

Theme 2: The Historic Urban Landscape and Evolution of Urban Heritage Governance Concept.

**RESILIENCE OF HISTORICAL CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE.
THE CASE OF THE OLD TOWN OF CORFU.**

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The aim of the following communication is the presentation of a research¹, that highlights the effects that climate change can cause to historical urban areas and villages, and the necessary planning solutions and measures to be taken, to make them resilient. One of the case studies was the old Town of Corfu, a World Heritage Site. The topic relates to the symposium's theme: Valetta Principles, and Climate Change, as well as to the ICOMOS document, "The Future of our Pasts: Engaging cultural heritage in climate action".

The purpose of the research is to evaluate the problems that climate change provokes in the historic cities, towns, and urban areas and propose guidelines to ensure that this heritage has the capacity to adapt appropriately. It is based on a Monitoring and Evaluation framework developed by a team of multidisciplinary experts which, proposed a set of measures and indicators to identify the effects of climate change on Greek cultural heritage and propose guidelines to ensure that this heritage has the capacity to adapt appropriately. The measures were proposed considering the international and European experience adapted to the actual conditions in Greece and the indicators were developed following UNESCO's guidelines².

Based on the above an integrated vulnerability assessment analysis for the old town of Corfu, included analysis of the site's topography, geographical location, the character of the urban tissue, the natural environment, social and economic data, the vegetation, the materials, the infrastructure, the accessibility, the legal context, and the management practices, as well as climate data and climatic indicators for the study area for the next years.

The research highlighted the vulnerability of the town and its monuments to floods, fires, tornadoes and rising sea level which may arise due to its geographical location, topographic features, dense fabric, high buildings and the sensitivity of building materials. Overtourism, the extensive development of restaurants and bars, the lack of traffic management in combination with some network problems increase the vulnerability of the town.

Communication of vulnerability assessment analysis to stakeholders will follow and the necessary adaptive policies and strategies aiming to the resilience of the old town - that should be considered in the Management Plan of the town - will be proposed. The above procedure should be periodically repeated and re-evaluate the site's vulnerability to future changes of the weather, as strengthening the resilience of historical towns and societies requires constant care. Training and education for professionals and public is also necessary.

According to the updating of Valetta Principles (17.06.21) "*a heritage management process is needed to include a thorough analysis of the likely climate impacts and disaster risks to both historic urban areas as a whole and the individual buildings and movable heritage, sites and cultural landscapes, communities, and intangible heritage they contain. Urban planning can play a key role in designing effective mitigation and adaptation strategies, which in turn will enhance the environmental value of urban areas*".

¹ The research is coordinated by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, while the partners include the Hellenic society for the environment and culture (ELLETT).

² [The UNESCO strategy for action on climate change: 2009](#)