



Plan d'Action

A la clôture du premier Sommet des musées des Amériques sur le thème "Musées et développement communautaire durable," tenu à San José, Costa Rica du 15 au 19 avril 1998, le plan d'action suivant fut adopté:

Considérant :

1. que le développement durable est un processus destiné à améliorer la qualité de la vie actuelle et future, à promouvoir l'équilibre entre l'environnement, la croissance économique, l'équité et la diversité culturelle, et que le développement durable exige la participation et le renforcement de l'autonomie de tous les individus;
2. que la culture est le fondement du développement durable;
3. que les musées sont essentiels à la protection et à la diffusion de notre patrimoine culturel et naturel;

Les participants au présent sommet représentant 32 pays de l'hémisphère attirent l'attention sur ce qui suit:

1. Le développement durable englobe la culture ainsi que les questions d'ordre social, économique, politique et environnemental, et leurs objectifs à moyen et long terme.
2. Les musées sont au service de la société et contribuent au développement durable.
3. Les musées conservent le précieux patrimoine de l'humanité.
4. Les musées éduquent, et ils reflètent et renforcent les valeurs et les identités des communautés qu'ils servent.
5. Les musées prennent des mesures qui impliquent la communauté.
6. Les musées sont des organisations dynamiques qui relèvent les défis du monde actuel.
7. La diversité des musées servant les diverses communautés crée un large champ d'action qui soutient le développement durable.

En outre, les participants au sommet affirment qu'il est nécessaire :

- d'élaborer des politiques culturelles qui renforcent la capacité des musées et autres institutions à collaborer avec leurs communautés dans un climat de respect et d'harmonie;
- d'encourager la collaboration entre les musées des Amériques et de créer des réseaux permettant de partager l'information; et
- d'éduquer et de former le personnel des musées en vue de relever ces nouveaux défis.

Pour terminer, nous invitons les gouvernements, les organisations de développement international, les fondations, les entreprises, les organisations nongouvernementales et la société dans son ensemble à se joindre à nous en vue de réaliser le présent plan d'action.



Agenda For Action

At the conclusion of the first Summit of the Museums of the Americas on "Museums and Sustainable Communities" celebrated in San José, Costa Rica, on April 15 to 18, 1998.

Considering the following:

1. Sustainable development is a process for improving quality of life in the present and the future, promoting a balance between environment, economic growth, equity, and cultural diversity, and that sustainable development requires the participation and empowerment of all individuals.
2. Culture is the basis of sustainable development.
3. Museums are essential in the protection and diffusion of our cultural and natural heritage.

We, the participants of this Summit representing 32 countries of the Western Hemisphere, call attention to the following:

1. Sustainable development encompasses culture, along with social, economic, political, and environmental concerns with medium- and long-term goals.
2. Museums are institutions in the service of society that contribute to sustainable development.
3. Museums hold and sustain the precious heritage of humanity.
4. Museums educate, reflect, and reinforce the values and identities of the communities they serve.
5. Museums take actions that involve the community.
6. Museums are dynamic organizations that respond to the challenges of today's world.
7. The diversity of museums serving diverse communities creates a broad field of action in support of sustainable development.

Furthermore, the participants of this conference assert that it is necessary to:

- Establish cultural policies that strengthen museums' and other institutions' abilities to work with their communities in respectful and harmonious relationships;
- Foster collaboration among the museums of the Americas and create networks to share information; and
- Educate and train museum personnel to meet these new challenges.

Finally, we call upon governments, international development organizations, foundations, corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and society in general to join us in the implementation of the Agenda for Action.

Action Steps

Thematic Groups

Education

(compilation of the work of three groups)

Considering that:

- 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.
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 at 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 for 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 toward 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;
 - 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 the 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:

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- 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 Communities" topics in conferences, training programs, and museum activities within each 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 agenda 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.
6. Museums will seek to establish links with other institutions working toward 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 should periodically 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 toward 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 among 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:
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 (AVICOM, CHIN, ICOFOM-LAM, ICOMOS, ILAM, MAC, SICLAC, 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.
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.

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.
3. Museums should establish a dialogue with their communities to encourage and support art and creativity in a way 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 that:

- 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 safeguard 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 involving several countries of the Americas to produce a virtual exhibit on 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.

Regional Groups

North America

Considering:

- The interdisciplinary aspects of communities and their museums;
 - Principles of equity, participation, empowerment, and respect; and the
 - Necessity to build learning organizations;
- the North American group has agreed to the following actions:
1. Each delegate will work toward increased recognition and understanding of the essential role of museums in

- the creation of a more sustainable society.
2. For the year 2000, there will be another hemispheric summit with more participants and broader topics to build on the progress resulting from the action steps of this Summit.
3. Professional organizations serving museums in the hemisphere will encourage demonstration and pilot projects to explore the role of museums in developing sustainable communities in the Americas. The results will be widely disseminated among our museums and communities.
4. Museums will develop criteria and assessment measures to help them demonstrate their contributions to sustainable communities.
5. Delegates will promote future dialogues between and among professional organizations through the dissemination of the Summit's proceedings and calls for actions.

Meso-America

Actions:

1. Foster a revision of existing legislation on a nation's entire cultural patrimony with special emphasis on ways to prevent the illicit traffic of cultural heritage and establish mechanisms for implementation.
2. Continue communication by establishing systematic regional study and discussion about links between museums and their communities with the objective of redefining museums' mission and goals. Begin with the following topics: community, museum dialogue, museum diversity and classification, global heritage, and sustainable development. Communication will be established through ICOM and ILAM.
3. Promote systematic links between educational systems and museums and encourage the exchange of experiences at different levels in the region.
4. Foster and redirect museum professional training toward a recognition of the role a nation's entire heritage plays within sustainable development.
5. Develop criteria and tools that can be applied to the region and the hemisphere in order to evaluate the role of the museum in sustainable development.
6. Strengthen regional organizations and create a network that facilitates the exchange of regional experiences.

Caribbean

Actions:

1. Establish a Web site of Caribbean museums in cooperation with MAC, ICOM, and other organizations to enhance accessibility within and outside the region.
2. Insist upon professional standards and take the necessary steps to create well-equipped and well-staffed museums and other institutions, as well as internship programs in various fields to ensure sustainability.
3. Exchange experiences and expertise in cultural and natural heritage with institutions such as ICOM, AAM, UNESCO, MAC, and others through available technologies and existing programs.
4. Recognizing the rich diversity of cultures in the region, develop and advocate cultural tourism policies that ensure the preservation of heritage and the promotion of sustainable economies.
5. Formulate and advocate for museum educational policies that are linked to formal and informal educational systems, with special emphasis on communities, children, and young adults.

Andean Region

Actions:

1. Engage in joint action with various government and community sectors to place a higher value on heritage by means of continuing-education programs that contribute to fighting illicit traffic of cultural property. Promote the knowledge and use of international agreements in harmony with national legislation.
2. Organize an educational network that integrates training efforts within the framework of museums and sustainable communities. Coordinate efforts via already existing networks (Convenio Andrés Bello, Pacto Andino, ICOM, etc.), universities, and/or conservation centers to organize specialized courses and workshops with the help of international organizations.
3. Request that already existing networks include a special network for museums of the Andes.
4. Include strategic planning on emergency preparedness in the programs and activities of museums and other pertinent institutions.
5. Develop and execute plans and programs for heritage site management (cultural and natural) with full institutional, private, and community participation. Ensure that the sustainable use of these sites for social purposes and tourism conforms to international conservation norms.

South Cone

Considering that:

- South Cone countries should have specific policies that favor relationships between the public and private sectors in order to enhance and promote museums and effectively protect heritage within a context of sustainable development;
- South Cone countries should incorporate heritage content into their educational reforms and development policies; and
- Networks and relationships should be created and strengthened between museums and institutions associated with the region's heritage; the South Cone group has agreed to the following actions:

1. Foster effective legislation through many different channels.
2. Articulate joint programs between the cultural and tourism sectors within a framework of sustainable communities in which museums, through their participation, stimulate and foster local development.
3. Develop region-wide heritage education training programs for educators and cultural administrators.
4. Promote the inclusion of heritage education within all methods of communication and for all levels and sectors (public, private, secular, religious, formal, and informal), through traditional and nontraditional methods.
5. Develop technical and professional exchange programs among museums in the region.
6. Initiate research on cultural heritage and sustainable communities.

Glossary

- AAM:** American Association of Museums
AVICOM: Audiovisual and New Technologies International Committee
CHIN: Canadian Heritage Information Network
ICOFOM-LAM: International Committee for Museology of Latin America
ICOM: International Council of Museums
ICOMOS: International Council of Monuments and Sites
ILAM: Latin American Institute of Museology
MAC: Museums Association of the Caribbean
SICLAC: Cultural Information System for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



The Summit on Museums and Sustainable Communities provided an ideal framework for a fruitful discussion of how museums can contribute to the preservation of a community's cultural and natural patrimony. Representatives of different geographical regions, interests, and museum disciplines attending this unprecedented event sought creative and effective solutions to some of the critical problems facing communities

Dialogue, Consensus, and Action

today. Using the *New Visions* methodology developed by the American Association of Museums to encourage strategic thinking and consensus-based outcomes, delegates agreed on these major issues facing museums of the Western Hemisphere:

- The need for museums to become better acquainted with their communities and improve relationships on the basis of sustainable development principles of equity, participation, and mutual respect.
- The need to train museum professionals so that they can work more effectively with their communities toward the goal of mutual sustainability, recognizing that the well-being of a museum is directly related to that of its

community.

- The responsibility to adopt museum policies and strategies that can serve as the basis for actions supportive of sustainable community development. These actions should focus on objectives that help achieve social, ecological, and economic vitality.
- The potential to link museums and other institutions at the regional, national, and

international level so they may initiate projects that help define and promote a community's distinctive cultural resources according to its specific character and needs.

If museums are to accomplish these goals, they need to open and maintain effective communication channels with each other throughout the Western Hemisphere. It may be possible to build on already existing networks related to cultural patrimony. For those cultural organizations without access to communication tools (for example, the Internet) and lacking adequate conservation technologies to protect their nation's patrimony, ways must be found to make them available through an expanded network.

Before they left Costa Rica, delegates agreed that they had a responsibility to share the results of the Summit with museum colleagues and their own communities in order to promote the idea that museums play a vital role in achieving sustainability. The exchange of experiences among individuals and institutions that began at the conference needs to continue and expand. The Summit's Agenda for Action (see page 9)

provides an excellent starting point for further discussion, so that the insights and conclusions resulting from the conference can reach a wider audience.

Groups were organized according to three criteria: issues (education, cultural heritage, technology, emergency preparedness, and cultural tourism); professional interest (natural heritage, science/technology, history, art, and archaeology/built environment); and geography (Andes, Caribbean, South Cone, Meso-America, and North America). After three days of discourse, each group arrived at priorities and action steps designed to advance the cause of sustainable communities.