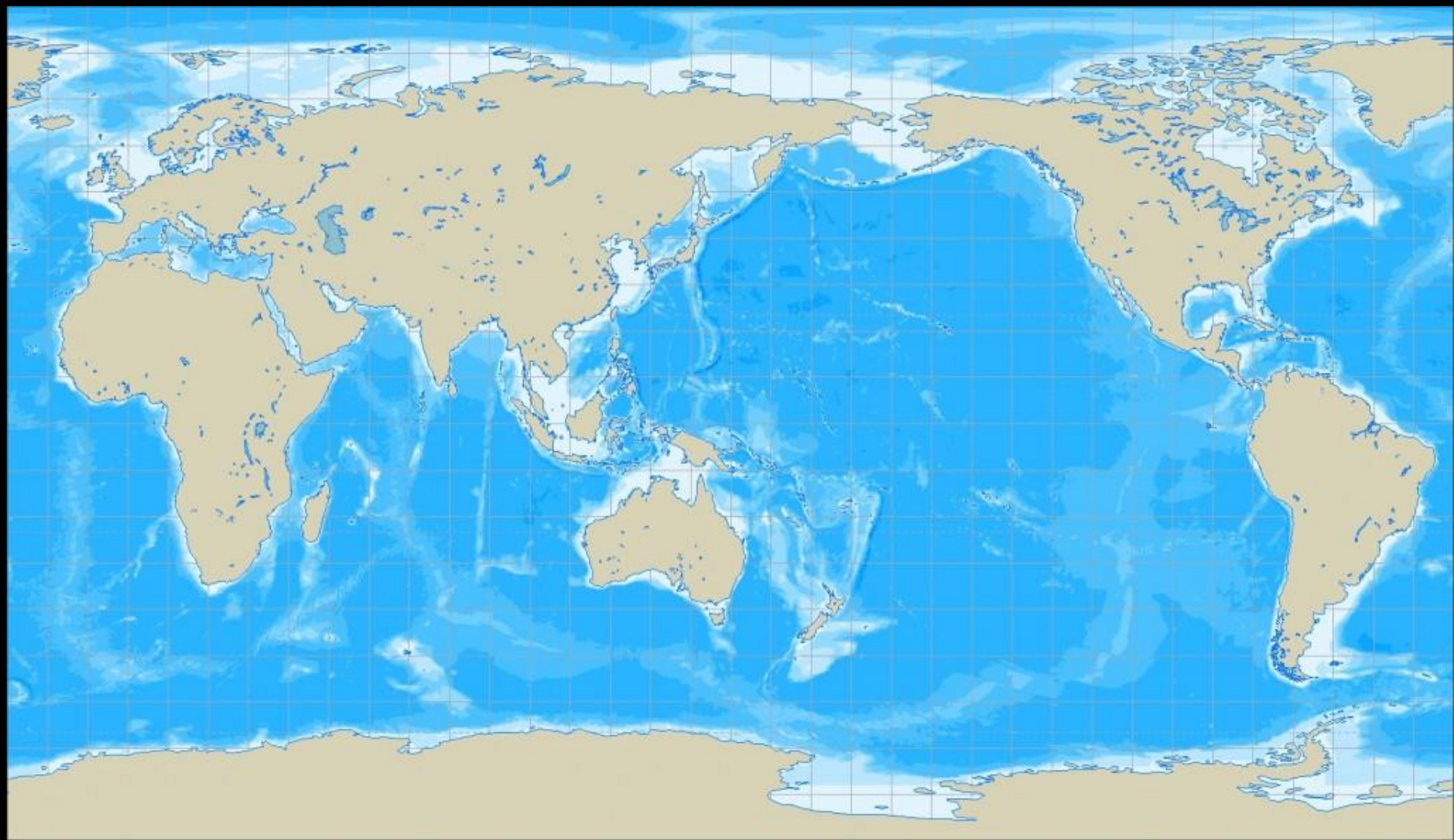
**Picture the Ocean**













Source: Google Earth





# Planetary environmental politics

**Local-global linkages**

**North-South cooperation**

**Intergenerational timescales**

**Earth-systems viewpoint**

**Inter/trans-disciplinary knowledge**

Adapted from Litfin, 2003

# The World Ocean

A globe of the Earth showing complex ocean circulation patterns. The patterns are represented by dense, swirling lines of red, orange, and blue, indicating different temperatures and flow directions. The lines are most prominent in the mid-latitudes, showing large-scale gyres and currents. The background is black, making the colorful lines stand out.

From “a giant sewer” ...

... to central to life on Earth

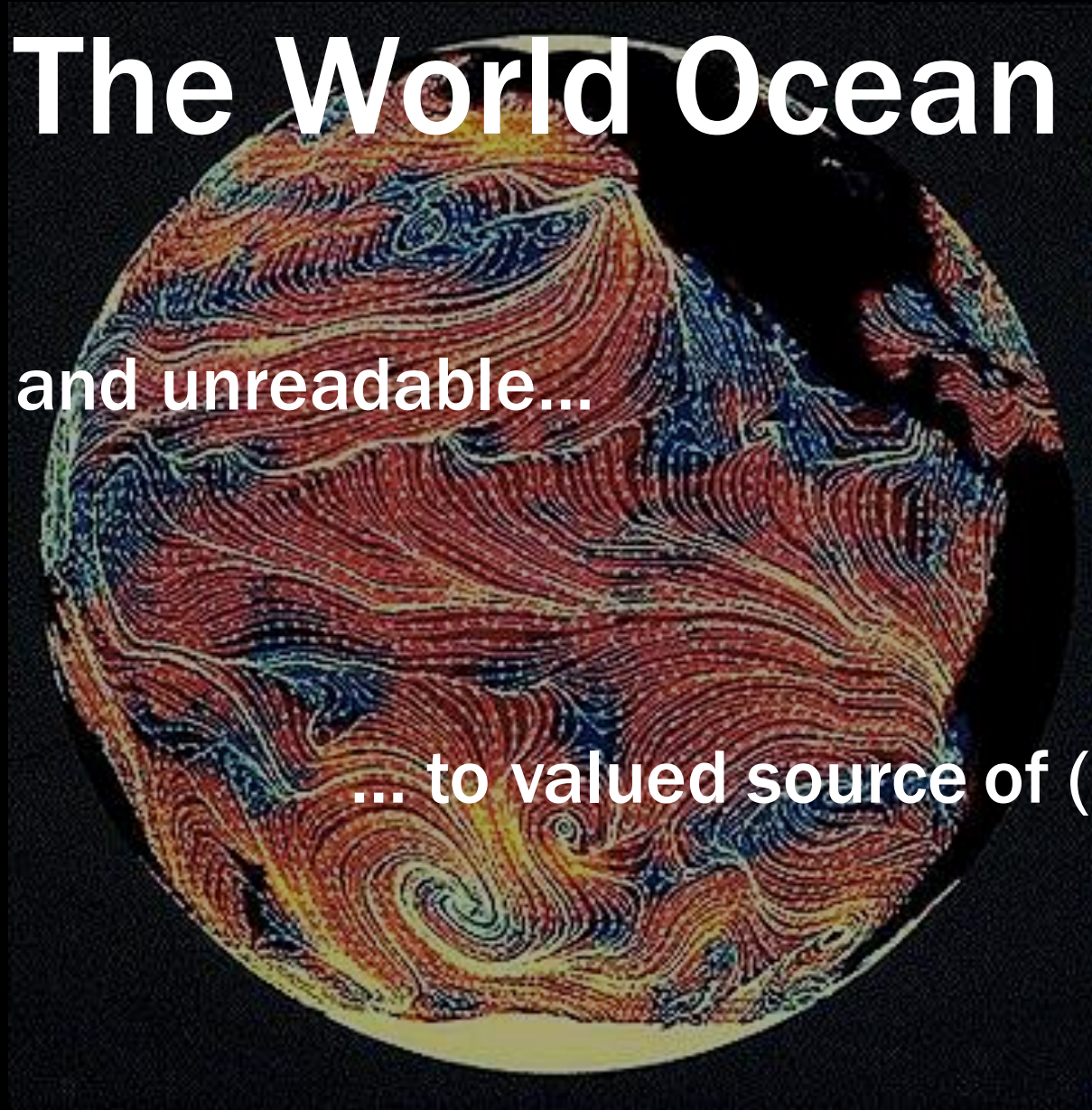
**“One of the most important cultural and scientific shifts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”** (Oreskes 2014, p. 384)



# The World Ocean

From unwritable and unreadable...

... to valued source of (hidden) histories



The background consists of several overlapping, wavy, organic shapes in shades of blue and green. The topmost shape is a light blue, followed by a darker teal, then a medium green, and finally a dark blue at the bottom. The text is centered over the teal and green sections.

# Frontiers of Marine Cultural Heritage



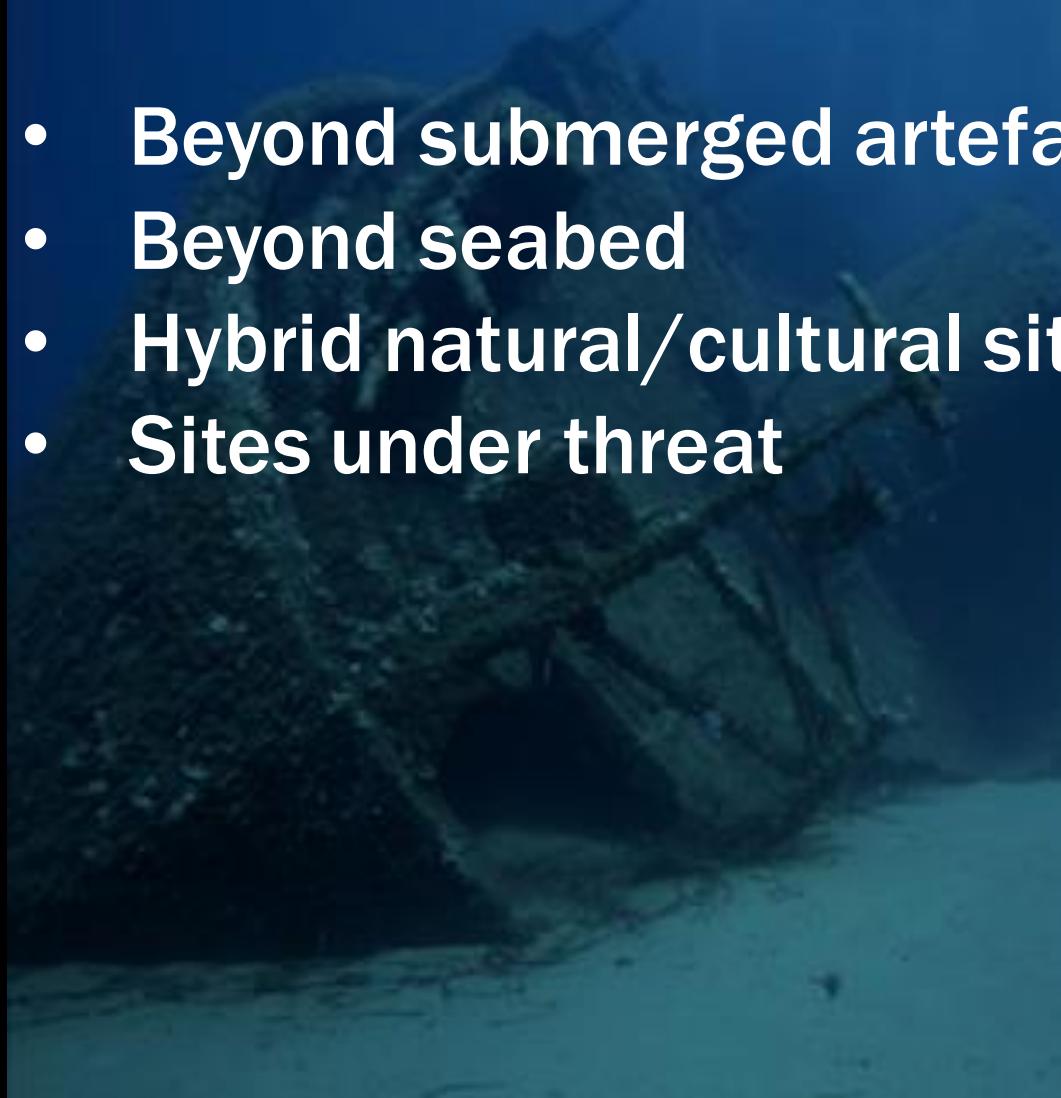


**Spatial/material frontier**



# Spatial/material frontier

- Beyond submerged artefacts
- Beyond seabed
- Hybrid natural/cultural sites
- Sites under threat





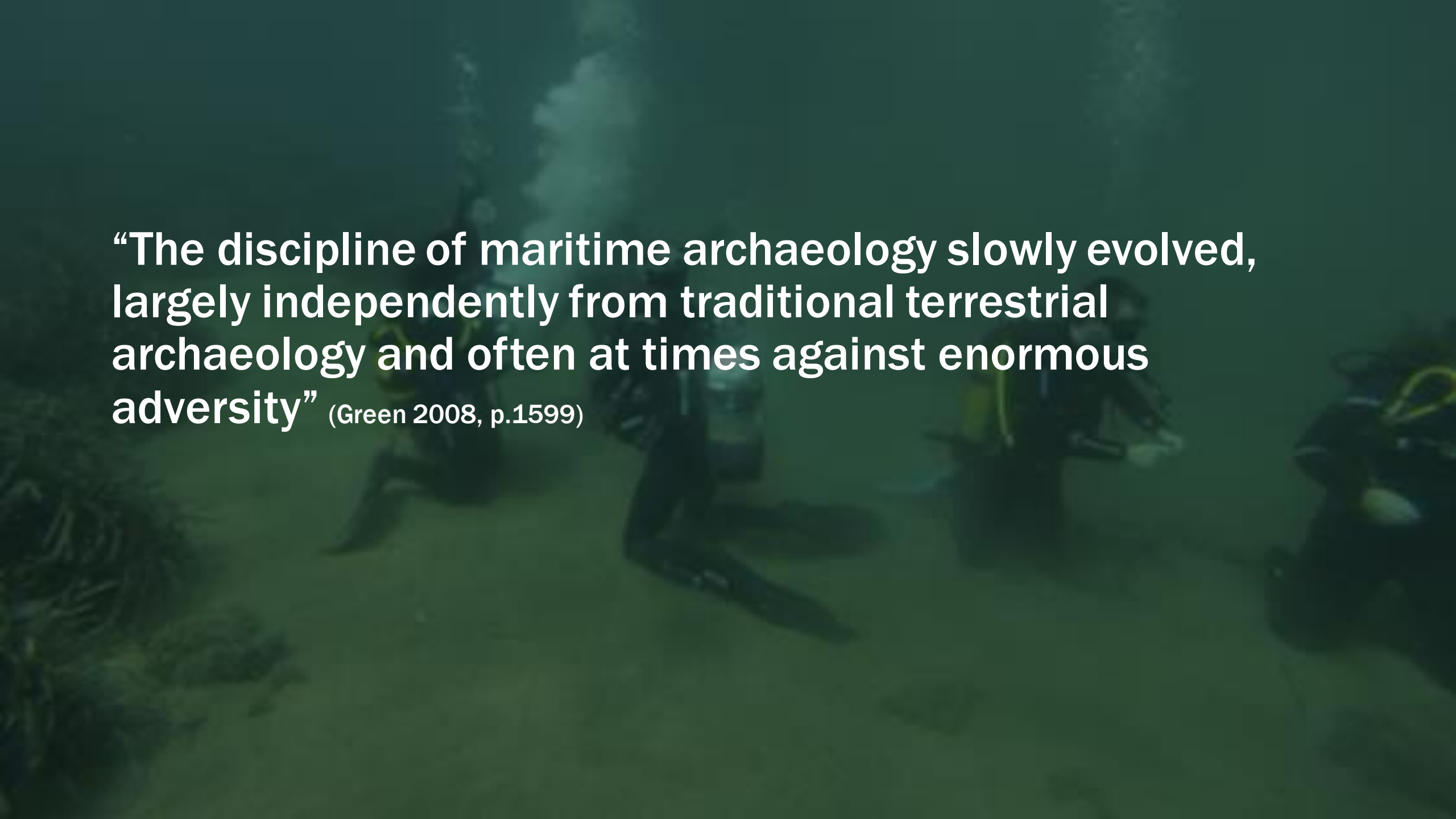
**“The growth regions for twenty-first century maritime archaeology — the seas and coasts of Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Arctic and Antarctic — are all those areas most likely to be fought over in the future as nations, corporations and individuals alike compete over increasingly scarce resources” (Flatman 2009, p.5)**

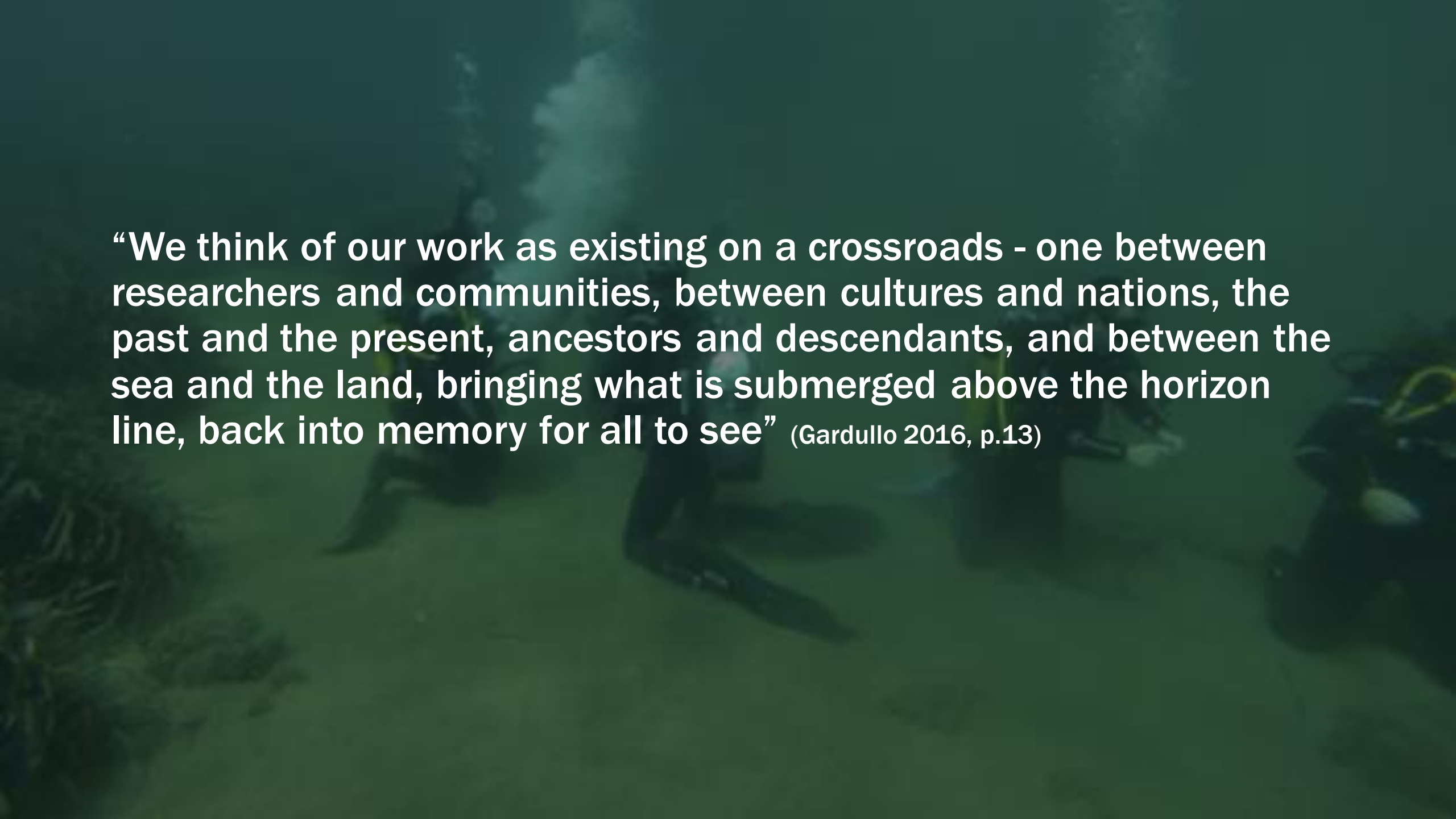
A dimly lit underwater scene with four divers. Bubbles rise from the divers, and the water has a greenish tint. The text 'Knowledge frontier' is centered in white.

**Knowledge frontier**



**“The discipline of maritime archaeology slowly evolved, largely independently from traditional terrestrial archaeology and often at times against enormous adversity”** (Green 2008, p.1599)



An underwater photograph showing several divers in a murky, greenish-blue environment. The divers are silhouetted against the light filtering down from above. The water is slightly hazy, and the overall tone is somber and contemplative.

**“We think of our work as existing on a crossroads - one between researchers and communities, between cultures and nations, the past and the present, ancestors and descendants, and between the sea and the land, bringing what is submerged above the horizon line, back into memory for all to see” (Gardullo 2016, p.13)**

# Governance frontier





# Principles of the Convention

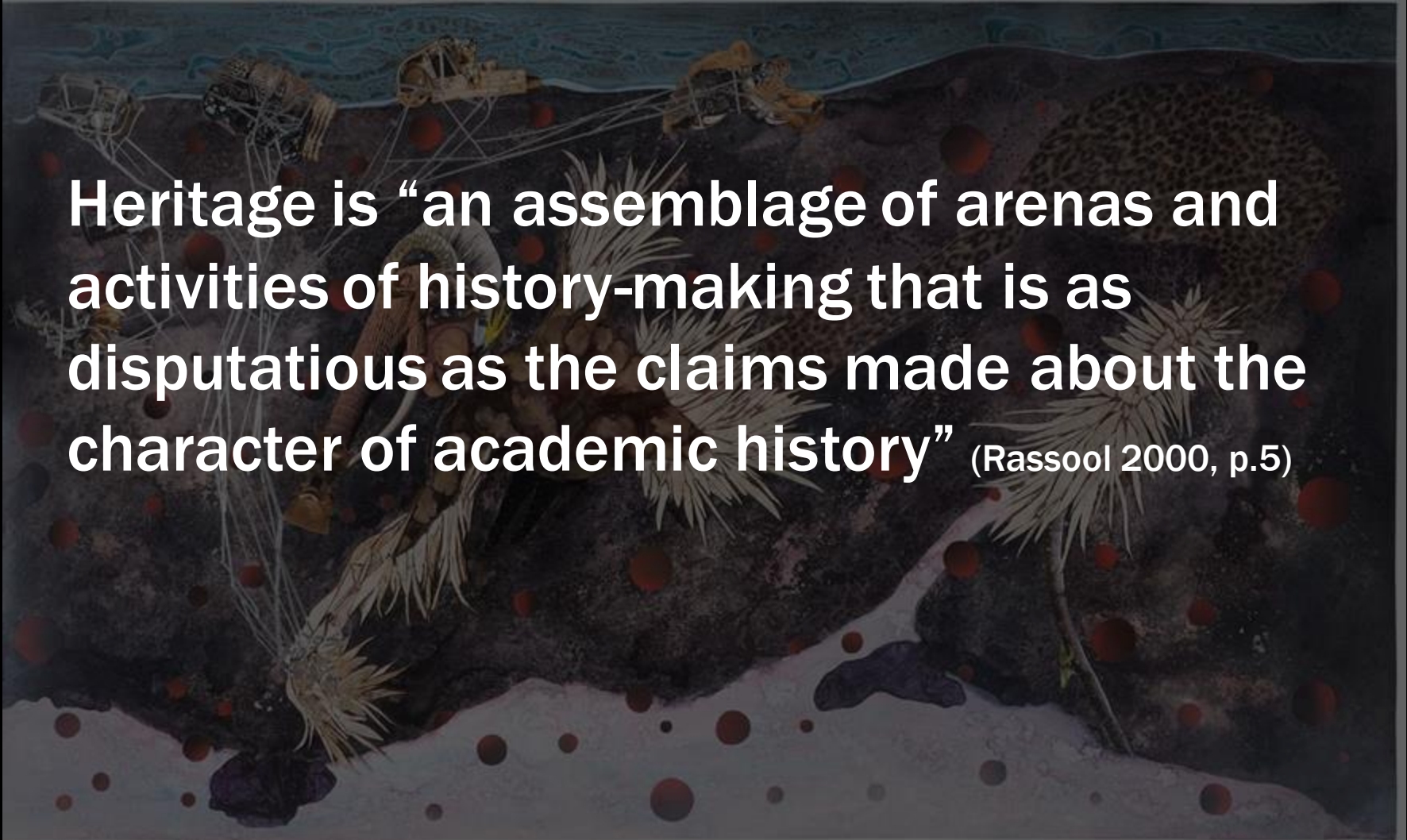
1. Obligation to protect MCH
2. Preference for *in situ* preservation
3. Rejection of commercial exploitation
4. Jurisdiction of coastal states in contiguous zone balanced with international cooperation
5. Support for international training and technology transfer

# Conclusion: Frontiers of Heritage



Wangechi Mutu: Trolling History





Heritage is “an assemblage of arenas and activities of history-making that is as disputatious as the claims made about the character of academic history” (Rassool 2000, p.5)



A bronze sculpture of a boat, likely a lifeboat, with several figures inside. The figures are depicted in various poses, some looking out, others looking down. The boat is tilted upwards, suggesting it is being launched or is in the process of saving lives. The background is a dark teal color.

# Thank you

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