

**UNESCO/ICCROM/Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan
Thematic Session on Cultural Heritage Risk Management
Kobe, Japan – 19 January 2005**

Recommendations (adopted by the meeting)

Introduction

A Thematic Session on Cultural Heritage Risk Management, organized by UNESCO, ICCROM, and Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, with coordination by Ritsumeikan University, was held in Kobe, Japan on 19 January 2005 within the framework of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The participants of this meeting came from 7 countries from many regions of the world as well as representatives of UNESCO, ICCROM, and ICOMOS.

At the global, national, and local levels, cultural heritage has become of great relevance to sustainable development and its components of environmental protection, and economic and social development.

Cultural heritage in this context is defined broadly to include the movable and immovable, and tangible and intangible heritage; that is all aspects of the physical and spiritual relationship between human societies and their environment.

The participants of the Thematic Session on Cultural Heritage Risk Management:

- express their thanks to
 - the United Nations and the Government of Japan for hosting the World Conference on Disaster Reduction,
 - UNESCO, ICCROM, and Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan for organizing the Thematic Session on Cultural Heritage Risk Preparedness as part of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and Ritsumeikan University for coordinating the event,
 - Japan ICOMOS, Ritsumeikan University, and the ICOMOS International Committee for Risk Preparedness for organizing a preparatory meeting, *Risk Preparedness for Cultural Heritage in Asia and Circum-Pacific Region*, from 14 – 18 January 2005 in Kyoto, Japan;
- express condolences to, and solidarity with, those persons affected by the terrible Sumatra-Andaman Islands Earthquake and Indian Ocean Tsunami of 26 December 2004, and to the victims of previous disasters in various regions of our planet;
- recognize that, in responding to disasters of all kinds, the first priorities are attention to the saving of human lives and the provision of basic necessities immediately following the disaster, while also noting that emergency response and recovery, as much as possible, should avoid unnecessary further harm to cultural heritage as a result of the disaster;
- recall existing Conventions, Recommendations, and Declarations and other documents, including but not exclusively
 - the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Properties in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954) and its protocols (1954,1999)

- the World Heritage Convention (1972) and in particular, article 5,
 - the Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), and in particular paragraphs 8 and 25,
 - the Declaration of Quebec (1996),
 - the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) Draft Heads of Agreement (1996),
 - the Kobe-Tokyo Declaration on Risk Preparedness for Cultural Heritage (1997),
 - the ICCROM-WHC-ICOMOS book Risk Preparedness: A Management Manual for World Cultural Heritage (1998),
 - the report of the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development (2002),
 - the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003),
 - the Hoi An Declaration on Conservation of Historic Districts in Asia (2003),
 - The Declaration and Recommendations of the International Workshop on the Recovery of Bam's Cultural Heritage (2004),
 - the Kyoto Declaration on Protection of Cultural Properties, Historic Areas and their Settings from Loss in Disasters, of the Japan ICOMOS meeting, Risk Preparedness for Cultural Heritage in Asia and Circum-Pacific Region (2005),
 - and other relevant documents endorsed by the international community of experts;
- note with regret that, eight years after the Kobe-Tokyo Declaration, appropriate disaster management strategies, which could have significantly reduced the damage caused to cultural heritage, are very often, still not in place;
 - emphasize the fact that the costs involved in carrying out remedial measures after a disaster far exceed the costs of appropriate risk management strategies for the protection of the cultural heritage before the occurrence of a disaster, even without calculating the economic value of the lost heritage;
 - recognize that traditional knowledge and skills and community participation constitute invaluable sources for education for establishing a culture of prevention, and for reduction of impacts of disasters on lives, property, livelihoods, and cultural heritage;
 - recognize the important role that cultural heritage, in all its forms, can play in post-disaster response and recovery;
 - note the general lack of appreciation of the importance of heritage as a primary resource for the community, which must be protected from the possible impact of disasters by means of appropriate preventive measures;
 - note with appreciation that the Draft Programme Outcome Document of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction acknowledges that critically important public facilities include culturally important lands and structures, and that protecting them against risk is a fundamental task of all levels of government.

Strategic Goals

In order to achieve the objectives of sustainable development and risk management, the participants of the Thematic Meeting on Cultural Heritage Risk Management identify the following strategic goals:

- to recognize that the transmission of traditional technology, skills, and local knowledge systems, and the conservation of cultural heritage, is of fundamental importance to sustainable development, including disaster reduction;
- to integrate cultural heritage into existing disaster reduction policies and mechanisms at the international, national and local levels including involving qualified heritage organizations and expertise;
- to involve local communities in the preparation and implementation of risk management plans, and all stages of disaster recovery;
- to include cultural heritage as a subject of scientific research, academic, educational, and training programmes associated with risk management and disaster recovery.

Action Recommendations

General Recommendations

Develop capacity building programmes aimed both at cultural heritage professionals and emergency personnel in other areas of disaster management, so as to achieve seamless integration.

Develop awareness-raising initiatives with a view to involving decision-makers and local communities in the development and implementation of risk management and disaster reduction strategies for cultural heritage.

Encourage established cultural heritage networks to promote the integration of cultural heritage into the broader disaster management arena.

For Intergovernmental and International Nongovernmental Organizations

Intergovernmental and international nongovernmental organizations concerned with cultural heritage, such as UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, ICOM, IFLA, and ICA, as well as the International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) and the related international instruments, such as the World Heritage Convention, should act to enhance and promote risk management and disaster reduction within their policies, programmes, and activities.

For National Governments

National Governments are encouraged to:

- adopt and implement comprehensive policies, procedures, and legal measures to integrate cultural heritage in all disaster reduction programmes;

- include governmental and non-governmental cultural heritage expertise in existing or future national coordinating bodies mandated to oversee the development and implementation of disaster reduction policy, programmes and actions plans;
- cooperate with local administrations and provide adequate resources to ensure the adoption and implementation of consistent risk management strategies for cultural heritage assets on their territory, in particular, historic urban areas and living cultural landscapes, and their settings;
- encourage and support civil society and non-governmental initiatives in the field of disaster reduction for cultural heritage;
- initiate and support education and awareness campaigns to disseminate information broadly for the protection of cultural heritage before, during, and after disasters;
- as a priority, include or improve risk management plans as part of the management system for heritage properties nominated for or already recognized in the context of the World Heritage Convention and other international instruments;
- include risk management and disaster reduction for cultural heritage into the scope of the assistance programmes of their international development and cooperation agencies, and promote this policy within multilateral development institutions to which they are a party.

For Educational/Research Institutions

Educational and research institutions, in particular universities and their networks, are encouraged to create, consolidate and disseminate multidisciplinary information on experiences in coping with disasters, traditional techniques, including disaster-resistant features of traditional construction, and new technologies and methodologies for disaster reduction for cultural heritage. This could include the establishment of UNESCO Chairs, such as the one proposed at Ritsumeikan University.

Scientific and traditional knowledge on disaster management for cultural heritage should be disseminated to a broad audience, in particular private owners, youth and the building industry.

Educational institutions should develop specific training for architectural, engineering, and planning professionals to enable them to act appropriately in response and recovery activities involving cultural heritage.

Educational institutions should establish and expand training programmes for the traditional construction crafts necessary for the continuation of building traditions, and work to increase the respect for these crafts by the general public.

Educational and research institutions should develop materials and case studies to demonstrate the economic value of the cultural heritage as a means to raising support among development agencies and other potential financial partners for the protection of the cultural heritage from disasters.