**Position paper**

Committee:United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Topic:Improving the Conservation of Cultural Heritage with Innovative Technology

Country:The French Republic

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The protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage is one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals; more generally, culture and cultural heritage are recognized as cross-cutting drivers and enablers to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.[[i]](#_edn1)

France has always been an important country in the field of cultural heritage protection, actively promoting the use of innovative technologies to improve the protection and management of cultural heritage. France will continue to spare no effort in supporting and improving the conservation of cultural heritage with innovative technology, as the whole earth can benefit from cultural heritage no matter the tangible and intangible ones. The spirit of love and peace in that cultural heritage will pass from generation to generation.

**International efforts:**

1. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe is involved in a number of projects and activities with different actors and countries in South-East Europe related to the safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage towards climate change, thanks to traditional knowledge and new technologies. The EU Horizon 2020 project I-REACT, for instance, integrates the data collected from the population on the status of their territory into a European platform capable of providing timely information to prevent and react to emergencies threatening heritage with immediate forecasting models.

2. the H2020 project GEO4CIVHIC, aims to manage and reduce the risk of disaster in UNESCO designated sites, and to develop new technologies to use green energy for supporting cultural heritage preservation.

**3.**As part of coordinated efforts to safeguard traditional games and sports in Italy, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus and France, the Associazione Giochi Antichi launched Tocatì , a festival and platform uniting communities, groups and individuals that practice traditional games. Tocatì links traditional games and sports to the values of intangible cultural heritage, mobilizing thousands of players, volunteers, admirers and media actors. This program was Selected in 2022 on the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.

**Domestic effort:**

1. The general survey of French cultural heritage in the 1960s embodied the principle of scientificity, systematization and standardization. It was the help of computer that made it outstanding of the general survey to complete the general survey to meet the needs of automatic processing thereafter.

2. France has set up a joint agency called the Centre for Conservation Studies to carry out research on cultural heritage. In addition to their own areas of activity, the three research institutions of the Conservation Research Centre use their complementary strengths to collaborate on a number of fronts, take concerted action and participate in a number of projects in Europe.Within France, the Centre for Conservation Studies cooperates with many university laboratories and maintains close cooperation with various research institutions and cultural heritage institutions. The Conservation Research Centre is also a member of the European Infrastructure System for Scientific Research on Cultural Heritage.

3. In order to preserve the precious relics and allow tourists to visit the Lascaux Cave, French government established the Lascaux IV Museum in Montignac, which opened to the public in 2017. The inside of the museum's caverns has been restored to much of their original dampness and dimness, the temperature has been reduced to 16 degrees Celsius, and state-of-the-art 3D laser scanning and casting technology has been used to replicate the caverns.

While the current framework and mechanisms of the UNESCO system have evolved well over the years, there are still abundant potential challenges behind protection: climate change, poverty, inequality, the digital divide, and increasingly complex emergencies and conflicts,the highest global geo-strategic tensions, existential climate crises, and growing global mistrust. In addition to these global challenges above, there are also some outstanding ones in France.

1. After the lamentable fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France needs to strengthen the prevention, monitoring and protection of historical and cultural heritage sites throughout the country, especially to strengthen safety measures during the renovation and construction of historical and cultural heritage sites.

2. Travel pressure. With the rich cultural heritage, France attracts more tourists than any other country in the world. The tourism industry is quite developed, which is one of the important pillars of the French economy. The survey shows that 94% of people think rich cultural heritage is the main factor attracting tourists. However, the annual number of 60 million tourists undoubtedly brings heavy pressure on the protection of cultural heritage in France. As one architecture and heritage director put it, developing tourism and preserving cultural heritage are both opposites and co-exists. Properly handled, they can form a virtuous cycle of mutual promotion; If handled improperly, the heritage will be destroyed and tourists will be lost. How to strike a balance between the two is a test of the wisdom of the government and society.

3. Professional companies are not of high quality. The maintenance of cultural heritage has strict requirements on the construction units, such as achieving a high level of technology, continuous technological innovation, and hiring or training qualified employees. However, the lack of funds leads to the reduction of maintenance projects, which makes the survival and development environment of professional companies increasingly unfavorable, resulting in the overall quality decline of professional companies, which often appear to be unable to complete the task according to the standard although receiving orders.

For the purposes and current situations stated before, France presents the **suggestions** below

1.Promote intelligent sensor **technology to monitor** the environment, temperature, humidity, and other conditions of cultural heritage, and promptly identify and address potential risks and issues that may cause damage to cultural heritage. It allows for continuous monitoring of cultural heritage sites and objects, which is crucial for identifying and addressing potential risks and issues. For example, if a sudden change in temperature or humidity is detected, appropriate action can be taken to prevent damage to the cultural heritage. In addition, the data collected by smart sensors can be analyzed to identify patterns and trends, which can help in the development of more effective conservation strategies.

2.The **databases**should be handled properly. France thinks that there must be a third party monitoring the authenticity of the data. As the country may modify some data when applying to the UNESCO. What’s more, a third party can avoid some accidents like the destruction of databases.

3.Advertising on **social media** should be restricted.The short video has become a part of people’s lives, which means the short video has become one of the knowledge sources for them. However, the quality of the short video can not be sure as the creator is not trained with the knowledge systemically. As a result, they will make some mistakes when introducing cultural treasures. So the government should monitor the video on the social media platform like TIKTOK, facebook, twitter and so on.

4.**Talent** related to the protection of cultural heritage should be focused. Nowadays the people should not only know something about the history of cultural relic, they should also know about the digital skills like the 3D-print, the VR. The France has already apply these techniques to the conservation of cultural heritages.

5.Increase the investment of the conservation of **underwater cultural heritage**. Underwater cultural heritage refers to items or sites left over by sunken ships, warships, ports, ancient cities, and other ancient human activities. Protecting underwater cultural heritage requires the use of various technologies, such as laser scanning, 3D reconstruction, and drone detection. The innovation of these technologies not only helps to improve the efficiency and accuracy of underwater archaeology but also reduces the damage to cultural relics. In addition, in order to protect underwater cultural heritage, various countries also need to cooperate and exchange ideas to jointly solve the problems in protection work. At the same time, it is also necessary to focus on talent cultivation and involve more professionals in the protection of underwater cultural heritage.

6.Increase the investment of the **mature technique application**.The developed country should provide some economic support to developing countries.

Based on the aforementioned ideas, France will actively participate in improving the conservation of the cultural heritage with innovative technology.France trusts that its initiative to this topic will serve as a model of a practical measure to face the challenges in all its aspects.

[[i]](#_ednref1) [ARTeCLIMA: Cultural Heritage Conservation and Protection in the wake of Climate Change | UNESCO](https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/arteclima-cultural-heritage-conservation-and-protection-wake-climate-change)