

MUSEUMS AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: SUMMIT OF THE MUSEUMS OF THE AMERICAS

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of Museums**

**In cooperation with: Latin American
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I. Professional Interest Groups

Archaeology/Built Environment

Actions:

1. In recognition of sustainability, museums and communities should inform authorities and institutions of the need for conservation actions to prevent deterioration of heritage sites, including cultural material and research documentation within a controlled environment.
2. Create a hemispheric training program on appropriate strategies and technologies for effective thematic interpretation.
3. Recommend that countries and pertinent institutions create heritage site management plans.
4. Create a hemispheric training program for site-management plans that promote sustainable use and protection of heritage property.
5. Increase awareness of archaeology's social responsibility, ensure that work in heritage sites is in compliance with international standards and laws, and, if needed, review or promote local legislation.

Art

Actions:

1. Art museums should make known to the public their criteria and underlying principles for acquisitions and exhibitions.
2. Exhibits should be complemented by educational programs.

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3. Museums should establish a dialogue with their communities to encourage and support art and creativity that guarantees freedom of expression.
4. Museums have the responsibility to establish principles of technical and scientific conservation that ensure the integrity and security of their collections.
5. Museums should set an example of respect for rights of authorship and intellectual property.

Science and Technology

Considering:

- ◆ Museums should retrieve traditional technologies from their communities and integrate appropriate new technologies into their management systems;
 - ◆ Museums within the Americas should become tools in sustainable development through collaboration, communication, and exchange; and
 - ◆ Communities that identify, value, and manage their cultural heritage should protect their cultural identity; the Science and Technology group has agreed to the following actions:
1. Create networks that identify and share traditional technologies and increase the exchange of new technologies among museums of the Americas.
 2. Train museum staff so that museums become more effective educational resources.
 3. Create a pilot project between several countries of the Americas to produce a virtual exhibit about an agreed-upon theme.
 4. Facilitate meetings, scholarly symposia, and training seminars about sustainable development among the museums of the Americas.

History

Actions:

1. Museums should establish a clear line of communication with community representatives and authorities to research and identify their needs and aspirations.
2. Museums must promote legislation and other actions that link them to educational systems.
3. Museums must promote regional professional training courses and guarantee participation through a system of equitably distributed scholarships that expand the level of expertise throughout the hemisphere.

4. Museums must strengthen hemispheric relationships by exchanging information, promoting professional development, and pursuing opportunities for collaborations.
5. Museums must advocate for the importance of history and help communities reconstruct their heritage as an essential element of sustainable development.

Natural Heritage

Considering that natural heritage is the basis of sustainable development; and is of primary interest to museums, the Natural Heritage group has agreed to the following actions:

1. Museums and cultural institutions should seek references to natural heritage.
2. Natural history museums and environmental-education institutions must integrate into their exhibits and public programs aspects of daily life and community activities that are relevant to the knowledge, enhancement, conservation, and enjoyment of natural heritage.
3. Establish a pilot project among museums of different disciplines to explore the possibility of proposals that integrate natural and cultural heritage.
4. Preserve and protect natural collections because they provide important information on life-forms that are either endangered or already extinct. Optimize research on, access to, and communication of information about museum collections.
5. Establish a network of institutions that share specific interest in the communication and conservation of the natural environment in order to enrich, share, and enhance our experience.

II. Thematic Groups

Education (compilation of work of three groups)

Considering:

- ◆ Museums should be meeting places for communities;
- ◆ Government authorities should include museums in their general policies; and
- ◆ Educational policy should be formulated to tie in with formal and informal education, the Education group has agreed to the following actions:

1. Museums will use their power and prestige to advance their educational mission and obtain the necessary resources to that end.

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2. Museum staff will continually update their skills and training.
3. Museums must strengthen hemispheric relations by exchanging information, promoting professional training, and finding ways to work together.
4. Museums must engage in dialogue and work with their communities and other institutions.
5. Museums must pursue the financial resources needed to advance and realize the vision of this conference.
6. Museums will urge higher educational institutions to train future museum staff—both professional and volunteer.
7. Museums will review their mission statements to respond to and reflect the identified needs of the community.
8. Conduct ongoing research to identify the needs and aspirations of the community.
9. Strengthen educational institutions to implement professional development and training programs on the regional and sub-regional level.
10. Design and implement an exchange program to optimize the relationships between the community and museums of the region and link them within existing regional systems.
11. Recommend to governments laws and regulations that promote the development of museum programs and activities.
12. Formulate, promote, and disseminate participation policies for communities in accordance with community and institutional objectives and create an evaluation system and follow-up of those policies.
13. Recognize and integrate sustainable development proposals and actions into museum policy.
14. Promote and/or strengthen the creation of integrated systems of all types of museums working towards the goal of sustainable development.

Emergency Preparedness

Considering that:

- ◆ Museums and communities should work together in the detection and prevention of the deterioration of universal patrimony;

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- ◆ An international network of museums should facilitate the distribution of information about disaster prevention and promote collaboration among museums; and
- ◆ Museum personnel should be adequately trained in disaster preparedness; the Emergency Preparedness group has agreed to the following actions:
 1. Diagnose current conditions of museum collections and develop a strategic program based on specific case studies.
 2. Encourage membership in ICOM and active involvement in the Blue Shield program.
 3. Promote regional training seminars and offer grants that guarantee greater participation.

Cultural Heritage (compilation of work of three groups)

Considering that:

- ◆ Museums should develop and implement policies, strategies, and programs that promote sustainable development and contribute to the social, ecological, and economic vitality of the community;
- ◆ Museums must be involved with the community and its needs;
- ◆ Museums should establish training and professional development of staff that is consistent with the community's cultural dynamics;
- ◆ Museums must educate future generations regarding their cultural heritage;
- ◆ Museums should work with their communities to identify their cultural heritage; and
- ◆ An ongoing dialogue and collaboration among communities, museums, and other institutions should be established; the Cultural Heritage group has agreed to the following actions:
 1. Foster the inclusion of "Museums and Sustainable Development" topics in conferences, training programs, and museum activities within the institution, as well as public programs and publications.
 2. Establish direct communication with representatives and authorities from different communities.
 3. Create one or more groups per region in the hemisphere to establish a research association about the relationships between museums and sustainable communities.
 4. Promote legislation and other actions that will directly link education with museums.
 5. Museums must foster actions to protect cultural and natural heritage from deterioration, depredation, and illicit traffic as a way to ensure sustainable development.

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6. Museums will seek to establish links with other institutions working towards sustainable development at regional, national, and international levels.
7. Establish explicit and specific museum policies from which regulations, procedures, manuals and action programs will be derived so as to facilitate activities that encourage sustainable development.
8. Redesign exhibitions for children and young adults.
9. Incorporate museums into formal and informal educational systems.
10. Foster awareness of individual responsibility in the community through exhibitions and educational programs.
11. Determine the community's interest in its cultural heritage through scientific surveys, dialogues/forums, and other activities and assess whether the museum is meeting community expectations.
12. Museums periodically should inform the community, as well as other museums and institutions, about their programs, exhibitions, and other activities.
13. Develop and promote programs, exhibitions, and publications to maintain natural and cultural heritage.
14. Implement evaluation surveys about the use of and attitudes towards cultural and natural heritage.
15. Implement projects that link territory, heritage, and community consistent with the different contexts.
16. Consolidate communication networks with other museums and initiate a linkage throughout the hemisphere. Develop cooperation between museums and joint projects.

Technology

Considering that:

- ◆ Museums should have creative uses of low technology and access to higher technology;
- ◆ Museums should exchange information through available technology; and
- ◆ There must be multilingual communication, the Technology group has agreed to the following actions:

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1. Organize a hemispheric meeting to present, discuss, and evaluate technologies pertinent to the functions of the museum and what are determined to be the needs of the community.
2. Revise and strengthen existing networks (ICOMOS, SICLAC, ICOFOM-LAM, CHIN, AVICOM, ILAM, ICOM, and others).
3. Create a hemispheric program for training in and consulting on appropriate technologies, one that includes the production of support materials.
4. Promote ethical and political guidelines that respect the moral and intellectual property of global heritage information.
5. Develop a pilot project for a virtual, hemispheric museum.

Cultural Tourism (compilation of the work of two groups)

Considering that:

- ◆ Museums must preserve, protect, and interpret a community's cultural identity within a context of cultural and natural tourism;
- ◆ Museum staff and the community should be trained in tourism issues, including its impact and benefits;
- ◆ Museums must recognize and incorporate all the parties involved in the decision-making process;
- ◆ Museums must have cultural and eco-tourism plans that respond to current conditions and consider sustainable-development models;
- ◆ Education policies must promote awareness of cultural and natural heritage.
- ◆ Private and public sectors, and civil society should collaborate on the formulation of cultural and tourism policies; the Cultural Tourism group has agreed to the following actions:

1. Each Summit participant commits to take appropriate steps on local, regional, national, and hemispheric levels.
2. Identify key players in the interaction between tourism activities and heritage.
3. Promote the active involvement of these players.
4. Establish joint programs for mutual benefit.
5. Obtain and manage the resources at local, national, and international levels.
6. Continually evaluate actions within a framework of sustainable-community principles.

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7. Train museum and community members in the planning process concordant with the issues of sustainable development and the principles discussed at this Summit.
8. Disseminate the results of the Summit and promote the implementation of its action steps.
9. Facilitate the formulation, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of individual sustainable community projects involving Summit participants, which includes the respectful use of all patrimonies and equitable distribution of tourism's economic results.
10. Facilitate the incorporation of sustainable development and cultural diversity issues in traditional and nontraditional educational systems.
11. Create a network of existing communication systems in order to share the results of training and community projects in the hemisphere among Summit participants.