

Resolution 21GA 2023/16 – Cultural Dimensions of the SDGs

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The 21st General Assembly of ICOMOS,

Recalling the resolution 18GA 2014/37 which urges governments and National Committees of ICOMOS to firmly acknowledge the prominent role of culture and heritage in sustainable development and urgently support the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN Agenda 2030);

Noting that culture remains unrecognised in the UN Agenda 2030, and that economic growth is a key indicator of development which has the potential to exacerbate the exploitation (privatization, commercialization and monetization) of nature and culture globally;

Conscious of the need for heritage and development actors to identify the significance and transformative potential of culture in sustainable development beyond the designated SDG Target 11.4: “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”, which is only measured through the total per capita expenditure on the preservation, protection and conservation of heritage at national, regional, and local levels;

Acknowledging the need to go beyond the current discourse of ‘sustainability’ and apply a systems approach supporting generative and restorative economic activities that strengthen integrated social, cultural and environmental systems that can be sustained and enhanced;

Recognising the 2022 UNESCO Mondiacult Declaration which affirms culture as a global public good and moreover a shared resource (commons) with an intrinsic value that could enable and drive sustainable development through appropriate governance and collaborative stewardship;

Taking into account the need for a strategic and inclusive approach, through multisectoral and interdisciplinary partnerships and collaboration within and outside the cultural sector;

Considering the role of UN-Habitat and the New Urban Agenda in addressing urban sustainability, localisation of the SDGs, and the contribution of urban culture thereof;

Affirms the continuous efforts of the ICOMOS Sustainable Development Goals Working Group in raising awareness on the transversal linkages between culture, heritage and sustainable development relevant to practice and policy, built on theoretical and applied (including situated and traditional) knowledge and contributing to global knowledge commons;

Urges ICOMOS members to assist the ICOMOS Sustainable Development Goals Working Group by gathering relevant research, quantitative and qualitative data informing how culture and heritage can support sustainable development;

Requests ICOMOS National Committees and International Scientific Committees to engage with the UN 2030 Agenda by supporting national and local governments in producing and communicating relevant data for Voluntary National Reviews, Voluntary Local Reviews and other documents as part of SDG reporting;

Further requests ICOMOS National Committees and International Scientific Committees to consolidate data for the National, Provincial and Local Indicator Framework that is specific to culture;

Calls upon awareness and critical discussions among ICOMOS members in addressing challenges within the current development paradigm and identify leverage points for systems change where culture and heritage are fully recognised for regenerative sustainability of people and the planet;

Requests that ICOMOS supports UNESCO and the Culture 2030 Goal Campaign to identify relevant targets and indicators that support the pivotal role of culture and heritage as integral enablers of sustainable development and the UN development agenda in this Decade of Action and post 2030.