

Addendum to the Youth for the Future of Cultural Heritage Position Paper

Recent developments at the intersection of cultural heritage and climate action

It has been more than half a year since the launch of our collaborative Position Paper. Between September 2023 and May 2024, there have been several notable advancements at the intersection of cultural heritage and climate action. These efforts highlight and add to the growing recognition of the need to leverage cultural resources for climate action and to address climate change impacts on cultural heritage. We are glad to add a report of these developments to our paper in an effort to mark a growing concern and care simultaneously for climate change in cultural heritage's development towards a green and sustainable sector.

Climate Heritage Network's Action Plan (2022-2024): The Climate Heritage Network has been proactive in integrating arts, culture, and heritage into climate action. Their latest action plan, launched in September 2022, focuses on helping communities adapt to climate changes. This initiative underscores the importance of culture-based climate action, aiming to make climate policy more people-centred through coordination and cooperation among its members ([Climate Heritage Network](#)).

COP28 was key in the integration of cultural heritage into climate change discussions and policy-making. Spearheaded by the **Climate Heritage Network** and supported by over 25 nations, led by the UAE and Brazil, the conference saw the launch of the **Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action**. This group signifies a global commitment to incorporating cultural heritage, arts, and creative industries into the climate discourse, highlighting the integral role of cultural heritage in climate adaptation strategies ([Europa Nostra](#)). European Heritage Hub, a consortium whose ESACH is a member, campaigned for 2 months, since the Hub event in Venice, in September 2023 until the COP28 in order to assure better position of cultural and more concretely cultural heritage on this worldscale event (Venice Call to Action)

The conference itself underlined the value of traditional knowledge and heritage-led solutions in addressing climate change. Advocates for heritage-based climate action emphasise the importance of drawing on the wisdom and sustainable practices of our ancestors, such as ancient water management systems and natural insulation materials. The sector aims to transform inspirational stories from our pasts into impactful actions today, advocating for a more inclusive approach in climate discussions and campaigns ([Heritage Tribune](#)).

Another significant outcome of the COP28 was the adoption of the Emirates Declaration on Culture-based Climate Action, endorsed by more than 20 countries. This declaration recognises the devastating impacts of climate change on both tangible and intangible heritage and puts forward the importance of culture and heritage-based strategies for enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience against climate change impacts ([The Equation](#)).

Furthermore, COP28 identified a 'GST Culture Gap', referring to the lack of focus on socio-cultural enablers in climate action, which could affect the effectiveness and inclusivity of future climate policies. Efforts are underway to address this gap at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, with the aim of establishing a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action that will lead to the creation of the first-ever Work Plan on Culture under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by COP30 in Belém, Brazil ([Heritage Tribune](#)).

The **Joint Work Decision (JWD)** on Culture and Climate Action is a global call to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to integrate cultural heritage, the arts, and creative sectors into climate policy. It advocates for recognising culture's potential to inspire change and foster sustainable solutions. The campaign, led by [Julie's Bicycle](#) as part of the Climate Heritage Network, aims to establish a UN process for developing policies and frameworks that leverage cultural contributions to climate action. This initiative underscores the importance of culture in strengthening resilience, inspiring action, and shaping sustainable lifestyles. For more detailed information, you can visit their [website](#).

On December 9, 2023, in Dubai, UAE, a ministerial meeting on integrating culture into climate action took place at COP 28, following the Global Call to put Culture at the Heart of Climate Action launched a month prior. Chaired by the culture ministers of the UAE and Brazil, the meeting featured representatives from over 30 governments and prominent organisations like UNESCO and the European Commission. It was a significant gathering of cultural organisations, including Europa Nostra, ALIPH, ICCROM, and ICOM, emphasising the vital role of culture in climate resilience.

These developments at COP28 represent a significant step towards fully integrating culture and heritage into the global climate agenda, recognising their potential to inspire transformative and meaningful action for a climate-resilient future.

ESACH Coordination Committee