



Pretoria Declaration on Culture in Crisis

During 18 and 19 October 2018, a conference exploring 'Cross-Disciplinary learning opportunities for Natural and Cultural Heritage Preservation', was held at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

The conference was convened by the Culture in Crisis International Team; comprised of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Yale's Global Cultural Heritage Initiatives and the Museum fur Naturkunde, Berlin - alongside the conference hosts; the University of Pretoria.

The event built upon previous Culture in Crisis conference experiences in London (2015) and New Haven (2016), as well as benefitting greatly from an exploratory workshop held in Rwanda (2016).

The conference was attended by speakers and delegates from four continents, more than half of whom hailed from across Africa. This meeting of international and interdisciplinary expertise was made possible through the generous support of the German Federal Foreign Office.

We understand that heritage is an expression of the diversity of life on earth and a peace-making link between people.

We realise that cultural and natural heritage can be finite and non-renewable resources and as such require protection to preserve them. We understand the profound and long-lasting impact of both environmental and cultural loss on communities, and that this loss is seen as a loss for all of humanity.

We appreciate the positive impact that nature and heritage protection and conservation can have on communities following disaster or conflict.

We recognise that successes from either nature *or* heritage preservation, could be used as templates or roadmaps to inform the other.

We acknowledge that despite obvious conservation and heritage synergies, those involved in natural conservation and heritage preservation do not commonly share their experiences or best practice.

We note the prevalence of mixed heritage sites where a balance between human needs and natural or heritage conservation needs requires careful balancing.

We appreciate the need to engage with local communities and understand their needs and sensitivities in regard to all preservation or conservation practices.

Based on these understandings, we declare that:

1. The complementary and inseparable co-existence of both nature and culture within heritage landscapes should foster greater collaboration between practitioners from multi-disciplinary fields. Through the sharing of their expertise across these professional boundaries more effective heritage management might be achieved.
2. Through their expertise and mission, museums and universities should play a central and catalysing role in this process. Through key areas of research, transfer and advocacy, they should not only build up expertise but also foster a dialogue between people, policy-makers and society.
3. We promote the ONE HEALTH approach, believing that animals, the environment and humans are all interrelated and through harmonising their preservation we will achieve the greatest possible impact.