

# Climate Change Impacts on Cultural Heritage: Facing the Challenge

## Athens

22 June 2019

*Thematic session on climate change and sustainable development as related to human rights and democracy, and specifically, culture, heritage and landscape resources*

## Mobilizing Cultural Heritage for Climate Action

*Andrew Potts, ICOMOS*



# le Groupe de travail de l'ICOMOS sur le changement climatique et le patrimoine



**Andrew Potts, Coordinator**  
**@AndrewSPotts @ICOMOS**  
**#ClimateHeritage #ActOnClimateNow**




# Urgency



- While effects of 1.5° C are bad, 2° is significantly worse.
- Limiting Global Warming to 1.5° C requires *rapid and far-reaching* transitions in the way we use land, energy, industry, buildings, transport, and cities.
- Global net Anthropogenic emissions of Carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) need to fall by about 45 percent from 2010 levels by 2030.
- Net Zero Emissions by around 2050

# Climate Action is Heritage Conservation



"...climate change has become one of the **most significant** and fastest growing threats to **people and their heritage** worldwide." ICOMOS, Delhi 2017

"evidence of climate impacts across World Heritage properties confirm that **urgent and rapid action** to reduce global warming is essential and the highest degree of ambition and leadership by all countries is needed to secure the full implementation of the Paris Agreement." -UNESCO World Heritage Committee, Krakow 2017

"...climate change is the **fastest growing threat** to world heritage" – Union of Concerned Scientists



# Heritage: Impacted by Climate Change but also Climate Change Solution

**Resolution 19GA 2017/30 – Mobilizing ICOMOS and the cultural heritage community to help meet the challenge of climate change**

**The 19th General Assembly of ICOMOS.**

## **Emphasizes**

- i that cultural heritage is both impacted by climate change and a source of resilience for communities;
- ii that heritage sites as well as local communities' intangible heritage, knowledge and practices constitute an invaluable repository of information and strategies to address climate change, even while those resources are themselves at risk from climate impacts;
- iii the value of cultural heritage-based solutions to climate change mitigation and adaptation;

# Correlating Culture Heritage to Climate Action

## What's In the Paris Agreement?:



- **High Ambition:** Mobilize people to pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5C.
- **Carbon Mitigation & Net Zero:** Mitigation of greenhouse-gas emissions; peak emissions as soon as possible and by 2050, all anthropogenic emissions balanced with sinks.
- **Adaptation:** Enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, reduce vulnerability via participatory approach guided by science and traditional, indigenous and local knowledge.
- **Loss & Damage:** What impacts can't be avoided? How do we prepare for this; assess and manage risk; measure and insure against losses, including "non-economic losses"

# Catalyzing Ambition



The Statue of Liberty stands beyond parts of a brick walkway damaged in Superstorm Sandy.

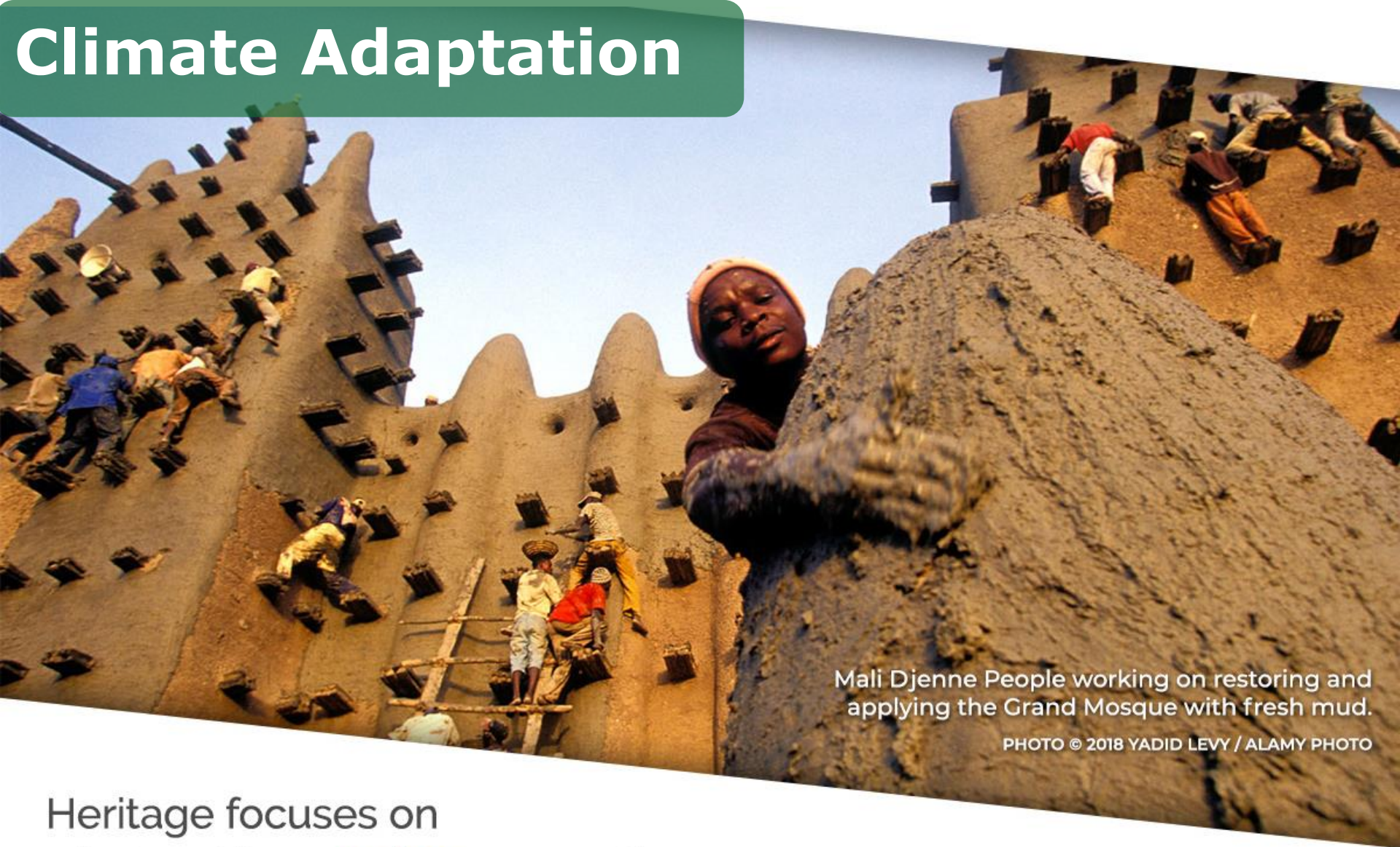
PHOTO © 2018 THE ASSOCIATED PRESS (AP PHOTO/RICHARD DREW, FILE)

Every heritage **place**  
has a **climate story** to tell.

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**climateheritage.org**



# Climate Adaptation



Mali Djenne People working on restoring and applying the Grand Mosque with fresh mud.

PHOTO © 2018 YADID LEVY / ALAMY PHOTO

Heritage focuses on what residents **value**, promoting a **people-centered** approach to community **resilience**.

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# Carbon Mitigation



PHOTO @ RUTH KNIGHT, BRIGHTON (VIA CLIMATE VISUALS PROJECT)

Valuing **older neighborhoods** and **historic buildings** puts communities on the road to **Net Zero**.

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# Loss and Damage



Gloria, 6, at Newtok village cemetery (Alaska).  
Once suitable for building houses, the melting of the permafrost  
means the swampy ground is no longer good for housing.

PHOTO © 2018 (VLAD SOKHIN / PANOS)

**Heritage** is helping  
communities plan for loss from  
**climate impacts** with a uniquely  
**inter-generational perspective.**

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# Cultural Heritage in the global Sustainable Development conversation



**Sendai Framework  
for Disaster Risk  
Reduction  
2015-2030  
March, 2015**



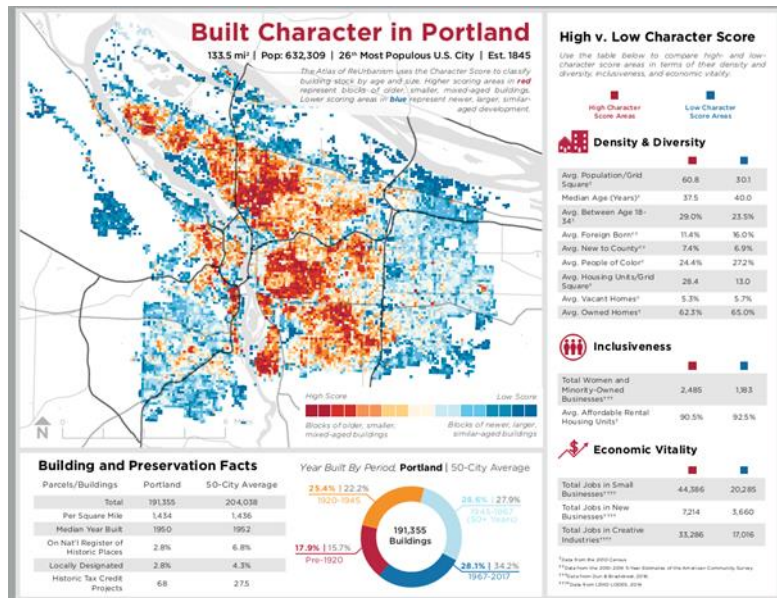
**Habitat III  
New Urban  
Agenda  
October, 2016**



**UN Sustainable  
Development  
Goals ("SDGs")  
Sept, 2015**

**Agenda 2030**

# Climate-resilient Development Pathways (CRDPs)



**US National Trust for Historic Preservation**  
*Atlas of Reurbanism, using big data to target Existing older and historic buildings for reuse*

**Using Culture as an Emplacement Strategy**  
*Jordan's Za'atari Refugee Camp, Jordan*  
Photo: Rosie Thompson/Save the Children



# Human Rights and Equity

**‘THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE  
ON CULTURAL HERITAGE IS AN  
URGENT HUMAN RIGHTS  
QUESTION’**

PROF. KARIMA BENNOUNE



Climate Heritage  
NETWORK

# ICOMOS Outline of Climate Change and Cultural Heritage

Climate Change and Heritage Working Group



Outline of Climate Change and  
Cultural Heritage

Zero Draft

December 2018

**ICOMOS**  
international council on monuments and sites

- 18 months to produce.
- Over 100 experts provided peer review.
- Experts from North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Oceania and Australia.
- Forward by Professor Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Co-Chair, IPCC Working Group I & Toshiyuku Kono, ICOMOS President.
- 20 disciplines (social science, natural sciences, indigenous ways of knowing)



# Integrating Heritage Science and Climate Science: Engaging the IPCC



## IPCC Fifth Assessment Report Synthesis Report

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2014  
Copenhagen

IPCC AR5 Synthesis Report

**ipcc**  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

### Evaluation of costs and limitations



- Ambitious mitigation is affordable and translates into delayed but not foregone growth (entails losses in global consumption of median value 1.7 % in 2030)
- Estimated costs of mitigation do not account for the benefits of reduced climate change
- Many impacts, such as loss of human lives, cultural heritage, and ecosystem services, are difficult to value and monetize, and thus they are poorly reflected in estimates of losses

IPCC AR5 Synthesis Report

AR5 WGIII SPM, IPCC SREX

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

WHO UNEP

# Climate Heritage Mobilization

GLOBAL  
CLIMATE  
ACTION SUMMIT

## Endorsing Organizations





# Organizing for Climate Action



[www.climateheritage.org](http://www.climateheritage.org)

# Thank you!



Andrew Potts

 @AndrewSPotts

[andrew.potts@icomos.org](mailto:andrew.potts@icomos.org)

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