Sweden’s response to questionnaire on cultural rights and climate change

**Negative impacts of climate change in culture and cultural rights.**

1. **What negative impacts of climate change on culture, heritage and the enjoyment of cultural rights by all have been documented in your context? Are particular groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, rural persons or peasants, and youth or future generations, as well as cultural practitioners being impacted in specific and disproportionate ways? What efforts are being undertaken to inventory and monitor such impacts?**  
   The growing impact of climate change is of great concern for all of us but for the Sami indigenous people it is clearly of vital importance.  
   The **Sámi culture** is highly impacted by climate change. There are of course other groups and contexts where climate change is interlinked with culture and cultural rights. However, these answers focus on climate change, culture and cultural rights in the context of the Sámi culture.  
     
   In the Arctic the Reindeer herding, is one important bearer of Sámi culture. Reindeer herding is negatively impacted by climate change due to i.a. changed pasture and grazing lands. The impacts of climate change are added as a cumulative effect to already existing challenges the reindeer herding is facing. The behavior of the reindeer – as it follows the weather, landscape patterns – also changes with changing climate. The negative impacts of climate change also affect other traditional livelihoods making up the Sámi culture. For example, duodji (traditional handcraft) and hunting and fishing. The occurrence and harvest of animals and natural material necessary to uphold these practices and pass them on to the next generation diminish or change. As such the intergenerational exchange of árbediehtu (Sámi traditional knowledge) and the Sámi languages are negatively impacted.   
     
   The Sami Parliament report annually to the government on how the authority works with Sami traditional knowledge, its importance for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and how the activities have helped to achieve the goals in the 2030 Agenda goals. The Sámi Parliament also reports annually on its work on climate change adaptation, including on identified vulnerabilities and which risks have been prioritized. In addition, the national adaptation work is followed up in a five-year evaluation cycle by the National Expert Council on Adaptation.The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil society continuously produces knowledge on young people’s living conditions across a range of areas. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society also has the task of ensuring that a youth perspective is developed in the work of other governmental agencies and to provide support for the municipalities in their youth policy work. A recent study made by the Agency shows that the climate is one of the most important issues for young people in the age of 16-29. The study also shows that young people worry about the climate in a higher extent than before and that the increase in level of concern is larger compared to other age groups. The Swedish Minister of Youth chairs the Youth Policy Council twice a year where youth organisations and Agencies working with young people are represented. The agenda is set in cooperation with the Council and in 2019, one of the meetings had a focus on climate change and its impacts on the Swedish youth sector. Cultural heritage in all its diversity is an important source of knowledge and identity for individuals and society, as well as a contribution to economic growth, social inclusion and sustainable development. Climate change is a major challenge that has great influence on cultural and natural heritage. Buildings and sites will be affected in many ways. In Sweden the Historic Environment Act states that cultural heritage is a matter of national concern and that responsibility for cultural heritage is shared by all. The aim of the provisions in the act is to ensure that current and future generations have access to a diverse range of cultural heritage. Cultural heritage protection and management in Sweden aims to preserve and manage sites of historical, architectural or archaeological significance and to empower cultural heritage as a force in the evolution of a democratic, sustainable society. In Sweden professionals at different levels work in different ways with risk management concerning cultural heritage. At national level The Swedish National Heritage Board works with questions concerning the care and management of historic landscapes and environments, in broad cooperation with other authorities, and has presented an action plan for risk management relating to climate change.Resilience to events caused by climate change (for example floodings) has become an important aspect of new housing and city development. It will (and has already in some instances) affect cultural dimensions of design in city planning and architecture.   
     
   The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, in its reporting on its work on the 2030 Agenda goals, raises the issue of the climate impact of international artistic exchange. They report that more artists now choose environmentally friendly means of transportation – this might affect the geographical scope of artistic exchange. More monitoring might be needed to see the effect of climate change on artistic exchange.
2. **Are cultural sites or resources which are critical to participation in cultural life identified as being threatened due to climate change and if so, how? What processes are used to analyse the risk of harm or inaccessibility to these areas and resources? Are records being kept about these risks and impacts?**  
   The roles and responsibilities of climate change adaptation in Sweden are divided across different levels – from local and regional to national. At the local level the role of the municipalities includes several important activities in which climate change adaptation are to be integrated. At regional level the county administrative boards, in addition to the regional responsibility, have an important role in providing support to municipalities for their environmental efforts. As part of the adaptation work cultural sites, listed buildings and historic landscapes at risk due to climate change are identified by authorities at a regional and local level. Although to which extent varies between different regions and municipalities. There are several on-going national projects specifically concerned with climate-related risk management, for example one in cooperation between 15 European countries that aims to strengthen and develop management of historic landscapes in the Arctic where climate changes rapidly.  
   http://adaptnorthernheritage.interreg-npa.eu/  
     
   The Swedish National Heritage Board is Sweden’s central administrative agency in the area of cultural heritage. The National Property Board Sweden shares responsibility for the country's 300 or so State-owned historic buildings and is involved to varying degrees in seven of the 14 Swedish world heritage sites on UNESCO's list. These agencies are, together with 29 other national agencies, mandated by an ordinance to initiate, support and follow up on adaptation within their area of responsibility, and to develop action plans for its work.   
     
   A central part of this is to identify and then prioritize efforts by risk and vulnerability analyzes (RSA). The Swedish National Heritage Board has developed a method for this in relation to cultural heritage, and put together central experiences and conclusions regarding the work on risk analyzes that have been made in three regional Swedish projects. The methods show different ways of working based on available resources and purpose. Most of the results are universally valid and can therefore be applied throughout the country. The results also show where there are deficiencies in the environmental materials' support material and where improvements are needed.  
     
   As part of its work, the Swedish National Heritage Board participates in the EU-project Adapt Northern Heritage, which is a project supporting communities and local authorities to adapt northern cultural heritage to the environmental impacts of climate change and associated natural hazards through community engagement and informed conservation planning.  
     
   Furthermore, a warmer, more humid climate in Sweden means the material Sami cultural heritage such as buildings and objects are subjected to new risks. However, inventories and more thorough research is needed in order to determine the impact of climate change on Sami physical cultural heritage. As has been mentioned previously, impacts of the intangible cultural heritage: traditions, customs, practices, traditional knowledge and languages are already noted.
3. **Please provide examples of specific natural resources, local sites used for cultural practices or seasonal patterns that influence the ability to participate in diverse aspects of cultural life that may be subject to volatility due to climate change. Consider also diffuse geographical features or resources that may be at risk and are definitive or influential in the practice and development of culture on either a collective or individual basis.**  
   In the Arctic, climate change is happening faster than in other parts of the world. The changes are also accelerating and more extreme which greatly affects the Sami culture. The rise in temperature is expected to be two to three times higher than the average. The fact that it has become warmer is noticed by, among other things, more extreme weather, increased unpredictability in the weather, increased sea levels and decreasing sea ice in the Arctic. See also question 1.

**Positive potential of culture and cultural rights to enhance responses to climate change**

1. **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?**The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is an important tool for dialogue, ideas and transmission of local traditional knowledge. Sweden ratified the convention in 2011. Since 2015, Sweden has a national inventory of intangible cultural heritage in Sweden. The Institute for Language and Folklore has the overall responsibility for the work with the inventory and it is carried out together with a range of stakeholders. Anyone who is interested can submit proposals. It is an online, living document constantly updated (www.levandetraditioner.se). Non-governmental organisations and bearers of traditional knowledge have contributed to the inventory, documenting their traditional knowledge, and thereby making it visible for others. For example, the inventory contains traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and Swedish food traditions, including traditions of minority groups. This kind of knowledge can play an important role for a more sustainable living in the long run.  
     
   The Sami Parliament is both a central government agency and a popularly elected body for the indigenous Sami people in Sweden. Under the Instrument of Government, the opportunities of the Sami people to preserve and develop a cultural and social life of their own shall be promoted. The Sami Parliament and the Sami people therefore have special status in society and the Sami Parliament is of key importance for the opportunities of the Sami people to exercise self-determination.  
     
   The Sami Parliaments in Sweden, Norway and Finland cooperate on a Nordic level in the areas of indigenous rights, linguistic and cultural rights, climate and environmental issues. The Sámi Parliament in Sweden has extended its activity and participate internationally e.g. The UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and meetings related to indigenous rights such as the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Affairs and the UN Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Rights. The Sami Parliament has also had an active role in the OECD's international project [*Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development*](http://www.oecd.org/development/linking-the-indigenous-sami-people-with-regional-development-in-sweden-9789264310544-en.htm).  
     
   In order to ensure means to influence decision making, consultations are of great importance and carried out in all areas affecting the Sami. The government is currently working on a proposal for a more comprehensive procedure for consultations between public authorities and the Sami (see also question 5, page 9 - procedures for consultation). Such a consultation procedure would be a step toward strengthening the opportunity of the Sami people to influence and participate in decisions on matters which affect them e.g. climate change.  
     
   The Sami Parliament's work with traditional knowledge is linked to the UN's global goal for sustainable development, the 2030 Agenda and an increased opportunity to dialogue with other authorities and disseminate knowledge about Sámi sustainable solutions. The Sami Parliament's knowledge and competence on traditional knowledge, the Sami cultural heritage and language, human rights, sustainable development and social planning have a connection to global development and contribute to Sweden's implementation of Agenda 2030. Sami cultural grants encourage projects that maintain, develop and transmit traditional knowledge to new generations. Further, the Sami Parliament is preparing a strategy related to the 2030 Agenda and will be presented in 2020.  
     
   The Swedish **National Adaptation Strategy** was adopted in 2018 and outlines mechanisms for coordination, monitoring, evaluation and review of adaptation to climate change. The Sami Parliament has together with 32It is also national authorities and the 21 County Administrative Boards been mandated by an ordinance to initiate, support and follow up on adaptation within its area of responsibility, including to develop action plans. Even before the ordinance was decided the Sami Parliament had voluntary developed an action plan with support of national funds. The plan includes how changes in the climate affect the conditions for reindeer husbandry and Sami culture and identifies specific problems and proposes possible climate adaptation measures. One of the measures in the action plan is that each Sami reindeer herding community (sameby) is to produce its own climate and vulnerability analysis as well as its own action plan for climate adaptation. In 2018, four samebyar participated in a pilot project and developed climate and vulnerability analyses and action plans for climate adaptation. The Sami Parliament is part of the National network for adaptation, promoting both vertical and horizontal cooperation, including the 21 counties, and 19 Government agencies.  
     
   The Sami culture is based on a holistic perspective where human, nature and land is a part of an undividable whole. The Sami people has for long created relations based on observations and interactions with plant and animal life, as well as water systems, land and weather. In that way, the sami perspective on land encompasses a green infrastructure, biodiversity, nature-based solutions and a circular economy. The knowledge of landscape is a part in the Árbediehtu, which describes knowledge as both information and a process that clarifies different way of taking in knowledge. These perspectives can contribute greatly to both mitigation and adaptation measures. An example of this the Sami Parliament's climate adaptation strategy, which has as one of its sub-goals a strong and viable árbediehtu, ie traditional knowledge.
2. **What are the diverse legal frameworks, trends and practices at the national and international levels that promote intervention from across the cultural ecosystem, including by cultural rights defenders and cultural practitioners, as well as women, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, rural people and peasants, and youth, in addressing disparate impacts and influencing decisions around climate change mitigation and adaptation? What are the challenges to such inclusivity and how are they being addressed?**  
     
   Climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time. **Sweden has a Climate Policy Framework, including a Climate Act** through which the government has committed to have net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and should thereafter achieve negative emissions. This requires a societal transformation in which it is key to respect, promote and consider the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as human rights, the right to health, the rights of persons indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, and people in vulnerable situations, gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity. Below are some examples from Sweden of legal frameworks, trends and practices at the national and international levels that promote intervention on climate change mitigation and adaptation from indigenous peoples.   
     
   Promoting and protecting the rights of indigenous peoples remain longstanding priority for the Swedish government. In the 2019 **Statement of Government Policy**, the Prime Minister set out the Government’s commitment to strengthening the self-determination and influence of the indigenous Sami people. The Swedish Government intends to continue and step up its work in the area of policy relating to the Sami people. Dialogue with the Sami Parliament of Sweden and other Sami organisations is crucial to and a cornerstone in efforts to shape Sami policy  
     
   The **Sami Parliament of Sweden** (the Sámediggi) is a body elected by the Sami people to safeguard and promote Sami rights, culture, livelihoods and languages. It is also a national administrative authority with an expert mandate on reindeer husbandry.   
     
   The establishment of formalized procedures that give indigenous peoples the opportunity to participate and the ability to genuinely influence decision-making in issues that concern them is crucial. **Procedures for consultation** are a step towards strengthening opportunities for the Sami to influence and participate in matters concerning the Sami. A Ministry memorandum entitled “Consultation on Matters Concerning the Sami People” has been circulated for comment and a draft bill is under preparation. The government aim is to put a Government Bill before the Swedish Parliament (the Riksdag), proposing a new Consultation Act during 2020. Already today, the Government is including the Sami Parliament in work under the UNFCCC. If the Bill is passed, it is the Government’s, government agencies and municipalities duty to consult the Sami people before decisions affecting them are made. From a Sami perspective, this would entail consultations on issues relating to the national implementation of the Paris Agreement as Sápmi (the Sami homeland) and the Sami people – being part of the Arctic - are heavily affected by the impacts of climate change.   
     
   The Swedish **National Adaptation Strategy** was adopted in 2018 and outlines mechanisms for coordination, monitoring, evaluation and review of adaptation to climate change. The Sami Parliament has together with 32 national authorities and the 21 County Administrative Boards been mandated by an ordinance to initiate, support and follow up on adaptation within its area of responsibility, including to develop action plans.   
   In the **Swedish delegation to the UNFCCC**, there are also two representatives from the Sami Parliament are included. They are a fully integrated and vital part of the delegation, having the task as lead negotiators for the matters related to the LCIPP. The Sami Council is included in the preparatory work for the climate negotiation meetings and the input they provide is crucial in compilation of the Swedish position.  
     
   Due to the principle of arm’s length-distance and the respect for artistic freedom, public funding to the arts does not take into account the artistic content in or messages conveyed by the funded projects and infrastructures. The decisions on funding are taken by independent experts, based on assessment of artistic quality. However, it is clear that many artists today are very concerned about climate change and there are several grass-root initiatives on this issue. In providing funding for innovative artistic practices, through for example the Swedish Arts Grants Committee and the Swedish Arts Council, the Government is indirectly promoting artistic intervention on climate change issue – but the initiatives always come from the artists themselves. This can be seen also on the regional level.
3. **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?**  
   In reports by our government agencies and judging by the topics currently discussed in conferences and seminars on artistic practices, many artists in Sweden are very concerned about climate change and are questioning international mobility and exchange that does not take into account effects on the climate. Climate change is also one identified theme and trend in the applications for support to innovative contemporary culture from *Kulturbryggan*/the Swedish Arts Grants Committee.  
     
   The discussion about climate change and what it means for the development of architecture and design is part of most meetings and conferences, mostly related to concepts like green, sustainability, production, consumption and long-term perspectives. And people, in terms of market, are pressing producers towards a more sustainable production.
4. **In what capacities do experts from across the field of culture and climate interact and exchange knowledge at the national or international levels? For example, are experts from various cultural fields involved in relevant climate change policy? Are climate change experts engaging with the cultural sectors, and if so how?**  
     
   There are examples of projects where artists and researchers together address the issue of art and climate change, initiated by for example universities (*Arts Meets Science* by Lund University and the Museum of Artistic Process and Public Art). The artistic project *Man and Biosphere* on adaptation to climate change in the municipality of Kristianstad is another example.  
     
   The Public Art Agency Sweden has had a cooperation with Akademiska Hus, a state-owned property company for universities and colleges, on the project *Future Island*, a work of art by Ooze and Marjetica Potrč in a campus of Stockholm University. Future Island is an artificial island where one part is warmer than the other, designing a new climate change reality. Generally, the 2030 Agenda is the basis of several ongoing projects within the academic field of architecture.   
     
   Cultural heritage is relevant to many aspects of society and to a wide range of policy fields. Working to preserve, use and develop cultural heritage requires cross-sectorial collaboration. Goals and obstacles pointed out by the Swedish government for the cultural heritage field are also found in the environmental policy, the generation goal and environmental quality objectives. The National Heritage Board cooperates with several authorities in different policy areas. On an international level The National Heritage Board co-operates in for example developing standards for conservation and climate change adaptation of cultural heritage.

**Measures taken and recommendations**

1. **Are affected persons and groups being consulted and enabled to participate in discussions related to climate policy and climate action?**  
     
   The roles and responsibilities of climate change adaptation in Sweden are divided across different levels – from local and regional to national. In the activities done by municipalities and county administrative boards it is possible to involve affected persons and groups. An example from northern Sweden is one of nine “demonstration sites” for new methods in risk management. Both local and regional authorities and organisations representing affected persons and groups are involved, in this case a minority group/[indigenous people](https://sv.bab.la/lexikon/engelsk-svensk/indigenous-people). Link to South Sami Cultural Centre (in Swedish): <http://www.gaaltije.se/verksamhet/samiska-kulturmiljoer-i-ett-forandrat-klimat/>   
     
   For further information regarding the indigenous Sami people, see answer to question 4. See also answer to question 5.  
     
   Generally in the Swedish legislation process, the Government forwards the report made by a commission of inquiry to relevant public agencies, organisations and others on regional and local level to hear their opinions on the proposals. Anyone, including private individuals, is entitled to obtain a copy of the report and submit comments to the Government. This is of course also the case when it comes to environmental legislation.
2. **Are cultural rights defenders who are working on climate-related harms to culture and cultural rights facing specific challenges in their work, and are they at particular risk of threats, harassment and human rights violations? If so, how should these human rights defenders be better protected and supported?**  
     
   The Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis, *Kulturanalys*, carried out a survey in 2012 regarding the level of exposure to threats, violence and harassment among artists and authors. Their findings included the motives of the perpetrators – however, there were no reports of threats due to artistic work on climate-related harms. In 2018, the Government launched its action plan *Defending free speech*, specifically intended to safeguard politically elected representatives, journalists and artists as a part of the infrastructure of the democratic discourse. The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, a government agency supporting artists, has published guidelines for artists on what to do if exposed to threats.
3. **Has your country adopted specific regulations or measures 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?**  
     
   In addition to the goals and targets of the Global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Sweden has formulated a generational goal that is intended to guide environmental action at every level of society. 16 environmental quality objectives describe the quality of the environment that Sweden wishes to achieve. Several objectives concern cultural heritage, for example A Good Building Environment, A Varied Agricultural Landscape, Sustainable Forests and A Balanced Marine Environ­ment, Flourishing Coastal Areas and Archipelagos. Reaching the objectives will reduce the negative impact of climate change on culture meaning cultural heritage.   
     
   The Swedish parliament adopted in May 2018 a new policy for the living environment. This policy emphasises the challenges of climate change and the need for a sustainable design and architecture. “The aim is to put people’s needs at the centre of society’s development, enabling more people to live in inclusive, well-designed environments that are sustainable in the long term. A designed living environment approach entails a holistic view of the shaping of our physical environment in which architecture and design are seen as one cohesive sphere.” With this policy comes several missions for national agencies to promote the cultural dimension of the built environment and of design.
4. **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?**  
     
   What should be undertaken in future in this regard? Establishing synergies with various international conventions/agreements and organizations. Undertake research on increased risk factors; socio-economic research, such as valuing the economic losses from climate change or impacts of climate change on societies. As for the cultural aspects of architecture and design, this is considered in the Policy for Designed Living Environment (https://www.government.se/48ec28/contentassets/c008469d86b848f3918a1efcd7d7fb2f/webb\_policy-for-designed-living-environment.pdf). This policy should be considered as the foundation for now ongoing actions taking place inside and in-between government agencies, and in relation to regional and local policymaking.  
     
   An impact assessment is always made within the framework of the legislative process. Proposals are also referred to the relevant stakeholders.
5. **What opportunities or mechanisms, if any, for remedies and redress are being made available to respond effectively to the harm to culture and cultural rights caused by the climate crisis?**  
   Winter is a delicate time for the reindeer. It happens that pastures become completely locked up due to ice formation closest to the ground. This is becoming more common with climate change. According to § 35a of the Reindeer Husbandry Ordinance (1993: 384), grants may be made available to reindeer husbandry communities (sameby) to the extent that the costs of feeding have arisen due to extremely difficult grazing conditions in order to prevent extensive death of reindeer.
6. **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?**  
     
   Two international initiatives relevant in this context is the UNSG Climate Action Summit initiative by the name Addressing climate change impacts on cultural and natural heritage. As well as the Commitments for Action on Climate presented by the indigenous peoples at the same summit.   
   Below are some examples of regional initiatives connected to climate change which has a participation of indigenous peoples.   
     
   The **Arctic Council** is the leading intergovernmental forum promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction among the eight Arctic States, Arctic indigenous peoples’ and other Arctic inhabitants on common Arctic issues, in particular on issues of sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic. Six indigenous peoples’ organizations have been granted “Permanent Participants” status in the Arctic Council. Permanent Participants sit at the same table as the member States and can intervene and speak according to the same procedures applied to member States. Permanent Participants have full consultation rights in connection with the Council’s negotiations and decisions. This is a unique arrangement whereby the Permanent Participants play an active and influential role in the Councils work both at the level of Ministers and Senior Arctic Officials and in guiding and leading Arctic Council initiatives. Climate change is one of the key areas of work within the Arctic Council. The Arctic Council recognizes the importance of traditional and local knowledge to improving our knowledge of the Arctic and the changes occurring there; and how it can contribute to more informed decision-making. This can be seen in the evolving work of the Council for the co-production of knowledge which combines both indigenous and traditional knowledge to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the changes to and challenges facing Arctic biodiversity and ecosystems.   
     
   The **Barents Euro-Arctic Council** (BEAC) is the forum for intergovernmental cooperation on issues concerning the Barents region.[[1]](#footnote-1) The representatives of the three indigenous peoples in the region, the Sami, the Nenets and the Vepsians, cooperate in the Working Group of Indigenous Peoples (WGIP).[[2]](#footnote-2) It has an advisory role in both the BEAC and the BRC which means that their participation is welcome in all Barents Working Groups, that the WGIP Chair is a member of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) and the Barents Regional Committee, and that they are always represented at the BEAC Ministerial Sessions and the Barents Regional Council meetings. The Action Plan on Climate Change for the Barents Co-operation[[3]](#footnote-3) contains recommendations for concrete activities in most working groups under the Barents Euro-Arctic Council and the Barents Regional Council. The activities contribute to the following main policy areas: mitigation, adaptation, research and outreach. Working Group of Indigenous Peoples is responsible for cooperation on reindeer husbandry.  
     
   **The Nordic Council**, one of the main forums for official Nordic cooperation, addresses issues on sustainable development, environment and climate. Since 2018 the Sami Parliamentary Council (the cooperation body of the Sami Parliaments in Sweden, Finland and Norway) has observer status to plenary meetings including making interventions it also has expanded observatory status to committee meetings meaning it can participate when issues concerning the Sami people are discussed.  
     
   The project *Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture – Creating new practices of sustainability* addresses cross-sectorial creativity in the era of climate change and is a creative response for supporting sustainable development. The project is based on the idea that art and culture can serve as activators for developing the social discourse in an eco-social and cultural direction. The project aims to generate new common ground around the Northern Dimension area (Northern Europe, Northwest Russia and the countries around the Baltic Sea) and strengthen professional intermediation. The project was launched in 2019 and it is still too early for an evaluation  
     
   Further measures could include working towards greener mobility between artists and cultural operators, since it is of utmost importance that international and intercultural exchange can continue, but the climate aspects of course need to be taken into account.
7. **What recommendations should be made to States and other stakeholders concerning these topics?**Though the climate crisis is obviously of great concern, it is essential that the measures taken do not limit human rights (for example, the right to freedom of expression or the right to freedom of artistic creation).  
     
   The climate crisis and its cultural aspects have to be addressed on an international level as well as on a national one. We are all a part of the reason but also the solution. On a national level, risk assessments could be a helpful tool.  
     
   It is important to address the linkages between climate change, culture and cultural rights. However, there is an institutional gap between the cultural and climate change communities which must be addressed. In this regard, there is a need of more research and information, plans and programs as well as education on the topic of culture and climate change.   
     
   As always it is essential to ensure the highest possible ambition in implementing the Paris Agreement to keep global warming below 1,5 degrees. By limiting global warming, negative consequences of climate change on culture and cultural rights can be minimised.   
     
   It is also key to utilise the potential of culture and cultural rights to enhance responses to climate change. This requires inclusive climate policies, building on a multitude of perspective, which respect, promote and consider the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as human rights, the right to health, the rights of persons indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, and people in vulnerable situations, gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity.

1. See for the BEAC definition of the region: <https://www.barentscooperation.org/en/About/Learn-More/Barents-region>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Working Group of Indigenous Peoples (WGIP) in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region, <https://www.barentscooperation.org/en/Working-Groups/Working-Group-of-Indigenous-Peoples> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Action Plan on Climate Change for the Barents Co-operation, <https://www.barentscooperation.org/en/About/Learn-More/Climate-Change-and-the-Barents-region/Barents-Action-Plan> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)