



PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday, 9 March 2021

Climate Heritage Network Welcomes 31 New Members

Charenton-le-Pont, France –The Climate Heritage Network is pleased to announce new members of the Network. The announcement was first made on 15 February at a meeting of the network’s International Steering Committee.

This immense power of arts, culture and heritage to drive just and transformative climate action often goes untapped. The Climate Heritage Network was launched in October 2019 in Edinburgh, Scotland by over 70 arts, culture and heritage organisations committed to unlocking this potential. The Network is expanding rapidly, as evidence by these new members.

The Climate Heritage Network aims to unite diverse actors across the arts, culture and heritage spectrum as part of the climate action movement. Ms. Suwaree Wongkongkaew, Director of the Chiang Mai City Arts & Cultural Centre and a CHN Steering Committee member, described the CHN’s philosophy this way:

In Chiang Mai the connection between our culture, our life, and our environment is a mutual relationship, a strength, and inseparable. In the current situation, when we face climate problems that are rapidly escalating, the power of arts and culture can be used. We are working as a coalition to use cultural power to restore and protect the environment and cross the boundaries of familiarity, no longer separating government or general public.

The new CHN members reflect this diversity and include government bodies from the national, regional and local levels; universities and research organisations; cultural institutions; NGOs; and architecture and design firms. Climate change is a global phenomenon. The CHN works to connect groups around the world and to promote solidarity with communities on the frontlines of climate change. The 31 new members are drawn from all of the CHN’s five regions: Africa and the Arab States, Asia-Pacific, Europe and CIS, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America.

One hallmark of the CHN is the members’ commitment to working collaboratively. In 2019 the CHN released its first action plan at an event held in Madrid at COP25, the 2019 UN Climate Summit. Dubbed the Madrid-to-Glasgow Arts, Culture and Heritage Climate Action Plan, the plan’s release kicks off a year of culture-based climate action that will culminate in November 2021 at COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland.

The plan’s activities will be implemented by volunteer working groups made up of CHN members. Dr Ewan Hyslop, Head of Technical Research & Science at Historic Environment Scotland and a Co-Chair of the Climate Heritage Network describes the value of the CHN approach this way:

Successfully transitioning to a low-carbon future and adapting to environmental changes already underway requires individuals, organisations, governments and communities to work together. The Climate Heritage Network provides an opportunity to develop new and creative partnerships, strengthen those that already exist and pool expertise and knowledge from all

corners of the world. Together, we can demonstrate what meaningful climate action looks like, and share our experiences and perspective with others.

Climate change is one of the most significant and fastest growing threats to people and their cultural heritage worldwide. 2021 will be a critical year for climate action. The CHN aims to foreground the cultural dimensions of global climate action and to create a roadmap that will allow every arts, culture and heritage-related organization to do its part. The new members added today contribute immeasurably to that cause.

“With every conversation, every new partner, every opportunity, we advance greater solutions into action. Cultural heritage supports communities towards a low carbon, resilient future. Further, faster, together,” said Julianne Polanco, California State Historic Preservation Officer and a CHN Co-Chair.

For more information, contact: Andrew Potts, Climate Heritage Network Secretariat, +1 202 215-0993 andrew.potts@icomos.org.

What is the Climate Heritage Network?

The Climate Heritage Network connects organisations around the world that share a common commitment to strengthening the use of arts, culture, and heritage to help communities tackle climate change and achieve the ambitions of the Paris Agreement. CHN Members include government boards, offices, ministries at all levels, site management agencies, Indigenous People’s Organisations, as well as NGOs, universities, businesses, and other organizations. Entities may join at <http://climateheritage.org/join/>.