



Triennial Plan

2024 - 2027



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Introduction

ISC Water and Heritage

Water is an essential part of all cultural heritage. Without meaningful water management no human life is possible and therefore no cultural achievements. In addition, water plays an elementary role in coping with present and future challenges. A variety of material heritage and cultural practices are directly related to water, e.g. water supply systems, flood protection, dams and water wheels, agriculture, waterscapes and urban deltas as well as governance, religious and spiritual practices, and administrative systems.

Water related heritage merits public awareness and protection as living assets. This cultural heritage is a rich source of inspiration for sustainable solutions to water-specific problems. Water related heritage can help us build fairer and more resilient societies. The aim of ISC Water is to explore the diverse aspects of water related heritage in more detail; to advocate recognition and protection; to increase public awareness of water-related heritage as a source of traditional knowledge; to highlight the significance of water related heritage for management and planning design; and to communicate the value of water-related heritage for the livelihoods of communities into the future.

Long term vision

“Our vision for the future is to articulate and communicate the significance of water related cultural heritage for present and future management challenges and strengthen the social and economic livelihoods of worldwide communities. We aim to contribute to climate mitigation and resilience efforts, ensuring the preservation and sustainability of water related cultural assets for future generations.”

Mission Statement and Objectives

This Mission Statement defines the remit of the International Scientific Committee on Water and Heritage (ISC Water) and helps affinity partners to recognize when their activities concern matters in relation to which they may engage with the ISC Water. The ISC is dedicated to the research, protection and promotion of water-related cultural heritage and its material, conceptual, political and spiritual aspects. The Committee's aim is to advance comprehension and dissemination of the knowledge and experience contained in the World's water heritage and harness it to sustainably address the water-related concerns of the present and future.

Specifically, the objectives of the Committee are to:

- Create an **international platform** for interaction between ICOMOS, its ISCs and other heritage organizations and the water sector; governments, agencies, associated communities and NGOs, for networking, education and dialogue about the significance and management of water related heritage.
- Develop **methodologies, training, policies and good design process**, responding to traditional wisdom, to inform climate change mitigation and adaptation, and improve current and future water management and planning.
- Generally, strengthen the role of water related heritage in **social engagement and policy-making**.

Team Structure

Subcommittee & Working Groups



Membership Subcommittee (Focal Points: Dr. Akifumi Iwabuchi, Dr. Ping Kong, Henk van Schaik)

Scope: This Subcommittee reviews membership applications and initiates membership engagement surveys.

- Review of Expert, Associate and Institutional membership applications
- 2025 Membership Survey (Expert and Associate Members) for participation with Working Groups
- Coordination within ISC Water:
 - Education & Engagement Working Group (Emerging Professionals Working Group)

Global Policy & Partnerships (Focal Points: Henk van Schaik, Dr. Sinite Yu)

Scope: This working group focuses on the ISC's global policy and collaborations with international organisations.

- *Initiative 1: United Nations Water and Heritage Decade 2029-2039*
- *Initiative 2: Terraced Agriculture, Livelihoods, Economics, Climate Change & Gender*
- *Affinity Groups:*
 - United Nations Water (UN Water)
 - United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
 - UNESCO Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP)
 - Global Commission on the Economics of Water (GCEW)
 - The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
 - International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)
 - Global Network of Water Museums (WAMUNET)
 - IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (IHE)
 - International Water Association (IWA)
- *Universities and Private Companies: TU Delft; Lincoln; Arup; University Forum*
- *Coordination with ICOMOS ISC's and WGs: ICOMOS 2030 UN Agenda Sustainable Development Goals Working Group; Cultural Landscapes ISC; Climate Action Working Group; Triennial Strategic Plan*

Research & Publications (Focal Points: Henk van Schaik, Dr. Olufemi Adetunji)

Scope: This working group focuses on the ISC's research initiatives that will be published.

- *Initiative 1:* 2024 Annual General Meeting and Scientific Symposium proceedings
- *Initiative 2:* ICOMOS Scientific Symposium paper “Revisiting the Venice Charter” 2024/2025 (Henk van Schaik, Nupur Prothi, Meisha Hunter)
- *Initiative 3:* Thematic paper on Terraced Agriculture: livelihoods, economics, climate change, sustainability, gender (Dr. Sinite Yu, Henk van Schaik, Dr. Kevin Lane; partnerships with FAO, OECD, ICID)
- *Initiative 4:* Define Water Related Heritage Typologies (Saranya Dharshini)
- *Potential Future Initiatives*
 - Water Related Heritage in Arid Zones (Spate irrigation, qanats, water retention systems)
 - Water Related Heritage in Urban Coastal Zones (Climate Change, Sea Level Rise, Resiliency)
- Coordination within ISC Water:
 - Events, Planning & Logistics Working Group: regarding symposia and conference proceedings

Events Planning & Logistics (Focal Points: Henk van Schaik, Meisha Hunter, Kevin Lane, Sinite Yu)

Scope: This working group focuses on planning and executing the ISC's activities.

- *Initiative 1: Annual General Meeting and Scientific Symposium, Fondazione Romualdo del Bianco, Florence, Italy, October 2025 (Henk van Schaik, Meisha Hunter)*
- *Initiative 2: United Nations Water Conference, United Arab Emirates (co-host), December 2026*
 - *Preparatory and Organizational Meetings, 3 and 18 March and 9 July 2025*
- *Initiative 3: Preparation for United Nations Water and Heritage Decade 2029-2039*
- *Initiative 4: Atlas of Water Architecture (Catalonia in Venice - Water Parliaments)*
- *Future Initiatives:*
 - *ICOMOS Annual General Assembly, Lumbini, Nepal, 13-19 October, 2025*
 - *ICOMOS General Assembly, Sarawak, Malaysia 2026*
 - *ISC Water Annual General Meeting and Scientific Symposium, Gibraltar (date TBD)*
 - *ICOMOS "Spot on the Horizon" inviting ICOMOS members, ISCs and NCs to share their views on the development of ICOMOS for the next 15 years (in preparation for ICOMOS's 75th anniversary in 2040)*
 - *Conferences, webinars and In-person lectures*
- *Coordination within ISC Water:*
 - *Research & Publications Working Group: regarding proceedings arising from meetings and symposia*

Education & Engagement (Focal Points: Sukrit Sen, Saranya Dharshini)

Scope: This working group focuses on activities that disseminates the work of the ISC to a broader audience.

- *Initiative 1: Illustrated Encyclopedia and Glossary of Water Related Heritage (UNESCO World Heritage inventory and National ISCs)*
- *Initiative 2: Heritage Landscape Workshop in Pune, India, 7-11 August 2025 in collaboration with the University of Pune, Faculty of Architecture and TU Delft, Netherlands*
- Coordination within ICOMOS:
 - Emerging Professionals Working Group
- Coordination within ISC Water:
 - Research & Publications Working Group: For definitions of Water related heritage typologies
 - Communications and Outreach Working Group: ISC Water Website and Social media platforms

Communications & Outreach (Focal Points: Dr. Kevin Lane, Dr. Akifumi Iwabuchi)

Scope: This working group focuses on website design, social media updates, and ISC Water's annual report.

- **Initiative 1:** ISC Website and ICOMOS Secretariat Coordination
 - Mission Statement
 - Vision Statement
 - Triennial Plan
 - Ongoing Updates for ISC events
- **Initiative 2:** Social Media platforms (Linkedin)
- **Initiative 3:** ISC Water Annual reports to ICOMOS Secretariat
- **Potential Future Initiatives:**
 - Annual Newsletter
 - Podcasts
 - Translations

Triennial Scientific Plan (Focal Points: Saranya Dharshini, Meisha Hunter, Henk van Schaik)

Scope: This working group focuses on developing and updating the ISC Triennial Scientific Plan (2024 - 2027).

- *Deliverable 1: AdCom Questionnaire for ISCs*
- *Deliverable 2: Triennial Plan*
- ICOMOS Secretariat - Triennial Scientific Plan Task Force coordination: Saranya Dharshini (alternate Meisha Hunter), Dr. Ping Kong, Dr. Kevin Lane
- Annually update this Plan
- Coordination with ICOMOS Secretariat:
 - ISC Water's Annual reports
- Coordination with ISC Bureau members:
 - status of working group tasks, activities and updates

Structure of International Heritage Designation, Protection and Management Doctrinal Conventions, Statements and Documents				Relevance to Water-Related Heritage
UN/UNESCO CONVENTIONS Formal, multilateral treaties with State parties signing	1	1954 Hague Convention 1972 World Heritage Convention 2001 Convention for Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage 2003 Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development (including Sustainable Development Goals)	https://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/	Underwater heritage Intangible heritage associated with water e.g., governance
UNESCO OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES and POLICY DOCUMENTS Implementation criteria for a convention	2	2015 UNESCO Policy Document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective in the Processes of the World Heritage Convention 2015 UNESCO General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 2022 Dushanbe Declaration (Water for Sustainable Development)	https://whc.unesco.org/en/compendium/55 https://whc.unesco.org/en/ga/	
CHARTERS adopted by ICOMOS Formal instrument that may or may not be legally binding on the parties	3	1931 Athens Charter 1964 Venice Charter 1994 Nara Document on Authenticity	https://www.icomos.org/en/resources/charters-and-texts	The Venice Charter is presently being re-examined in a contemporary context and with cross-cutting approach between the Venice Charter and other international conventions, e.g. the Global Commission on the Economics of Water
RESOLUTIONS, DECLARATIONS, PRINCIPLES and DOCUMENTS Statements regarding Water-related heritage	4	2013 ICOMOS Netherlands' Statement of Amsterdam 2020 Statement of the Chair of the Tokyo Conference 2021 COP26 Water related Spirituality for Climate Adaptation 2023 New York Statement on Water Culture and Heritage 2023 New York Commitments on Water Culture and Heritage 2024 ISC Water formally approved by ICOMOS Secretariat 2024 proposed Amendments to the Venice Charter 2025 Global Commission on the Economics of Water	https://water.icomos.org/ https://watercommission.org/publication/the-economics-of-water/	The Global Commission on the Economics of Water's inaugural 2024 report identifies the need to rehabilitate Traditional Water Systems in Priority #1 (Water and Food).