

"Water and Heritage: Connecting Past, Present and Future"
A Dialogue among water professionals and culture, heritage professionals
Towards bridging mandatory, disciplinary and institutional divides
Official Side event UN Water Conference

Monday, 20 March and Tuesday, 21 March 2023

The Dushanbe Declaration of 2022, "Water for Sustainable Development", states that we need to "accelerate our efforts for coherent implementation of water-related goals and achievement of targets of the 2030 Agenda and aim at strengthening political and technical dialogue on water, including at the highest level." This urgent call for action happens on the brink of the UN Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" to be convened in New York from 22 to 24 March 2023.

As coordinators of "Dialogues on Water, Culture and Heritage", we share the profound concerns articulated in the Dushanbe declaration. It ignited our mission to make a difference by launching a Water, Culture and Heritage side event from 20 to 21 March in New York leading up to the UN Conference.

The side event called "Water and Heritage: Connecting Past, Present and Future" brings together a diverse and interdisciplinary group to discuss concepts, methodologies and case studies. We challenge governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, community-based organizations, environmental and conservation groups, historical and cultural organizations, women's and gender organizations, youth organizations and groups, and academic and research institutions to voice their knowledge and experience on past and present water management.

We believe that commitments for action should always be rooted in the past as it holds the value of water-related material, conceptual and spiritual 'assets' built up over millennia for today's and tomorrow's livelihoods worldwide. Embracing the message from the International Symposium on Water and Culture, Tokyo 2020, we promote "the dialogue on water and cultural heritage", encouraging knowledgeexchange. Our objective is to foster alliances between water, culture and heritage sectors, which offer synergies and new opportunities vital to addressing sustainable development challenges, focusing on SDG 6 and other water-related goals and targets. Adopting practice-based agendas across all levels of our global society drives the development of long-term perspectives, legal and policy frameworks, and societal-cultural paradigms capable of catalyzing systemic change.

Our collective insight into functional, spatial, temporal, material and immaterial dimensions of water set the scene to develop new integrated perspectives on water and living heritage for the future. It provides diverse insights into new concepts, methodologies and international case studies to better understand historical context, governance and culture. And most importantly, it triggers the movement to understand and build on the past together to embed heritage into sustainable development firmly.

Draft version



The two-day side event, “Water and Heritage: Connecting Past, Present and Future”, will take place on the Harlem Stage and at Columbia University, New York City, on March 20th and 21st. This side event is organized by ICOMOS (ISC Water and Heritage, NL and US), the UNESCO Chair on Water, Ports and Historic Cities, the engineering firm Witteveen+Bos and the Water Authority Amstel, Gooi en Vecht (AGV), and supported by the Union of Water Boards, The Netherlands, Delft University of Technology, the Icomos International Scientific Committee on Underwater Cultural Heritage (ICUCH), the Icomos Sustainable Development Goals Working Group (SDGWG).

Programme Overview

Day 1 on Monday, 20 March

- 1) Warm welcome, followed by presentations of the outputs of the Valuing Water and Culture, Heritage Project financed by the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management; Harlem Stage
- 2) Resulting in commitments to the Water Action Agenda
- 3) The day will be closed by the world premiere of the Water and Heritage themed chamber music, composed by Evan Fein and to be performed by the UN Chamber Music Society

Day 2 on Tuesday, 21 March

- 4) Starts with a program for children in the Bronx Children's Museum
- 5) followed by a Multimedia Art Exhibition in the Water House with several international artists;
- 6) continued by a workshop at Columbia University;
- 7) concluded with a ceremony in Central Park, with the participation of spiritual, religious and indigenous leaders underlining the group’s commitment to building inclusive water futures and the awarding of the ICOMOS ISC Water Awareness Shield to the City of New York.

Draft version

Draft PROGRAMME Conference

Monday 20 March 2023

Venue: Harlem Stage, 150 Convent Avenue, New York, New York (<https://harlemstage.org/>)

09:30 - 10:00	<p>SESSION 1: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION WATER, CULTURAL HERITAGE INITIATIVE Moderator: Diederik Six</p> <p>Creating a Global Movement: connecting disciplines, and institutions, and practices</p>
30 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenzo Hiroki Water Envoy Japan • Pamela Jerome (Treasurer Icomos Board) • Peter Glas Delta Commissioner (on behalf of Netherlands as organizer of the Summit and initiator of the project) (tbc) • Aziza Akhmouch, OECD Head of Cities,, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development • Abou Amani the Director of the Division of Water Sciences and Secretary of the IHP (tbc)
10:00 - 12:00	<p>SESSION 2: CONCEPTUAL AND SCIENTIFIC TRACK Moderator: Carola Hein</p> <p>Developing A Shared Discourse: Theories, methodologies, tools and global examples</p>
15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key speech by UNESCO Chair WPHC Carola Hein (TU Delft): Conceptualizing valuing water, culture and heritage
30 min.	<p>Round table 1 – Connecting Water and Heritage: Conceptual, methodological and case study-based perspectives to living history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eddy Moors (IHE Delft): Why the past matters for the future • Eriberto Eulisse (Wamunet): Activating the past for sustainable futures – The role and function of water museums • Jean-Francois Vereecke (AGUR): The Water Canvas - a system’s approach • Ellen Schultz (Fairmount Water Works): The Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center and the Watershed Alliance (Place-based Education in schools for a sustainable future) • Mariette Verhoeven (Radboud University): Revitalizing Istanbul’s Water Heritage: sustainable solutions for increasing knowledge and public engagement
15 min.	<p>Perspective from young professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayman Kassem (Waternet) • Loay Alatrash (Waternet) • Hilde Sennema (TU Delft/Erasmus University) <p>Reflection 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradley Moggridge (The University of Canberra)

Draft version

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naomi Hogervorst (UN Habitat) (Tbc) • Lyli Coelho (AgroParisTech-SUEZ Water for All) • Annika Hinze (Fordham University) <p>Q&A</p>
30 min.	<p>Round table 2 The role of culture in sustainable water systems past, present and future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sylvia Amann (Inforelais) The role of cultural quality for water futures • Matthias Wantzen (UNESCO Chair River Culture) Resetting values for mitigate the crisis of riverscapes • Nanco Dolman (Deltares) Opportunities for Blue-Green Infrastructure to enhance natural heritage in urban area • Maud van den Beuken (Artist, Rotterdam): Artistic practices for cultural transformation • Iris Bijlsma (RVO) The Valuing Water Concept
15 min.	<p>Perspective from young professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queenie Lin (TU Delft) • Carlien Donkor (TU Delft) <p>Reflection 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katherine Daniell (Australian National University) • Rosemary Wakeman (Fordham University)
15 min.	<p>Concluding remarks and recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living History • The Blue Papers <p>Q&A</p>
12.00 - 13.15	<p>SESSION 3: Valuing WATER RELATED HERITAGE: Moderator: Henk van Schaik, Vice President ICOMOS ISC Water, Member of ICOMOS SDGWG</p> <p>Showcasing the Relevance of Water Heritage in the past, today and into the future: Examples of living heritage in diverse hydrological conditions for today and tomorrow</p>
10 min.	<p>Introduction: ICOMOS mandate and activities on Water and and Heritage</p>
30 min.	<p>3-minute cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taha Ansari (ICOMOS ISC Water Algeria) Qanats and foggara's, serving the livelihoods of many in arid areas into the future • Elena Perez-Alvaro (ICOMOS ICUCH / UNIR, SDGWG) Underwater heritage, significant for the future • David Mormout (MetaMeta) Age old spate irrigation fit for the future • Aaron Wolf (Oregon State University) Inspired dialogues, wisdom of the past fit for the future

Draft version

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nils Ahlberg (ICOMOS ISC Water / SDGWG / OCD- RBAWG) Small scale hydropower and dams - of great value yesterday, today and tomorrow • Dinara Ziganshina (Director SIC ICWC, Uzbekistan) Traditional water governance, fit for the future. The case of Central Asia
30 min.	<p>Reflections by Young Professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matteo D'Agostino (TU Delft) • Quindi Hadi Toure (Young Expert alumni), Water Operator Partnership, Mali <p>Reflections by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Smith (DG IWMI) The IWMI perspective on water and heritage • James Dalton (IUCN) Perspective on culture, heritage services • Diana Morales Irato (Deltares) Living water related heritage in Valuing Water Journeys • LIFENG Li, (FAO), FAO perspective on valuating irrigated terraces for the future
5 min.	<p>Conclusions :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should water related heritage be included in the valuing water framework? Regional/national and hydrological systems 2. Do the presented cases, material, governance and spiritual make sense, and could they be connected? <p>Recommendations :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate Assessments under 'Valuing Water Journeys' in different hydrological systems 2. Introduce Water related heritage in IHP programme in collaboration with ICOMOS ISCs and ICOMOS NCs.
13:30 -14:30	Lunch
14.30 - 16.00	<p>SESSION 4: DUTCH COMPENDIUM AND OTHER REGIONAL INITIATIVES Moderator: Maarten Ouboter</p> <p>Exploring the Dutch Case Study: The Dutch reconsideration of water and heritage stakeholders, developments and case studies</p>
10 min.	Introduction: Maarten Ouboter
15 min.	<p>Round table 1 Dutch Compendium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Li An Phoa (Drinkable Rivers) Visions on water connect divides • Willem Ligtvoet (PBL) Looking from the Future to the Present and the Past • Luzette Kroon (Unie van Waterschappen) Reflection on Compendium as process and product. • Tilly Stroo Wavemakers (Wetskills) Campaigning
10 min.	<p>Reflections by Young Professionals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sannah Peters (Wetskills), • Jakob Olliver de Leth (Vitens)

Draft version

35 min.	<p>Reflections on National and Regional initiatives (40)</p> <p>Moderator: Maarten Ouboter/Henk van Schaik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ICOMOS USA USA Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Andrew Bernard, ○ Christopher Fullerton, ○ Meisha Hunter, ○ Tonja Koob Marking, ○ Priyanka Sheth (US ICOMOS dba World Heritage USA Water & Heritage) ● Sergio Ribeiro (ICOMOS ISC Water, Brasil) ● Sinite Yu (ICOMOS ISC Water) ● Sara Ahmed (ICOMOS India) ● Akifumi Iwabuchi (ICOMOS Japan / ICOMOS ICUCH / SDGWG) ● Hasti Tarekat (Heritage Hands-On and ICOMOS Indonesia) ● Maximilaan Ooft (ICOMOS Suriname)
10 min.	<p>Reflections on Water Heritage Case Studies: Maarten Ouboter/Henk van Schaik/Jeroen Oomkens</p>
16.00 – 16.55	<p>Session 5: Towards a NY policy statement (connecting past with present and future materially, conceptually and spiritually)</p> <p>Discussion: Henk van Schaik (ICOMOS), Carola Hein (UNESCO Chair WPHC), Maarten Ouboter (Waternet), Diederik Six</p>
16:55 - 17:00	<p>Meisha Hunter (announces 3/21 program; intro for Chamber Music Performance)</p>
17:00 - 17:30	<p>Chamber Music performance</p> <p>World premiere of commissioned chamber music celebrating the dual themes of water and heritage; composed by Evan Fein (Juilliard School professor of music;) and performed by the United Nations Chamber Music Society https://www.unchambermusic.org/press/</p>

Draft version

Tuesday 21 March 2023

1. Working Group Sessions

Venue: Columbia University, Prof. Rick Bell

Program: 30 delegates;

Group 5 Collaborating towards shared perspectives (Matteo D'Agostino, Jakob Olliver de Leth)

Schedule: Morning 9:00-12:00

2. Event in Bronx Children's Museum (invitation only)

Coordinated with the Bronx Children's Museum (<https://www.bronxchildrensmuseum.org/>), NYC Department of Education (elementary school children grades 2-3); Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct (<https://aqueduct.org/>); Mona Polacca; Little Friends of the High Bridge; High Bridge School PS11; Global Network of Water Museums

175th anniversary of the High Bridge: *Lowdown on the High Bridge How NYC Got Its Water*

(<https://www.bronxchildrensmuseum.org/lowdown-on-the-high-bridge>)

Schedule: Morning 10:00-12:00

3. Ceremony with Spiritual, Religious and Indigenous Leaders and Presentation of the Water and Heritage Awareness Shield

Venue: Angel of the Waters Fountain, Bethesda Terrace, Central Park (<https://centralpark.org/bethesda-fountain-angel-of-the-waters/>)

See (INSERT LINK FOR CEREMONY PROGRAM, SEPARATE DOCUMENT)

Schedule 14:00-16:00

Draft version