**Questionnaire from the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights**

**Contribution by the Culture, Nature and Heritage Department of the Council of Europe**

**POSITIVE POTENTIAL OF CULTURE AND CULTURAL RIGHTS TO ENHANCE RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

**4. What are ways in which culture and cultural resources, such as traditional knowledge, are being used to mitigate and/or adapt in the face of climate change? Where available, please share examples of best practices for applying traditional knowledge and cultural practices, such as those of indigenous peoples, peasants and fisher people, including traditional fire management and agricultural techniques that should be considered in developing mitigation and adaptation responses. What is being done to inventory and preserve such cultural resources that could be useful to addressing climate change?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

The effects of climate change are being felt throughout the world. The declining environmental quality of our planet is heavily affecting climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture. Modern patterns of travelling – based on low-cost services, frequent short-term journeys throughout the year, ephemeral business trips – contribute to a constant increase in fuel burning and pollution. Urban development threatens natural areas and the survival of traditional economies based in agriculture, and sustainable use of natural resources.

**The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe programme** ([www.coe.int/routes](http://www.coe.int/routes)) places sustainability at the heart of its practices and concerns. One focus is the sustainable cultural development of the communities involved and the promotion of a responsible sustainable tourism. Among the 38 Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe, 90 % cross rural areas, taking the visitors “off the beaten track” and promoting dialogue between urban and rural cultures.

As representatives of the various chapters of European memory, history and heritage, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe set themselves the objective of implementing exemplary projects in the field of sustainable cultural development. **They provide a successful example of how culture and cultural resources are being used to mitigate and/or adapt in the face of climate change, by providing opportunities for slow tourism, landscape preservation and for the development of alternative economic activities in rural areas.**

Rural areas are at present increasingly considered entertainment places with strong authenticity potential: urban citizens feel the need to explore what they consider being traditional ways of living, and rural destinations are ever more gaining in popularity. Considered pure and distant from the artificiality of life that the city offers, rural spaces are considered, in the mind of the urban citizen, slow-paced regions following the rhythm of the seasons.

In this context, rural tourism is increasingly viewed as a panacea, stimulating local economies, promoting social regeneration and improving the living conditions of rural communities. Less developed areas, often affected by rural poverty, deficient infrastructures, out-migration of the population and declining agricultural rentability have a considerable potential in attracting those tourists in search of authentic and unique experiences.

By involving small and medium-sized businesses, local communities, cultural institutions, non-profit enterprises and civil society organisations, the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe contribute positively to the economic development of the territories they pass through. In rural areas or in the most outlying areas, itineraries become exponents of good practices, establishing positive synergies with the environment that surrounds them, positively influencing the social and educational context of the territories.

When travelling along these routes, visitors can expect to discover not only monuments, historical artefacts and archaeological sites, but also landscapes, local products, practices, traditions, beliefs and stories specific to each place. The itineraries thus open access to culture for all, by means of sustainable tourism at the local level.

By partnering in a Cultural Route, territories can optimise funds, boosting market knowledge and developing joint marketing initiatives concerning thematic grass-root cultural experiences. In this sense, Cultural Routes can benefit those rural areas, and therefore rural tourism can become an engine for development even in the most remote areas of the planet.

The stay element of cultural route visitors is equally important. The routes seek to encourage visitors to stay longer in a place, get to really experience local culture rather than just pass through. They provide an important model for slow tourism – tourism with a purpose but with enough scope to allow for real discovery – discovery of the self and discovery of different landscapes, communities and experiences. It also promotes the reduction of the seasonality of the tourism demand, offering visits and activities all year, as well as spreading the tourist affluence into vast territories, avoiding the extreme tourism pressure in main areas. Slow tourism is often linked to the use of alternative and low-impact transportation means, such as travelling by foot (in the case of many pilgrimage trails) and by bike.

The Routes provide a recognisable platform for local creativity, artistic practice and economic development to blossom, whether through the provision of local accommodation and hospitality, the merchandising of local products and souvenirs, and the production of local festivals and events. This economic dimension of the Cultural Routes is vitally important for many parts of Europe and its marginal communities, and therefore it highlights the role of cultural routes as rural tourism catalysts.

Below are some examples of how Cultural Routes promote the use of culture and cultural resources for rural development and slow tourism:

**\**Iter Vitis* Route**

In order to reward local initiatives in each European country member of the *Iter Vitis* network, the European federation "Iter Vitis, the wine routes in Europe", launched a prize which aims to reveal the local action of valorisation of wine landscape and heritage.

The “Iter Vitis Award” rewards the initiatives of public and private organisations that have realised or supported a project promoting landscape. It also rewards actions responding to an environmentally-friendly approach, beneficial for the local economy and positive for society. Three axes are at the core of this initiative: Environment (preservation, heritage recognition); Education (mediation, transmission of knowledge, responsible consumption) and Accessibility (promotion of wine tourism for all)

This prize provides an opportunity to:

* mobilise the actors of wine tourism and value their action; promote and show the general public attractive activities;
* highlight achievements and exemplary solutions for economic development and business competitiveness;
* show that the action brings together all the local actors and revolves around strong values, whatever the size of the companies;
* promote the sustainable development thinking of companies and their practices in social responsibility

**\*The European routes of the Emperor Charles V**

Charles V cultural route has recently launched a product club. This is a “Club of Hostelry, Handcrafts and Agro-food Excellence” intended to give visibility to tourist products distributed along the different routes travelled by the King/Emperor Charles Habsburg, especially in rural areas.

It seeks to integrate into the Co-operation network o the European routes of the Emperor Charles V the whole fabric of the hostelry, handcraft and agro-food production in the towns, regions and rural areas traversed by the route.

The produce Club integrates five “labels” of quality, which are achieved after the implementation of the quality standards required by the manuals of good practice, created for each specialty:

* Imperial Lodging. Accommodation Establishment specialised in the figure of Charles V;
* Imperial Kitchens. Restaurants, Inns, Gastro Pubs, Tapas Bars…, which offer a renaissance menu based on the traditional recipes that Charles V tasted;
* Manufacture and/or sale of Handicraft products (leather, wood, fabric, antiques…) if the products are entirely local (materials and workmanship) and their traditional handcraft style is accredited;
* Production and/or sale of traditional agri-food products: foods in all categories – meat, fish, milk products, fruit, vegetables, spices etc, both fresh or preserved, and locally produced drinks (wine, cider, beer, sparkling wine, natural liqueurs…);
* Collaborating Establishments.  Any type of establishment or company that collaborates with the start-up or distribution of products or services related to Charles V. (Typical product stores, tourist guides, receptive agency ....).

This initiative fosters the quality improvement of local products, gives visibility to SMEs and stimulates local economies.

\* **Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes**

From its beginnings, the concept of hospitable networks (the Order of Cluny, the Knights of Malta or St John) has led to the development of a network of small businesses, initially religious, which federated agricultural and medical “clusters” to feed and care for pilgrims. Today, with the renaissance of pilgrimages, this spirit of hospitality and welcome has spawned resting points, hostels and semi-tourist accommodation facilities, which contribute to the local development of the villages and rural spaces traversed, creating an entire “social economy” linked to a social, supportive and ethical tourism.

For instance, the network of hostels for pilgrims in Spain has contributed and continues to contribute to the social and economic development of the towns where they are located. In 2015 this network welcomed 334,975 pilgrims and already constitutes a complementary facility to the growing offer of private hostels and rural tourism establishments that have been born under the protection of the development policy of the territory promoted through the Way of Saint James.

\*The **European Route of Cistercian Abbeys**

Since the 12th century, the Cistercian religious order developed an amazing action in the construction of the landscape and the cultural identity of Europe. Today, thousands of visitors cross borders to know this magnificent heritage that is part of their own identity.

The Monastery of Alcobaça, situated in Alcobaça, Portugal, portrays a good example of regeneration of rural areas. It is one of the finest and most impressive examples of Cistercian architecture in Europe, being the largest primitive Gothic church built in Portugal in the Middle Ages.

Alcobaça is a small town of around 16,000 inhabitants that every year attracts a huge number of travellers interested in visiting the Monastery, which is not only part of the certified cultural route but also inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. This phenomenon has an important spill-over effect in the region, revitalising small nearby towns and rural areas through the contribution to restaurants, accommodation establishments and local production. In this sense, the Cistercian Cultural Route in general, and Alcobaça Monastery in particular, contribute to the valorisation and promotion of cultural heritage assets and sites that act as engines for sustainable development and regeneration of rural areas.

**\*Via Francigena**

Via Francigena has recently implemented the project “Stop and taste”; a co-operation action with Parmigiano Reggiano cheese. The project allows visitors to discover the Via Francigena while tasting this famous cheese.

The idea of offering modern pilgrims an experience that combines spiritual exercise with culinary tasting originates from the growing importance that travellers from all over the world attach to local products to get to know an area. Pilgrims will have the opportunity to stop at one of the dairy farms participating in the project to taste the product, discover its characteristics and to see the variety of dairy farms scattered around the thirteen towns situated in rural areas along the Via Francigena.

This project is aimed at promoting the emergence of a virtuous cycle of local development in economic, social, environmental and cultural terms, fostering the creation of employment, while promoting social exchange and the welfare of the communities.

**6. What opportunities are available for people to publicly engage in cultural life in ways that demonstrate contemporary cultural shifts in response to climate change? Are there currently visible signs of cultural change underway? What factors might impede such practice of cultural life?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

**Both community and traveller engagement in cultural routes exemplify cultural shifts in response to climate change, namely the use of sustainable and alternative means of transportation, the consumption of local goods and services, the development of grass-root networks for the protection and promotion of local heritage, the increasing number of volunteers engaged in cultural projects and  the involvement of younger generations in the enhancement of memory, history and European heritage.**

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe offer a new approach to cultural heritage and sustainable cultural development, fostering community engagement in the protection, enhancement and preservation of their cultural assets, environment and landscape.

They encourage widespread community participation in cultural activities, raise awareness of a common cultural heritage and promote the European dimension of citizenship. In this respect, the cultural tourism promoted and experienced along the routes has also the ability to help communities value their unique cultures and traditions, building their sense of identity.

Along the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, travellers play an active role, becoming co-creators of their personal experience. The experiences proposed by the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are not based on actions especially organised and packaged exclusively for tourists. Travellers become temporary inhabitants of the places travelled through, they experience different traditions, local products and food, develop relationships with local people, they become culturally creative tourists.

Cultural routes initiatives can only be sustainable if communities value their unique heritage and feel involved and aware of their responsibility towards the preservation and management of their own heritage. Bottom-up strategies and participative decision-making are thus fundamental for maximising the impact on local development.

A special characteristic of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe is the fact that the members are scattered all over Europe but are at the same time transnationally connected, with its mixed composition and public-private partnerships which result in an expanded and improved outreach. This model reflects a multi-level governance perspective, thus the approach according to which decisions should be taken at the lowest possible level, i.e. as close as possible to the citizens. This means that the various levels are interacting and complementary, each meant to fulfil a different function in view of efficient management. In this respect, the network governance of the Cultural Routes proved to be successful in developing actions that have a high impact at the local level, particularly for rural areas in need of regeneration.

The decentralised and participatory model of governance of the Cultural Routes is crucial in reinforcing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Cultural Routes networks, reinforcing the commitment of their members to actively participate in network activities and facilitate transnational connectivity through collaborative practice development, cross-border knowledge and information exchange, resource sharing and stronger links among network stakeholders.

Examples:

**\*Prehistoric Rock Art Trails**

“*Siega Verde*” is a site member of the Prehistoric Rock Art trails, located in Salamanca, Spain. It is a natural ford where a bridge that connects two villages was built. This place had a strong significance for the local population: they used to go there to bathe, spend the day outdoors, the shepherds used to bring the cattle to drink water. In 1988, cave paintings were discovered next to the river and the area was closed with fences by the public administration, preventing local inhabitants from accessing the area. In 2010 there was recognition of the site by UNESCO together with the Portuguese site of “*Foz Coa*”. The local population felt displaced and robbed by the Regional Administration and they began to reject and sabotage the site. The management became very difficult, local inhabitants turned against the place, and it became a tourist destination without local participation or approval.

In 2006, there was an acknowledgment of the problem. The rural development agency that integrates towns in the area saw the opportunity of turning the place into a site for sustainable development, a tourist destination and a resource for local development. They worked in co-operation with national, international and regional institutions, through a bottom-up strategy. Siega Verde became a visible tourist destination and the local population started to get involved, for example, participating in promotional films, visiting fairs, promotion workshops, etc. The important aspect of this example is that the management of the site was carried out by the inhabitants themselves, allowing the site to become a cultural and educational resource for the population. The feeling of identity, belonging and property for the site is now very strong.

**\*The European Route of Jewish Heritage**

This Cultural Route was awarded the certification of the Council of Europe in 2005 and it aims to preserve and promote Jewish heritage, developing tourism, as well as providing an in-depth exploration of the subject matter of cultural diversity and the recognition of “The Other”. Jewish heritage is an integral part of European history and culture. Much of it is rooted in Europe, with a story of migration, persecution and precariousness, but also of exchange, humanism and a profusion of mutual enrichment.

The European Day of Jewish Heritage is the flagship project of the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ). The event has been taking place since 1999 in some 25 European countries and aims to promote wider knowledge and a deeper understanding of the Jewish people and their culture, as part of the European culture and heritage, through a wide range of activities such as open doors at synagogues and museums, exhibitions, workshops and concerts.

The growing success of the European Day of Jewish Heritage is the result of the continuous and thorough work of over 10,000 volunteers and institutional persons: Jewish organisations, historical groups, tourist boards, local councils, museums, artists, students. The Day raises awareness of Jewish culture to the wider society, in the belief that a greater awareness of the culture, tradition and life of the different communities living in the same space helps people know “the other", strengthening social exchange and dialogue between cultures.

The initiative began with a Franco-German co-operation that consisted of opening Jewish heritage sites to the public. Today, 31 countries participate and almost 200,000 people attend. The programme has evolved thanks to the fact that the local co-ordinators of the different Jewish sites have been offered the possibility to decide how to celebrate the event, enabling a more participatory process. This example reflects the multi-level governance perspective of cultural route members working together, and their expanded outreach.

**\* The Viking Routes**

Between 2015 and 2019, the Viking Cultural Route was funded by Creative Europe for their project “Follow the Vikings”, which aimed to broaden the audience to sites related to Viking history and its legacy. It was a multi-faceted project to promote, celebrate, transfer knowledge and skills and facilitate the exchange of tangible and intangible cultural material relating to the Viking World. The project involved 15 full partners and 10 Associate Partners, all members of the Destination Viking Association (including local governments, museums, cultural institutions, etc).

In the framework of this project, members have developed an innovative tool: the “Follow the Vikings Roadshow”, an international touring event which promotes interest in Viking heritage by organising a travelling group of Viking actors and artists to Viking markets and similar events throughout Europe. The touring show includes especially commissioned performances by contemporary artists from all over Europe, including actors, musicians, dancers and filmmakers, to create a stunning visual celebration of European Viking heritage. Performed live at 11 significant Viking locations over a two-year programme, each show was unique.

Each location has sought out professional and amateur artists and performers, as well as members of the public of different ages, to be involved in the local events. Locals were given the opportunity to work with the project’s creative producer and professional choreographer, as well as professional make-up artists, musicians and dancers. The project included working with local school children to teach them about Viking heritage and culture as well as the participation of local students of music and make-up schools. The events enhanced Viking heritage in an innovative way, while offering opportunities for members of the local communities to acquire new skills that can be used to further their careers in any artistic field.

**\*The Huguenots and Waldensian trail**

This cultural route has created a special programme for accommodation establishments to become partners of the route. This programme has a special focus on rural areas traversed by visitors when they hike along the route.

It is aimed at developing a network of establishments of different natures (hotels, bed and breakfasts, refuges, campsites, youth hostels, etc.), located on the French section of the international path and offering a level of quality hospitality that is adapted to the needs of hikers.

Some of the benefits of the programme comprise:

* Land survey and ecological monitoring: the establishments that take part in the network inform the route management about significant incidents (signposting problems, incidents on the route, etc) that they observe or have been informed about by visitors.
* Visitor sensibilisation: each accommodation host can share with visitors the history and heritage of the itinerary.
* \*Sustainable development: the partnership promotes good practice in terms of sustainable development and respect of the environment, such as recycling, economies of water and energy, making meals based on products from organic farming and short circuits, respect and enhancement of the built heritage and the environment, etc.
* Community involvement: the project supports local establishments managed by local inhabitants, providing them with economic opportunities, socio-cultural exchanges with visitors, enhancement of their heritage and their identity, and active participation in the network.

**\*The Hansa**

Since 2015, this Cultural Route has been working in the development of the project called “Hanseatic Approach to New Sustainable Alliances”.

Governments from the Baltic Sea Region have supported the application for an INTERREG Project (“Interreg Central Baltic”) which has provided the Hansa Cultural Route with funding of around 2 million euros.

Through this project, the Hanseatic heritage will be developed for its great cultural value from three perspectives: local, national and international. At the local level, the existing attractions are made known to a broader public.

The project is aimed at branding activities, creating materials, and disseminating information online and, via tourism organisations and information centres, promoting the Hanseatic history, as well as the Baltic Sea region as an attractive destination. The project will also strive to link local attractions to a wider European context of Hanseatic history.

Some of the project outcomes include the development and implementation of new tourism products such as:

* biking and trekking packages;
* culinary city breaks, city tours;
* the “Hansa Culinary” quality label: many food and beverage festivals are organised through the co-operation of restaurants, bio-farmers, winegrowers, brewers, etc. The culinary offer is based on products grown or bred by local producers, using traditional recipes and adding a new touch of modern flavour. In the framework of these festivals, tourists and locals can visit local farms and taste local food in traditional restaurants;
* Hanseatic events and markets: Hanseatic festivals allow visitors to taste and to get to know local products and participate actively in different leisure activities related to the Hanseatic heritage.

This project promotes visitor awareness while fostering community involvement and supporting local production and SMEs in rural areas. It represents a holistic approach that combines cultural and leisure activities, with a focus on exchanges with the local population, local products, traditional activities, immaterial heritage and contact with nature.

 **\*Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Routes**

The pilgrimage paths that cross Europe in all directions are undoubtedly some of the earliest forms of tourism. Research shows that some 300,000 pilgrims travelled the Camino de Santiago in the 12th and 13th centuries, living up to the fame of the path in medieval times. In 1985, a little less than 1,250 pilgrims arrived in Santiago de Compostela, but the figures have increased significantly to reach 301,036 pilgrims counted by the Pilgrims Office in Santiago by 2017.

Although it is assumed that all medieval pilgrims had religious reasons for walking the paths, the remarkable statistical work carried out by the Office shows that religious reasons, although they prevail, only represent a little over 40% of pilgrims. Within the remaining 60%, although more or less interested in religious heritage, all mention the cultural aspect of the path as a reason for walking it. Culture is closely followed by several other reasons for choosing that form of travel over another, such as trekking, experiencing nature, cycling or even horseback riding.

The Camino de Santiago is a clear example of this revitalisation of contemporary pilgrimages. Pilgrimages to Compostela have been re-dimensioned, in recent decades, as a phenomenon of European and world-wide scope, converted into a modern proposal of dialogue, multicultural encounter, contact with nature and slow tourism.

**MEASURES TAKEN AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**10. Has your country adopted specific regulations or measure to address the negative impacts of climate change on culture and cultural rights? If so, please specify the content of such regulation and measures. Is a human rights approach taken to these questions?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

At the Council of Europe, the Human Rights approach is systematically taken when preparing documents and measures to be put in place by member States. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, while not directly addressing climate change issues in its status (Resolution (2013)66 and (2013)67 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe), participates in other Conventions of our organisation, such as the Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, and the European Landscape Convention which, in particular, promotes the protection, management and planning of landscapes and organises international co-operation on landscape issues, such as climate change and its impact on cultural and natural heritage.

**11. Are the impacts of climate policy and climate action on culture, cultural rights and human rights more broadly being assessed? What should be undertaken in future in this regard?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

Several Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe are implementing studies on the impact of their activities at local and regional level, namely in terms of the number of visitors, travel purposes, travel expenditure patterns and duration of journeys.

To date, a study on the impact of climate change on cultural routes has not been yet carried out. Producing statistics and gathering qualitative data would be of crucial importance for the sustainability of the Cultural Routes programme, in order to identify potential challenges caused by climate change and to find common solutions to address them.

The Cultural Routes programme – supported by its network of universities and research centres (University Network for Cultural Routes Studies) – should give priority to the definition of indicators to assess and monitor the current impact of climate change on the cultural route networks. Such indicators could provide valuable data for the adjustment of the route’s strategic plans to new challenges and opportunities.

Once applied by each route, the results of the indicators could be regularly collected by a Cultural Routes Observatory that would measure, monitor, evaluate and manage information regarding the economic, social and cultural implications of climate change for the Cultural Routes. The ultimate objective of the observatory will be to produce and implement policies for the sustainable management and function of the Cultural Routes certified by the Council of Europe.

Indicators referring to the following main categories could be applied:

* Preservation of natural resources and biodiversity
* Preservation of cultural heritage and cultural diversity
* Pollution
* Tourism impact
* Mass tourism
* Tourism seasonality
* Community participation
* Community conflict
* Governance
* Employment
* Destination economic benefit
* Energy and water management
* Solid waste management
* Sustainability
* Impacts of means of transport
* Ecological transition
* Visitor satisfaction
* Visitor expenditure patterns

**13. What national, regional and international initiatives are being undertaken to address the intersections of climate change, culture and cultural rights? How effective have such initiatives been, what primary challenges have they faced, and what additional efforts should be suggested in this regard?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

Some of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, such as the Saint Martin of Tours Route put in place some innovative approaches to climate change, such as the “Bande Verte et Citoyenne” (the Green and Civic belt) that promotes slow tourism and citizenship and builds on the values of civic sharing. Its ambition is to bring out practices that go beyond those commonly developed around hiking trails, respectful of the environment and the people inhabiting it. As a programme, we encourage these initiatives by promoting them and sharing them with other certified Cultural Routes, for them to put in place similar initiatives, such as those described above.

**Response relating to Council of Europe Action on Culture/ Heritage and Climate Change**

* In 2011, [the Council of Europe's CultureWatchEurope initiative issued a Think Piece on Culture and Climate Change](https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806a34c9). The paper analyses the cultural disconnect between humans and nature and their possible reconnection, reflects upon human rights perspectives and cultural perspectives on ecology from other parts of the world and, finally, analyses the role of culture, education and media to promote sustainability and creative solutions, also in partnership with local and regional authorities.
* In 2018, work of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) included the preparation of [a Recommendation by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Cultural Heritage facing Climate Change: increasing resilience and promoting adaptation and the launch of a publication on the same topic in 2018](http://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks/cultural-heritage1). This sets out selected national experiences, strategies and action plans, as well as cases from cities, institutions and dedicated research initiatives.
* A number of conferences and workshops have been held: the most recent one in 2018 supported by the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement on “[Culture against disasters: protecting cultural landscape as prevention of natural disasters” held in Ravello/Italy in September](https://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks/culture-against-disasters).
* Work on the Faro Convention ([Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society](https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199)), as well the European Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century (Strategy 21), also deal with sustainable development issues and are relevant when charting ongoing Council of Europe activities.
* To promote risk culture among the population, synergies between the [EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement](https://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks/home) and the Education sector have been created in the framework of the “[BeSafeNet” Olympiad: Better knowledge against disasters](https://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks/news-2019/-/asset_publisher/0cIobklpNI3q/content/-better-knowledge-against-disasters-re), whose winners were awarded a prize at the Plenary Meeting of the Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP) on 12 June 2019, in Strasbourg.
* A thematic session on climate change and sustainable development as it relates to human rights and democracy and, specifically, culture, heritage and landscape resources, was held at the Plenary Meeting of the CDCPP on 12 June 2019 in Strasbourg, with the participation of international experts. Delegates exchanged experiences on how they are addressing climate change challenges and/or contributing to sustainable development and highlighted how Council of Europe standards, soft standards and other tools could be of help. A [thematic space](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cdcpp-committee) was subsequently opened on the CDCPP website, offering national contributions on measures taken in
* respective member States.
* A study was produced in 2019 on “Potential synergies concerning climate change between the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement”.
* The Bern Convention Secretariat contributed to the preparation of [a *High-level Conference on Environmental Protection and Human Rights*,](https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-rule-of-law/human-rights-and-the-environment) organised under the aegis of the Georgian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 27 February 2020). The objective was to discuss the relation between human rights and environmental protection in the context of national policies. The participants explored how to develop a strategy to support member States in better meeting their obligations in the field. They examined the potential of the European Convention on Human Rights and other Council of Europe instruments for protecting the environment, while also considering current or previous initiatives at universal, regional and national levels, notably with the Global Pact for the Environment.

**14. What recommendations should be made to States and other stakeholders concerning these topics?**

**Response relating to the** [**Enlarged Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes)

Climate changes and cultural rights should be brought to the attention of member States and policy makers as too often protection of culture and its access are not a priority of such talks. Initiatives promoting small and less-known heritages, in particular if it is common and shared heritage, should be put forward as ways to better tackle over-tourism with the negative footprint it has on the environment and local communities alike. The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, by promoting locally-run and protected heritage, on themes of shared values and history, often encouraging slow itinerance (foot, bicycle, donkey), stretching beyond the June-August seasons, and promoting local consumption (restaurants, small locally-run hotels), crossing some 90% of rural areas, are tools to put forward to member States and policy makers as ways to change behaviour in the tourism sector where differently planned activities can have a hugely positive impact on communities and their environment. Cultural and natural heritage need tourism to survive, as visits enable those heritages to be preserved and presented, therefore tourism needs to be planned in a way that allows communities to maintain access to their heritage in a sustainable fashion. Many initiatives already exist, such as the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, and ought to be promoted and put forward to member States and policy makers to ensure tomorrow’s tourism respects and preserves yesterday’s heritage.