

Economy and the Maritime Cultural Landscape of Greece: An Introduction

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The idea for this panel session was to get people thinking about the many ancient settlements along the coastlines of mainland Greece, the Peloponnese, and the Greek islands, to look at their roles in local, regional and national economies and their various relationships with the sea. Many of these settlements became important transition points, serving as centres for trading and distribution. From a social perspective they were often the first point of contact for seafarers, travellers and migrants, playing an important part in the diffusion of cultural, political and religious ideologies.

In spite of their importance throughout Greece, coastal sites remain understudied, and due to their location are often at risk of destruction from human and natural interventions. The ancient landscapes that greeted 18th and 19th century travellers as they wandered through Greece are now gone, making our attempts at evaluating life beside the sea even more challenging.

The Call for Papers for this panel invited interested parties to explore the cultural, economic, political, religious, social, technical, industrial and environmental aspects of these ancient coastal landscapes and, where applicable, to move away from the traditional approach that treats terrestrial and underwater evidence as separate disciplines. The response enabled us to hold two panel sessions with an interesting selection of topics covering the Bronze Age, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic and Roman periods, all of which led to some interesting debate and discussion. The aim of this panel was to generate interest and discussion and I would like to thank the presenters, Marco Schugk, Michael Loy, Chiara Maria Mauro, Jane E. Francis, and George W. M. Harrison, for helping us achieve this.