

ICOMOS

international council on monuments and sites

Call for Abstracts

Reducing Risks to Cultural Heritage from Natural and Human-Caused Disasters (2012)

Symposium date and location

31 October 2012 in Beijing, China (during the ICOMOS Advisory Committee, Scientific Council and Executive Committee meetings)

Scientific Council Officer

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Background

At the recent ICOMOS General Assembly in Paris, the interdisciplinary theme for the Scientific Council Triennial Action Plan for 2012-14 was discussed. Taking into consideration increasing risks to tangible and intangible cultural heritage due to various natural and human-caused factors, the themes for the scientific symposia for the next three Advisory Committee meetings will focus on risks resulting from natural and human-caused disasters (2012), globalization and uncontrolled development (2013), and loss of traditions and collective memory (2015). Consideration of risks also marks a shift from reactive to a preventive approach for conservation that seeks to put emphasis on risk reduction and preparedness.

The three themes will bring forward the underlying causes for risks to cultural heritage; tools and methodologies for their assessment; and policies, strategies and techniques for reducing potential threats to the future of cultural heritage aimed at protecting and managing our irreplaceable cultural resources for present and future generations.

Context

Cultural heritage is exposed to numerous disasters resulting from natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, as increasingly human-induced hazards, such as arson, armed conflict and civil unrest. The great East Japan Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami (2011); Thailand Floods (2011); Haiti, Chile and Christchurch earthquakes (2010); and recent civil unrests in Libya, Egypt, Yemen and Syria have caused serious damage to tangible and intangible attributes of cultural-heritage sites ranging from historic buildings, museums, historic settlements, as well as cultural landscapes.

Undoubtedly the frequency and intensity of some disasters has increased recently due to impact of Global Climate Change, as well as social, economic and political changes. Considering these challenges, The ICOMOS Symposium, Reducing Risks to Cultural Heritage from Natural and Human-Caused Disasters, aims to assess these risks and formulate policies, strategies and techniques for reducing risks to disasters, responding to emergencies and recovering from disasters. During the one-day symposium, position papers and case studies will be presented on the following themes:

- 1 Techniques and Strategies for Mitigating Risks to Cultural Heritage from Natural and Human-Caused Disasters**
 - How can we develop appropriate techniques for mitigating risks to cultural heritage from earthquakes and floods, cyclones/hurricanes and fires by considering factors of safety, as well as values?
 - What are traditional materials, skills and knowledge systems for disaster mitigation of cultural heritage, and how can we utilize them in present context?
 - Which maintenance and monitoring strategies can be adopted for reducing risks to cultural heritage due to disasters?
 - How can we enhance security of cultural-heritage sites to prevent risks of terrorism and theft?

- 2 Methodology and Tools for Undertaking Risk Assessment of Cultural Heritage**
 - What are various approaches and tools for assessing risks to cultural-heritage sites from natural and human-caused disasters?
 - What are good practices in documentation, inventorying and mapping for recording and analyzing risks due to natural and human-caused factors?
 - How can we communicate these risks to decision makers?

- 3 Protecting Cultural Heritage in Times of Conflict and Other Emergencies**
 - What kind of policies, techniques and strategies can be adopted for protecting cultural-heritage sites in the times of conflicts and other emergencies?
 - How can we effectively use international legal instruments and coordinate with organizations such as Blue Shield?

- 4 Planning for Post-Disaster Recovery of Cultural Heritage**
 - How do we avoid hasty destruction of vulnerable materials and structures (earth, stone and wood) of architectural heritage located in disaster-prone areas?
 - How do we undertake post-disaster damage assessment of cultural heritage?
 - How can we develop monitoring and evaluation strategies for post-disaster interventions and reconstruction?
 - How do we evaluate costs of post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation of cultural heritage?
 - How do we engage various international and national stakeholders for post-disaster recovery of cultural heritage?
 - How can intangible heritage be utilized effectively for post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation?

- 5 Awareness-Raising and Capacity-Building for Managing Disaster Risks to Cultural Heritage.**
 - How do we engage communities for disaster-risk management of cultural-heritage sites?
 - How do we build the capacity of craftsmen, professionals and decision makers for managing risks to cultural heritage from natural and human-caused factors?

Symposium Format

Papers and poster presentations will be solicited through the Scientific Council listserv and National Committees. Paper abstracts and poster proposals will be blind-peer-reviewed. Abstracts will be selected for presentation and/or e-publication. Finished papers in the provided format will be due prior to the symposium.

In the **first session**, open to the general public, selected papers will be presented. Posters will be accepted as space and the blind peer-review process permits.

Part of the **second session** will be devoted to breakout groups for ISC members wherein each working group will be asked to reflect on specific topics and how they relates to their ISCs.

The breakout groups will return for a **final plenary session** to present each group's recommendations which will then be synthesized into formal recommendations to be distributed and discussed by the Advisory Committee and e-published for download on the ICOMOS website along with selected papers.

Call for Abstracts and Posters

The 2012 Symposium will highlight five main themes in its examination of risks to cultural heritage due to natural and human-caused disasters. However, the questions posed herein are merely suggested as sub-topics; we welcome additional perspectives in submitted proposals for abstracts and posters.

Submission of Abstracts

Abstracts for papers or posters should be a maximum of 250 words in English or French and should be submitted to pamela.jerome@icomos.org by **30 April 2012**

Please indicate clearly whether the submission is for a paper or a poster.

All abstracts must contain the title of the proposed paper or poster, the name of the author(s), and contact information (institutional affiliation, mailing address, phone number, and email address).

Timeline for symposium organization

- Abstracts due: 30 April 2012
- Review and notification of authors: 14 May 2012
- Papers due: 30 July 2012
- Papers reviewed and comments back to authors: 15 September 2012
- Final submission of revised papers: 30 September 2012
- Publication: 30 November 2012