

INSIDE WORLD HERITAGE - DOURO 2018

CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE: Challenges for Planning and Management

Tabuaço, July 20, 2018

The Challenge

Cultural heritage constitutes a crucial driver for the societal transformation and resilience needed in order to respond to climate change and promote sustainable development in the world. Understanding the impacts of Climate Change on ecosystems, landscapes and land uses is an essential basis for well-grounded decisions on adaptation and mitigation strategies and politics at a local and regional scale. At many World Heritage sites, the direct and indirect impacts of climate change may present a threat to their outstanding universal value (OUV), integrity and authenticity. This is of particular relevance in Cultural Landscapes, where climate change may increase vulnerability and exacerbate other stresses, ranging from pollution and conflict over resources to urbanization, habitat fragmentation and the impacts of unplanned or poorly managed tourism. In the specific context of Cultural Landscapes, it is the purpose of this meeting to share the knowledge generated within the Cultural Heritage and, thus, proactively contribute to the definition of tools for planning and management of sites that guarantee effective reduction of risks as a result of climate change without posing a threat to their Universal Outstanding Values.

Keynote Speakers



Dr. Rohit Jigyasu
(President of ICOMOS
India and of ICORP-
International Scientific
Committee on Risk
Preparedness)



Dra. Ana Paula
Amendoeira
(DCR Alentejo)



Dra. Lluïsa Dubon
Pretus
(Chief of Cabinet of
the Govern of Islas
Balears)

Organizing Committee

- GETER-UTAD: Ricardo Bento, Luís Ramos
- ICOMOS-Portugal: Esmeralda Paupério; Fernando Pádua, Orlando Sousa, Rafael Alfenim
- CM Tabuaço: Carlos Carvalho (Mayor)
- CIM Douro: Carlos Silva (President)

Location

Municipality of Tabuaço.

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Program

09:00 - Reception

09:30 - Opening Session

Carlos Carvalho (Mayor of Tabuaço Municipality)
Carlos Silva (President of Douro Intermunicipal Community)
António Fontainhas Fernandes (Dean of UTAD)
Soraya Genin (President of ICOMOS-Portugal)
Embassador José Filipe Mendes Moraes Cabral (President of the UNESCO National Commission)

10:00 - Panel 1 - Climate Change and Heritage: potential impacts and substantive answers
Keynote Speaker: Rohit Jigyasu (President of ICOMOS India and President of ICORP)

Chairman: Emílio Fernandez (UVigo)
Contestant 1: João Santos (UTAD)
Contestant 2: João Gama Amaral (Bosque)
Contestant 3: Gloria Álvarez (Representative of Islas Cíes UNESCO candidacy)

11:45 - Debate

12:15 - Lunch

14:00 - Panel 2 - Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), Integrity and Authenticity in the context of Climate Change

Keynote Speaker: Ana Paula Amendoeira (DRCAIentejo)
Chairman: Orlando Sousa (ICOMOS-Portugal)
Contestant 1: Isabel Freitas (Universidade Portucalense)
Contestant 2: Artur Cristóvão (Liga dos Amigos Douro Património Mundial)
Contestant 3: Álvaro Domingues (FAUP)

15:30 - Debate

16:00 - Coffee-Break

16:15 - Panel 3 - Challenges for planning and management of Cultural Landscapes
Keynote Speaker: Maria Lluïsa Dubon Pretus (Chief of Cabinet, Govern of Islas Baleares)

Chairman: Fernando Bianchi de Aguiar (Prof. Associado aposentado da UTAD)
Contestant 1: Rafael Alfenim (ICOMOS-Portugal)
Contestant 2: Luís Ramos/Ricardo Bento (GETER-UTAD)

17:45 - Debate

18:15 - Conclusions

18:30 - Closing of the Conference

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Rationale

Heritage management is based on the concept of common use and assumes a strong link between heritage on the one hand and culture, education, nature, planning, art and the environment on the other. These links have recently been restated in the Addendum to the Strategy for the Reinforcement of UNESCO's Action for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of Armed Conflict, concerning emergencies associated with disasters caused by natural and human-induced hazards (Paris, 24 October 2017).

The Addendum acknowledged the role of culture both as key consideration in risk prevention, and on the other hand recognizing that both tangible and intangible cultural heritage "have a proactive role to play in building the resilience of communities and saving lives and properties from disasters", given that local knowledge systems and practices embodied in planning, construction, management and ecology, not only "may prevent or mitigate the impact of disasters but also provide sufficient coping mechanisms to deal with post-disaster situations". Cultural heritage also constitutes a crucial driver for the societal transformation and resilience needed in order to respond to climate change and promote sustainable development in the world.

Recently, in its updated Strategy for Action on Climate Change (2018-2021) approved in Paris, last October, 2 of 2017, UNESCO recognizes this importance and reinforce their support to Member States, as custodians of the UNESCO designated sites in developing efforts in "building their capacity to design sustainable development options, responding to the new conservation challenges posed by climate change, developing innovative policy, tailoring management strategies, and recognizing the value of resilient communities and of protected area systems that help safeguard the global environment and human societies from the threats posed by climate change".

Also recognizing the importance of Climate Change impacts on cultural heritage, the World Heritage Committee, meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2007, had already adopted decisions 31.COM 7.1 - "the impacts of climate change on world heritage properties" and 31.COM 7.2 - "strategy for reduction risks at world heritage properties", from which we underline that "The protection of the Outstanding Universal Value and the integrity and authenticity of World Heritage properties from disasters implies consideration for the associated intangible aspects and movable items that contribute directly to its heritage significance." and that "...Climate Change, in this context, should be considered as one of the factors that, combined with specific vulnerabilities, can result in significant risks to the conservation of World Heritage properties. The policies and strategies of the World Heritage Committee on the issues of Climate Change and Risk Reduction, therefore, should be consistent and complementary."

Among the different cultural heritage, spatial attention should be given to Cultural Landscapes, to which, the effects of global climate change present perhaps the greatest, and least controllable, challenge to long-term resiliency and viability across international borders.

Cultural landscapes are products of both natural and human systems and this interdependent relation is of particular importance when considering the impacts of climate change on cultural landscapes and in their viability. It is not possible to understand or conserve a significant cultural landscape without also understanding the natural systems within which it developed and exists and this natural-human continuum, makes them particularly responsive to variations in natural systems which means that, in light of impending and current climate change impacts, these cultural resources may be affected first and most dramatically.

Within the climate change context, and following the previously referred decisions, the ICOMOS International Scientific Committees have been developing activities that seek to implement the strategy to strengthen UNESCO's action in the protection of culture and cultural diversity.

Format: Discussions at the Conference will be organized around three main panels:

Panel 1: Climate Change and heritage: potential impacts and substantive answers

Understanding the impacts of Climate Change on ecosystems, landscapes and land uses is an essential basis for well-grounded decisions on adaptation and mitigation strategies and politics at a local and regional scale. Information and methods should be further developed in order to scale climate change effects down to regional and local scale and to project or estimate direct and indirect effects such as loss of biodiversity, flood risks, sea level rise, soil erosion, landslides, droughts, heat waves, permafrost decline, snow coverage decline, forest fires, increasing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from soils, as well as economic impacts on tourism, water, agriculture and forest production.

Like stated by Perry (2015), climate change adaptation is a wicked problem since there are no clear-cut solutions and stakeholders at each site disagree on values, norms and first steps, making adaptation difficult. In this context, how can we successfully incorporate climate adaptation and landscape resilience in preservation goals and strategies? And is climate change necessarily a problem for heritage? Without denying possible negative impacts, can we see adaptation and loss more creatively?

Given the likelihood that climatic impacts will be felt globally, national and regional frameworks to be developed on how best to conserve and protect heritage, will inevitably require strategies underpinned by the prioritization of sites, which means ranking the potential impact of climate change on individual heritage assets and determining their vulnerability, sensitivity and resilience to future change. How can preservationists, planners, legislators and other decision makers work together to prioritize the preservation of our built environment and cultural heritage from climate change impacts?

Panel 2: Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), integrity and authenticity in the context of Climate Change

At many World Heritage sites, the direct and indirect impacts of climate change may present a threat to their outstanding universal value (OUV), integrity and authenticity. This is of particular relevance in Cultural Landscapes, where climate change may increase vulnerability and exacerbate other stresses, ranging from pollution and conflict over resources to urbanization, habitat fragmentation and the impacts of unplanned or poorly managed tourism. How to consider the authenticity and integrity of the OUV in this context? Are the elements and characteristics that support OUV classification criteria immutable? What changes can we admit in Cultural Landscapes derived from climate change? How can the Planning and Management instruments incorporate these preservation/adaptation/mitigation/evolution strategies?

Panel 3: Challenges for planning and management of Cultural landscapes

In the specific context of Cultural Landscapes, it is the purpose of this meeting to share the knowledge generated within the Cultural Heritage and, thus, proactively contribute to the definition of tools for planning and management of sites that guarantee effective reduction of risks as a result of climate change without posing a threat to their Universal Outstanding Values. How management and planning authorities can respond to anticipated and unanticipated climate change threats and impacts to cultural landscapes? What is the multilevel governance model and the nature of the most appropriate planning and management mechanisms to meet the challenges of climate change? How to ensure the balance between the conservation of the Good and its outstanding universal values and the local systems, practices and cultural processes, in a context of adaptation to the impacts of climate change?

Conclusions

The Conference should aim to discuss the main challenges for planning and management of World Heritage Sites from the perspective of Climate Change mainly of the connexions with the declaration of Universal Outstanding Value. Lessons learned will be disseminated and shared among the participants, who are expected to bring their experience to the conference and engage in fruitful discussions.

Expected participants: Representatives of government, public administration and policy makers. World Heritage Site Managers and members of ICOMOS. Local and Regional Authorities, relevant associations and experts.

Languages of the Conference: Portuguese and English