

POSITION PAPIER

Cultural Heritage in a Changing Climate Contributions from Cultural Heritage Stakeholders and Climate Science

Numerous German institutions from the fields of cultural heritage and climate science are taking the current negative effects of climate change on cultural heritage as an opportunity to actively engage in climate change mitigation and coping with the consequences of climate change. This commitment seems all the more urgent given that the climate goals of the Paris Climate Agreement have not yet been effectively implemented.

The starting point for this paper was an international meeting of over 150 scientists, the "International Co-sponsored Meeting on Culture, Heritage and Climate Change" (ICSM CHC) organised by UNESCO, ICOMOS and IPCC in December 2021. The aim of the exchange was to integrate cultural contexts more strongly into the international climate discourse and to publicise the added value of culture / cultural heritage and the knowledge of the actors involved in mitigating and adapting to climate change. At the same time, the so-called OMC Group (OMC standing for Open Method of Coordination) is working at EU level to strengthen the resilience of cultural heritage to climate change at various levels.

The following fields of action have been developed from the two final documents "Global Research and Action Agenda" of the ICSM CHC and "Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate Change" of the EU Expert Group:

1. Actions for Working across Knowledge Systems

What knowledge systems do we need to utilise for climate change mitigation and to address the negative impacts of climate change on cultural heritage?

The signatories are in favour of:

- an interdisciplinary exchange and greater consideration of different knowledge systems relevant to mitigating climate impacts on cultural heritage;
- greater networking between cultural heritage and climate sciences in order to develop interdisciplinary approaches to climate adaptation measures;
- greater consideration of local and traditional approaches for increasing resilience to climate change when planning adaptation measures (e.g. local and historical crafts and building techniques).

2. Actions for Empowering Culture and Heritage Stakeholders to Take Action

How can cultural heritage stakeholders be empowered to implement climate action and tackle the negative impacts of climate change on cultural heritage?

The signatories endeavour to:

- regularly include this topic in the working groups of all institutions involved in the paper;
- acknowledge and integrate all aspects of cultural heritage in climate action;
- promote co-operation and exchange of experience between the various cultural heritage institutions on this topic and thus learn from each other;
- strengthen communication, networking and cooperation between public and voluntary stakeholders in order to increase the diversity of people involved in climate action and empower them in the climate discourse;
- advocate for the number of cultural heritage actors required for cultural heritage protection and to ensure the necessary training and further education;
- link (climate science) research and (cultural heritage) practice in order to:
 - o share research results on climate change, identify further research needs and develop practical adaptation solutions;
 - o put new findings and methods from climate science into practice more quickly.

3. Actions for Enhancing Meaningful Collaborations among Research, Policy, and Practice

How can politics, education, administration, research, society and practice work together in a meaningful way to tackle climate change and its consequences for cultural heritage and strengthen its resilience?

The signatories are campaigning in the fields of politics and administration for:

- raising awareness among governmental and non-governmental organisations in fields such as spatial and urban planning, tourism, education and research;
- the provision of basic information on cultural assets in order to facilitate the prioritisation for politicians;
- a clear consideration of cultural heritage approaches and methods in all political strategies such as legislative initiatives, climate change mitigation measures and adaptation strategies;
- an inter-ministerial coordination centre for cultural heritage and climate change (Federal Ministries of Culture, Urban Development and Construction, Environment, Research & Education, Economy & Climate, Disaster Relief);
- the provision of a sufficient number of posts in the cultural heritage sector to ensure the resilience of cultural heritage to the effects of climate change;
- the stimulation of financial and fiscal incentives.
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In the field of research, the signatories are in favour of:

- the recognition of research as an indispensable driving force for strengthening cultural heritage and the launch of interdisciplinary research programmes and projects;
- a centralised information system on cultural heritage and climate change that enables the exchange of (new) research results, data, best practices and strategies, thus making the various knowledge systems more widely accessible.

In the field of society, the signatories are committed to:

- a change in social awareness regarding the sustainable management of cultural heritage through information measures and awareness-raising campaigns;
- utilising the resource-protecting skills of cultural heritage stakeholders as ideal role models for a repair society in sustainability education;
- considering cultural heritage at all levels of national education systems (curricula) and strengthening the value of traditional knowledge for the preservation of cultural heritage in training and professional development.

4. Actions for Funding

The signatories are committed to:

- interdisciplinary and sustainable funding strategies that take into account both climate change mitigation and cultural heritage protection concerns in the award criteria and that respect the European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage;
- a medium and long-term implementation of the results of the funded projects in practice;
- the stimulation of funding for the development of multidisciplinary expertise among cultural heritage stakeholders and climate scientists through education, training and further education at all levels.

Further Publications:

- Global Research and Action Agenda on Culture, Heritage, and Climate Change
- VDL brochure Denkmalschutz ist Klimaschutz. Acht Vorschläge für eine zukunftsorientierte Nutzung des kulturellen Erbes und seines klimaschützenden Potenzials (2022)
- OMC final report Strengthening Cultural Heritage Resilience for Climate Change
- European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage

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April 2024