



# INTERNATIONAL NATIONAL TRUSTS ORGANISATION

## HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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# FOREWORD

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Everyone is talking about sustainable development. And indeed, it's hard to argue against a concept that seeks to balance efforts to improve quality of life with social, economic and environmental issues.

What is hard is to know what good sustainable development looks like.

When the member states of the United Nations set out their agenda to end poverty, promote peace, share wealth and protect the planet in 2015, they rooted it in seventeen objectives. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide powerful aspiration for improving our world – laying out where we collectively need to go and how to get there.

Cultural heritage, though, gets scant mention in the SDGs: just a brief reference in Goal 11.4 to “strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”. We think it can contribute much more, which is why we wanted to share our INTO member organisations’ experiences in working toward the achievement of the SDGs.

This report shows very practically how the National Trust family across poorer and richer countries alike is taking action to end poverty, promote peace, share wealth and protect the planet. From Austria, Bermuda and China to Uganda, Yangon and Zimbabwe, INTO member organisations are working to create beautiful cities, to protect the countryside whilst still producing enough food, caring for our inheritance rather than striving for unsustainable levels of growth.

But the fight is not yet won. Over the last century we have lost a vast richness of nature and much of the diversity of our landscape; we have degraded our soils and natural resources and we have let our precious heritage decay or – worse – be sacrificed. And in spite of huge efforts, nature and the beauty of the wider countryside are in a worse state than when the conservation movement set out to protect them. Add to this the looming pressures of climate change and it is clear we need to do things differently.

The SDGs call for us all: governments; businesses; civil society and the general public to work together to build a better future for everyone. It was with that in mind, and in keeping with the framework of the SDGs adopted by the UN in September 2015, that INTO recently carried out a survey amongst its membership to find examples of where heritage conservation in its many facets is contributing to the relevant SDGs. With INTO members contributing to 14 out of the 17 goals, we think we can say that the protection of our cultural landscape, and all that that entails, has an important role to play in the future of our planet. Heritage is indeed a ‘pillar of sustainability’.

John Muir, the Scottish-American naturalist and preservationist, had the words for it: “not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress”. It’s a fight to which we all need to belong.

# INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, organisations were beginning to be formed across the world with the aim of conserving fast-disappearing natural and cultural heritage.

The Society of the Preservation of Norwegian Ancient Monuments (Fortidsminneforeningen) was established in 1844 by artists who "discovered" Norway's cultural heritage during academic excursions to rural districts and valleys, for example. The Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts became the US's first private non-profit conservation organisation in 1890 and the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland (National Trust) was founded in 1895.

Since then the National Trust movement has grown to include a range of countries from Australia, Bermuda, Canada and Fiji through Korea, Malta and New Zealand to Taiwan, the United States and Zimbabwe.

Each organisation is different, but they share similar goals, legal constitutions and structures, and for around 40 years have been coming together under the umbrella of the International Conference of National Trusts (ICNT) to share information and best practice, to develop solutions to common problems and to show solidarity with other members of the movement.

It was at the 10<sup>th</sup> ICNT in Edinburgh that delegates agreed the need to establish a global federation to coordinate activity between conferences, and so the International National Trusts Organisation, INTO, was launched at the 12<sup>th</sup> ICNT in Delhi in December 2007.

INTO, ([www.intoorg.org](http://www.intoorg.org)), is an umbrella body for National and Heritage Trusts globally, united by their common interest in the conservation and enjoyment of our shared heritage – built and natural, tangible and intangible. It currently has over 70-member organisations of which 11 are based in the Pacific region.

The organisation brings people together to exchange information, develop and promote best practice, and work to effect change. INTO's mission is to "promote the conservation and enhancement of the heritage of all nations for the benefit of the people of the world and future generations".

# THE PRESENT POSITION

The 21st century is a time when built and natural heritage all over the world is under increasing threat from environmental decay, climate change, apathy leading to neglect, and conflict. Against this background is a growing awareness and recognition of the value of collaborative international action.

The National Trust approach is viewed by many as an important model for the charitable and voluntary organisations that have been established to combat these threats. As established Trusts, we have an opportunity, if not a duty, to collaborate with our sister organisations around the world.

To date, international collaboration on heritage conservation has focused primarily on sites of universal value. This is important, but there is a critical need to better protect and preserve both tangible and intangible heritage of national, regional, and local significance, and especially to integrate heritage conservation into international, national and local programmes for sustainable development. Heritage-focused NGOs within individual countries (National Trusts and similar organisations) can and do play a key role – in partnership with national and local governments – in facilitating and promoting this type of heritage conservation.

As a global non-governmental organisation with close ties to the United Nations (UN), INTO has engaged with the topic of sustainable development since its establishment and has highlighted the vital role of cultural heritage in the sustainable development process.

INTO members have a wider portfolio of interests beyond preserving built and natural heritage. The ownership of property, as is the case with many of the members, often allows for practices relating, for example, to sustainable tourism, clean water, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, poverty eradication, education etc., all of which contribute directly to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The SDGs, otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The 17 goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another. They all have targets and indicators with the aim to achieve these by 2030

It was with that in mind, and in keeping with the framework of the SDGs adopted by the UN in September 2015, that INTO recently carried out a survey amongst its membership to find examples of where heritage conservation in its many facets is contributing to the relevant SDGs. The results demonstrate that that a surprising 14 of the 17 Goals are relevant to heritage conservation, confirming this as a ‘pillar of sustainability’.

This paper examines the role played by INTO and its members in achieving the SDGs and provides relevant case studies.

## GOAL 2: NO HUNGER



Goal 2 of the SDGs calls for ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture by 2030. As the world's population continues to grow, increasing food production to meet this challenge puts a tremendous amount of pressure on natural resources.<sup>1</sup> To meet this task, we need to be moving towards more sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices.

Examples from the INTO network show that programmes should integrate cultural factors, such as traditional knowledge, with practices that contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources. These practices can be based on the use of diverse crops, plants and animals as well as an understanding of the local environment. Many of INTO's members are currently planting traditional plants (heritage stocks) in their communities as well as promoting sustainable farming practices in conjunction with genetic preservation of heritage livestock species.

Tesouros de Galicia (Spain) works to promote sustainable agri-business properties in Galicia that are environmentally responsible, either for energy efficiency, ecological management of natural resources and production, or conservation of native breeds or typical products.<sup>2</sup>



'Biocoop' Verin, Galicia (INTOFARMS)

The Nabogiono Farm (National Trust of Fiji) located on Taveuni Island, is a semi-subsistence farm and established agritourism venture. The farm shares knowledge of local agricultural produce, medicinal plants and biodiversity with communities, and emphasises the importance of conserving these natural resources for the future.<sup>3</sup>

The Nehill Brothers Farm (National Trust of Australia) in Victoria has used sustainable farming practices since 1874. It focuses on traditional farming techniques and genetic breeding of livestock, which were once common throughout rural Australia, such as the Large Black Pig and Wiltshire Horn Sheep.<sup>4</sup>



Wiltshire Horn Sheep (INTO Farms)

The preservation of traditional breeds and heirloom species is important for cultural reasons, as well as reducing the dangers associated with narrowing the genetic base. The loss of genes influencing adaption ability and disease resistance can have dire consequences for a species.

Education is a key component of sustainable agriculture, especially the role of imparting traditional knowledge to younger generations. La Rochelle, a property owned by the National Trust Zimbabwe, is establishing an agricultural training centre of excellence that will offer courses in sustainable organic farming for small scale farmers in southern and central Africa.<sup>5</sup>

The role of traditional farming techniques, traditional breeds and heirloom species is invaluable in creating sustainable agricultural systems for future generations. These traditional practices are being implemented at INTO's members' sites world-wide.





The concept of good health and well-being has been defined by the World Health Organisation as a “state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”<sup>6</sup>

The impact of ‘place’ on health is well recognised.<sup>7</sup> A sense of place is characterised by a unique collection of qualities and characteristics – visual, cultural, social and environmental – that provide meaning to a location.<sup>8</sup> Studies have shown that “healthy places make people feel comfortable and at ease, increasing social interaction and reducing antisocial behaviour, isolation and stress”.<sup>9</sup> Well-designed cities can promote health, reduce stress, increase social interactions; while poorly designed cities can create unhealthy environments, crime, dangerous traffic and can impact a person’s motivation for exercise.<sup>10</sup>

Many INTO members promote the notion that the preservation of open space is essential to a healthy lifestyle. Bodenfreiheit in Austria acquires land for open space in the belief that the preservation of free space serves three major objectives: well-being and leisure, ecological quality and diversity, and sustainable food production.<sup>11</sup> The Bermuda National Trust has developed community gardens to encourage community-based activities.<sup>12</sup>

Studies have also shown that people have an intangible connection and emotional attachment to places and communities. The National Trust recently conducted a neurophysiological research study that revealed for the first time that meaningful places generate a significant response in areas of the brain associated with positive emotions.

It found that people experience intense feelings of well-being, contentment and belonging from places that evoke positive memories, much more than tangible objects such as photographs or wedding rings.<sup>13</sup> This study solidifies the need to preserve these meaningful places for people to reap the health benefits now and for future generations.



National  
Trust

# Places that make us

Research report

Report Cover, (National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland)





Education has been recognised as a critical factor in addressing environmental and sustainability issues and ensuring well-being.<sup>14</sup> This SDG aims to ensure that all have equal access to education and opportunities to improve relevant skills for increased employment prospects. An additional objective seeks to ensure that students of all ages gain the necessary knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. In support of this goal, learning takes place in areas including sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

A quality education underpins improvements in people's lives and is consequently a factor in sustainable development. Several INTO members have worked to integrate a natural and cultural approach into their respective educational systems. The An Taisce Green School, a programme operated and co-ordinated by the National Trust of Ireland, is a student-led programme that has seen environmental and sustainability issues embedded into the curriculum for primary and secondary schools across Ireland.<sup>15</sup>

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands provides content to the Cayman Islands Education Department to ensure that preservation of natural resources and places of historic significance are cited in the national curriculum and made available to educators.<sup>16</sup> In a similar vein, the Japan National Trust has a Trust Youth Centre aimed at engaging an international cohort of students in the promotion of natural resources and heritage conservation in Japan.<sup>17</sup> Students are encouraged to attend seminars, exhibitions and events as well as network with environmental and heritage professionals.

Other members have educational programmes on specific topics, such as the Montserrat National Trust programme on the digitalisation of endangered archives of Montserrat's history, where students learn about the process of archiving documents as well as the history of the Island.<sup>18</sup> St. Helena National Trust has a programme for the protection of endangered invertebrates that are part of the ecosystem of the Island.<sup>19</sup> The Bermuda National Trust has developed teacher resource guides for several of their historic sites that are tied to the Bermudan educational curriculum.<sup>20</sup>

Incorporating intangible cultural heritage into an educational curriculum is a fundamental component to a sustainable future, as it provides living examples of education as well as being the most important vehicle for cultural diversity.<sup>21</sup> INTO has worked with the Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU), National Trust Zimbabwe, and the Sierra Leone National Trust to sponsor *Schools Cultural Heritage Competitions* held in each country.<sup>22</sup> This competition emboldens the younger generation to serve as 'Heritage Champions' and encourages children to take responsibility and develop a better understanding and appreciation of the diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage across the continent. Entries have covered areas from traditional pottery, to the importance of cattle, mat making, and ceremonial dances.<sup>23</sup>

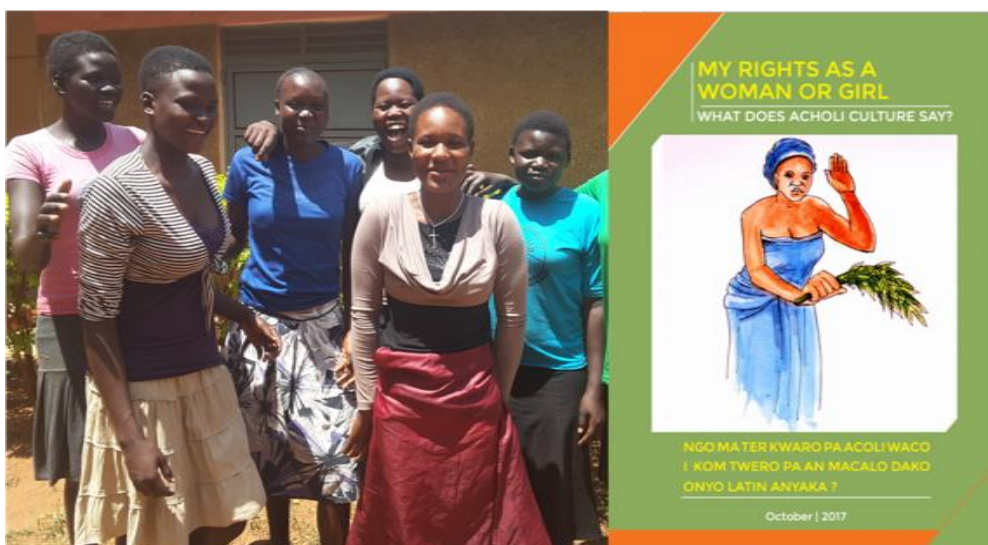


Women and girls continue to face discrimination across economic, social and political spheres. SDG 5 aims to end all forms of gender discrimination and ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making. It is important to recognise the role that culture has played in terms of gender equality. Many cultural practices are carried out by women, especially in developing countries where the majority of those employed in the cultural sector are women.<sup>24</sup>

The Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda (CCFU) prepared a report on *Women Culture & Rights in Acholi*.<sup>25</sup> The report looked at concerns about the marginalisation and oppression of women in Uganda, since independence from Britain in the 1960s. It was perceived that patriarchy, culture and traditions frequently reinforced gender inequality and the subjugation of women and girls.<sup>26</sup> However, the research also found that in a historical lens, culturally defined women's and girls' rights existed under traditional Acholi culture and were protected.<sup>27</sup> These values, norms and expectations related to gender and community had been passed on from generation to generation, upholding women's dignity in society.<sup>28</sup> Since the 1960s, these culturally-defined rights have changed (or adapted) while others have ceased for various reasons, including war, western forms of education and religion.<sup>29</sup>

The report discusses how these culturally-defined rights and current laws can be used to enhance women's empowerment today and educate the younger generation on these rights and traditions.<sup>30</sup> The CCFU has published two additional handbooks on using Acholi culture to promote women's rights and empowerment: "*My Rights as a Woman or Girl – What does Acholi culture say?*" and "*Promoting Women's Rights as Defined by Acholi Culture – A cultural leaders' handbook*". These handbooks highlight ways to use culture to strengthen the realisation of women and girls' rights.<sup>31</sup>

As culturally-defined values, norms and expectations are shaped, empowerment of women, including through traditional roles that women have played, has the potential to provide women and girls with a voice that shows the important role of women and girls in cultural life. Heritage organisations, amongst them INTO's members, are playing a critical role in helping women increase their stature within the community.



Report Cover and participants (Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda)





SDG 6 seeks to ensure the availability of safe and affordable drinking water, improve water quality and protect water-related ecosystems through the sustainable management of water. It is important to recognise traditional knowledge and practices concerning water management and how they contribute to equitable access to clean water and sustainable water use, especially in the area of agriculture.

It has long been established that local communities, through traditional knowledge, have been able to shape sustainable water management practices.<sup>32</sup> The Indonesian Heritage Trust has worked determinedly to protect the traditional agricultural social system named the Subak, which has been recognized as UNESCO World Cultural Heritage of Cultural Landscape Site since 2012.<sup>33</sup> For over 1,000 years, Subak has been used as a traditional Balinese system for water irrigation management.<sup>34</sup>

This cooperative farming system uses a traditional method of regulating water management/irrigation of rice fields, representing a historical understanding of the agricultural ecosystem in Bali, including how to deal with pest management. The water management system is under the authority of the priests in water temples that practice the traditional Balinese philosophy of *Tri Hita Karana*, meaning the three causes of well-being/happiness.<sup>35</sup> This philosophical approach brings together the realms of the spirit, nature and humanity. Historically, this traditional practice of democratic and egalitarian farming enabled the Balinese to become the most prolific rice growers in the region. Unfortunately, the remaining Subaks are under continued threat due to increased urbanisation and a growing tourism trade. With this in mind, the Indonesian Heritage Trust, offered a 2016 Field School entitled “*Towards Sustainable Cultural Landscape of Subak System*”.<sup>36</sup> Students’ participation was targeted at finding sustainable approaches to protect this vulnerable landscape.



Balinese Subak, (Indonesian Heritage Trust)

The Fondo Ambiente Italiano (FAI) has launched a #salvalaqua (save water) campaign aimed at promoting awareness of the sustainable use of water resources throughout Italy.<sup>37</sup> Working with shareholders from across the private sector, public sector, local communities and farmers, the campaign is focusing on encouraging efficient use of water and asking the Government for a national strategy to implement this approach.

FAI's campaign is looking at methods of rain water recovery efforts by replicating traditional methods carried out during Roman times. They have implemented a model project of these recoveries at one of their properties 'Casa Lovara Farm' in Punta Mesco, in the Cinqueterre area in Liguria. This project includes 12 underground storage tanks that allow collected rain water usage for agricultural purposes as well as for personal usage of the farm residents. The release of the water is controlled through a digital system that controls consumption and optimises better efficiency of use. FAI's campaign also aims to look at the reuse of waste water (grey water), changing the consumption of individuals and families, and promoting the possibility of tax relief for those who enact sustainable water management practices.

The Slovakia National Trust's former director, Martin Kovac, an expert in water resource management, has worked with INTO and its members on the impact of water management on cultural heritage sites. He advises the National Trusts on topics ranging from water shortage, flood and drought risks, and how to regenerate damaged landscapes and water cycles impacted by climate change as well as disaster risk recovery.

It is imperative that local cultural policies and environmental sustainability, including the sustainable use of water resources, be incorporated into governmental policies. As exemplified by the Subak system, traditional practices concerning water management can contribute to equitable access to sustainable water use. Without this local traditional knowledge base, we may see some of these unique heritage sites disappear. The work that INTO and its members provide in advocating for the protection and continued use of these traditional systems of water management is crucial for the development of sustainable solutions to address many water-related challenges.



Energy Generation at Hafod y Llan (National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland)





Sustainable Development Goal 7 calls for universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy. It advocates for a substantially increased share of renewable energy in the global energy mix, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.

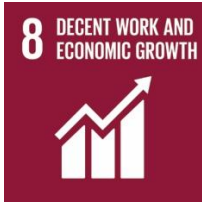
Educating the public on awareness of renewable and sustainable energy, in particular for use in the conservation and preservation of historical and cultural buildings and homes is essential. The Montserrat National Trust is using solar panels to provide energy to pump collected rain water to irrigate its Botanic Garden and through this project is running a series of workshops for local farmers and landscapers to inform them of the uses of renewable energy in the field.<sup>38</sup>

Members of INTO are leading the charge in renewable energy and promoting energy conservation for heritage sites. The National Trust has pledged to source 50 percent of its energy needs from renewable resources by 2020.<sup>39</sup> In fact, at Hafod y Llan, a sheep and cattle farm in Wales, the National Trust is operating a hydroelectric plant that provides enough energy for the entire farm and a further 445 homes.<sup>40</sup>

Working collaboratively to combat the impacts of climate change and rising energy costs, the National Trust's *Fit for the Future Network*, brings together more than 80 of the UK's largest charities and land-owning organisations to educate each other on the clear benefits of becoming more environmentally sustainable and energy efficient.<sup>41</sup>

The adaptive reuse of heritage buildings is an essential component of sustainable development. It provides tremendous environmental benefits, combined with energy savings and avoids the wastefulness of demolition and reconstruction.<sup>42</sup> "The greenest building is the one already built."<sup>43</sup> In 2009, the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States (NTHP) created the *Preservation Green Lab* to advance research on the value that older buildings bring to their communities and to establish policies that makes it easier to reuse and green older and historic buildings.<sup>44</sup> The goal of the Preservation Green Lab is to minimise carbon impacts from the built environment by retrofitting and reusing older buildings while still maintaining their historic character.<sup>45</sup>

The efficient use of resources – energy savings, energy efficient technologies and measures as well as the use of renewable energy sources are essential for sustainability. INTO members have shown that heritage buildings and cultural resources are part of the future and contribute to the long-term sustainable development. The key for heritage organisations is creating sustainable solutions that work in harmony with natural and historic heritage.



SDG 8 finds that an increase in labour productivity, a reduction in the unemployment rate, especially for young people, and improved access to financial services and benefits, are essential components of sustained and inclusive economic growth.<sup>46</sup> Heritage conservation is considered an asset in terms of economic development.<sup>47</sup> “Both tangible and intangible heritage can and do contribute to equity, inclusion, liveability, sustainability, and creativity. Dozens of studies conducted on the economics of preservation have consistently found that heritage conservation is good for the economy.<sup>48</sup> Heritage conservation:

- Creates jobs,
- Increases property values,
- Provides a boost for heritage tourism through adaptive reuse of heritage assets,
- Reduces environmental impact by less materials in landfills, and
- Increases the revitalisation of downtown areas.<sup>49</sup>

The Main Street programme of the National Trust for Historic Preservation is one of the most successful heritage programmes of economic development.<sup>50</sup> The programme has been helping revitalise older and historic commercial districts for more than 35 years, generating \$74.73 Billion USD since the 1980s for reinvestment. Other notable figures include 276,790 buildings rehabilitated, 614,716 jobs created and 138,303 businesses started.<sup>51</sup> Preservation of older places can have tremendous economic benefits and serve as a powerful and forward-looking tool that makes places more inclusive, resilient, safe and sustainable.

With rapid urbanisation, cities with valuable historic cores and heritage assets sometimes struggle to modernise without losing their uniqueness. The National Trust in Tasmania has collaborated with the University of Tasmania to develop a programme which identifies and measures the economic and social benefits of investing in heritage conservation.<sup>52</sup> Investing in heritage conservation can lead to urban liveability, attract talent and provide an enabling environment for job creation.<sup>53</sup>

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the world economy, of which heritage tourism accounts for 40 percent.<sup>54</sup> This positive story naturally has a negative aspect: successful heritage sites can receive a huge influx of visitors, causing a degradation of the site and visitor experience. INTO member organisations are frequently at the forefront of conversations about managing heritage resources, looking for ways to involve local communities and manage tourism investment in a sustainable way.<sup>55</sup>

The Australian National Trusts have developed a national framework for heritage tourism including a “discussion paper for government” to consider for the development of a national policy and investment.<sup>56</sup> Other members are forming partnerships with other leading cultural and tourism organisations. For example, the Bermuda National Trust is partnering with other heritage, art and tourism organisations to encourage visitors to discover Bermuda’s heritage beyond the beaches.<sup>57</sup> Some INTO members are working at the more local level, such as the Saint Lucia National Trust, which is investing in the protection of the Mankote Mangrove, the largest mangrove in the Eastern Caribbean.<sup>58</sup> The work involves protection and enhancement of the health of the mangrove as well as providing livelihood support for local communities that depend on the area. Saint Lucia National Trust is providing training and equipment for tour operators in the area.



Cultural heritage has a crucial role to play in SDG 11, as it is the principal goal dedicated to sustainable development in cities and rural communities. The goal aims, inter alia, to improve access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces and to strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Cities and communities are essential for well-being and quality of life, serving as hubs for economic and social development and innovation. Arguably, a vision for sustainable cities has never been more important than today, as the proportion of the world's population living in urban environments passes the half way point, predicted to reach two-thirds by the year 2050.<sup>59</sup> "Well planned and managed cities can drive sustainable development"<sup>60</sup>.

Heritage cities in developing nations currently face intensified urban problems as a result of rapid population growth, economic development and commercialisation. Many of INTO's members are working to promote liveable cities. The Yangon Heritage Trust works with an international advisory group of urban planners, conservationist, and architects to help facilitate dialogue with local experts and interested parties to promote and integrate Yangon's unique urban heritage into one of Asia's most liveable cities.<sup>61</sup>

Following the communist revolution, Shanghai began a frenzy of demolition and new construction.<sup>62</sup> The Ruan Yisan Heritage Foundation was created to support and promote urban heritage conservation in China.<sup>63</sup> They work directly with the government to carry out surveys of older historic districts and neighbourhoods, striving to protect neighbourhoods/areas that are more liveable and community-orientated as a key aspect of sustainability.<sup>64</sup>

The Cape Town Heritage Trust works with developers and conservationists to restore and preserve the city's outstanding assets.<sup>65</sup> It undertook one of the largest restoration projects in the inner city, a group of eighteenth-century town houses, and restored them into a hotel, restaurants, retail stores, offices and operating blacksmith. This is held up as an example of how good conservation and successful commercial developments do not need to be mutually exclusive.<sup>66</sup>

In Malaysia, new townships on the edge of historic cities are often exposed to severe pressures from commercialisation, poor design and cultural uniformity, reducing their uniqueness.<sup>67</sup> The Badan Warisan Malaysia (BWM) works towards restoration and adaptive reuse of many of these sites.<sup>68</sup> Their aim is to revitalise historic structures while maintaining and promoting the sense of place and the role that traditional knowledge-based systems play in sustainable development.



# Heritage Square, Present



The Africa Café



Hotel Street restoration



The Savory Cabbage Restaurant



The entrance to Heritage Square



The oldest, fruit-bearing vine in the country, in the courtyard.



Corner of Bree & Shortmarket streets, now a hotel and restaurant.



90 Bree Street, now the Cape Heritage Hotel

Heritage Square as it is in 2005. The Square has been acclaimed as one of the most successful urban renewal projects in central Cape Town and has led the way in encouraging similar projects throughout the city, as well as being a major contributor to the upgrading of the West City. Sensitive restoration and renovation permits an exciting range of activities to take place, including restaurants, specialist shops, a boutique hotel and even a traditional blacksmith!





Protecting rural communities is also essential for promoting sustainable economic growth and traditional cultural values and resources. The Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development (ITRHD) promotes sustainable economic growth in rural areas of India. ITRHD works to empower rural communities through conservation of heritage resources that may be otherwise lost to development or neglect.<sup>69</sup> They have recently undertaken a conservation project in a small village, Nuh of District Mewat in Haryana, which is approximately 70 km from Dehli.<sup>70</sup> The Gateway to Sheikh Musa's Dargah project is located on a 700 year old site with a 350 year old Mosque, famous for its shaking Minarets. When ITRHD acquired the property, the site and the gateway were in desperate need of repair. Working with the local community, ITRHD used traditional methods of conservation, including lime mortar and locally resourced stones. They employed thirty percent women and built capacity with local people in traditional techniques that could be used on other buildings in the area.<sup>71</sup>

Creating strong heritage and natural resource conservations laws will ensure these resources are protected in the future. As discussed in SDG 7 and 8, the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Green Lab's and Main Street America programme are resources for promoting historic preservation and building reuse to a growing interest in sustainability. Through their research, they support the establishment of legal frameworks for adaptive reuse to be included in sustainability and resilience planning in cities and local communities across the United States.<sup>72</sup> Other members, such as the National Trust Cayman Islands, work directly with local government to make sustainable development choices moving forward and helped to create the country's first National Conservation Law.<sup>73</sup>

Another important component for promotion of sustainable development in cities and rural communities is to maintain an inventory and list local tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage resources. Inventories are a key component of cultural management plans and critical in order to know, protect and preserve what is found in a specific area. Many INTO members have developed such inventories. For example, the Saint Lucia National Trust has designed a "System Plan of Protected Areas" with a list of buildings of architectural and/or historic significance and areas of natural importance.<sup>74</sup> The National Trust Cayman Islands has created a Heritage Register for both important historical sites and natural areas to keep a better inventory and safeguard these key sites.<sup>75</sup> These inventories and list are the underpinning for establishing mechanisms for protection.

The need for urban areas and rural communities that are sustainable can create hope, jobs and growth. These areas can create stronger social cohesion and general human development. Adopting measures to protect and safeguard tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage in an urban and rural environment are critical. INTO and its members advocate for stronger regulations and laws, collaborate with key stakeholders such as governments, developers, environmentalists, those with traditional knowledge base, and other interested parties to realise the goal of sustainable cities and local communities.



'Doing more and better with less' is the aim of SDG 12. Responsible consumption and production is about growing our economies by reducing resource use, degradation, and pollution while increasing the quality of life in the process. Current global consumption and production patterns are unsustainable.<sup>76</sup> Efficiency gains and technological advances alone will not be sufficient to bring global consumption to a sustainable level.<sup>77</sup> It is therefore imperative that consumers adopt more sustainable consumption patterns, making use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while, at the same time, minimising the use of natural resources, environmental pollutants, and waste, so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations. Consumers and producers must be more sustainable in their choices and use of products and services.

Food and drink have the highest levels of ecological impact per dollar spent.<sup>78</sup> In terms of absolute consumption and production, food has the most significant impact.<sup>79</sup> Food produced locally usually has lower 'food miles' and therefore less emissions and energy attributed to it from paddock production to the consumer consumption. Buying local produce also strengthens local food chains and supports farming communities. A great example for healthy eating and local produce are found in Quinta da Pedra Branca in Portugal.<sup>80</sup> The farm has a "Bio-Nice" campaign which engages people who share an enthusiasm for food with high nutritional value, unique flavour, and is produced without fertilisers and pesticides.

Another component of SDG 12 is the development and implementation of tools to monitor the impact of sustainable development for sustainable tourism, which creates jobs and promotes local culture and products. The Grenada National Trust and the Organisation of American States (OAS) have worked on implementing a model to help develop viable and responsible heritage tourism economies throughout the Caribbean.<sup>81</sup> The model focuses on encouraging protection and promotion of tangible and intangible sustainable heritage among communities that now receive few benefits from the regional tourism industry. This is delivered through endorsement of local tourism products and services that safeguard heritage resources and communicate their value to all audiences.

Studies have shown that consumers are interested and willing to pay more for sustainable products that are geared towards environmental protection and would benefit local communities.<sup>82</sup> For example, in England the Lake District Tourism and Conservation Partnership (now the Lake District Foundation) was founded in 1993 by the National Trust, Cumbria Tourist Board and the Lake District National Park Authority to help fund the beautiful landscapes in the region, a key driver for tourism interest in the region.<sup>83</sup> This partnership worked with the local tourist industry (hoteliers, shops and businesses) to set up a "Visitor Payback" scheme whereby all the revenue received goes to environmental works carried out by the various conservation bodies.

The experience of INTO members shows that tourism-related activities should show due respect for the safeguarding of intangible and tangible cultural and natural heritage. Tourism must be managed collaboratively with clear strategies and guidelines that reflect the interests of all key stakeholders. Heritage organisations, as key stakeholders, play a strategic role in sustainable cultural tourism by working with local communities and guiding sustainable behaviour in tourism activities. Sustainable consumption and production patterns are central to sustainable tourism.



The target here is to improve education, awareness-raising & human & institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction & early warnings.

INTO has been an active participant in climate change debates since the fifteenth United National Climate Change Conference (COP 15) in Copenhagen, promoting the need to take strong and decisive action to address climate change and its impacts on heritage through both mitigation strategies that reduce the effects of climate change and adaptation strategies to cope with its unavoidable consequences.<sup>84</sup>

At COP 17 in Durban INTO's climate change campaigning moved a few steps further by specifically drawing out the failure of the international deliberations of the UN and national governments to acknowledge sufficiently the implications of climate change for the sustainability of culture. And at COP 18 in Doha we managed to ensure that cultural heritage, and in particular the intangible cultural heritage, was included in formulating compensation for non-economic Loss and Damage.<sup>85</sup>

Climate change has the capacity to substantially undermine the integrity of the world's cultures, altering most, if not all, and destroying many. INTO determined that it could not stand by and witness this impact occurring as the destruction of culture is a fundamental breach of the principle of intergenerational equity, in that a culture destroyed or diminished within the time of the current generation will deprive members of future generations of their right to their cultural inheritance. This principle has been confirmed in many UNESCO Conventions.<sup>86</sup>

We say that if the global community acts too slowly in response to climate change, or acts insufficiently, the cultural legacy for those that follow the current generation will be irreparably diminished.<sup>87</sup>

INTO and its members have the capacity to demonstrate that cultural heritage holds not only the record of past successes and failures to adapt to climate change, but also the record of successful ways of minimising greenhouse gas emissions, thereby showing how climate change may be mitigated. Members' perspective of resource conservation involving soil, energy, water and other natural components in the biosphere can demonstrate that a wise and balanced approach to sustainable land management is achievable. This paper highlights some of the many case studies from across the National Trust movement where exemplary management approaches convey a strong, practical and positive message.

Most recently, at the biennial International Conference of National Trusts held in Bali in September 2017, the Indonesian Heritage Trust formulated the Gianyar Declaration. This highlights the role that heritage organisations across the globe should be taking in terms of mitigation and adaptation and goes on to describe how this should be achieved.<sup>88</sup>

For the last 4 COPs, in Paris, Marrakech, Bonn and Katowice, INTO has worked in partnership with ICOMOS and UNESCO promoting the need for more account to be taken of the principles espoused above.



Human actions are an increasing threat to marine life and ocean sustainability. Protection of marine species and support for the people who depend on oceans is critical.

INTO has supported its two members in Taiwan, the Taiwan Environmental Information Association and the Taiwan National Trust, as well as other environmental associations, in opposing the proposed construction of a petro-chemical factory on 4500 ha of coastal wetland on the west coast at Dachen, the biodiversity of which was exceptional.

Just offshore of the site in question was the last remaining habitat for the few, critically endangered (IUCN Red List) Pink Dolphin that still survive. It was also an area where the local oyster fishermen plied their trade using ox-drawn wooden carts (the last remaining site in Taiwan where they are used) to access their oyster beds.

These organisations and other conservation groups, with the support of INTO's Director of Advocacy, succeeded in persuading the President of Taiwan that the site held extraordinary value to the pink dolphins and other marine life as well as to the oyster fisherman's livelihood and should therefore be protected. The project was abandoned a year later.



Traditional Oyster Catching in Taiwan (INTO)





SDG 15 seeks to ensure the protection, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands. It further acts to combat desertification, land degradation and the loss of biodiversity.

Terrestrial ecosystems provide many benefits to society, including clean air and water, natural resources, recreation, biodiversity conservation, and protection and mitigation from natural disasters and climate change. However, today these natural resources are declining, ecosystems are stressed, and biodiversity is being lost across the globe.<sup>89</sup> There are many causes of deforestation and severe forest degradation including agriculture, unsuitable forest management, infrastructure projects, natural disasters and climate change.<sup>90</sup>

Human-caused deforestation and desertification pose major challenges to sustainable development.<sup>91</sup> INTO members are at the forefront of sustainably managing deforestation, biodiversity loss and ecosystem protection. In particular, many organisations are working with local communities and traditional landowners to protect and restore biodiversity and contribute to environmental sustainability.

The National Trust of Fiji is working to combat deforestation and desertification of their land, a significant task given that more than half of the land in the Fiji Islands is forested.<sup>92</sup> Some of this has been extremely degraded from constant burning, poor soil quality and abandonment of agricultural land. In partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Forests, the National Trust of Fiji is currently working on the implementation of the Action Against Desertification Project.<sup>93</sup> They are collecting information from targeted communities and stakeholders that will lead to restoring forests in areas of Fiji through sustainable land management and land use planning.<sup>94</sup>

In an effort to combat forest degradation in Uganda, the African Union of Conservationists (AUC) is using a participatory and innovative approach that requires involvement of a broad spectrum of stakeholders.<sup>95</sup> The Collaborative Forest Management plan is a collaboration between government, interested organisations, community groups and other stakeholders where they share roles, responsibilities and benefits for the purpose of sustainably managing a local or central forest reserve.<sup>96</sup> Involving local communities in the design and implementation of management plans is essential to help them move into roles where they themselves are regulating and policing forest reserves.

Natural disasters also have devastating impacts on natural resources, especially in the Caribbean. Since 1999, the National Parks Trust of the British Virgin Islands has undertaken a mangrove replanting programme across the southern coast of Tortola. Unfortunately, after the catastrophic hurricane season of 2017, the majority of these mangrove stands were destroyed.<sup>97</sup> To prevent this from reoccurring, the National Parks Trust is currently working with volunteers to pioneer other techniques, such as planting within concrete blocks, in order to replant mangroves across the British Virgin Islands.



Restored habitats in Anguilla (Anguilla National Trust)

Biodiversity is the foundation of healthy, functioning ecosystems upon which all life depends, including animals, plants and people on earth.<sup>98</sup> The integration of ecosystems and biodiversity values into national and local planning is essential. Biodiversity in the Pacific islands has been hit particularly hard with the introduction of invasive species and habitat loss.<sup>99</sup> Fiji has 164 known amphibian species, approximately 29 percent are endemic and approximately 15 percent are threatened. One of the critically endangered species is the Fiji Crested Iguana, found only on a few Fijian islands.<sup>100</sup> Working with traditional landowners (Mataqali Vuvaivi of Yanuya Village) and other key stakeholders, the National Trust of Fiji is protecting and restoring the tiny island of Manuriki, home to these endangered species. Fijian Bats, the nation's only native mammal, are also critically endangered.<sup>101</sup> Currently, the National Trust of Fiji is working on plans for the restoration and rehabilitation of these native species by compiling inventories of their numbers, acquiring critical habitats and running an awareness programme - educating landowners and the public on best efforts to protect these species.

In a parallel case to Fiji, on Dog Island in Anguilla, degradation of native species of birds and native plants have been devastated by invasive non-native species.<sup>102</sup> The Anguilla National Trust began the Dog Island Restoration Project to restore the island by eradicating the non-native species and thereby create an invaluable opportunity for re-colonisation with other rare indigenous species. Today, Dog Island has become the largest island to be cleared of rats and restored in the Eastern Caribbean.

The Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT) through partnerships with various government agencies and livelihood groups, is also involved in the conservation of endemic endangered species or threatened species, including the world's rarest snake, the Saint Lucia racer *Liophis ornatus*. The SLNT also plays a lead role in the biosecurity of two of Saint Lucia's offshore islands, Maria Islands and Maria Minor, which are home to several of Saint Lucia's endemic species, including the Saint Lucia racer.

The Bermuda National Trust is working on a Conservation Management Plan for two islands located in Ely's Harbour, Palm Island and Morgan's Island, where invasive species have taken hold.<sup>103</sup> These islands form a valuable habitat, detached from the main island and have healthy populations of endemic species. Research is being done to implement an invasive species removal plan.

Working with local and traditional knowledge offers an alternative view and relationship to nature and the environment. INTO and its members work with indigenous and local communities as they have unique perspectives on the local environments and are able to provide valuable insights into conservation, restoration and use of terrestrial ecosystems that support sustainable management of land and its resources. The experience of INTO's members demonstrates that the contribution of local and traditional communities is invaluable to protecting biodiversity and environmental sustainability.





INTO and its members are committed to promoting respect for cultural diversity and facilitating cultural understanding and peace. Australian National Trusts in both Western Australia and Victoria have major programmes underway which include working directly with Aboriginal communities in the conservation and interpretation of heritage areas, having developed national guidelines for Aboriginal Interpretation on Trust places.

In New Zealand, Maori heritage is central to national identity and heritage. Heritage New Zealand works to promote Maori heritage and to protect tangible and intangible property associated with the Maori people. The Maori Heritage Council works collaboratively with Heritage New Zealand to help promote the Maori culture and consciousness by encouraging an understanding of its values beyond being thought of as purely Maori culture but rather a culture belonging to all New Zealanders.



Maori heritage (Heritage New Zealand)





SDG 17 aims at strengthening national and international efforts to drive sustainable development by creating partnerships between governments, NGO’s and private sector organisations that are built on shared principles and values. One example of this is the SLNT, a founding member of the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations (the ‘Coalition’) for Sustainable Development in Saint Lucia. The Coalition develops and delivers consultations that educate other civil society organisations about the various SDGs and promote their meaningful engagement, alignment and contribution to the national achievement of the SDGs.

INTO has partnered with a broad range of international organisations to promote its members’ interests. In the heritage conservation space, these include UNESCO, ICOMOS, IUCN, and Europa Nostra; sustainable tourism partnerships have been with the World Travel and Tourism Council and UNWTO; sustainable consumption and production with UNEP, sustaining local communities with the Global Ecovillage Network; and climate change and cultural heritage with UNFCCC. INTO has also introduced a small grants programme to build the capacity of its members to further address various sustainable development challenges.

As well as partnerships that beyond INTO, INTO also represents a powerful example for SDG 17 itself. An international membership organisation representing more than 70 members from across the globe, this paper demonstrates the broad engagement with the SDGs that INTO’s member organisations achieve.

In order to further this collaborative partnership, INTO works with host organisations to organise a bi-annual International Conference of National Trusts. This is well attended by both members and other organisations in the heritage space, where they exchange best practice, network, and above all learn about how to tackle the challenges of heritage conservation.



INTO conference March 2019

## CONCLUSION

Although none of the seventeen (17) SDGs explicitly focuses on attaining its stated goals exclusively with culture, no less than fourteen (14) of the SDGs discussed in this report, have direct impact on and from heritage conservation activities. Moreover, there are numerous examples where one cultural heritage practice attains benefits across multiple SDGs.

Indeed, while cultural heritage can play a fundamental role in making the U.N. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals successful, it is all too often overlooked or omitted from debates on, for example, climate change and sustainability. Public awareness of the importance of culture and cultural heritage are essential.

We hope that this paper provides important case studies to heritage organisations and other stakeholders of what others in the field are doing towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This may be simply food for thought, but it may alternatively act as a springboard to action, and we would encourage organisations to adopt some of the best practice contained within this document and take it forward in their own part of the world. In order to maximise impact on a global scale, heritage organisations will need to work collaboratively to highlight the benefits that cultural heritage and related conservation efforts can bring towards driving sustainability and enabling sustainable development.

*With thanks for the research of:*

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