



Comments of the International Council on Monuments and Sites on the Zero Draft of the Habitat 3 New Urban Agenda

5 June 2016 Draft

These comments are based on the ICOMOS Concept Note for the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development

ICOMOS applauds the issuance of the Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda and welcomes the inclusion of many of ICOMOS's key recommendations on cultural heritage from the 2015 Habitat 3 Thematic Consultations. We also applaud the clear effort to reflect the spirit of the existing elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ICOMOS also believes, however, that enhancements are needed to the Zero Draft in order to harmonize it with the treatment of urban heritage elsewhere in the 2030 Agenda. Enhancements are also required to properly reflect the role of safeguarding heritage for urban resilience, sustainability, inclusiveness and safety.

Summary of Key Comments of ICOMOS on the Zero Draft

1. Improved linkages between the New Urban Agenda and SDG Goal 11 are needed.
2. The Inter-Linkages of Nature and Culture need to be made explicit.
3. Better alignment between NUA and SDG Target 11.4 regarding the Role of Heritage in Urban Equity and Poverty Eradication is needed.
4. The role of Tourism in Inclusive Urban Prosperity is not appropriately treated.
5. The role of heritage in Ecological and Resilient Cities is not addressed, creating a major disjunction with Goal 11 and the Sendai Framework.
6. Means of Implementation, Financing and other Tools for leveraging the safeguarding of heritage are inadequate.
7. The role of traditional settlement patterns in planning and managing urban spatial development need to be recognized.

What is meant by Cultural Heritage?

As a prefatory matter, it is important to reiterate what is meant (or should be meant) by the term “Culture Heritage” in the New Urban Agenda. Over time, the meaning of cultural heritage has expanded from single monuments identified as objects of art to cultural landscapes, historic cities, and serial properties. Moreover, contemporary practice extends the concept of heritage beyond “tangible heritage,” to the intangible dimensions of heritage as well. This means the entirety of the capital of knowledge derived from the development and experience of human practices, and from the spatial, social and cultural constructions linked to it that may be encapsulated in the word, “memory.”

The unique power of World Heritage sites and other exceptional, iconic properties cannot be doubted. Even so, in order to fully understand the relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable development, including the promotion of social cohesion, inclusion and equity, the idea of “heritage” must thus be understood in its broader, modern sense. Physical conservation of selected artifacts alone will not help preserve a community’s cultural heritage but neither can the promotion of development and creative livelihood-related activities be removed from the conservation of these properties. So conservation and development must be approached in a more complex and multidisciplinary way to embrace planning and management that resolves the competing goals of conserving heritage value while integrating with inclusive social and economic development.

Background to the ICOMOS Review of the Zero Draft

On 25 September 2015, after years of dialogue, the countries of the world adopted the successor to the MDGs. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets — is arguably the most ambitious and holistic development framework ever conceived. Amidst much history that was made in its adoption, not to be overlooked is the unprecedented, explicit recognition given in the document to the fundamental role that heritage and culture play in human development. “The new SDGs reflect a hard-learned global realization that heritage is a necessary enabler and a powerful driver of sustainable development,” said Gustavo Araoz, President of ICOMOS.

Unlike their predecessors, the MDGs, the SDGs speak boldly about heritage. Of the 7 targets making up the groundbreaking new Urban Goal, Target 11.4 calls for “making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.” The adoption of the SDGs has been accompanied by several parallel Post-2015 agenda settings processes. Because of the work of

ICOMOS and partners, these also include groundbreaking references to Heritage, most notably the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The treatment of heritage in these elements of the Post-2015 Development Agenda reflects the critical role culture and cultural heritage/landscape in the emerging need for a paradigm shift to a concept of development that view sustainability in more humanistic and ecological terms. As Gustavo Araoz put it, “The SDGs show that the World has a common vision of sustainability and a shared understanding of the tools – including heritage – that make that vision achievable. Now it’s up to all of us to build and re-build that future together.”

The New Urban Agenda is the first major step in this process and for operationalizing sustainable development in an integrated and coordinated way at global, regional, national, sub-national and local levels. By creating an action-oriented roadmap for implementation, the New Urban Agenda will drive the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially SDG Goal 11, of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Because the heritage target, 11.4, is located within Goal 11, the elaboration of the role of heritage in Agenda 2030 is necessarily closely linked to the Habitat 3 New Urban Agenda process as well.

Several of these key concepts that undergird the inclusion of heritage in the SDGs and the Sendai Framework are also present in the Zero Draft. We especially welcome provisions relating to the role of heritage in sustainable and inclusive economies and in efforts to achieve social cohesion. ICOMOS and its partners have highlighted the fact that cultural heritage and creativity are drivers of inclusive economic development. Heritage areas incubate creativity while intangible heritage and sustainable tourism are drivers of inclusive livelihoods. Cultural heritage is an enabler of social cohesion, inclusion and equity. Historic environments including public spaces and monuments are functionally and socially mixed and embody multiple cultural values. Heritage, both tangible and intangible, strengthens communities by fostering pride, shared identity, integration and emplacement among newcomers and longtime residents alike.

We also celebrate the text’s reference to a commitment to “leverage culture and heritage in cities through integrated urban policies and to invest adequate budget shares, at both the local and national levels, to safeguard and promote cultural and natural heritage,” highlighting the role that these play in the “rehabilitation and revitalization of urban areas, as a way to strengthen social participation and the exercise of citizenship.” ICOMOS has championed the idea that cultural heritage supports livability and sustainability. Reuse of existing built environment conserves materials while traditional building technologies and materials offer low-energy, regional appropriate examples of human adaptability. Indigenous science and local knowledge support disaster risk reduction and modern resilience. Dense, walkable and inclusive, historic territories are models for new urban settlements.

Detailed Comments of ICOMOS on the Zero Draft

1. Improve Linkages Between SDG Goal 11 and the New Urban Agenda

While ICOMOS welcomes the link made between the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs in the Zero draft, I note the concern that the draft is not sufficiently and consistently correlated to Goal 11 of the SDGs. While many elements of Heritage Target are present in the Zero Draft, the draft is not organized in a manner that coherently correlates to Target 11.4, nor, as a substantive matter, does it embrace all its elements. Target 11.4 calls for

making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Target 11.4 thus has four elements:

- (I) Strengthening safeguarding of heritage to make cities and human settlements more inclusive;
- (II) Strengthening safeguarding of heritage to make cities and human settlements more safe;
- (III) Strengthening safeguarding of heritage to make cities and human settlements more resilient; and
- (IV) Strengthening safeguarding of heritage to make cities and human settlements more sustainable.

While there is overlap between the four, each addresses a different aspect of the urban agenda and each apprehends different issues, policies and possibilities. The Zero Draft is vastly uneven in treating these four, with safeguarding heritage to make cities inclusive being perhaps the best treated and safeguarding heritage to make cities safe and resilient all but ignored.

Recommendation:

- a) The Zero Draft would be improved if it were reorganized to correlate in a more coherent and obvious manner to the SDGs in general and Goal 11 in particular. This could be accomplished by regrouping the provisions or perhaps just indexing them to the SDGs.
- b) Irrespective of the organization, substantively speaking, each of the four elements of Target 11.4 should be squarely addressed. To leave out elements of Goal 11 in the New Urban Agenda is unthinkable. The point is addressed further below.
- c) Goal 11 includes only seven targets, and entire one of the seven is devoted to heritage. Yet heritage is not referenced in the Transformative commitments. As a core Goal 11

Target, heritage should be included. We recommend the following edit to Section 6 of the Zero Draft:

6. We commit to a New Urban Agenda that embodies these three main guiding principles: (a) Leave no one behind, ensure urban equity and eradicate poverty by providing equitable access for all, to physical and social infrastructure, recognizing and leveraging [natural and cultural](#) heritage, culture, diversity and safety, while enabling participation and enhancing livability and quality of life.

2. Make Explicit the Inter-Linkages of Nature and Culture

A consequence of not expressly correlating the provisions of Goal 11 and Target 11.4 to the Zero Draft is that there is no reference to the inter-linkages of natural and cultural heritage, as we find in Target 11.4. The emerging need for a paradigm shift in the concept of development in more humanistic and ecological terms is manifest in the linkages of natural and cultural heritage found in Target 11.4. Enhancing these linkages is a key tool for increasing the resilience and sustainability of cities.

Recommendation: Revise the “Ecosystems and Cities” section as follows:

- (a) 71. The provision of a well-connected network of open and green public spaces in central and peripheral urban areas, facilitating linkages with and access to the surrounding natural environment [and cultural landscape](#), can improve public health and contribute to the quality of life and well-being of all people, through increased leisure and physical activity, while protecting and improving the urban ecosystem and the services it provides, and mitigating climate change risks such as urban heat island, among others.
- (b) 72. We acknowledge [the inter-linkages of natural and cultural heritage](#) and that the practices and attitudes of residents and users of urban space – both individuals and organizations – strongly determine the extent of environmental impact. We resolve through policy and regulation to increasingly internalize externalities as a driver of behavioral change. We will also use school curriculums and public awareness campaigns as additional tools [and leverage cultural heritage and historical memory representing critical knowledge of how a community relates to the natural environment](#).

3. Align NUA and SDG Target 11.4 regarding the Role of Heritage in the “Leave No One Behind” Agenda, Urban Equity and Poverty Eradication

The role of heritage in social inclusion is addressed in the section titled “Recognize and leverage culture, diversity and safety in cities.” In particular, Section 38 which reads:

38. We commit to leverage culture and heritage in cities through integrated urban policies and to invest adequate budget shares, at both the local and national levels, to safeguard and promote cultural and natural heritage, including cultural infrastructures and sites, museums, as well as traditional knowledge and the arts, highlighting the role that these play in the rehabilitation and revitalization of urban areas, as a way to strengthen social participation and the exercise of citizenship.

The concept also arises in Section 47 (see below regarding sustainability). The language of Section 38 is clearly intended to incorporate the IEAG-SDG Target for Section 11.4. The reference to integrated urban policies would even seem to be nod to the ICOMOS proposal submitted in the IAEG-SDG Grey Indicator comment period, and is to be commended. On the other hand, locating the Indicator reference here is a bit awkward. We recommend moving the budget share portion to the Implementation section (see our discussion below). As to the balance, to harmonize Section 38 with Goal 11, recommend revising it to read:

Recommendation

. . . play in urban areas and in social integration through shared attachment to place, creativity and livability, as a way to strengthen safety, sustainability, resilience and inclusion, including social participation and the exercise of citizenship.”

This change would also harmonize the clause with Section 38 dealing with culture which correlates culture to “strengthen social cohesion, gender equality, innovation, inclusion, identity and safety, as well as to foster livability and a vibrant urban economy.”

4. Improve Treat of Tourism in the Section on Inclusive Urban Prosperity and Opportunities for All

As it regards inclusive and sustainable urban economies, Section 47 provides for inclusive and sustainable urban economies by building on local resources and competitive advantages, including modern infrastructure and cultural heritage. The reference to cultural heritage here seems particularly apt as it highlights the role of heritage as a place-specific assets that can guide territorial development. The provisions of Section 47 are amplified in the Section on “Enabling business environment, jobs and livelihoods.” There, Section 57 calls for moving “towards ensuring that all citizens have access to income-earning opportunities, respecting and leveraging culture and territorial specificity.” We applaud these provisions but recommend adding "traditional knowledge" to Section 47.

Section 58 and 61 speak to heritage, creativity and employment. Section 58 references the business opportunities offered by the diverse creative potential of cities. Section 61 provides: Urban economies should be sustained and supported to promote the progressive transition to higher productivity jobs through high value added sectors, promoting diversification, technological upgrading and innovation. Qualified jobs in both the formal and informal sectors, including through cultural and creative industries, tourism, performing arts and heritage conservation activities, will create the conditions for sustainable revenue generation. We commit to empower local governments and other local actors to promote local economic development with the inclusion of all the appropriate industries in each locality.

A problematic element of this section is the treatment of tourism. Again, we see the failure to correlate the Zero Draft to the SDGs. SDG Target 8.9 reads “[p]romote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all . . . by 2030 devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products.”

In order to correlate Section 61 with SDG 8.9 and 11.4, ICOMOS recommends revising the unqualified reference to “tourism” in Section 61 to track SDG Goal 8.9 as follows:

Recommendation:

Qualified jobs in both the formal and informal sectors, including through cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products, performing arts and heritage conservation activities, will create the conditions for sustainable revenue generation.

Given the important role of tourism in the SDGs and to cities, we recommend further addressing tourism by adding a correlating reference to Section 63 that the working poor and the informal sector are boosted by heritage conservation and cultural businesses that develop local products and services and increase productivity for local economies by serving the visitor economy (SDG 8.9).

5. Address the Role of Heritage in Ecological and Resilient Cities and Human Settlements by Aligning with Goal 11 and Sendai on this topic

Both SDG Target 11.4 and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction contemplate important roles for heritage in disaster risk reduction and resilience. These matters are all but non-existent in the Zero Draft. The section on “Resilience to Disasters and Climate Change and other shocks” needs to recognize the use of the heritage and culture of places as a guide to adaptation and a source of mitigation; the special requirements of protecting cultural assets and the need for resilience-building measures that are culturally specific. These changes would correlate the resilience section to SDG 11.4 and Sendai.

In the context of sustainability, the Zero Draft emphasizes the role of heritage in sustainable and inclusive economies. The Zero Draft largely ignores the role of heritage in other forms of sustainability, for example ecological.

In order to address the role for heritage contemplated in Section 11.4, the sustainable model of building reuse and conservation of embodied energy reflected by historic preservation models should be recognized, as follows:

Recommendation:

74. The consumption and production patterns of cities are a critical element of achieving global resilience and sustainability. We therefore commit to strengthening the crucial linkages and efficient management of resources like land, water, energy, materials including the appropriate use and reuse of existing older and historic buildings and traditional technologies, food, as well as the reduction and management of waste and the mitigation of emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants, taking into consideration the full-range of resource requirements vis-à-vis the environmental impact and sustainability. We support the development of transparent frameworks for public and private entities to report on their environmental footprints to ensure sustainability.

80. We commit to substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing and monitoring the implementation of integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and resilience to disasters, using the heritage and culture of places as a guide to adaptation and a source of mitigation. This should include the conduct of pre-disaster risk assessments in urban areas in order to develop a thorough understanding of disaster risks across the various dimensions of hazards, vulnerabilities, exposure of people and assets, including their economic, environmental and cultural assets, and improve capacity of local and national governments, city administrators, development planners, emergency responders, and decision-makers on disaster and climate risks, to implement risk-informed solutions to protecting people and the existing assets, as well as in appropriately protecting them from future development at the city and community level so they do not introduce additional hazards.

6. Enhance the Treatment of Means of Implementation, Financing and other Tools for leveraging the safeguarding of heritage

The Zero Draft contains only one paragraph regarding the Implementation of Heritage-related provisions. As is, this provision is not adequate if the New Urban Agenda is to provide a template for implementing SDG Goal 11.4.

The current heritage implementation section reads as follows:

124. We will place urban culture and heritage as a priority component of urban plans and strategies through the adoption of planning instruments, including master plans, zoning guidelines, and strategic growth policies that safeguard a diverse range of tangible and intangible cultural assets and landscapes and mitigate the disruptive impact of development. We will also conduct a comprehensive inventory and/or mapping of these tangible and intangible assets, utilizing new technologies and techniques and involving local communities, as appropriate.

Inventorying while important alone is not an adequate tool to achieve Target 11.4 and does not reflect adequate attention to the implementation side of SDG Target 11.4.

Recommendations:

We recommend adding the following to the existing language of Section 124:

124. We will place the safeguarding of urban culture and heritage as a priority component of urban plans and strategies through the adoption of planning instruments, including master plans, zoning guidelines, building code requirements for existing buildings, and strategic growth policies that safeguard a diverse range of tangible and intangible cultural assets, structures, sites and landscapes and mitigate the disruptive impact of development. We will also conduct a comprehensive inventory and/or mapping of these tangible and intangible assets, utilizing new as well as traditional technologies and techniques and involving local communities, and protect these sites, structures and assets from disasters, including urbanization, as appropriate.

We will maintain financial funding, incentives/disincentives for existing infrastructure and appropriate regeneration of existing urban areas, historic districts and neighborhoods. Such tools may include for instance, tax incentives for density and infill and tax credits for adaptive reuse. We also commit to supporting the development of and design and other guidelines for integrating culture and cultural heritage/landscape with socially and economically inclusive sustainable urban development. We commit to supporting the development of tools for assessing the way that heritage safeguarding and protection is implemented in a development perspective at the local level, and for improved evaluation methods for comparing the multidimensional impacts on natural and cultural heritage.

Such an approach would integrate culture and cultural heritage/landscape with urban planning, tourism development, infrastructure development, poverty alleviation, affordable housing, disaster risk reduction, and conservation of tangible and intangible heritage.

In addition, the language of Section 38 of the Zero Draft is clearly intended to incorporate the IEAG-SDG Target for Section 11.4. The reference to integrated urban policies would even seem to be nod to the ICOMOS proposal submitted in the IAEG-SDG Grey Indicator comment period, and is to be commended. On the other hand, locating the Indicator reference here is a bit awkward. The UN Statistical Division metric relates to all four elements of Target 11.4 whereas Section 38 only calls on investing adequate budget shares as a way to strengthen social participation and the exercise of citizenship. It might make more sense to move the budget share piece (i.e. the indicator discussion) to Section 124 (the implementation section). We suggest the following:

Recommendation:

We commit to leverage culture and heritage in cities through integrated urban policies and to invest adequate budget shares, at both the local and national levels, to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient *and* sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.

This approach will help significantly to harmonize SDG Target 11.4 and its corresponding UN Statistical Division Indicator and the Zero Draft.

7. Acknowledge the Role of Traditional Settlement in Planning and Managing Urban Spatial Development

Cultural heritage and particularly historic cities and settlements are a proven reference model for Sustainable development. Historic cities demonstrate mixed uses, human scale, density and vibrancy. By their adaptation economically, environmentally and socially over time they have demonstrated resilience. In the evolution of historic cities, we see the lessons of adaptive reuse.

In order to recognize this important fact, recommend revising Section 100 of the Zero draft as follows:

Recommendation

100. We will plan cities and territories based on the principles of efficient use of land, compactness, adequate density and connectivity, as well as mixed economic use in the built up areas, giving due regard to historic areas and traditional settlement patterns that are a proven

[reference model for sustainability](#), to reduce mobility needs and service delivery costs per capita, and harness density and economies of agglomeration. The application of these principles will foster sustainable urban development, including job creation, reduced infrastructure spending, efficient public transport, reduced congestion, as well as reduced urban sprawl and land consumption.

About ICOMOS

ICOMOS is deeply committed to the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage including monuments and sites. The consideration of cultural heritage conservation with sustainable development has come about due to a number of conditions, challenges, and opportunities in the current socio-economic, environmental, and political context all of which must influence approaches to heritage conservation. We now live in what has been termed the urban century, and increasingly heritage has an urban face.

A series of ICOMOS initiatives and actions to promote tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a vital aspect of social development and sustainability informs these comments. Of particular importance is the ICOMOS Symposium held in Paris in 2011 in anticipation of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (the Rio+20 Conference) that resulted in the Paris Declaration on "*Heritage as a Driver of Development*." Earlier efforts began with the ICOMOS conference held at Moscow and Suzdal in Russia (1978), one of the sub-themes of which was "*Historical Monuments as a Support to Economic and Social Development*." The ICOMOS Valletta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas (2011) is another key text.

Also informing this Concept Note are a number of international initiatives and actions on culture and sustainable development undertaken in recent years. High level documents on culture and development in the last half decade including the *Creative Economy Reports* (2013), *World Report: Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue* (UNESCO 2009), the Rio+20 post 2015 agenda document, (2012), *the Hangzhou Declaration* (2013), *Declaration of the 3rd UNESCO World Forum on Culture and the Cultural Industries* (UNESCO 2014a), and *Culture 21: Actions: Commitments on the Role of Culture in Sustainable Cities* (UCLG 2014), have contributed to an enormous diversity of practical approaches and solutions.

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