

The Dublin Declaration on Climate Change

OUR MISSION

- 1.1 The International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) is a Non-Governmental Organisation, founded in 2007, with the following object: 'to promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of all nations for the benefit of the people of the world.' INTO has close links with, inter alia, UNESCO, UNEP, ICOMOS, IUCN and Europa Nostra.
- 1.2 INTO currently represents about 5 million individual members, and countless millions of visitors to sites and properties, across more than 25 countries.
- 1.3 As such, INTO and its members are well placed to work with governments and agencies to:
 - conserve and enhance existing built resources, most notably by the viable re-use of historic and older buildings, greening of existing building stock, and reinvestment in older and historic communities;
 - manage land in a sustainable way;
 - pilot and implement low carbon technologies;
 - assist in the implementation of International Programmes and Conventions, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UNEP Convention on Biological Diversity; and the UNESCO World Heritage Committee programme to protect the outstanding universal value, integrity and authenticity of World Heritage sites from the adverse effects of climate change; and
 - reach citizens around the world with key messages about climate change mitigation and adaptation, including through education programmes at heritage sites.
- 1.4 **We, the members of the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) and affiliated and associated bodies, urge world leaders gathering at Copenhagen for the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP15) to take immediate action to tackle global climate change and to protect the world's natural and cultural heritage from its negative impacts.**

THE FACTS

- 2.1 Our natural and cultural heritage is of fundamental significance to all humankind, irrespective of race, creed or nationality, for its inspirational, artistic, scientific, economic, spiritual and other values. This heritage is composed of both tangible assets and resources, such as landscapes, monuments, buildings, artwork and artifacts, as well as intangible assets ('living heritage'), such as languages, stories, music, dance, ceremonies, traditional medicine, and other traditional cultural practices.
- 2.2 Climate change is impacting on both natural and cultural heritage. Impacts include:
- destruction of or damage to natural ecosystems, including loss or movement of animal and plant species;
 - destruction of or damage to heritage sites, historic buildings and monuments;
 - damage to or destruction of sacred sites or the viability of traditional cultural practices, disproportionately affecting indigenous peoples;
 - damage to historic landscapes;
 - failure and loss of traditional agricultural practices; and
 - changes to the lives of individuals and communities resulting in disruption to or loss of aspects of intangible cultural heritage, and potential displacement of entire communities.
- 2.3 Changing rainfall patterns are resulting in more frequent and severe floods, storms, droughts and wildfires. These extreme weather events are destroying or damaging natural and cultural heritage worldwide, and place at risk the freshwater resources so essential to supporting life.
- 2.4 Rising global temperature threatens small island states, coastal settlements and historically significant and iconic coastal structures, especially those on river deltas, coastal barrier islands and coral atolls. These places are at risk from significant coastal erosion and inundation and will be increasingly vulnerable to major or catastrophic damage due to the combined effects of sea level rise and more intense and frequent storms. Thawing permafrost in many parts of the world also endanger traditional settlements.
- 2.5 Climate change poses a threat to the well-being of all peoples of the world, but its impacts will disproportionately affect the developing world. It threatens the viability of many traditional practices - indeed, entire cultures - that have evolved in harmony with their natural surroundings.**

OUR REQUEST TO WORLD LEADERS

- 3.1 We therefore urge world leaders to take strong and decisive action to address climate change and its impacts on heritage through mitigation strategies that reduce climate change and adaptation strategies to cope with its unavoidable consequences. It is essential that these actions take into account the effect of climate change on global heritage.

3.2 Specifically, we request world leaders to:

- reach global agreement on greenhouse gas reduction targets (limiting global average temperature rise to less than 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels¹) and the policy mechanisms and timescales for implementing these targets in order to stabilise the global climate (establishing a credible trajectory for reducing global emissions by at least 50% on 1990 levels by 2050);
- create policy frameworks, at international and national levels, that encourage investment in low-carbon technologies and promote energy efficiency; and
- ensure that any agreement or policy framework takes into account considerations of intergenerational and inter-regional equity.

3.3 In addition, we call on world leaders to promote and undertake mitigation and adaptation measures that specifically take advantage of the contribution heritage can make in mitigating climate change and that alleviate the effects that climate change has on global heritage.

3.3.1 GLOBAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE - MITIGATION

We call on governments and agencies worldwide to:

promote sustainable land use practices by:

- reducing deforestation and other harmful environmental practices through the development and promotion of sustainable agriculture that supports local communities, traditional cultural land use, and traditional food sources;
- creating incentives for ensuring more sustainable management of soils in the landscape, given their important role as carbon stores;
- promoting and supporting ecosystem restoration projects that use indigenous species and take into account traditional knowledge and expertise; and
- investing in existing urbanised areas in order to reduce the harmful environmental impacts of development on previously undeveloped land.

promote investment in historic buildings by:

- promoting and supporting the re-use and re-investment in historic and older buildings in order to reduce the negative environmental impacts of new construction; and
- increasing the energy efficiency of historic and older buildings and communities.

3.3.2 GLOBAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE - ADAPTATION

We call on governments and agencies worldwide to:

increase recognition of impacts of climate change on heritage by:

- giving greater recognition to the effect that the impacts of climate change will have on heritage values, particularly intangible cultural heritage and heritage in developing nations;

¹ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (an agency co-sponsored by UNEP and the WMO) states that global average surface temperature rise in excess of 2 degrees Celsius, compared with pre-industrial levels, will lead to catastrophic damage to the planet. The IPCC also predicts that global temperatures could rise by between 1.8 and 4 degrees Celsius by 2100 if urgent action is not taken.

document heritage resources, conduct risk assessments and develop adaptation strategies through:

- researching and recording natural and cultural heritage assets and resources, which will preserve the knowledge to humanity, now and in perpetuity, of, for example, important archaeological and historical remains, or traditional cultures or ways of living, that are particularly at risk from the impact of climate change;
- completing risk assessments of the likely impact of climate change on natural and cultural heritage;
- considering the vital role played by water when analysing and planning adaptation methods;
- incorporating considerations about heritage into disaster response programmes;
- developing appropriate strategies to alleviate and adapt to the impacts identified by:
 - promoting the importance of maintenance and other measures to enable natural and cultural heritage to withstand climate change;
 - promoting research on the impacts of climate change on heritage, including the development of new technologies and techniques for the conservation sector; and
- providing financial and technical support to developing nations to help them undertake adaptation measure to protect heritage from climate change impacts.

3.3.3 GLOBAL HERITAGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We call on governments and agencies worldwide to:

- support educational programmes for visitors to heritage sites about the impact of climate change on these sites and what can be done to both prevent further climate change at a global level and to reduce impacts on that site;
- educate people, especially those in areas particularly at risk, about threats and about adaptation measures that they can take; and
- ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies relating to heritage engage, involve and have the ownership of local communities.

The Dublin Declaration on Climate Change was written and agreed by the members of the International National Trusts Organisation (INTO) many of whom were gathered in Dublin, Ireland from 13 to 17 September 2009 for the 13th International Conference of National Trusts, the theme of which was 'Heritage of the World in Trust: Conservation in a Changing Climate'.

INTO member organisations have pledged to work with governments and agencies worldwide to tackle climate change and thereby to protect the world's natural and cultural heritage now and for future generations. Conscious of their role as custodians and repositories of heritage, INTO member organisations have also pledged to take action to address their own organisation's carbon emissions and thereby to be exemplars of best practice in this regard.

Signatories

This declaration has been signed by:

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International National Trusts Organisation

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Charles Alluto
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Graeme Blackman
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