

SVENSK STANDARD

SS-EN 16873:2016



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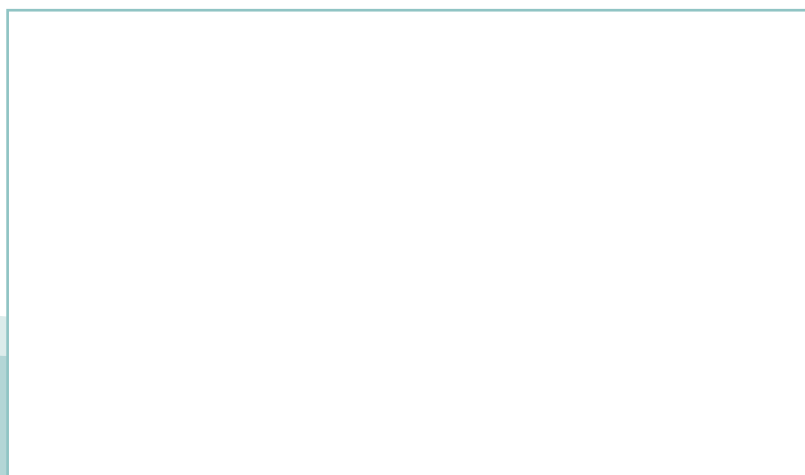
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Bevarande av kulturarv – Riktlinjer för hantering av vattendränkt trä i landarkeologisk kontext

Conservation of cultural heritage – Guidelines for the management of waterlogged wood on archaeological terrestrial sites



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Denna standard är framtagen av kommittén för Bevarande av kulturarv, SIS/TK 479.

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EUROPEAN STANDARD

EN 16873

NORME EUROPÉENNE

EUROPÄISCHE NORM

November 2016

ICS 97.195; 79.040

English Version

Conservation of cultural heritage - Guidelines for the management of waterlogged wood on archaeological terrestrial sites

Conservation du patrimoine culturel - Lignes directrices pour la gestion du bois gorgé d'eau sur les sites terrestres présentant un intérêt archéologique

Erhaltung des kulturellen Erbes - Leitlinien für die Handhabung von Nassholz an terrestrischen archäologischen Stätten

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 26 September 2016.

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EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION
COMITÉ EUROPÉEN DE NORMALISATION
EUROPÄISCHES KOMITEE FÜR NORMUNG

CEN-CENELEC Management Centre: Avenue Marnix 17, B-1000 Brussels

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European foreword

This document (EN 16873:2016) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 346 “Conservation of Cultural Heritage”, the secretariat of which is held by UNI.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2017, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2017.

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SS-EN 16873:2016 (E)**Introduction**

The successful management of archaeological wood finds from waterlogged sites starts in the planning phase of any excavation. From the moment of exposure, waterlogged wood finds are extremely vulnerable to a range of man-made and natural threats. There is a real risk of losing the artefact if it is not handled and conserved properly. To minimize these threats and prevent damage, several actions shall be taken in the field which shall include proper management of the site and handling of the finds. These activities should be carried out by professionals, specifically qualified in the management and handling of waterlogged archaeological wood.

1 Scope

This European standard provides guidelines for safeguarding waterlogged wood on terrestrial sites of archaeological or historical significance. It deals with the protection of archaeological and historical waterlogged wood, from the time of exposure during and after excavation, until it reaches the conservation laboratory. The standard cannot be applied to the management of controlled reburial, *in situ* preservation, long term post excavation storage or excavations under water. Composite artefacts, and other waterlogged materials are specifically excluded from this standard.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

Not applicable.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

deposition archive

formal handing over of the entire excavation record, including the conserved artefacts, to a museum or other receiving institution

3.2

block-lifting

removal of a fragile find by lifting from the ground with surrounding burial matrix, with or without extra support, limiting the risk of damage

3.3

burial matrix

soil, peat, sediment or other medium found in direct contact with an artefact

3.4

cleaning

removal of unwanted material from an object

Note 1 to entry the criteria for something being “unwanted” always have to be stated, e.g. potentially damaging, obscuring detail, un-aesthetic

[SOURCE: EN 15898:2011, definition 3.5.3]

3.5

condition

physical state of an object at a particular time

[SOURCE: EN 15898:2011, definition 3.2.1, modified, Note 1 to entry deleted]

3.6

conservation

active remedial treatment of waterlogged wooden finds designed to prevent further deterioration or degradation and bring them into a stabilized condition for research, archiving or museum display

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3.7

controlled reburial

systematic redeposition of finds at the original excavation site or another appropriate location for the purposes of their long term preservation

3.8

cushioning

provision of soft but stable packing or padding material beneath and around fragile artefacts to provide protection, support and shock absorption, so as to mitigate the risk of damage during lifting, handling and moving

3.9

degradation

result of the process of wood deterioration through physical, chemical and biological factors

3.10

discarding

disposal of wood material through the considered application of a selection and retention policy

3.11

in-situ preservation

maintaining finds in their original context whilst monitoring and controlling factors influencing degradation in the burial matrix

3.12

labelling

process of fastening a label or tag carrying a unique identification number or code onto the artefact and/or its packaging

3.13

lifting

removal of an artefact from its buried position in the ground

Note 1 to entry: Lifting techniques aim to support and protect the wood surface and overall structure.

3.14

maintenance

periodic preventive conservation actions aimed at sustaining an object in an appropriate condition to retain its significance

[SOURCE: EN 15898:2011, definition 3.4.1, modified, examples deleted]

3.15

post excavation storage

long term maintenance off-site before commencement of further recording, analysis and conservation treatment

3.16

preservation by record

data generated from a process of documentation will become the only evidence of a find after it has been discarded

3.17**recording**

systematic documentation of the artefact's original position, context, dimensions, appearance, structure and other features, using a range of techniques

3.18**revealing**

removal of burial matrix covering the find or artefact during excavation

3.19**sampling**

process of removing a sample

[SOURCE: EN 16085:2012, definition 3.3]

3.20**temporary storage**

maintenance of finds on site after excavation until transport or other decisions relating the future of the finds are made

3.21**waterlogged site**

wet or water saturated burial environment

3.22**waterlogged wood**

wood whose internal structure has been completely filled with water through long term burial in a water saturated environment

3.23**wood conversion**

evidence for wood processing and wood working

4 Guidelines for management of waterlogged archaeological wood

4.1 Introduction

Waterlogged wood remains, bearing signs of human working, are usually referred to as artefacts. Unworked archeobotanical wood finds may also be part of the assemblage recovered. Artefacts and archeobotanical finds bear witness to past societies and cultures, and have an archaeological value and significance for which they are either preserved by record or through conservation treatment, to form part of a permanent archive for research and dissemination.

Many different types of terrestrial waterlogged environments are likely to contain archaeological wood. Most usually encountered are bogs and wetlands, palæo river channels, urban waterlogged deposits, and 'dry' occupation sites containing pits and wells that penetrate beneath the water table and contain waterlogged organic artefacts.

The types of find encountered on such sites can vary between individual small artefacts to large complex structures such as prehistoric track ways or platforms built of a large number of wood elements, logboats and ship remains, building foundations, domestic assemblages and manufacturing waste. The state of degradation of wood is variable and the visual appearance and integrity of the wood is often misleading.