



2011 UNESCO  
Recommendation  
on the  
Historic  
Urban  
Landscape



Canal Ring Area of Amsterdam; Author: Ko Hon Chiu Vincent; Copyright: © Ko Hon Chiu Vincent

# World Heritage City Lab – Historic Cities, Climate Change, Water, and Energy

16-17 December 2021

Concept Note and preliminary Agenda

International Experts Workshop organised in the context of the 10th Anniversary of the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape



Ministry of Education, Culture and  
Science of the Netherlands

## **Background**

Climate change is one of the most urgent and critical issues facing World Heritage properties today. Its impacts are more evident than ever, with increasing exposure both to slow-onset climate-related events and extreme weather as the most obvious threats to cultural and natural heritage properties. Climate action and sustainable development are intrinsically linked. Promoting urban resilience and sustainable urbanization, as well as the protection of cultural and natural heritage, are instrumental for the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. As the impacts of climate change become more apparent, cities, as the producers of 70% of the world's green-house gas emissions, have an urgent role to play in devising solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Historically, cities have developed next to water as it provided opportunities for transport, trade, jobs, defence, and resources. More than a third of World Heritage cities are located in coastal areas, which makes them increasingly at risk from coastal hazards due to sea-level rise. Yet historic cities and settlements have a wealth of knowledge to offer solutions for climate action – ranging from traditional building techniques to living practices that can contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation, and improve water management and energy transition.

For decades, UNESCO has upheld the importance of cities as rich repositories of history, heritage and identity accumulated over centuries. Recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value not only to the residents but to all of humanity, more than 300 cities are currently inscribed on the World Heritage List. These historic cities work to protect unique local features, so future generations may enjoy the authenticity and integrity of these diverse settlements around the world. At the same time, the need for conservation and human-centred urban planning extends well beyond World Heritage Cities. In this spirit, the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) was adopted as an inclusive heritage management approach open to all. In order to reconcile heritage conservation and sustainable development, cities look to HUL as the necessary framework for sustainable, liveable cities. The pandemic has further revealed the downside of rapid urbanisation, as cities account for over 90% of the COVID-19 cases. Urban areas also have the responsibility to mitigate crises, including those related to climate change impacts, as research suggest that 70% of the world's green-house gases are emitted in cities. The approach of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape provides a wholistic vision of the historic city, highlighting its unbreakable links to other aspects of urban life, from its geographical and natural setting, to the knowledge and practices of the local community in terms of building, living, and managing natural resources.

Concern for the environment, particularly for water and energy consumption, calls for new approaches for urban living, based on ecologically sensitive policies and practices aimed at strengthening sustainability and the quality of urban life. For these initiatives to be effective, however, they should integrate natural and cultural heritage as resources for sustainable development. For example, historic cities do not only provide a scenic setting, but are also proof of human adaptation to the surrounding setting, climate, and available resources. Having survived and thrived for centuries, they are key to face some of our contemporary problems, climate change among them. Traditional building techniques and materials, vernacular architecture shapes, the geographical siting of buildings, street patterns, greening and use of natural resources, such as the city's relation to water, and any other forms of knowledge in historic cities can become key elements in contemporary urban and architectural design, planning, and strategic development.

The International World Heritage City Lab ‘Historic Cities, Climate Change, Water, and Energy’, organised in the framework of the 10th Anniversary of the HUL Recommendation, aims to identify key challenges and opportunities faced by historic cities and settlements – particularly in coastal areas - and devise forward-looking approaches that integrate cultural and natural heritage in climate action, with a special focus on design and strategic planning. The World Heritage City Lab will present practical case studies to build on the HUL Recommendation to foster urban development and heritage conservation as complementing elements towards sustainable urban futures.

### **Conference Format**

The World Heritage City Lab will be held **online** via Zoom platform

Dates: 16-17 December 2021

International experts and relevant UNESCO Chairs will deliver presentations and stimulate discussions, supported by selected case studies of World Heritage cities (see agenda below).

### **Working languages**

English, French, Spanish

## **Agenda**

### **Thursday 16 December 2021 Master Lectures and Debates**

**Morning session (UTC+1, Paris time)**

**10:00-10:10 – Welcoming Remarks**

**10:10- 10:30 Keynote lecture: “Climate Change and Management of Urban Heritage: Challenges and Opportunities”** by Jyoti Hosagrahar, Deputy Director, UNESCO World Heritage Centre

**10:30-11:00 Master lecture:** Culture, water and climate links in the Bangka Island, by Kemas Ridwan Kurniawan, Department of Architecture Faculty of Engineering Universitas Indonesia

**11:00-11:30 Master lecture:** Water Cities in Africa, by Lassana Cisse, heritage consultant, Mali

**11:30-11:45 Q&A**

**11:45 -12:25 Experts Round Table: global challenges and opportunities 1**

Cornelius Holtorf, UNESCO Chair on Heritage Futures, Linnaeus University

Hasti Tarekat, Heritage hands-on

Jean Paul Corten, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands

Mohan Rao, Consultant, World Monuments Fund

**12:25-12:30 Wrap up**

12:30-14:30 – Lunch break

### **Afternoon session (UTC+1, Paris time)**

**14:30-15:00 Master lecture:** Water Cities in Europe, by Carola Hein, UNESCO Chair on Water Ports and Historic Cities, TU Delft\*

**15:00-15:30 Master lecture:** *As-Salt, the place of tolerance and urban hospitality: future urban conservation management and the critical link between tangible and intangible attributes of place*, by Rami Daher, heritage expert; Associate Professor at the School of Architecture and Built Environment at the German Jordanian University (GJU)\*

**15:30-16:00 Master lecture:** Water Cities in Latin America and the Caribbean, by Patricia Green, Senior Lecturer in Architecture and Historic Preservation, University of Technology, Jamaica; Jamaican Institute of Architects (MJIA); Coordinator UNESCO / UNITWIN Network

**16:00-16:15 Q&A**

### **16:15-16:55 Experts Round Table: global challenges and opportunities 2**

\*Carola Hein, UNESCO Chair on Water Ports and Historic Cities, TU Delft  
Katerina Gkoltsiou, International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) in Europe  
Katty Osorio, Heritage Consultant; ICOMOS Panama  
Zaki Aslan (Jordan), Director ICCROM Sharjah, Regional Conservation Centre; Visiting Professor at Sharjah University

\*Rami Daher, heritage expert; Associate Professor at the School of Architecture and Built Environment at the German Jordanian University (GJU)

**16:55-17:00 Session conclusions and wrap up**

## **Friday 17 December 2021 Global City Scenarios**

**(UTC+1, Paris time)**

### **13:00-13:05 Recap of Day 1**

**13:05-13:30 – *Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam*** by Shigeru Satoh, Professor Emeritus, director of the Waseda Institute of Urban and Regional Studies, Waseda University, Japan (video lecture)

**13:30-13:55 – *Historic cities in Yemen***, by Ivan Thung, Programme Manager and Technical Advisor at UN-Habitat Amman Office

**13:55-14:15 – “*Kashbah of Algiers*”, Algeria**, by Abdelouahb Zekagh, head of the protection plan for the WH site; Teacher and Researcher National Polytechnic school of Algiers, Algeria

**14:15-14:35 Q&A**

**14:35-14:55 – “*Paraty and Ilha Grande – Culture and Biodiversity*”, Brazil** by Gabriel Ramos Costa, *Diretor de Patrimônio Mundial, Secretaria Executiva de Governo, Brazil*

**14:55-15:15** The *keres*, the underground water structures in Bidar, India, by Neelkanth Chhaya, UNESCO Chair on Culture, Habitat and Sustainable Development, Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology

**15:15-15:25** – Q&A

**15:25-15:55** Interactive Discussion: localisation and implementation

**15:55-16:00** Closing

**16:00-16:30** Documentary “Water, Ports, and the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape approach: Learning from the past to protect, adapt and design for a more sustainable future” by TU Delf and the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands

### **Key Participants:**

The World Heritage City Lab will bring together international experts, site managers and national focal points of World Heritage cities, representatives of local governments, urban planners, heritage professionals and youth actively involved in the field of culture to share innovative local ideas and exchange global examples and analyses to support the development of forward-looking solutions.

### **Key Objectives**

In the context of the 10th Anniversary of the HUL Recommendation and its Call for Action, and building on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the World Heritage City Lab aims at:

1. Exploring the links between cultural and natural heritage and climate change in historic cities, including through concrete local case studies;
2. Raising awareness of the participants on urban heritage protection and challenges to local solutions in specific historic cities;
3. Identifying key issues and opportunities for historic cities to respond to climate change, and developing innovative approaches, building on the HUL Recommendation, to promote effective water and energy management through culture for sustainable development;
4. Actively engaging youth in integrating culture in urban and territorial planning, heritage protection, policy, and sustainable development strategies;
5. Supporting the development of local solutions in specific historic cities following exchanges with city authorities, and international experts;
6. Gathering UNESCO Chairs, schools of design, business, tourism, architecture and urban planning to participate in the event in order to present students with diverse intertwining topics and encourage their participation in the debates together with decision-makers.

### **Outputs:**

- A report will be issued including discussions, case studies and proposed solutions during the event.

