

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES (CIVVIH) – ICOMOS
3RD CONFERENCE OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

LIVING HERITAGE : ADDRESSING RISKS
AND VULNERABILITIES

CONCEPTUALIZING DISASTER RISKS AND HERITAGE VULNERABILITY
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE URBAN POLICIES FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
RESILIENCE OF HISTORIC CITIES

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STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING HISTORIC
CITIES' RESILIENCE TO DISASTERS

SEPTEMBER 10-15, 2025
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INTRODUCTION

The evolution of global policy approaches to disaster risk management and resilience

Growing attention to the importance of disaster risk management (DRM) and its relation to cultural heritage preservation and sustainable development for several decades.

Mondiacult 2025, September 2025, (forthcoming)

Climate Heritage Network, 2022-24 Action Plan, Goal 2: Transform climate policy, 2022

Heritage And The Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance For Heritage And Development Actors, ICOMOS SDG-WG, 2021

ICOMOS Resolution on Cultural Heritage and the Climate Emergency, 2020

The Future of Our Past: Engaging cultural heritage in climate action, ICOMOS Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group, 2019

Valletta Principles, 2011

Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage, 2010

Washington Charter, 1987

Policy documents on culture & cultural heritage and DRM for urban resilience

2026, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), workshop, February (forthcoming)

2016, UNHABITAT III, New Urban Agenda

2015, UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2015 Paris Agreement

2015, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-30)

1992, Agenda 21, Rio Summit

1988, The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC),

Policy documents on DRM, climate change & urban resilience

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Washington Charter, 1987

“Historic towns should be protected against natural disasters and nuisances such as pollution and vibrations in order to **safeguard the heritage and for the security and wellbeing of the residents**”.

Valletta Principles, 2011

“Historic towns and their settings must be protected from the effects of climate change and from increasingly frequent natural disasters”.

The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 1988



The United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change:

Established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The IPCC is an organization of 195 governments that are members of the United Nations or WMO.

Created to provide policymakers with regular scientific assessments on climate change, its implications and potential future risks, as well as to put forward adaptation and mitigation options.

Provides regular assessments of the scientific basis of climate change, its impacts and future risks, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

- ✓ Assessment reports
- ✓ Special and Methodology Reports

<https://www.ipcc.ch/>

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UNESCO / ICCROM contribution from 2008



“... We will continue collaborating with ICCROM and various international and national institutes in cultural heritage disaster risk management”.

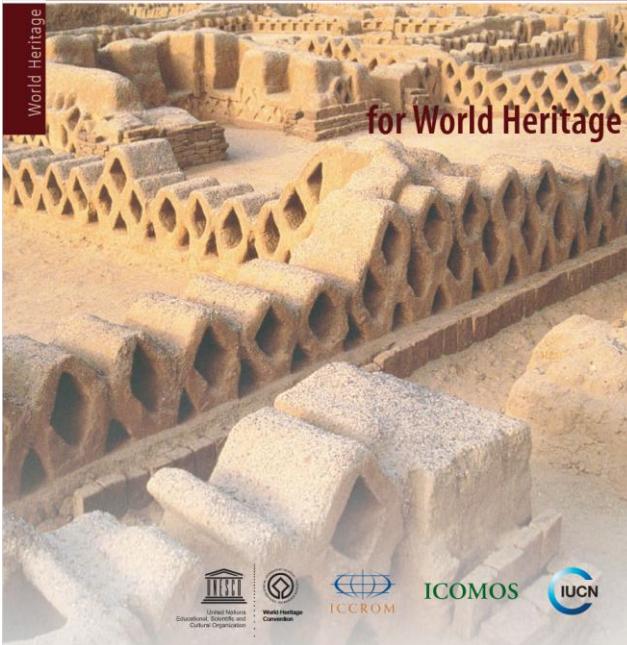
<https://rdmuch-itc.com/>

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<https://icorp.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Managing-Disaster-Risks-for-World-Heritage.pdf>

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UNESCO WHC / ICCROM / ICOMOS / IUCN joint contribution | 2

Managing Disaster Risks for World Heritage, 2010

A joint undertaking by the three Advisory Bodies of the World Heritage Convention (ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN) and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre as the Secretariat of the Convention, initiated in 2007.

“... disaster risks constitute the most urgent priority that heritage managers should address”.

“Experience shows that *heritage, if well maintained, can positively contribute to reducing disaster risks*. This is true not only for natural heritage resources that guarantee *the proper functioning of ecosystems and the beneficial effect of their goods and services*, but also for cultural heritage properties that – as a result of *traditional knowledge accumulated over centuries*, have proved to be resilient to disasters while providing *shelter and psychological support to affected communities*”.



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The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), 2015

SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

The **first major global agreement** of the post-2015 development agenda **to reduce disaster risk and losses** in lives, livelihoods, and assets by enhancing preparedness, promoting resilience, and preventing new risks.

Four priorities for action: understanding risk, strengthening governance, investing in resilience, and enhancing preparedness

Recognizes that **States have the primary role** to reduce disaster risk but that **responsibility should be shared** with other stakeholders including local government, the private sector and other stakeholders.

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UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015 | 1



*Adopted by all UN member states in 2015, a global plan of action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity for all people by 2030, centered around **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.*



The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, 2015

Adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Includes a comprehensive set of policy actions, with over 100 measures that draw upon all sources of finance, technology, innovation, trade, debt and data, to support of the SDGs achievement.

“34. By 2020, we will increase the number of cities and human settlements **adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters.”.**

62. ... We encourage consideration of climate and disaster resilience in development financing to ensure the sustainability of development results.

117. ... We recognize that traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities can support social well-being and sustainable livelihoods. “

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2051AAAA_Outcome.pdf

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UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015 | 2

Adopted at the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016.

SDG11. Aims to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”; outlining 10 targets and their associated indicators, including **urban planning, cultural heritage, disaster reduction, and public spaces.**

SDG Target 11.4. Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage

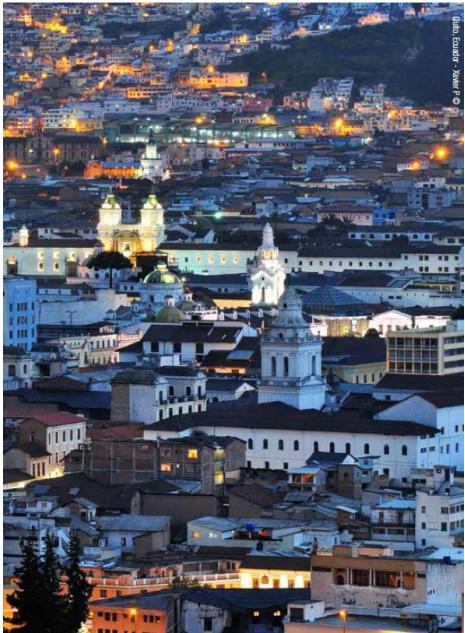
11.4.1 Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage, level of government, type of expenditure and type of private funding. [Tier III]

11.5. Reduce the adverse effect of natural disasters.

11.9. Implement policies for inclusion, resource efficiency and disaster risk reduction – holistic disaster management at all levels in line with the Sendai 2015-2030 framework.

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HABITAT II CONFERENCE 2016 | 1



The Conference and the city of Quito welcomed 30,000 participants from 167 countries, with online platforms and tools that enabled people all over the world to follow principal events online -

A historic realization of the principle of inclusivity. Provided a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future.

“Promoting a new model of urban development that is able to integrate all facets of sustainable development to promote equity, welfare and shared prosperity”.

*Dr. Joan Clos, Secretary-General of the Habitat III Conference, on the **Transformative Power of Urbanization**:*

<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

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The New Urban Agenda, 2016 | 1



<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

“We have reached a critical point in understanding that cities can be the source of solutions to, rather than the cause of, the challenges that our world is facing today”.

A **paradigm shift** based on the science of cities; lays out **standards and principles** for the planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas along its **five main pillars of implementation**: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation.

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The New Urban Agenda, 2016 | 2

Quito Declaration on Sustainable cities and human settlements for all:

10. The New Urban Agenda **acknowledges that culture and cultural diversity are sources of enrichment for humankind** and provide an important contribution to the sustainable development of cities, human settlements and citizens, **empowering them to play an active and unique role in development initiatives.**

13(g). **To adopt and implement disaster risk reduction and management, reduce vulnerability, build resilience and responsiveness to natural and human-made hazards and foster mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.**

<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

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The New Urban Agenda, 2016 | 3

Quito Implementation Plan for the New Urban Agenda:

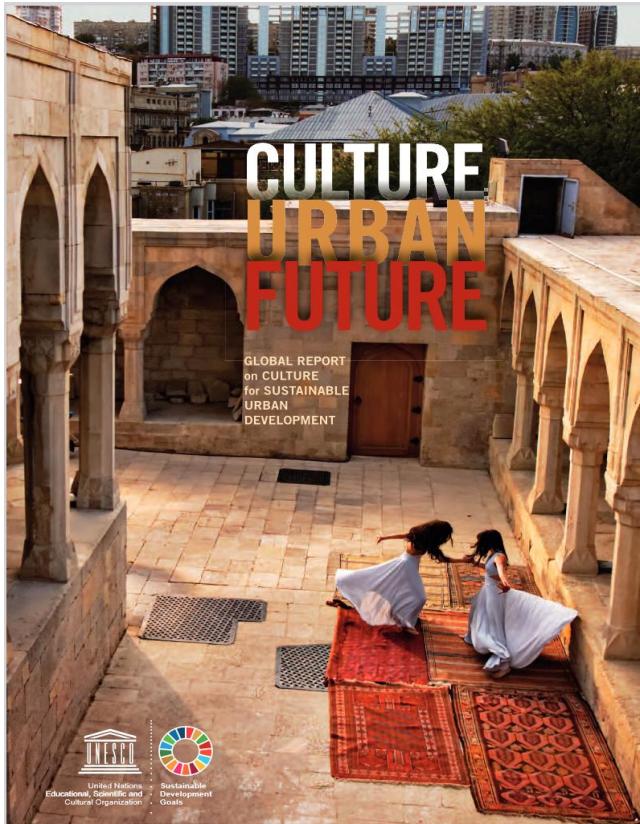
78. We commit ourselves to moving from reactive to more proactive risk-based, all-hazards and all-of-society approaches, such as raising public awareness of risks and promoting exante investments to prevent risks and build resilience, while also ensuring timely and effective local responses to address the immediate needs of inhabitants affected by natural and human-made disasters and conflicts.

125. We will support the leveraging of cultural heritage for sustainable urban development and recognize its role in stimulating participation and responsibility. We will promote innovative and sustainable use of architectural monuments and sites, with the intention of value creation, through respectful restoration and adaptation. We will engage indigenous peoples and local communities in the promotion and dissemination of knowledge of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and protection of traditional expressions and languages, including through the use of new technologies and techniques.

<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

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UNESCO/ICOMOS contributions to the New Urban Agenda, 2016

ICOMOS CIVVIH: 3 scientific symposia on historic cities and sustainable development in the preparation of the HABITAT III conference: Valetta 2010; Naples, 2012; Budapest, 2013

Culture: Urban Future. UNESCO first global report on culture for sustainable urban development, launched on 18 October 2016 In Quito in the framework of HABITAT III Conference.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246291>



2017, Established ICOMOS SDG Working group

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2019, COMOS Climate Change and Cultural Heritage Working Group:

“In order to understand the relationship between cultural heritage, climate action and resilience, the idea of heritage must be understood and acted upon in its broadest sense”. (The Future of Our Past: Engaging cultural heritage in climate action)

2020, ICOMOS Resolution on Cultural Heritage and the Climate Emergency:

Declares a Climate and ecological emergency and calls upon other culture and heritage organizations to do the same; calls on all the ICOMOS community to implement heritage responses to climate change.

2021, ICOMOS Advisory Committee Scientific Symposium on Living Heritage and Climate Change.

“Living heritage provides people with their sense of identity and is continuously regenerating in response to their environment. But we live in a time of rapid environmental change accelerated by the current climate crisis. Our responses to this crisis have the potential to strengthen our living heritage or destroy it”.

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HERITAGE AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

POLICY GUIDANCE FOR HERITAGE
AND DEVELOPMENT ACTORS



<https://www.icomos.org/en/focus/un-sustainable-development-goals>

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Midterm Review

SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

<https://www.undrr.org/implementing-sendai-framework/what-sendai-framework>

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2023, Midterm Review, The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030):

“The risk landscape has changed markedly since the adoption of the Sendai Framework - The adverse impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, geo-political tensions and conflicts, and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic have amplified inequalities and poverty across regions”.

Capacity-building of communities, incorporation of local, traditional and Indigenous knowledges in planning, and evidence-based programming deemed essential steps to be taken.

A **sense of urgency** - near complete absence of local government and community involvement in DRR planning identified.

The **lack of integration of disaster and climate action** frequently cited. The Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) welcomed in several statements

The urgency **to integrate risk reduction** in the implementation and follow-up to the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

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Preserving Legacies: A Future for Our Past, Years 2022 – 2025 | 1

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Living Heritage and
Climate Change

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<https://www.heritageadapt.org>

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Preserving Legacies: A Future for Our Past, Years: 2022 – 2025 | 2

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<https://www.heritageadapt.org>

Climate Change is Here, Take Action Now

No matter where you are on your climate adaptation journey, we have a home for you!



Climate Custodian Cohort Program

A 3-year program that guides an annual cohort of 10 heritage places on a climate adaptation journey, from education to action.

[Learn More >](#)



Community of Action

A platform for virtual learning, insights sharing, and relationship building to support anyone looking to take action to safeguard their site.

[Join the Waitlist >](#)



Climate Heritage Resource Collection

A curated collection of resources, insights, and tools to enhance your climate heritage adaptation journey and elevate your work.

[Explore >](#)

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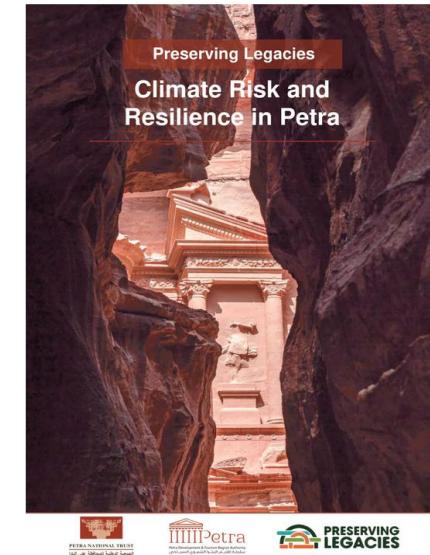
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Climate Risk and Resilience in Petra

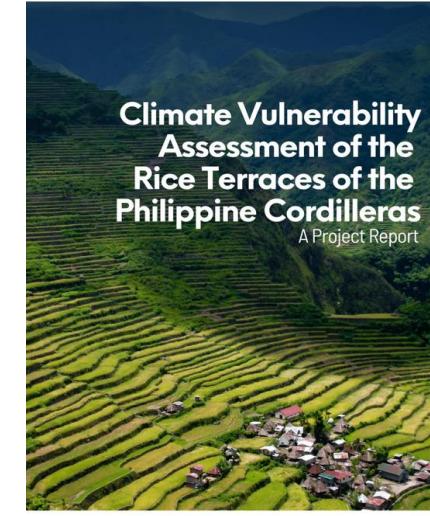
A climate risk assessment workshop organised in Petra, March to June 2023; community focus groups and a 3-day workshop bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders

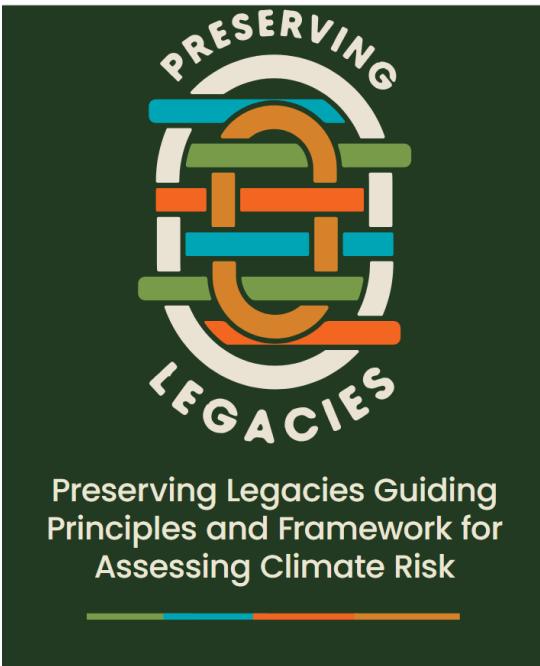
to identify key values of the heritage site, highlight **social and economic vulnerabilities**, **gauge adaptive capacities**, and **assess climate impacts and risks**. A methodology which acknowledges plural values, diverse knowledge systems and existing adaptation efforts.

Climate vulnerability assessment of the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras

Collaboration with the ICOMOS Philippines National Committee; an in-depth assessment into the climate challenges faced by the iconic Ifugao Rice Terraces, confronted with a series of threats ranging from typhoons to prolonged droughts and rising temperatures.

Outlined imminent risks of soil erosion, reduced crop yields or crop loss, landslides and structural damage to the terraces **which threatens the ecological integrity and agricultural productivity of this cultural landscape**. **Highlights the values of the terraces for the local communities.**

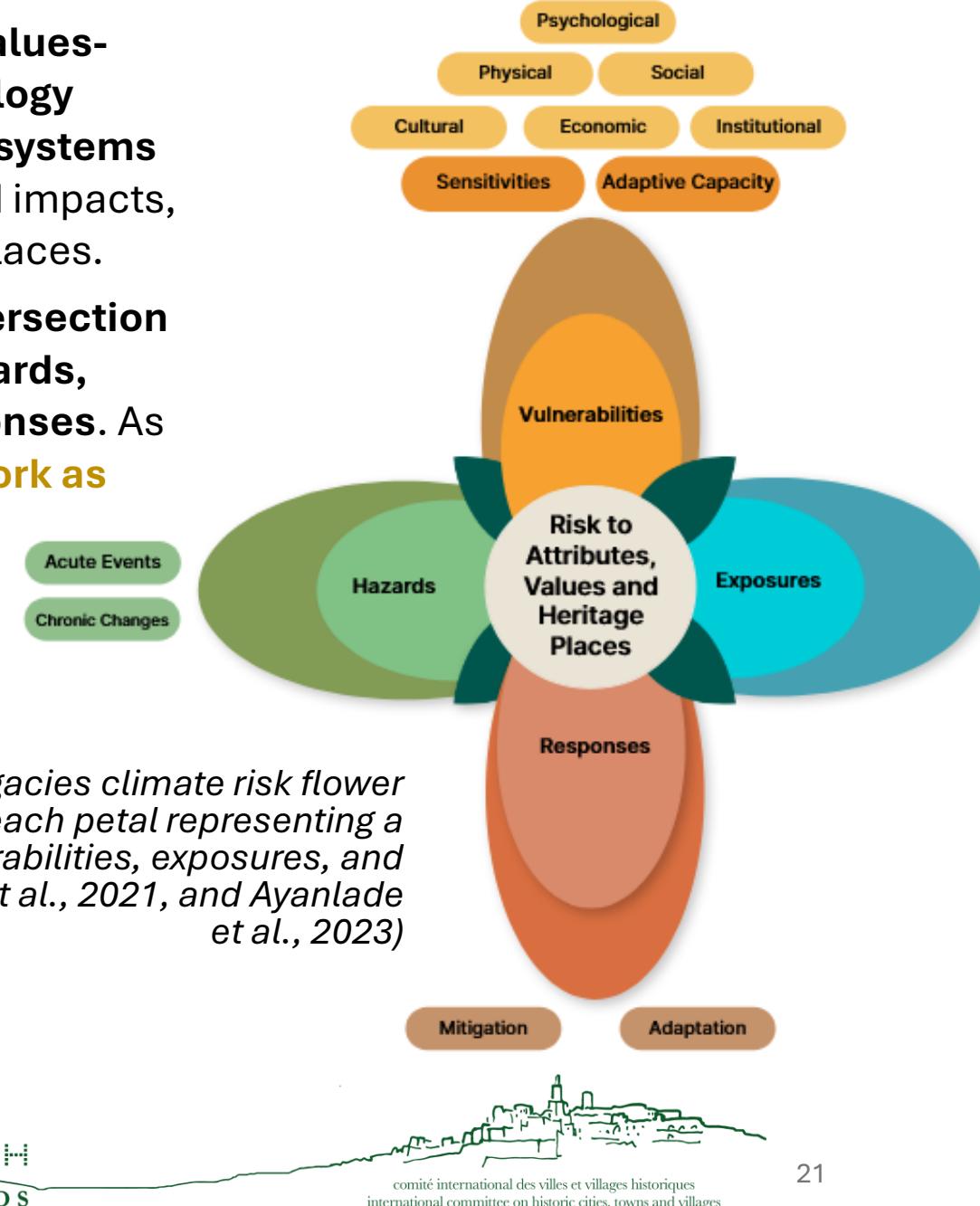




<https://publ.icomos.org/publcomos/jlbSai?html=Bur&base=technica&ref=44739&file=3764.pdf&path=Preserving%20Legacies%202024%20-%20Guiding%20Principles%20and%20Framework%20for%20Assessing%20Climate%20Change%20Risk.pdf>

Preserving Legacies advocates for a **values-based and community-led methodology** which **embraces diverse knowledge systems** to understand climate change risk and impacts, both present and future, on heritage places.

It **understands risk as a dynamic intersection of the four determinants of risk: hazards, vulnerabilities, exposures and responses**. As such, it **aligns with the IPCC framework as outlined in the 2023 AR6 report**



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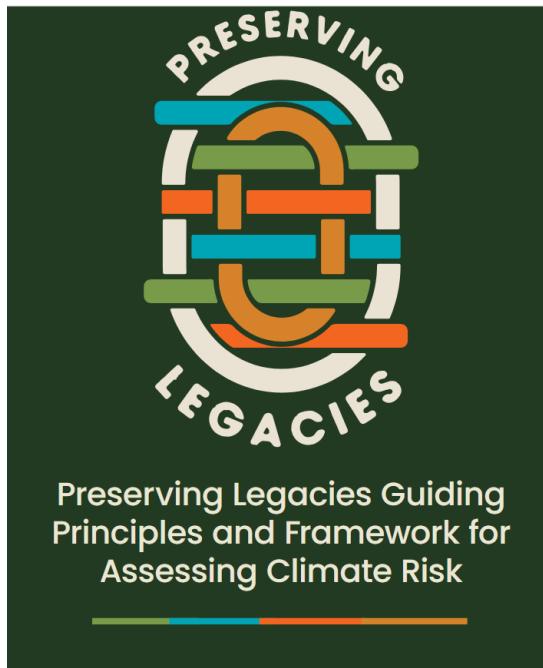


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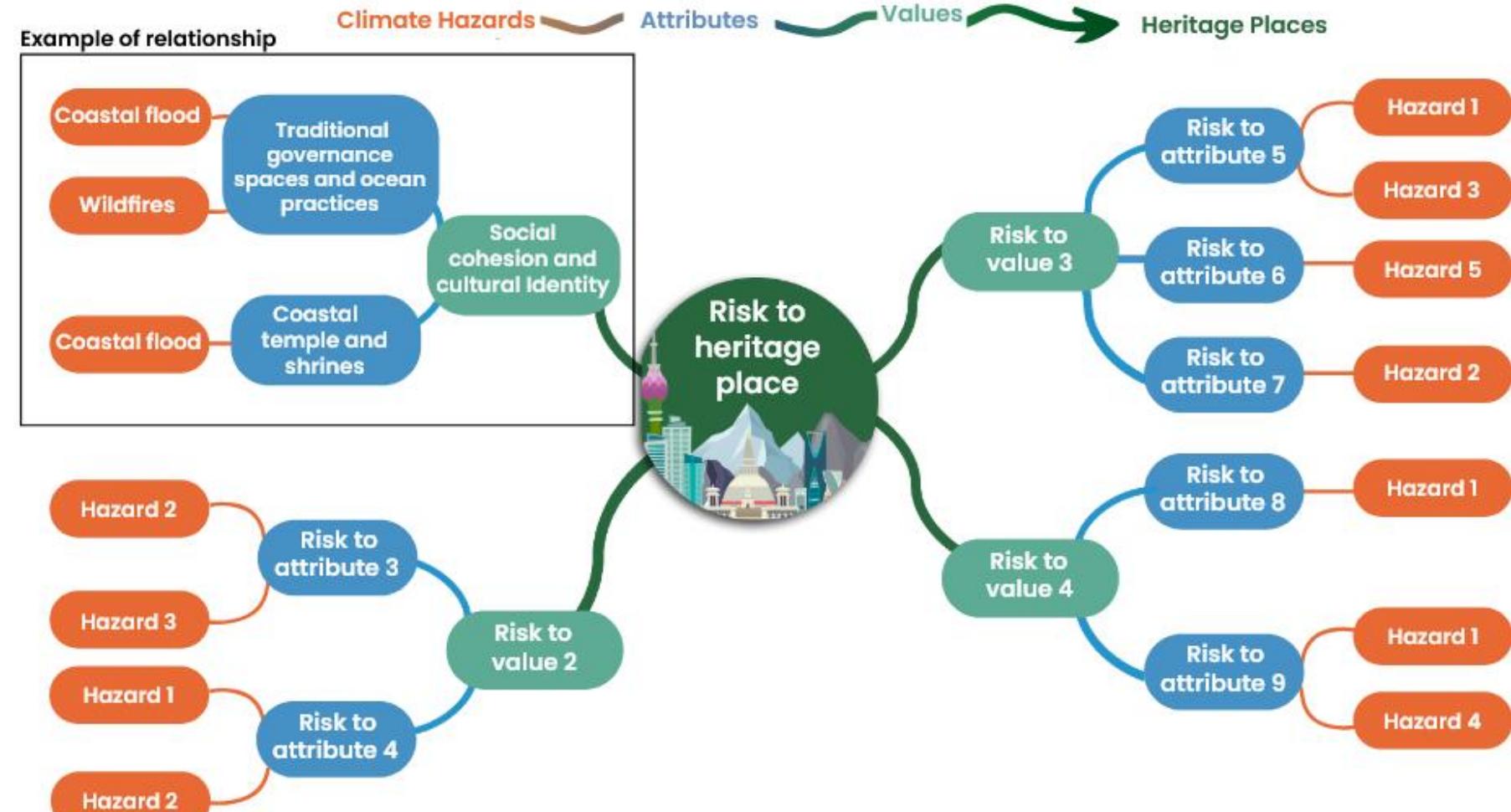


Figure 2: Risk assessment for a heritage place involves a systematic process that begins with identifying and mapping stakeholders, rights holders, and the site's values.

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“Integrating DRM into World Heritage management: using disaster risk management to improve management practice for both culture and nature”

<https://www.iccrom.org/courses/integrating-drm-world-heritage-management-using-disaster-risk-management-improve-management>

ICCROM's Disaster Risk Management (DRM) programme, 2025

Focuses on **integrating cultural heritage protection into broader disaster risk reduction strategies** by providing training, developing practical tools, and strengthening policies at local, national, and international levels.

ICCROM helps institutions and communities **implement risk assessments, mitigation measures, and preparedness plans** to safeguard cultural heritage from natural hazards and other emergencies, including climate change impacts.

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The Climate Heritage Network 2022-24 Action Plan

EMPOWERing People to Imagine and Realise
Low Carbon, Just Climate Resilient Futures
Through Culture - from Arts to Heritage

*“... change happens by
unlocking the power of culture
to empowering people to
imagine and realise low-carbon,
just, climate resilient futures”.*

<https://www.icomos.org/actualite/launch-of-the-climate-heritage-network-chn-2022-24-action-plan/>

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The Climate Heritage Network (CHN), 2022-24 Action Plan

A global network of more than 250 member organizations formed in 2019 and launched on Sep 27, 2022, committed to supporting communities in achieving the ambitions of the Paris Agreement by scaling up culture-based climate action.

ICOMOS' support of CHN: as Secretariat and sustaining member.

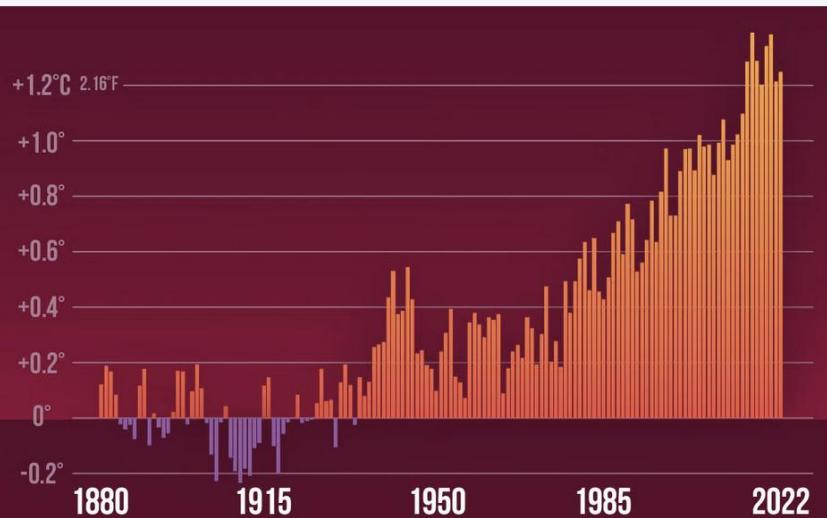
Strengthening the cultural presence in the climate sector. Two goals for 2022-24:

- ✓ Increase the quantity and quality of **culture-based climate action** at all levels, and
- ✓ Transform climate policy by **embedding culture and heritage into strategies** to realize low-carbon, just and fair, climate resilient living.

The growth of the Network also reflects growing recognition of the potential power of culture for connecting people with climate issues.

Climate Change Knowledge Portal

The Climate Change Knowledge Portal is the hub for global, climate-related data on historical and future climate, vulnerabilities, and impacts.



<https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/>

The Climate Change Knowledge Portal

Provides an **online platform to access and analyze comprehensive data related to climate change and development.**

Climate data aggregations are currently offered at national, sub-national, and watershed scales.

The successful **integration of scientific information in decision making** often depends on the use of flexible frameworks, appropriate data, and informative tools that can provide **comprehensive information to a wide range of users, allowing them to apply scientific information to the design of a project or policy.**

Understanding Climate Change

Understanding climate science through observational data and predictive modeling.

Mainstreaming Climate Action

Ways to solve the climate change crisis, through decarbonization, policy and sustainable energy.

Scaling Up Climate Finance

Finding available rewards for implementing solutions to the climate change crisis.

Tracking Outcomes of Climate Action

Understanding what is working, how it works and the lessons learned from others.

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FORTHCOMING



Culture for Sustainable Development



"MONDIACULT is a major event during which the 194 Member States of UNESCO work together to define the global agenda for culture."

Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General

<https://www.unesco.org/en/mondiacult>

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“The event will contribute to global advocacy for recognizing culture as a stand-alone goal in the post-2030 development agenda”.

- ✓ How can living heritage and craft **knowledge systems** be central to cultural resilience and sustainability?
- ✓ What **policies** are needed to support their transmission, especially in relation to built heritage, cities, and landscapes?
- ✓ How can **cultural institutions** and policy frameworks foster enabling environments for intergenerational and interdisciplinary heritage innovation?

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/nain/FMfcgzQbgJQhkjqPsngCzZmXtRfkBBSF?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

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MONDIACULT 2025

Side Events Form



Selected side event (Federated)

Only one form to be submitted per side event

Title

Living Heritage / Living the Heritage: Community Voices for Rethinking Approaches and Shifting Systems

MONDIACULT 2025 domains or areas to be addressed

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural rights	<input type="checkbox"/> Digital technologies and culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture and education
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economy of culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture and climate action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture, heritage and crisis
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture and peace	<input type="checkbox"/> Artificial intelligence and culture	

Organizations involved

1	ICOMOS [SDGs, Indigenous Heritage, OCD-RBA, Climate action Working Groups]
2	King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

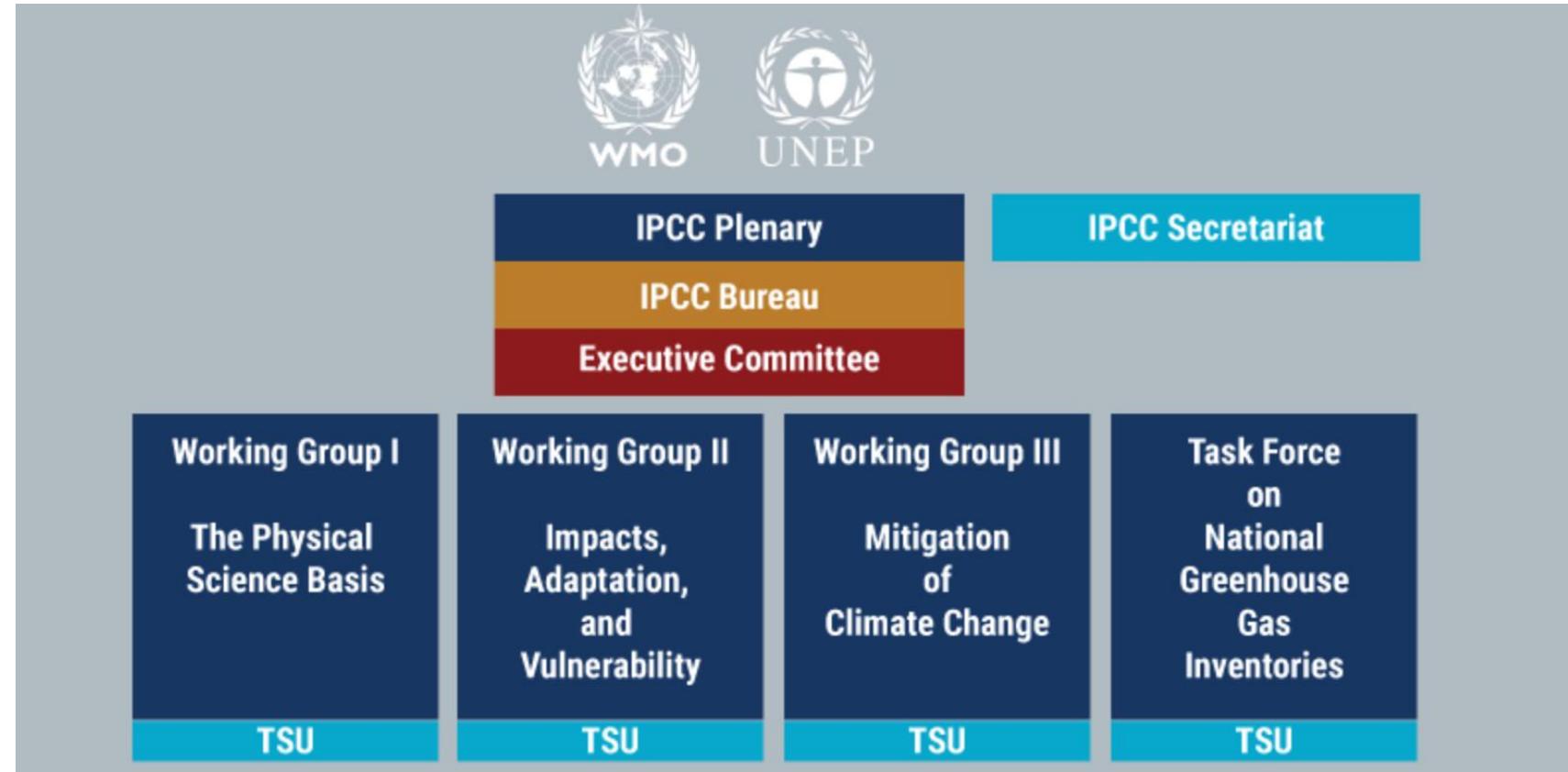
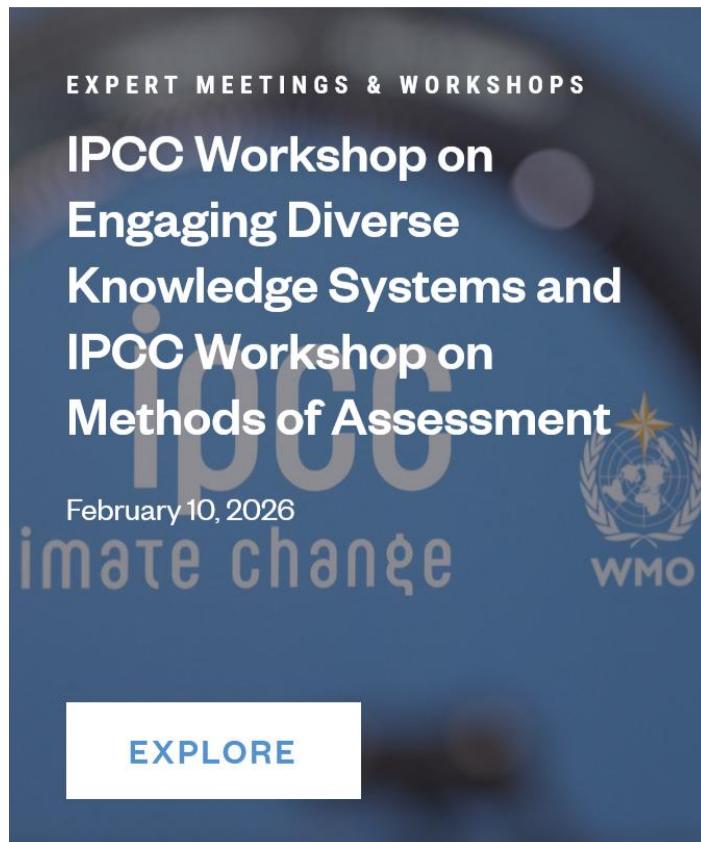


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FORTHCOMING:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Panel, workshop in 2026



<https://www.ipcc.ch/>

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DISCUSSION

- ✓ **Climate change and DRM challenges.** The critical review outlines a visible evolution from rather fragmentary to holistic approaches, acknowledging the complexity and integrity of challenges and within a framework aligning DRM, climate change and sustainable development. A sense of urgency is being recently added.
- ✓ **International organizations** such as UNESCO, ICCROM and ICOMOS are important actors in the process; they have been actively involved for decades in the effort to integrate cultural heritage considerations into the broader DRM process at the global, regional and local level. Synchronization of policy development with research outcomes and practical experience is acknowledged to be crucial.
- ✓ **Estimated gaps** in the ongoing effort for the adoption and practical implementation still refer to capacity building at the local level and synchronizing local knowledge and skills with highly specialized innovative technologies.
- ✓ **Developing a shared set of priorities, sensitivity to the local context and efficient communication channels** at all levels needs a shared sensitivity to the cultural dimensions of human development.

Thank you!

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