



Over 1,000 Signatories Back Global Call to Embed Culture into Climate Policy at COP 28

As we embark on COP 28, leading voices from cultural heritage, the arts, and creative sectors have united behind a campaign to ask the UN Climate Change Convention to put culture at the heart of international climate policy, planning and action.

Over 1,000 cultural organisations, leaders and practitioners have added their voices to a [Global Call to Action](#) in advance of this year's COP 28 in Dubai, which begins today, 30 November and runs until 12 December. They are urging the UN Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) to adopt a groundbreaking 'Joint Work Decision on Culture and Climate Action' to ensure culture-based solutions to climate change are recognised and implemented.

Existing climate policies have proven inadequate and left the world struggling to meet Paris Agreement targets. Culture-led solutions that are inclusive, rights-based, place-specific, demand-oriented, and focused on people and nature are already abundant. Yet in spite of its potential, culture has not yet been integrated into climate policy and planning.

This global campaign asks for a 'Joint Work Decision (JWD) on Culture and Climate Action', a UN process which would trigger policies and frameworks to enable culture to bolster climate action. A High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Culture-based Climate Action has been scheduled for 8 December at COP 28, with a view to asking the UN to adopt the JWD at next year's COP 29.

Culture has the power to help people imagine and realise low-carbon, just, climate resilient futures. Heritage, including traditional knowledge, strengthens resilience, helps communities to adapt to climate impacts, protects places, and offers green, circular and regenerative solutions. The arts speak to hearts and minds, challenge dominant perspectives and inspire action through dialogue, images, storytelling and shared experiences. The creative sectors - design, music, fashion and film - shape our lifestyles, tastes and consumption patterns.

"Europe is already an international leader in both climate action and cultural action - and so too should it be a leader in culture and heritage-based climate action. I call on EU member states to support a Joint Work decision and for the UNFCCC to adopt it at COP28", stated **Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović**, Secretary General of Europa Nostra and Project Leader of the European Heritage Hub.

The European Heritage Hub is leading the campaign in Europe. The draft Call to Action itself was launched and workshopped during the European Heritage Hub Forum '[Reimagining the](#)

[Anthropocene: Putting Culture and Heritage at the Heart of Climate](#), which took place in September 2023 in Venice.

Speaking at the Hub Forum, **HRH Princess Dana Firas**, President of ICOMOS Jordan and Petra National Trust, stated: *“We are failing to keep the promise of 1.5C alive (...) And many of us in the heritage field have been arguing that we fail because there is a glaring gap called culture and heritage and climate policy. To enable the world get back on track to meeting the targets of the Paris Agreement, we must understand the historic and cultural origins of the climate crisis and we must address the social, cultural and heritage related enabling conditions of transformative climate action.”*

Secretary General of the United Nations, **António Guterres**, sent a [letter](#) of support to the Forum where he recognised the urgent need to harness culture and heritage in the fight for our planet: *“We can learn from Indigenous Peoples’ relationship with the planet, and from their traditional knowledge that can help us to reduce emissions and adapt to extreme weather. We can explore how culture contributes to climate change. And we can direct the power of culture, heritage and the arts towards inspiring social and political change that can help accelerate climate action.”*

Over 250 leading organisations from a wide array of sectors, ranging from culture to climate and the built environment, are supporting this campaign, including partners of the European Heritage Hub: Eurocities, Europeana Foundation, ICLEI Europe, DigitGLAM KU Leuven, Centre Européen de Musique, Centro Nacional de Cultura, Elliniki Etairia, Europa Nostra Heritage Hub for Central and Eastern Europe in Kraków (run by the the Society of Friends of Kraków History and Heritage), Hispania Nostra, ALIPH Foundation, Organization of World Heritage Cities, ESACH (European Students' Association for Cultural Heritage), and the European Union Youth Orchestra.

Culture is a powerful force that shapes all of our lives, wherever we are in the world. Harnessing the knowledge, passion and creativity of the cultural and creative sectors for climate policy would enable transformative climate action - allowing it to scale up, influence key decisions on net zero and adaptation, and ensure that heritage is safeguarded for future generations.

The Call to Action remains open to the public. If you recognise the extraordinary potential of culture to strengthen global climate action, sign up to support and widely disseminate this Call, as a network, organisation or individual. [Add your voice and help amplify the campaign!](#)

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Editor's notes

Who is behind this campaign?

This Global Call to Action does not belong to a single organisation, but rather is a coalition of cultural heritage, the arts and creative sectors - and has been initiated with the backing of [founding signatories](#). The Global Campaign is for everyone who cares about empowering cultural voices, actors and sectors in the fight against climate change. Everyone is invited to [add their voice](#) and share the campaign with their communities and networks.

The management of the Global Call campaign is being undertaken in the framework of the Climate Heritage Network Culture at COP28 Working Group, under the leadership of Julie's Bicycle. Europa Nostra/European Heritage Hub provides the secretariat for this CHN Working Group.

What is a Joint Work Decision?

A 'Joint Work Decision' (JWD) is a recognised process that national governments meeting at a COP can follow.

- A JWD can result in new platforms that provide a permanent role for a topic or sector, like culture, in climate talks and in the work of the UN climate agency (the UNFCCC).
- Through workshops and expert meetings, the process would take into consideration the vulnerabilities of cultural heritage to climate change and approaches to culture and heritage as a driver of climate action.
- The goal of this process would be to make recommendations for consideration and adoption at future COPs. Ideally, this would be a comprehensive work plan by the UNFCCC on engaging with the cultural dimensions of transformative climate action.

What is happening at COP 28?

At this year's COP28 in Dubai, a High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Culture-based Climate Action has been scheduled for 8 December, co-chaired by H.E. Salem bin Khalid Al Qassami, Minister of Culture and Youth, UAE, to launch the Group of Friends of Culture-based Climate Action at the UNFCCC. An initial focus of the group of Friends could be to consider a future JWD and coordinate efforts towards its adoption. These initiatives are led and funded by the UAE Ministry of Culture and Youth in partnership with the ALIPH Foundation.

What is the timeline for this campaign?

The timeline, contingent on meeting campaign goals is:

- At COP 28 in Dubai, a High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Culture-based Climate Action has been scheduled for 8 December. Global Call to Action has been launched to gather support from across cultural heritage, the arts and creative sectors.
- At COP 29 the campaign hopes to get approval of the Joint Work Decision to trigger consultations with culture bodies on culture and climate over the following year.
- At COP 30: Launch of the recommendations to UNFCCC for culture-based climate action.

What happened at COP 27?

This campaign builds on last year's success when Climate Heritage Network and partners had Cultural Heritage recognised under the Loss and Damage Framework at COP 27. In November 2022, COP 27 delivered exciting news and a historical win for the creative climate movement. For the first time ever, national governments included cultural heritage in statements on both 'loss and damage' and 'adaptation'.