



## **SUSTAINABILITY IN CULTURE**

**The unique role of culture in a green and sustainable agenda**

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## 0.1 SUMMARY

Sustainability is increasingly becoming an important consideration for the cultural sector. It should here be noticed that we understand sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations” (UN, 1987). How do we produce art sustainably? How do we change the audience’s mindset through art? And can we change our workflow in a manner that affects CO2 emissions positively? These considerations are discussed in the report, which includes reflections on the understanding of the two terms sustainable and green, specifically how we can distinguish them from each other. We here relate green transition to the European Green Deal and United Nations Brundtland Commission, while sustainable development refers to the three areas of Sustainable Development Goals: economic, environmental, and social.

Methodologically the report is based on diverse resources, such as a collection of existing literature and publications, collected within a thirteen-month period. It is furthermore peer-reviewed by Ane Hejlskov Larsen, Associate Professor of Art History and Museology at Aarhus University and Hans Dam Christensen, Professor, Professor at the Institute of Communication, Copenhagen University.

Since the report is based on a Nordic-funded project with 7 partners, the report also introduces the project partners and their local practice-based cases with the aim of inspiring others and as an illustration of the many ways you can work with cultural sustainability.

The report also touches upon different ways culture can have a positive influence in relation to sustainability. We here highlight three ways:

1. Mindset and behavioral change of the audience.
2. Changes in the production of artistic outcome that create environmental impact.
3. Sustainable and environmental awareness raising art.

Finally, the report highlights incentives to work sustainably, since it often involves more resources, both financially and personally. The lack of resources can therefore be an obstacle, which is why there is a need for more actors to support the sustainable agenda through for example funding.

## 0.2 READING GUIDE

In the first part of this report, you will read about the Nordic funded project, about its ‘partners and the aim of the project. Part 1 also tries to clarify what we are talking about when we are discussing sustainability. As a break between part 1 and 2, we have inserted an intermission that entails an interview that give us an approach to understand social sustainability. In part 2, we dive into the project activities. The project has produced an annotated bibliography, a webinar we call Nordic Digital Roundtable and local case examples on how our project partners work practiced oriented with culture and sustainability. In part 3, we try to connect the dots between what we already know and how cultural organisations are working strategically with culture and sustainability. We make an offer on what the unique role of culture is in a green and sustainable agenda and what challenges the cultural and creative sector is phasing in pursuing a more sustainable world.



Fig. 1: Picture of project partners. From left you see Julie Sand Jørgensen (Central Denmark EU Office), Kari Kuivamäki (Korkardiklubi), Mie Pedersen (Region Midtjylland), Janita Jämsén (City of Oulu), Ylva Gustafsson (Region Västra Götaland), Bettina Kiilsgaard Henrichsen (Region Midtjylland), Christine Fentz (Secret Hotel), Anna Berglund (Akvarell Museet), Per Smedegaard (Svalegangen), Maja Ravn Christiansen (Secret Hotel), Jette Rendbøll (Svalegangen), Louise Godt (Central Denmark EU Office) and Taina Ronkainen (City of Oulu).

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

This report is the outcome of the Nordic funded project *Cultural Sustainability – the unique role of culture in a green and sustainable agenda*. Based on Nordic and European knowledge as well as local and regional practices and experiences, seven project partners are examining the unique role of culture in a green and sustainable agenda with funding from Nordic Culture Fund. The project connects non-for-profit cultural organisations and local and regional authorities from Denmark, Sweden, and Finland that bring forward their own best practice, knowledge, and experience within the field of culture and sustainability. The project partners are Central Denmark EU Office (Belgium), Region Midtjylland (Denmark), Region Västra Götaland (Sweden), City of Oulu (Finland), Svalegangen (Denmark), Secret Hotel (Denmark), Nordiska Akvarellmuseet (Sweden), Kokardiklubi (Finland). The outcome of the project is this final publication report collecting existing knowledge, good practices, interviews, and discussions on future perspectives within the theme of culture and sustainability.

It is difficult to define the concept of *culture* and it is difficult to define the concept *sustainability*. When putting these two very broad terms together, which are understood in many different ways, it becomes difficult to discuss the defining details of what we are speaking about. It becomes difficult to speak the same language. Therefore, this report will try to explore the story and the practice examples of culture and sustainability, to clarify concepts and understandings. Inspired by environmental sustainability, we will in this report explore how culture interacts with social sustainability as well.

Introduction to the project partners:

The partners in this project were selected because of their experience and different knowledge about working with sustainability and their concrete projects and approaches to the theme. The partners were also selected to represent the Nordic countries as well as different cultural institutions and organisations.

The two Danish theatre partners Svalegangen and Secret Hotel both have concrete projects on sustainability but in two different ways. Svalegangen's United Change project focus' on dissemination and stronger partnerships on implementing the SDGs. Secret Hotel focus' on the so-called more-than-human perspective helping people to develop deeper bonds with the living world and a better understanding of how humans are part of nature. The two organisations are placed within Region Midtjylland.

Region Midtjylland and Region Västra Gotland are both regions that support development of cultural organisations in their regional areas by providing funds, workshops, advocacy, networking opportunities etc. The Danish and Swedish partners have an arm's length to cultural organisations. Region Midtjylland only funds development projects to cultural stakeholders whereas Region Västra Gotland both funds management and development projects to the benefit of cultural stakeholders in the region. The regions are interesting organisations in this project because of their potential role as managing cross-municipality cooperation as for example seen with Region Midtjylland, that took up the legacy after the city of Aarhus was European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in 2017 and created a regional network of 19 municipalities. The City of Oulu is also interesting because the city is going to be European Capital of Culture in 2026 and their main theme is sustainability. But as where the regions are more supporting non-for-profit culture, Oulu is focusing on creative industries such as event management which gives a different perspective on working with sustainability in the cultural field.

Nordiska Akvarellmuseet and Korkardiklubi are two organisations from Sweden and Finland within the areas of Västra Gotland and Oulu. They represent a different genre than theatre. They represent a museum organisation and a music venue that both want to work more sustainable. So, the projects partners also represent different levels in working strategically with the theme sustainability. The coordinator Central Denmark EU Office (CDEU) had a big role in providing concrete EU-project advising for cultural organisations up to the Aarhus ECOC 2017 and is still project advising on European Cooperation for cultural stakeholder in Region Midtjylland.

The project's seven partners believe that:

... Culture plays a role in putting new perspectives and sensitivities into citizens' behavior when it comes to acting more sustainably.

... Culture and sustainability contain contradictions but should not be limiting the cultural sector when thinking of the two areas together.

...Culture has a right on its own but for acting more sustainably cross-sectorial partnerships are essential.

The project seeks to discuss the topic as well as to inspire and reflect on own practices with stakeholders from three Nordic countries, to find new seeds and start new beginnings.

The objectives of the project are:

1. Collecting existing knowledge: Map existing knowledge and good practice in the field of sustainability in culture to learn more about partners – as a cultural institution working with sustainability and the SDGs or as a sector supporting organisations or policymakers, who wish to better advice and inspiration from the cultural sector on how to work strategically with sustainability.
2. Transfer of knowledge: Knowledge sharing, communicating, building up partnerships to share the knowledge and inspiration amongst project partners on the role of culture collected via the project with the sector in a broad sense – be it cultural institutions, artists, policymakers, politicians, officials etc.
3. Communicating synergies: Show obtained knowledge locally and create synergies between project partners on sustainability in culture. The project and the final project report will ask the question within the field to put the topic into perspective and map out possibilities for further understanding of culture in a sustainable agenda.

## 1.2 METHOD AND DATA

This final publication will be based on diverse resources collected within a thirteen-month period and enriched by a feedback and peer review by two researchers, Ane Hejlskov Larsen, Associate Professor of Art History and Museology and head of the Museological Research Programme at the Department of Communication and Culture at Aarhus University and Hans Dam Christensen, Professor at Institute of Communication at Copenhagen University. They are both coordinating the research project: CultureSustain. A network researching Scandinavian museums' impact on Cultural Sustainability (2022-2025). The researchers are selected specifically for this project because of their extensive CVs, professional experience, knowledge, and research within the field, and their vast Nordic network.

The project is based on:

1. Existing literature and publications on the subject, including written tools and guides.
2. Described cases, initiatives, partnerships, networks, and projects.
3. Analysis of criteria or value of good local cases on the subject and description hereof.
4. Interviews with cultural professionals recommended by consortium partners.
5. Discussions and exchanges with the arts sector through a) an online kick-off session that was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2021, b) one physical partner meeting in Sweden on the 10-12<sup>th</sup> of May 2022, and c) an online Nordic Digital Roundtable held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2022.

The collection of existing literature and publications will be presented in an annotated bibliography that map relevant literature in the field of cultural sustainability to create an overview of the understanding within the field and highlight the gaps in the existing literature and policy areas. The annotated bibliography is based on Nordic and European sources as well as some United Kingdom sources.

While writing the bibliography we are very much aware of the fact that it is outdated almost from the minute we publish it. However, it is valuable as a snapshot of where we are, at the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023, facing new realities in a time of record high inflation, war on the continent of Europe, and a coming recession.

### 1.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE SDGs

The [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG) was agreed upon in 2015 in UN General Assembly. They were very ambitious when they were agreed upon - not only agreeing on having the same goals across countries for different contexts and needs of citizens but also agreeing upon reaching those goals within 2030. The framework of the SDGs is based on three pillars of economic, social, and environmental considerations. However, [cultural organisations and networks](#) internationally and in Europe advocate for a fourth pillar, namely that of culture.

The evaluation of the sustainable development goals as described in the implementation progress and SDG's reports tell us that we still have a long way to go before the world is sustainable for all. Even the "impact of the COVID-19 pandemic [has] reversed the steady progress of poverty reduction"<sup>1</sup> and the Global Sustainable Development Goals Report from 2019 writes that "(the) 2030 Agenda are not even moving in the right direction"<sup>2</sup>. The reports made by the United Nations makes it clear that better data collection is needed for nations to act accordingly to the challenges addressed.

Culture is not very present in the SDG goals. Even though we can agree that culture is one element to help create a much-needed holistic approach to promote, disseminate and understand the goals for citizens and the broader society as a whole, there is another important question to be answered. It is still very urgent and necessary to get a better understanding of what *is* the unique role of art and culture in a green and sustainable agenda and transition. Therefore, this report aims to exchange ideas and experiences on art and culture in relation to sustainability as well as to establish a shared language on *culture for sustainability*. Culture is also how we relate to those we share the planet with – i.e., life on land and life in water. Therefore, the absence of culture in the SDGs is critical.

With less than 10 years to reach the goal, a big part of achieving the sustainable agenda is regulating, implementing, and investing in reducing environmental impact. But as the theory of Carbon Vision Tunnel<sup>3</sup> suggests, we should not only focus on reducing CO<sup>2</sup> footprints, but we should also focus on the broader perspectives such as biodiversity, gender equality, climate justice, and other elements that are just as important for developing a sustainable world which the Postdoc Research Fellow [Jan Konietzko](#) has illustrated in this easy and understandable figure:

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<sup>1</sup> SDG Progress Report 2022, page 4:

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/29858SG\\_SDG\\_Progress\\_Report\\_2022.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/29858SG_SDG_Progress_Report_2022.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2019.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> "Tunnel vision is a dangerous lens through which to view potential solutions to climate change. It is a form of selective attention which can lead to inadequate problem-formulation, partial solutions to complex problems, and new difficulties.":

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256034585\\_The\\_Dangers\\_of\\_Carbon\\_Reduction\\_Tunnel\\_Vision](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/256034585_The_Dangers_of_Carbon_Reduction_Tunnel_Vision)

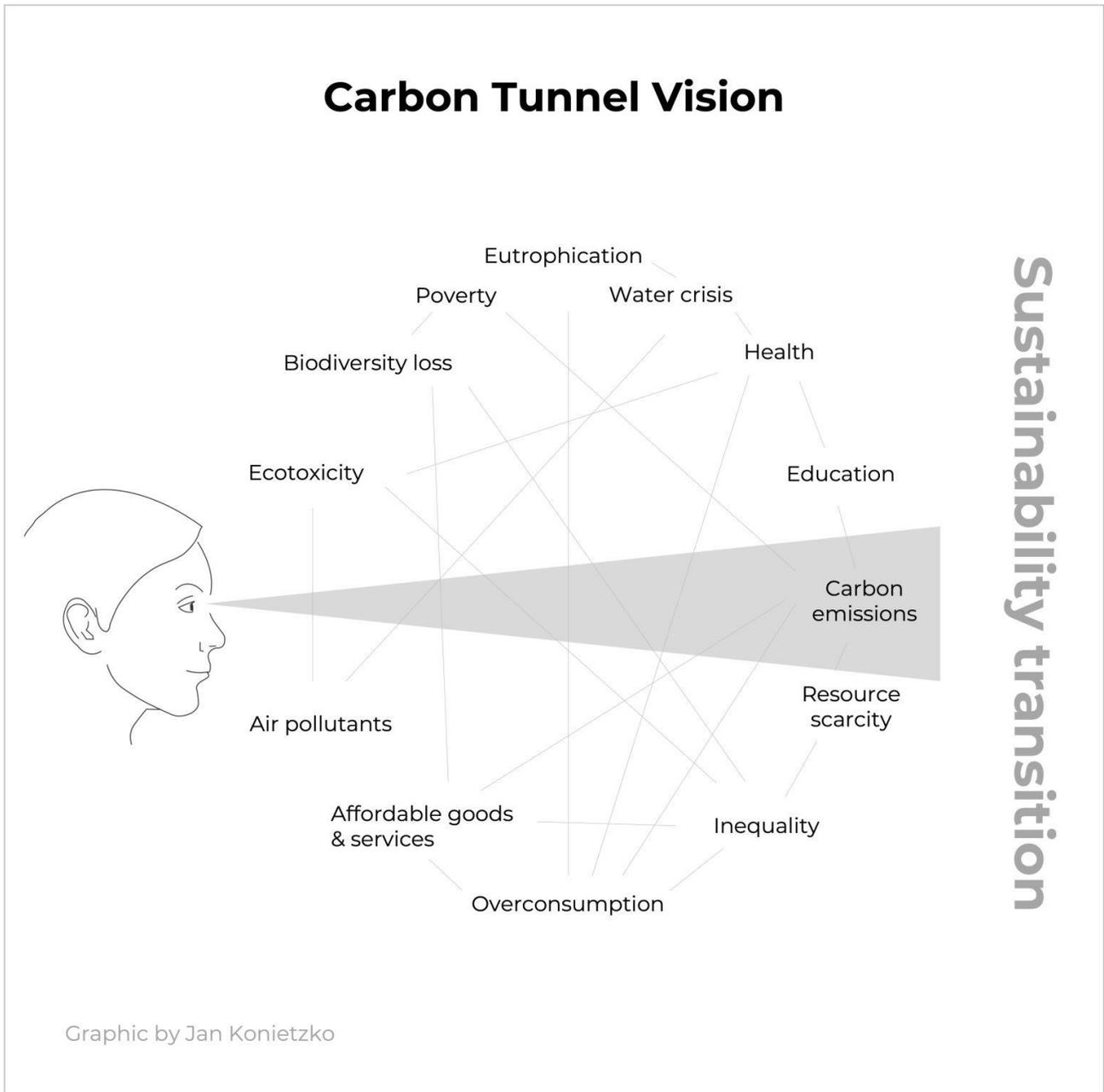


Fig. 2: Illustration of the Carbon Tunnel Vision.

To feel the need to do something and to do it together, culture plays an important role in the SDGs because it has the advantage of getting people’s attention and connect them so they – as an individual and as a community – can get new perspectives on what sustainability means to them. The cultural and creative sector has over recent years worked with sustainability, and an increasing number of artists, organisations and leaders in the creative sector use their skills and resources to draw attention to global challenges, stimulate willingness to change and devise innovative solutions, which can help move us into a more sustainable future.

Talking about culture, *culture* is broadly understood in this report as a concept used in the cultural and creative sector, also described as *cultural heritage*. It is defined as way of life and world of imagination that characterises a certain population group in a certain period, i.e., all the material and non-material results of human activity that are passed on from generation to generation. The Creative Europe programme 2022

describes the sector as: “cultural and creative sectors' means all sectors whose activities are based on cultural values and artistic and other individual or collective creative expressions, whether those activities are market - or non-market-oriented, whatever the type of structure that carries them out.”<sup>4</sup>

## 1.4 WHAT IS WHAT

UN defined sustainability for the first time in 1987. In the report, the [United Nations Brundtland Commission](#), sustainability was defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>5</sup>

In 2000, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)<sup>6</sup> are developed and signed by UN Member States. The MDG contained 8 goals were only one of them focused on green transition. The 8 MDGs were developed into the 17 SDGs in 2015.

The discussion of including culture into the SDGs began when developing them. In 2013, the International Congress "Culture: Key to Sustainable Development" was held in Hangzhou (China). This was the first International Congress specifically focusing on the linkages between culture and sustainable development organized by UNESCO. The report [The Hangzhou Declaration: Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies](#) (2013) states that culture is everything and places culture at the heart of development policies, which also makes it difficult to describe what impact culture specially have on sustainability. But at the same time, the report includes a more specific action called *Build on culture to promote environmental sustainability*.

In 2019, European cultural networks collected data and examples to implement culture in all the SDG's in the report [Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda: A Report by the Culture 2030 Goal Campaign](#). Just recently in 2022, the European Commission launched their report on [Strengthening cultural heritage resilience for climate change](#), which shows us that the discussion of including culture in sustainable development and the green transition is still going on.

Green transition as described in [The European Green Deal](#) sets both quantitative and qualitative goals. Prior to this, in December 2015, 196 member states of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) concluded a legally binding climate agreement - [the Paris Agreement](#) - at COP21 in Paris, which would help to shift to lower greenhouse gas emissions. Parallel, the UN's SDGs gave us a common language for the sustainable development across sectors and actors and laid out a more holistic and universal understanding of how to achieve sustainability.

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<sup>4</sup> Creative Europe programme 2022, page 6: [file:///C:/Users/CDEU/Downloads/creative-europe-2022-work-programme-c\\_2022\\_36\\_f1.pdf](file:///C:/Users/CDEU/Downloads/creative-europe-2022-work-programme-c_2022_36_f1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future: <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-\(mdgs\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/millennium-development-goals-(mdgs))



*Fig. 3. Environmental sustainability originates from the United Nations Brundtland Commission and the European Green Deal. It is about green transition. Sustainable development refers to all three areas of the SDGs: economic, environmental and, social. It originates from the Sustainable Development Goals that support the creation of a movement towards a broader understanding of what sustainability is.*

The [New European Bauhaus](#) is an example of an initiative that connects the European Green Deal to new European building and aesthetic living spaces. It creates a coherent cultural policy framework for the cultural sector in Europe at large from architects, IT-engineers onto artists and humanistic-centered professionals. It shows that if you want to transform, it involves everything and, the transformation - green transition, a sustainable new mindset - can only be done cross-sectorial because there are so many different and interconnected parameters to be worked on.

Measuring the development of the SDGs and the green deal, different tools have been made to measure a progress of the set targets. The European Commission's [EU taxonomy for sustainable activities](#) is one example and the UN's [SDG-tracker](#) is another. With a global indicator framework and research evidence-based policy on the five themes people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership, which seeks a holistic approach to touch all corners of sustainable living, there is still work to be done. The broad agenda and the complexity of the SDGs, challenge the collection of data and the measurement of indicators as the [OECD](#) points out.

To exemplify the difference in what the SDG and the green deal are targeting, our project has made a non-exhaustive overview that intends to show some of the key differences between the intentions of the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals that leads to different outcomes and perspectives on sustainability:

Environmental sustainability inspired by the European Green Deal - Lowering the CO2 level	Sustainable development inspired by the Sustainable Development Goals - Developing a mindset
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable touring and transport</li> <li>• Energy efficient renovation of cultural venues</li> <li>• Electricity</li> <li>• Sustainable productions and use of sustainable materials</li> <li>• Digital sustainable use of data</li> <li>• Waste management</li> <li>• Consumer consumption</li> <li>• Environmental impact</li> <li>• Clean water and sea</li> <li>• Forest and biodiversity</li> <li>• New partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity and gender balance</li> <li>• Equal access to education and training as well as to culture and arts</li> <li>• Fight against poverty and hunger</li> <li>• Protection of minorities and cultural rights and expression</li> <li>• Change of behavior</li> <li>• Decent work and inclusion in labor market</li> <li>• Health and well-being</li> <li>• Reduced inequalities</li> <li>• Human settlement</li> <li>• Peace and justice</li> <li>• Sustainable communities</li> </ul>

Fig. 4: Environmental sustainability versus sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goals are based on the framework on three pillars of economic, social, and environmental considerations, and European Green Deal is just addressing one of these pillars, namely the environmental pillar. The figure shows two sections: on the left side, it is about environmental sustainability and, on the right, it is about social sustainability. Both environmental and social sustainability entail economic sustainability.

In March 2021, the European network Europa Nostra published the report [European Cultural Heritage Green Paper](#), which offers suggestions on how the cultural sector can help solve the challenges posed by the European Green Deal. As the report claims, it is about joining forces and using the best examples we have. But when combining two very different fields as the diverse cultural sector and the green industrial sector on reaching sustainability, it becomes questionable if we speak the same language when using different terminologies. The New European Bauhaus have tried to describe the transformation of becoming more sustainable in a movement that combines the two sectors: “a) *sustainability*, from climate goals, to circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity, b) *aesthetics*, quality of experience and style, beyond functionality, c) *inclusion*, from valuing diversity, to securing accessibility and affordability”. The idea is that policies that aim to reduce environmental impact and create more sustainable societies can benefit from involving the cultural sector to further deliver on a climate-neutral Europe 2050.

**INTERMISSION: INTERVIEW WITH MARIA TOFT ON GREEN COMMUNITIES**

Maria Toft is a former PhD-student in Political Science at Copenhagen University. Her PhD project was part of the interdisciplinary research project supported by the Velux Foundation: Collective Movements and Pathways to a Sustainable Society (COMPASS), which examined why and how collective actors change environmental norms and behaviour in Denmark. Maria has mapped environmental communities in Denmark and examined how social and physical infrastructures (communities) affect the overall carbon footprint. The interview was conducted by the project in March 2022.

**How do you define sustainability?**

The choices we make today should not be at the expense of current and future generations.

**What is your background and how do you work on sustainability?**

Research has focused on individual nudging policies. But time and time again, it turns out that neither more knowledge nor economic instruments can do it alone, and therefore the starting point of my research is to look at how we move forward from here. I address, from my point of view, a failed focus on the individual. Organising yourself in a community, food community, green festival, kitchen garden, etc. can reduce your consumption by 1.5-3 tons out of the 12 tons we use now. You consume less and you also become more satisfied with life. In communities, there is a different discourse about what a satisfying life means, and therefore you can be satisfied with much less. My research indicates that those who are part of green communities are more satisfied with life than the consumers with the 25% highest consumption. They have emissions of 8 tons and 25 tons respectively.

**What do you think characterises the cultural sector's approach to sustainability?**

Art and culture are the starting point for encounters with others. In art, we meet others, and it is here that we can transform ourselves. Art is a stage for transformation. I point out that within green communities there is a different discourse on the good life. In psychology and political theory, people are working on this and are interested in what leads to better environmental behaviour. Here we see time and time again, it is self-transcendence that correlates with greener environmental behaviour. Self-transcendence is the experience of transcending one's own self and becoming part of something bigger. It is thus in contrast to egocentrism. It relates to "experiences of awe" - awe and excitement about what one experiences and sees. These experiences, and in psychology personality traits, are essential for green behaviour. I hypothesise that communities, nature and culture can help awaken this. We organise our societies based on dead things: GDP and growth. But what matters to people is family, friends and loved ones. Feeling alive is crucial. During Corona, it was culture, communities and the social that was cut away and we are now seeing the consequences of what that did to people. What characterises culture is that everyone tries out their own ideas and creativity. Maybe there is a lack of knowledge about what works, but on the other hand, it is characterised by the feeling of giving initiative and ownership of how to act. It is very effective in getting people to act: it has to come from below, and it requires support systems, the removal of barriers and trust in people's abilities.

**What interests you in the field of sustainability when it comes to culture?**

In the arts, there is minimal research on which expressions are influencing people in an environmentally friendly direction. The question of political art is relevant here: what happens if you arouse climate anxiety in people? And yes, it does arouse something, but the fear just makes people stand still and not act. Other

art is more self-transcendent and mesmerising, such as insanely beautiful and large-scale works. This kind of art is one of the most effective ways to get people to act. But there's a lack of research that ties these insights into a policy framework and that's what I'm trying to do.

### **What challenges remain to be addressed and what are the solutions?**

The potential of the community is not being realised at all. We are not being honest about what our behaviour actually means. And this is of course because it is politically sensitive. In Denmark, more than half of the Danes would like to reduce their consumption to help the climate crisis. This means that we need to have a bigger conversation about what makes us satisfied with life. It is not consumption, and we know that. What is needed is a big countermovement where communities are in focus. Corona opened a window, but unfortunately, we saw that we went back to stimulus packages. It was an interesting window that opened up for change. But we are still in a period of transition: war, economic crisis, climate crisis. What comes first - big crises or big solutions?

## **2.1 LITERATURE CONDENSE**

When reading about culture and sustainability, the two terms represent many different and conflicting elements. Culture is as broadly defined as in the Creative Europe programme<sup>7</sup> from fine art to intangible and tangible art to events, marketing, digital creative solutions, and business models. The same goes for sustainability whose understanding of the word derives from the professional fields of bioeconomy, circular economy, and the reuse of environmental resources. It is difficult to talk about these very broad terms in one conversation because they both entail many meanings, understandings and can be used in many different contexts and scenarios. Back in 2015, a European research network explained: “the theoretical and conceptual understanding of culture within the general frames of sustainable development remains vague and consequently, the role of culture is poorly operationalised in the environmental and social policies.”<sup>8</sup> When the SDG was formulated, culture remained a small part of the overall goals. Culture is only specifically mentioned in the SDGs two times in the targets 4.7 and 11.4. Here culture is linked to sustainability in an educational and urban setting.

Since the beginning of the launch of the SDGs, there has been a European movement to include culture in the SDGs and the discussion of heritage indicators has been pointed out in the report [Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe](#) - one of the first European reports made on this topic. Recently, the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022, that was held in Mexico, invited “its Member States and the international community to embark jointly on a continuous reflection on cultural policies to tackle global challenges and outline immediate and future priorities. The aim [was] to shape a more robust and resilient cultural sector, fully anchored in the perspectives of sustainable development as well as promotion of solidarity, peace, and security.”<sup>9</sup> But still, “with no explicit focus on culture in the UN 2030 Agenda, opportunities to mobilise the cultural sector, to draw on its reach, insights and, energy to accelerate development are being overlooked”<sup>10</sup>. Amongst European cultural network organisations, there has therefore been a very strong movement to develop a 18<sup>th</sup> goal specifically on culture.

The European networks Culture Action Europe ([CAE](#)) and [IETM](#) - International network for contemporary performing arts have written extensively about culture in relation to climate changes and the SDGs. IETM’s members have had the need to discuss sustainable touring since touring is a big part of the theatre

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<sup>7</sup> Creative Europe programme: <https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.culturalsustainability.eu/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.unesco.org/en/mondiaicult2022>

<sup>10</sup> <https://cultureactioneurope.org/news/mondiaicultzerodraft/>

production and performance. CAE has written on cultural approaches into all SDGs as seen in the report [Implementing culture within the sustainable development goals. The role of culture in Agenda 2030](#). Cultural organisations working for preservation of cultural heritage as well as monuments and sites have both published reports on policy guidance and the demonstration of the relevance of the benefits of investing in cultural heritage. The collection [Climate Heritage Network](#) has built their recommendations around the COP21 and see culture as a powerful tool for climate mobilisation.

Working with sustainability in the cultural sector, it is first and foremost about making the production cycle, transportation and touring greener which is a big part of working creative.

Culture Action Europe writes: "Comprehensive research is needed on how cultural practices of communities, social groups and artists and creators should become greener as well as analysing and making recommendations for greener operations, products, venues and processes of cultural organisations. Cultural and creative sectors should consult extensively and collaborate with environmental sector specialists. Defining what "greener" means is not necessarily straightforward, e.g., digital energy consumption vs reused paper, streaming an album 27 times is more environmentally damaging than the production of a CD record etc. Therefore, research results and data need to be provided on what is green and made available to the sector" as stated in the report [Culture's Contribution to the European Green Deal](#).

On a national level, several arts councils and arts foundations have developed their own guidelines to sustainable, cultural practice. In example, Arts Council England and Denmark's State Art Fund have both come up with concrete recommendations to how the cultural sector can limit their environmental impact. *Greening* the cultural sector and being *carbon-positive* are terms used to describe where the sector should move towards. Especially within theatre and performance, there are a large collection of guidebooks.

The project has made an annotated literature biography that can be read in continuation to this report.

## 2.2 NORDIC DIGITAL ROUNDTABLE



Fig. 5: Picture of participants from the Nordic Digital Roundtable on the 22nd of September 2022.

The project held an online Nordic Digital Roundtable in September 2022 where cultural stakeholders such as institutions, organisations, local and regional authorities from Central Denmark Region, Västra Götaland Region and the city of Oulu participated.

The objectives of the Nordic Digital Roundtables were to:

- Debate and discuss 'Culture and Sustainability' with like-minded stakeholders/specialists/do'ers etc. to inspire each other.
- Qualify the knowledge and findings that the project has already brought to light.
- Brainstorm and collect new knowledge and information to the project.
- Point to e.g., future work and new sustainability projects.

The setting of the roundtable was the UN's global goals and the challenges cultural stakeholders experience in the communication and understanding of culture in sustainable development. What role does culture play in understanding and implementing sustainability into our societies? In recent years, an increasing number of artists, organisations and leaders in the creative sector use their skills and resources to draw attention to global challenges, build a willingness to change and devise innovative solutions, which can help move us towards a more sustainable future.

The discussions derived from the participants' own practice and reflections on practices and challenges in managing cultural events and projects. In small groups the participants identified important themes that were ranked in plenum.

Here are the top three themes brought by the participants:

**Sustainability contains contradictions:** Culture can seem like a drop in the ocean when we talk about having a more sustainable world. Culture and sustainability can even seem contradictory because execution of sustainability needs a big budget to make a big change and culture has a very small budget in comparison. Many cultural organisations are small and have few resources. They do not necessarily have the resources to make a change. Furthermore, sustainable cultural production can conflict with the funding-systems' logic which prioritises new productions over prolonging or developing existing artworks. Touring is probably the first element that comes up when talking about the topic culture and sustainability. All eyes are on the artists travelling around to present their latest aspirations when talking about lowering the CO<sup>2</sup> level. But at the same time, audiences are travelling to concerts or cultural exhibitions are maybe contributing to a much larger level of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. Flights, cars, use both individual and public transport are used for audiences to meet their favorite artists. When cultural events give discounts to their audience when taking public transport, event managers contribute to the expansion of a larger cultural gap between people who have easy access to low CO<sup>2</sup>-level producing transport and those who do not. People living in urban settings already have easy access to cultural offers and public transportation but people living in rural areas have neither. It is difficult for people living in a rural area to make use of the discount offered. In that sense, climate-friendly transportation can have a potential social flip side.

**Partnerships are essential for sustainability:** When talking about projects – in any project – a partnership is needed. Cultural institutions working with sustainability is in a learning process and therefore new types of partnerships are needed. It is important to keep learning both for the individual artist, the administration supporting the cultural sector and politicians creating awareness about the importance of culture shaping people's mindset about sustainability today. A cross-sectorial approach is needed if sustainable mindset is to be mainstreamed. A good example is the huge potential of sharing equipment, scenography etc. between cultural institutions in a city or where there is a short distance between two organisations. To make it happen, a well-working storage infrastructure would have to be developed. Another example is to create a cultural strategy for the city that supports climate-cultural partnerships and that support sustainable collaborations and gives incentives to institutions to work more sustainable when producing art and culture.

**Culture helps integrate body, mind, and senses so we understand issues better:** Affecting emotions is the key to have an impact on attitudes. Importantly, culture can help facilitate and create safe spaces to have difficult conversations. For example, everything sustainable is not cheap - people must be willing to pay extra for the cultural experience, ecological products or energy saving investments. Art can communicate the ambiguity in the discussions on climate change. In policy making, green transition is not something that should be put on top of other agendas, which cultural institutions are taking care of, but green transition should be embedded in developing new cultural institutions. This way it becomes guiding and does not directly affect the art productions. It is not just ticking the box. It is about changing actions.

### 2.3 LOCAL CASE EXAMPLES

Cultural events, activities and projects are usually multi-artistic and multidimensional. It is difficult to evaluate the effectivity of sustainable practices because of the many diverse approached to the topic. That is why it is useful to produce many case examples illustrate possibilities and to use the examples to develop suitable methods for evaluating and creating new practices. Project partners have a lot of directives and

criteria on how to produce cultural processes and events. But how to include the message of sustainable development in the content and forms of expression of culture?

Going from translating SDGs into local initiatives, the examples here will take it's starting point in local and regional practices and experiences from Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. The case examples of different ways to concretely work with sustainability within the cultural field show us that culture can be seen as a tool to help communicate and make sustainability understandable to citizens.

CITY OF OULU: [SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION TESTING AT FESTIVALS](#)

Festival organisers will announce environmental challenges relating to e.g., energy, transportation, waste management and food and open a call for solutions to be showcased at the festival. Finnish innovation organisations can apply to suggest solutions those environmental challenges. The organisation inventing the solution will receive funding to test the innovation at the event.

IKAST-BRANDE MUNICIPALITY: [SDG-WALL](#)

17 professional artists create 17 works of art in 17 different cities in Central Denmark Region of the UN's 17 SDGs. The purpose of the project is to focus on the UN's SDGs through a poetic, aesthetic, and artistic experience, to engage local citizens in community and action around the SDGs, to create debate and awareness about local sustainability.

KULTURPRINSEN: [SCHOOL CHILDREN LEARNING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH ART](#)

The Global Roots project aims to empower children in primary education (8-13 years) to understand, reflect and act on their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a constantly changing world. The project aims to provide a learning environment where children can relate to, reflect, and act on sustainable development, and to develop their knowledge of the UN's 17 SDGs as well as to facilitate and qualify interdisciplinary collaborations between professionals from the school sector and professionals from the art and culture sector.

CITY OF OULU: [COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABILITY](#)

Environmentally sustainable events and culture productions' checklists and guides aim to communicate both environmental sustainability and a new mindset amongst audiences. It is going to be a tool for events and culture productions to check which environmental sustainability aspects they already follow. This project *Communicating Sustainability* will launch a guidebook for producers, artists, organizers with information, tips, and ideas on how to be more environmentally sustainable.

AARHUS MUNICIPALITY: [POLICY FRAMWORK FOR CULTURAL CLIMATE PARTNERSHIPS](#)

The aim of Aarhus Municipality's city strategy is to be CO<sup>2</sup> neutral in 2030. Their new cultural strategy aims to establish a climate partnership for culture that will work for sustainable developments of cultural life and developments of specific initiatives as well as to incorporate climate requirements into agreements with cultural institutions and organisers.

SVALEGANGEN: [17 CULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS](#)

United Change is 17 unique partnerships that together create 17 new works of art - all with a thematic focus on a sustainable future. The artworks will be shown at a large-scale festival in Aarhus, Denmark in September 2023.

SECRET HOTEL: [SUSTAINABLE RELATIONS WITH THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN](#)

Secret Hotel creates participatory events and performances which are sensorial and intellectually stimulating. The works seek to heighten human awareness of our surroundings and our relations with the more-than-human – i.e., all those we share the planet with. Works of Secret Hotel range from site-specific events to performance lectures and workshops for all ages. Central is the collaboration with the more-than-human and viewing the audience as guests and co-creators. Secret Hotel has for several years explored the relationship between humans, the outside world, and other natural beings. The sister organisation Earthwise Residency works on the same themes.

KOKARDIKLUBI: [SUSTAINABLE EVENTS IN RURAL AREAS](#)

Kokardiklubi is an event space for music in the Nordic. The premises are located in the barracks area of Hiukkavaara in Oulu, Finland on the premises of a former garrison. Kokardiklubi operates in the barracks' of an old movie theater, which has been renovated and brought back to life as a performance venue, meeting and cultural space, and concert hall. The materials and furniture used for the renovation of the premises are mainly recycled goods.

NORDISKA AKVARELLMUSEET: [DIGITAL TOOLS FOR EXPERIENCING AND MAKING ART](#)

In the field of art experiences and art-based education, a way of decreasing travels and transporting is to arrange digital guided tours and workshops with digital tools. This creates accessibility and give more groups and individuals the opportunity to visit the museum, despite distance, disabilities or other factors which make it hard to physically visit the museum.

### 3.1 CONNECTIONS AND PATTERNS

*Culture* and *sustainability* are two terms that can be defined in different ways. The European COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) research group that described their work in 2015 in the report [Investigating Cultural Sustainability: Culture in, for and as Sustainable Development](#), has managed to make three definitions of culture in connection to sustainability. The report writes:

“First, culture can have a supportive and self-promoting role (which we characterise as ‘culture in sustainable development’). This already-established approach expands conventional sustainable development discourse by adding culture as a self-standing 4<sup>th</sup> pillar alongside separate ecological, social, and economic considerations and imperatives. We see a second role (‘culture for sustainable development’), however, which offers culture as a more influential force that can operate beyond itself. This moves culture into a framing, contextualising and mediating mode, one that can balance all three of the existing pillars and guide sustainable development between economic, social, and ecological pressures and needs. Third, we argue that there can be an even a more fundamental role for culture (‘culture as sustainable development’) which sees it as the essential foundation and structure for achieving the aims of sustainable development (COST 2015: 8).”

Based on the case examples presented, the discussions derived in the project and the existing literature review, this project draws three models on how culture work with sustainability:

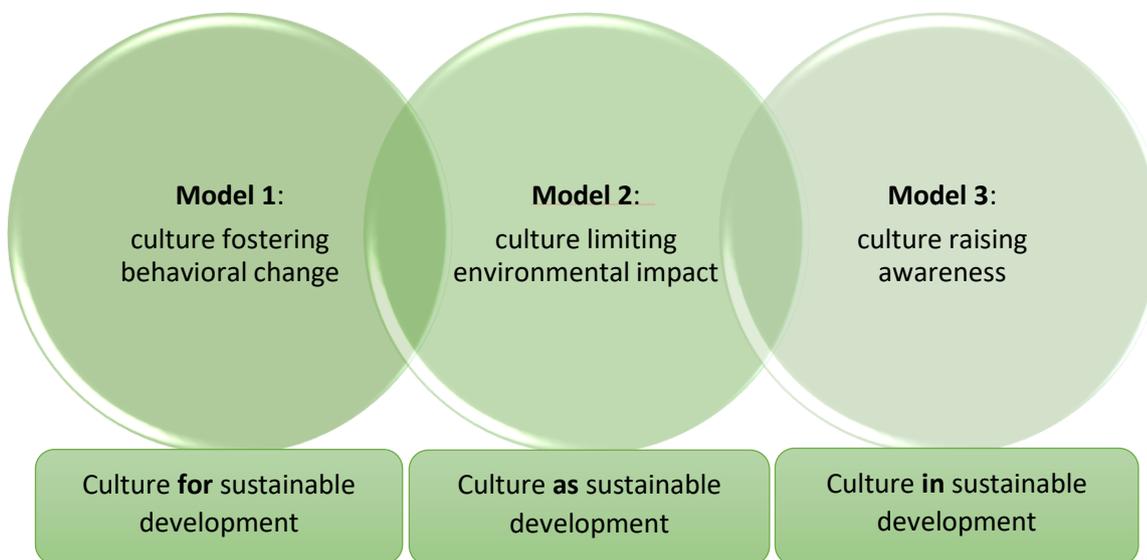


Fig. 6: Model on cultures’ unique role on sustainability named Model CultSustain. The model is extracted from the project’s findings from existing literature and practiced-based case examples. It shows culture to have a concrete role in relation to sustainability in three unique ways: *culture for* (culture fostering behavioral change), *culture as* (culture limiting environmental impact) and *culture in* (culture raising awareness).

When setting up the three definitions of culture in relation to sustainability as defined by the COST research group with the three models defined by the project, you clearly see that there are not shutter tight understandings of which theoretical definitions fits with which practice-based model.

“Culture as a more influential force that can operate beyond itself” (COST 2015: 8) could both be culture having a more individualistic and personal affect as in model 1, but the description could also be fitting to culture as a mere campaigning tool for creating noise on the urgent need for lowering the CO<sup>2</sup> as in model 3. When choosing model 1 as appropriate for the definition *culture for sustainable development*, the determining characteristic of culture as a mediating mode that can balance between economic, social, and ecological challenges, shows us culture exemplified as in Maris Toft’s definition of culture as communities and by case examples by Secret Hotel, Kulturprinsen and City of Oulu. Here culture is a tool for creating new understandings of sustainability by implementing culture into new settings.

When looking into *culture in sustainable development*, the key feature is to expand conventional sustainable development discourse to recognise culture’s ability to raise awareness on climate changes and sustainability in general as we see the in the examples by Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Ikast-Brande Municipality and Svalegangen. Knowledge nor economic instruments on green transition and sustainability are enough to get everyone on board. Culture can not only communicate a clear message, but by communicating verbal and non-verbal, culture can also create self-transcendence, the awe-experience, the experience of transcending one's own self to become part of something bigger – part of a sustainable movement. And here *culture for* and *culture in* have overlapping impact. They both transcends by culture being a messenger and culture being put into new settings. Culture being supportive (in) and culture contextualising (for), both have the ability to create a mindset-shift for the recipient. Where *culture for* is more based on social sustainability by creating dialogues between people, *culture in* is more based on communicating artistic expression characterised by facilitating mere monologues. But off course this can be contested since in today’s world where online communication is the norm, digital tools create a far more interacting responsiveness from recipients when communicating. At the same time, Ikast-Brande’s SDG wall is exemplary of communicating artistic expression as a monologue. It shows sustainable and environmental awareness raising art.

It will be expected that there exist conflicting understandings on how to understand *culture as sustainable development* in real life case examples. The project has chosen to exemplify culture as a fundamental role for sustainability by cultures aptitude to limit its environmental footprint, by drawing up strategies and hands-on methodologies for enhancing a more sustainable production line of cultural products. The capability to create changes in production that lower the environmental impact of artistic outcome. This is for example exemplified by Kokardiklubi and Aarhus Municipality that shows two spectrums of *culture as: direct*, reuse of materials for cultural venues and *indirect*, governmental guidelines to reduce environmental impact in cultural organisations.

### 3.2 COMMUNITY, PRODUCTION AND COMMUNICATION

Looking into the target groups of the three models, we see that models 1 and 3 contain participants, audience, and recipient. In model 1 which is more community based, a person can choose to take the position as the participant being active involved in the cultural activity or chose to be an audience (amongst an amount of people viewing) by looking at the cultural activity. In model 3, which is more based on communication, a person can choose to be a recipient of a message, or to be a participant of the message and interact, normally well known in digital communication.

In model 2 the target group are also ambiguous: the two direct impact of *culture as* are 1) the cultural organisation itself that draws benefit of the change in production, 2) the audience in the cultural organisation that get to see the sustainable materials chosen, and an indirect impact of *culture as* is 3) the supporting local government or authority that will have economic, social, and ecological benefits of the chosen sustainable material.

Creating sustainability with and within culture is about recognising that humans are part of the naturally made world. It is not about what is manmade and what is naturally made. It is two sides of the same coin, the human world living side by side. The COST research group report writes:

“A truly evolutionary culture, or an eco-cultural civilisation, involves practicing a new understanding of the human place in the world, and recognising that humans are an inseparable part of the more-than-human world. Crucially, this means that every human action is always relative to and influenced by the situation at hand. It allows new values, new ways of life, and (perhaps) utopian visions of a sustainable society (COST 2015: 31).”

So, when we try to answer the question ‘what is unique about culture in a sustainable agenda’, the answer to this is really about how we want to live our life and what world we want to leave for our children. Saying the goal of culture having a unique role in a sustainable agenda, is to create a mindset-shift, that could be a way to create new values and new ways of life. Based on our Model CultSustain, we can sample target groups with activities of Model CultSustain towards visualising what kind of expected impact activities can have on target groups.

	<b>Model 1 Culture for</b>	<b>Model 2 Culture as</b>	<b>Model 3 Culture in</b>
<b>Charateristic medium</b>	Community	Production	Communication
<b>Intended activity</b>	Culture fostering behavioral change	Culture limiting environmental impact	Culture raising awareness
<b>Potential target group</b>	Primary: Participant Secondary: Audience (viewer)	Primary: Organisation Secondary: Audience (viewer and participant) Third: Government	Primary: Recipient Secondary: Participant
<b>Expected impact</b>	Self-transcendence	New approaches	Visualisation
<b>Sustainability Plan</b>	A new narrative		

Fig. 7: Overview of links in Model CultSustain. It shows connections between Model CultSustain and its potential target groups and expected impact.

When answering the question on ‘what is the unique *role* of culture in a sustainable agenda’, the *role* is in this scheme referring to *activities*. By setting the three functions of the model into a scheme, the project is trying to visualise a red thread and create connections between the intended activities and their potential target groups as well as their expected impact. One challenge is easily perceived: overlapping understandings between model 1 and 3. If we see culture as a self-standing 4<sup>th</sup> pillar (culture in) as in model 3, it can not only contain communicating elements, but it must include framing, contextualising and mediating modes as described in model 1 (culture for). To give reasons for culture to have a self-standing 4<sup>th</sup> pillar, is to plead for

culture's own right and intrinsic value. When claiming that model 3 is about communication, it might sound contradictory, but to use cultural concepts, communication could also be understood as cultural expression, performance, exhibiting or dancing, that are all visualising a message through culture's intrinsic value. Culture raising awareness is culture raising awareness because of their intrinsic value. Culture in itself creates images and new perspectives on how the world could be.

When putting culture into a new setting as in model 1, culture's intrinsic value can be developed in partnership with other stakeholders, others that can inspire, give new perspectives, values, and methods to amplify culture's expression and impact. To cite Maria Toft on what that does to people, she states: "In art, we meet others, and it is here that we can transform ourselves. Art is a stage for transformation. I point out that within green communities there is a different discourse on the good life. In psychology and political theory, people are working on this and are interested in what leads to better environmental behaviour. Here we see time and time again, it is self-transcendence that correlates with greener environmental behaviour. Self-transcendence is the experience of transcending one's own self and becoming part of something bigger. It is thus in contrast to egocentrism. It relates to "experiences of awe" - awe and excitement about what one experiences and sees."

The expected impact in model 2 derives from the production that generate artistic outcome. In the case examples exemplifying how cultural production can be generated, there are two types: a direct and indirect. The direct impact is reuse of materials, but the materials could be swapped with something less tangible such as gender equality, health and working conditions or lifelong learning opportunities, that are also part of running a good and healthy organisation. The indirect impact of *culture as* are the audience in the cultural organisation that get to see the sustainable materials chosen, and the supporting local government or authority that will have economic, social, and ecological benefits of the chosen sustainable material. Choosing a new or different way in a production in a cultural organisation, can inspire and change into new approaches to how the organisation will go forward.

Characteristic for all three models is that they all tell a story, and together they create a new narrative because cultural activities create a unique role in the sustainable and green agenda. But to be part of something, the SDG's, that does not clearly state the importance of culture in a sustainable agenda, culture needs a new narrative, that we will explore more in the next section. The new narrative is to consider culture as an investment, not a cost.

The potential target groups of Model CultSustain are intertwined because they are overlapping and therefore, it is not adequate to set them up in horizontal pillars alone. Another way to show the interconnectedness of Model CultSustain, can be viewed with its characteristic mediums as in the next figure.

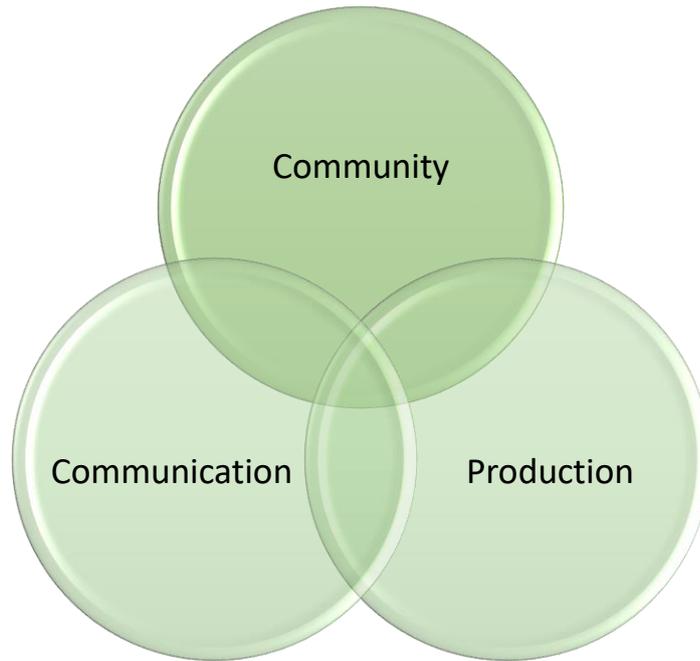


Fig. 8: Characteristic mediums of Model CultSustain. Communication, community, and production all have overlapping target groups and can therefore create different impact on different people depending on activity and the experience of it.

Setting up the mediums in a holistic circle diagram, gives associations to the knowledge triangle that are well used and known in the education field where the aim is to create recognition through a knowledge-based approach to interact between education, research, and innovation. Inspired by the [European Knowledge and Innovation Community approach](#), it is interesting to insert the characteristic mediums of Model CultSustain into a knowledge-triangle to explore what kind of opportunities cultural stakeholders could potentially have to penetrate the SDGs.

If we start with production, it is about the organisation examining new approaches to update management (operation costs). To update production, you need the right kind of skills, so working with production of a cultural organisation is to explore how we can empower talents and workforce with new skills.

A community-based artistic practice is placing cultural expression into a new setting to develop new experiences. It is about creating new knowledge on how we can be better at what we do. It is to accelerate culture's potential for new artistic practices. Communicating culture is to launch, develop and grow the message of culture exploring how we can create new opportunities to influence and impact target groups. Building further on the knowledge-triangle, an expansion hereof is [the quadruple helix](#) where citizens and end-user are added to a holistic flow of knowledge. A cultural ecosystem of knowledge can be demonstrated as such:

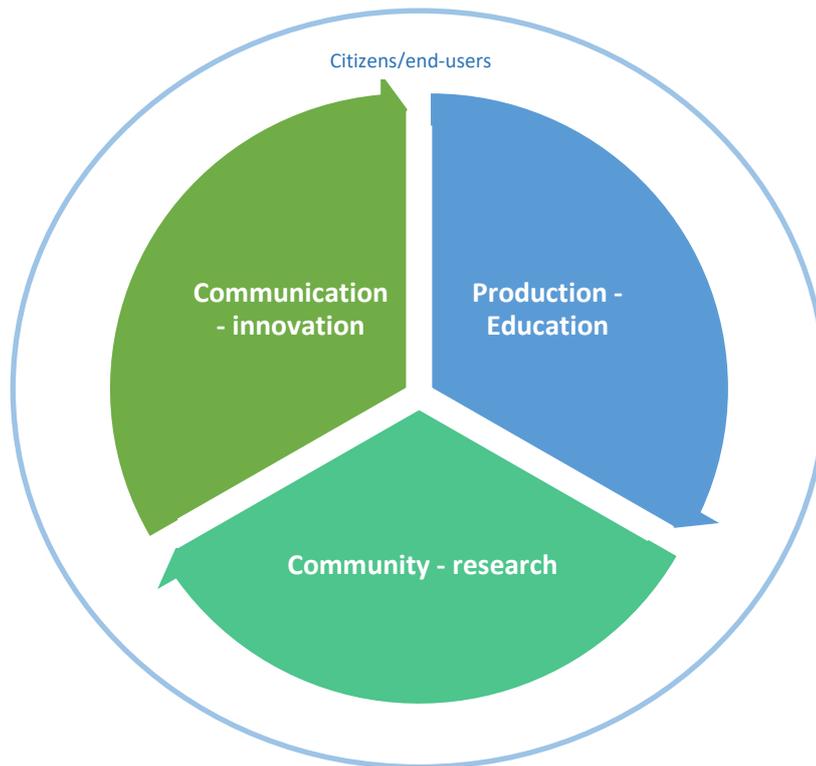


Fig. 9: A cultural ecosystem of knowledge. It is inspired from a quadruple helix.

The cultural ecosystem of knowledge is backed by the statements set out in the Nordic Digital Roundtable in the project, where one of the main points is *partnerships are essential for creating sustainability*. Furthermore, it is pointed out that a cross-sectorial approach is needed if sustainable mindset is to be mainstreamed. Sustainability contains contradictions and especially when we look at production. Creating a sustainable cultural production can conflict with the funding-systems' logic which prioritises new productions over prolonging or developing existing artworks. This we will investigate in the next section.

Seeing this visualisation of a potential cultural ecosystem of knowledge, citizens as end-users are moved forward. The target groups explained in the earlier overview of CultSustain, become simplified in this model where we come to distinguish between 1) audiences, those who are not part the cultural organisation, activity or production and show up to be entertained, and 2) insiders, those who are part of the cultural organisation, activity or production and are co-developer. No matter on which side you are of the cultural activity, we are all citizens and end-users.

Characteristic is it, if we insert the local case examples from this project into our quadruple helix, our model shows us that the case examples are characterised by only being present in one or two section of the model of a cultural ecosystem. One case example, mainly deal thoroughly with one objective. They neither deal with innovation, education, or research at the same time.

### 3.3 INCENTIVES FOR CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Creating a sustainable cultural production can conflict with the funding-systems' logic which prioritises new productions over prolonging or developing existing artworks. This is not only applicable for *production* but also for the activities *community* and *communication*. Cultural organisations that are dependent on external funding are pushed to create new exhibitions, touring, products, and shows in order to receive funding. This makes sense because audiences want to see new cultural products but if an organisation is to operate more sustainable, they do not need to change their approaches to creativity, but they need to change their

production in order to create more sustainable cultural productions. Therefore, a new narrative is needed: A sustainability plan that embraces community-practices, production processes and communication tools to support cultural organisations in being more sustainable.

Cultural organisations in this project have expressed concern about that a large part of an economical foundation of cultural organisations in Nordic countries are grants from public governments. Kulturanalys Norden puts forward in their analysis of public funding for cultural organisations:

“Throughout the Nordic region, several levels of government and administration are involved in public funding for culture: local, regional, national, Nordic, and European. We need more knowledge about how public funding initiatives at different levels support, and maybe sometimes contradict, one another.”<sup>11</sup>

Incentives to support cultural activities by public spending are mainly to create social cohesion and to strengthen democratisation and social policy development simultaneously with economic growth. When looking at European funding mechanisms at supra-level, the [CulturEU Funding Guide](#) shows us that the financing programmes only fund development project through grants. Operation projects are mainly funded through tenders and are targeted larger organisations that can distribute and incubate smaller cultural organisations. But following up on the statements by the project partners, cultural organisations are depending on public grants. The OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development states in their report “The Culture Fix: Creative People, Places and Industries” that:

“Direct funding to artists and cultural organisations has traditionally been the most prominent form of government investment in cultural sectors.”<sup>12</sup>

The typology of funding sources according to the [OECD](#) are fivefold: self-finance, public support measures, debt finance, equity finance, and other. Public government funding can be seen as a main source of income for many cultural organisations because the funding is building a broader idea on supporting social cohesion in society. At the same time, public government funding can be seen as one source of many different kind of funding sources for cultural organisations. But as the Kulturanalys Norden argues, we are not sure how public funding initiatives at different levels support. The project partners in this project have the experience that a public funding system primarily funds development projects. This intervenes with creating a new narrative, creating a support system that assists cultural organisations in both developing new projects and new operation projects where organisations get the opportunity to change to a more sustainable production.

The figure below shows an imbalance between funding operation projects for management and development projects for creativity. You can maybe fund culture *in* and *for* sustainable development, but you cannot fund culture *as* sustainable development, if public funds do not fund operation costs in cultural organisations. As the case example of Aarhus Municipality shows, it is not about giving organisations extra requirements but giving them support and incentives to develop more sustainable approaches without compromising on cultural and artistic production.

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<sup>11</sup> Kulturanalys Norden, 2022, “Preface”: <https://pub.norden.org/nordiskkulturakta2022-01/#92291>

<sup>12</sup> OECD’s Local Economic and Employment Development Programme (LEED), “The Culture Fix: Creative People, Places and Industries”, June 2022: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/29f05369-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/29f05369-en>

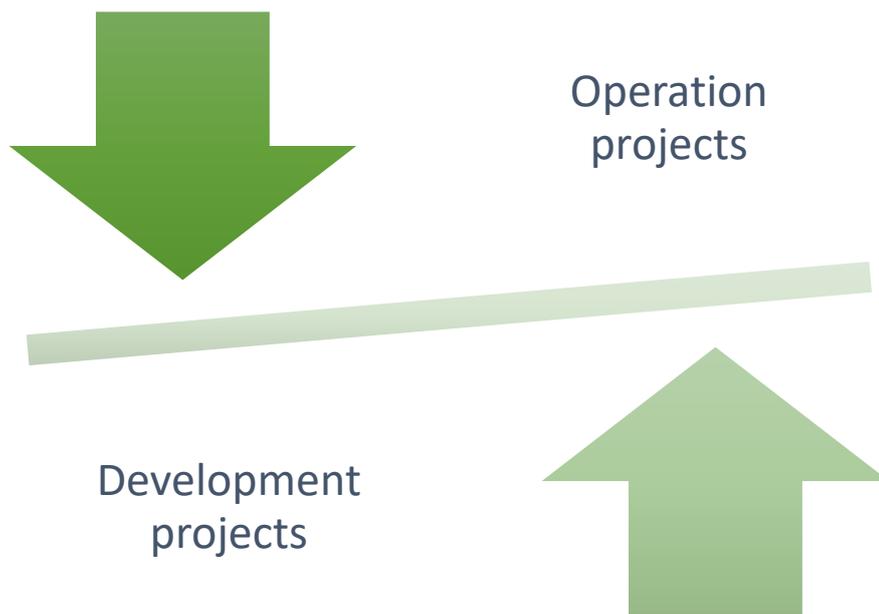


Fig. 10: Imbalance between external funding for operation projects and development projects. Society, audiences, cultural organisations themselves expect and want to operate in more sustainable ways but if a public funding system is not willing to fund operation projects, cultural organisations can find it difficult to be more sustainable in the future.

The figure visualises the imbalance between funding new development projects and recurrent operation projects. The incentive for cultural sustainability is low if not funding is provided. But why is it so important for cultural organisations to have access to financing to reform their productions?

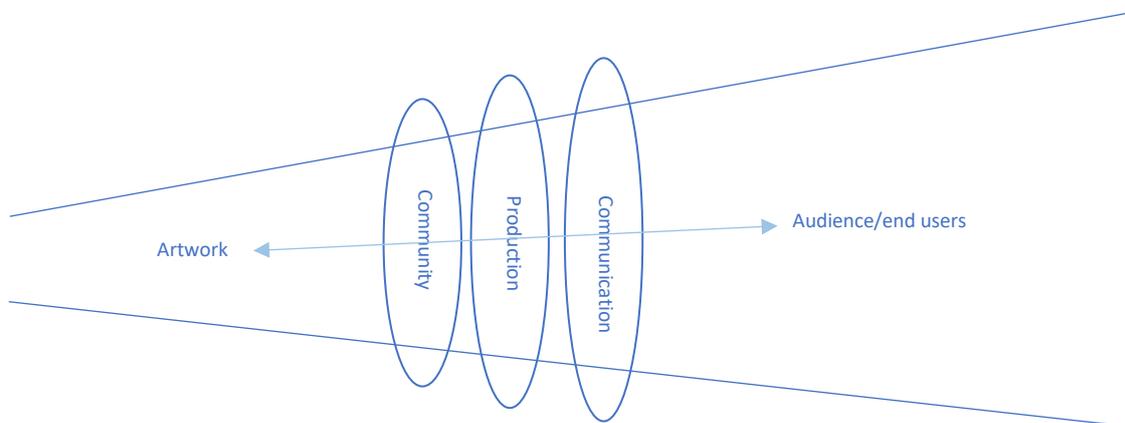


Fig. 11: A cultural development process. An artwork that is to be researched on, produced, and communicated to an audience (end users in a cultural organisation) goes through a development process that include research, training, and innovation before it reaches the audience.

To create a development process of an artwork that is to reach an audience, the artwork is going through three stages: community, production, and communication. The coming artwork must be researched on, it must be produced, and it must be communicated to an audience to be finalised. Funding a cultural development project is not only funding a show or an exhibition, but it is also funding the internal structure of an organisation that lays the ground for creative development projects. As this project includes public partners as two regions and one municipality, a new narrative for a sustainability plan for more sustainable

culture is needed. That includes both public operation incentives and public development incentives. So, to create more sustainable productions, communities, and communication, you need a public funding system that embraces this, that supports development and operation projects.



Fig. 12: A new narrative: A sustainability plan that embraces community-practices, production process and communication tools to support cultural organisations in being more sustainable, including public operation incentives and public development incentives.

As we have seen in previous chapters of this report, culture unique role in a sustainable and green agenda, is first of all three-fold: Culture can foster behavioral change; it can limit environmental impact and it can raise awareness. But as we see in this chapter, culture and arts are part of a bigger ecosystem. Cultural production in partnership with other fields such as *community* or *communication* can strengthen and amplify the understanding of the individual's impact on the environment and what sustainability means to oneself.

The illustration of a new narrative is trying to tell that if we want people to react and behave more environmental, economic, and social sustainable, we need cultural stakeholders to produce culture that embraces the core ideas and values of sustainability as communicated in the SDG's. Producing more sustainable, communicating about sustainability and creating sustainable communities are all part of a variety of activities that create cultural products with a sustainable impact on individuals in different target groups. With help from public incentives to both operation and development project it can happen.

**Into more | PART 4**

**4.1 CONCLUSION**

The report has highlighted the unique role of culture in a green and sustainable agenda with a focus from Nordic and European knowledge, together with local and regional practices and experiences. Trying to answer the question 'what is unique about culture in a sustainable agenda', is answering how we want to live our life and what world we want to leave for our children.

The concepts *sustainability* and *culture* can both be broadly defined, and it is to be expected that there exist conflicting understandings. Therefore, partnerships are essential for creating sustainability and cross-sectorial approaches are needed if sustainable mindsets are to be mainstreamed.

Sustainability contains contradictions and especially when we look at production. Creating a sustainable cultural production can conflict with the funding-systems' logic which prioritises new productions over prolonging or developing existing artworks. Therefore, a new narrative is needed: A sustainability plan that embraces community-practices, production processes and communication tools to support cultural organisations in being more sustainable. The unique role of culture in a sustainable and green agenda is three-fold: Culture can foster behavioral change; it can limit environmental impact and it can raise awareness.

The project partners representing one municipality, two regions, one museum, two theaters and one music venue and one EU-office, all worked together on the three objectives of the project: 1) collecting existing knowledge, 2) transferring of knowledge, and 3) communicating synergies. Together, they came to the conclusive understandings that:

... Culture plays a role in putting new perspectives and sensitivities into citizens' behavior when it comes to acting more sustainably.

... Culture and sustainability contain contradictions but should not be limiting the cultural sector when thinking of the two areas together.

...Culture has a right on its own but for acting more sustainably cross-sectorial partnerships are essential.

By putting an end to this report, we are very much aware of the fact that it is outdated almost from the minute we publish it. However, it is valuable as a snapshot of where we are, at the end of 2022 and beginning of 2023, facing new realities in a time of record high inflation, war on the continent of Europe, and a coming recession.

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*Fig. 3. Environmental sustainability originates from the United Nations Brundtland Commission and the European Green Deal.*

*Fig. 4: Environmental sustainability versus sustainable development.*

*Fig. 5: Picture of participants from the Nordic Digital Roundtable on the 22nd of September 2022.*

Fig. 6: Model on cultures' unique role on sustainability named Model CultSustain

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Fig. 8: Characteristic mediums of Model CultSustain.

Fig. 9: A cultural ecosystem of knowledge.

Fig. 10: Imbalance between external funding for operation management costs and development projects.

Fig. 11: A cultural development process.

Fig. 12: A new narrative.

### 4.3 LITERATURE LIST

- CHCfE Consortium (2015): *CULTURAL HERITAGE COUNTS FOR EUROPE*, International Cultural Centre, Krakow. (<http://blogs.encatc.org/culturalheritagecountsforeurope/outcomes/>)
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#### 4.4 ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The purpose of this annotated bibliography is to map former literature in the field of culture and sustainability to create a deeper understand and highlight the existing literature in the field. We have chosen to focus on Nordic and European sources.

**Aarhus Municipality: "Et Grønnere Aarhus". 4.11.2020.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Visions for a greener and more sustainable municipality in Aarhus

*The paper describes how they would like to make Aarhus more Green, for example by planting 10.000 trees in the city, create more and better nature and be CO2-neutral in 2030. The paper doesn't describe how they will be sustainable, only that they aim for a sustainable balance.*

**Aarhus Municipality: "Aarhus Sustainability Model (ASM) 2015". Aarhus, 2017.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: A tool for those working with culture and cultural projects.

*The project understands cultural sustainability as a medium and a tool to understand each other. This differs from the 'normal way' where concrete tools lead to cultural sustainability – so here the*

*causality is vice versa: concrete tools → Cultural sustainability vs. Cultural sustainability → improved understanding of each other.*

**Arts Council England Environmental Report: Sustaining Great Art and Culture. January 2020.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: The Council will soon propose their ten-year strategy, but before doing that, they reflect on the past ten years development in relation to the environment

*The reports key finding illustrates very simple what different actors has been creating regarding to sustainability in the last ten years, for example how many who facilitates environmentally themed activities or how many, who have installed energy efficient lighting and controls. It's a perfect overview tool to understand the last ten years.*

**Climate Heritage Network: “Accelerating Climate Action through the Power of Arts, Culture and Heritage – A Manifesto on Keeping 1,5 Alive. COP26”.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Provide key messages on culture and climate change from the 2021 United Nations Climate Conference (COP26)

*Highligts that Culture can create cohesion in ways that enable community-building and collective action drive public awareness and action; their work can be a powerful tool for climate mobilization.*

**Coast to Coast Climate Challenge Consortium: “Combatting climate change culturally”.** 15.03.2019: Link [here](#).

Purpose: Highlight how cultural and natural heritage can strengthen climate adaption

*Investigates the potential of cultural heritage to support holistic, multi-sectorial and citizen-near climate adaptation and mitigation efforts at the regional and municipal scale. Highlights that there are a lot of different actors involved in climate-projects and what capability they each have to reach UN's goals.*

**COST Action IS1007 Investigating Cultural Sustainability: Culture in, for and as Sustainable Development. 2015.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: COST Actions are designed to build new knowledge by bringing together researchers to cooperate and coordinate nationally funded research activities, and to build up new transnational and international research co-operation.

*Investigating Cultural Sustainability is a European research network focused in a multidisciplinary perspective on the relationship between culture and sustainable development.*

**Creative Carbon Scotland: “Why does arts and culture need to think about climate justice?” 12. July 2022.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: working on a project around climate justice and the ways in which it is relevant to the Scottish arts and culture sector.

The logical consequences of the basic ideas are wide ranging and present major challenges as well as opportunities for more effective action on climate change.

**Culture Action Europe: “Culture’s Contribution to the European Green Deal”. 2021.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Propose concrete recommendations on how the future generation of EU funded, hereunder how the Creative Europe Program contributes to tackle the climate challenge

*Highlighths that culture should be considered as a fourth pillar in Sustainable Development Goals and be transversally integrated in the SDGs framework. In addition to this point, the authors focus on, that the cultural and creative sector have a central and active role in changing how we can act sustainabl*

**Culture Action Europe: ‘IMPLEMENTING CULTURE WITHIN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS The role of culture in Agenda 2030’.** September 2019 Link [here](#).

Purpose: Highlight how the full capacity of culture can contribute to the achievement of the SDG’s.

*Describes how culture can play a vital role in each of the 17 SDG’s. You can wonder why it is necessary for Culture Action Europa to write this document, and it illustrates that we don’t automatically acknowledges cultures contribution to global challenges.*

**Dr. Ege Yildirim (ICOMOS): Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda: A Report by the Culture 2030 Goal Campaign 2019.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: place culture in all the SDG’s.

*Leading up to the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, several global cultural networks campaigned under the banner “The Future We Want Includes Culture” for the inclusion of one specific goal devoted to culture, or for the integration of cultural aspects across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

**ICOMOS: Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance for Heritage and Development Actors. March 2021.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: illustrate the many ways in which heritage can address the SDGs.

*The document consists of 17 policy sections. Each section addresses a specific SDG. The Policy Guidance document concludes with some recommendations for the Way Forward.*

**Europa Nostra, ENCATC, Heritage Europe, International Cultural Centre, RLIIC & The Heritage Alliance: “Cultural Heritage Count for Europe”. 12.06.2015, Oslo. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: To demonstrate the extraordinary power of our cultural heritage to improve the quality of our lives.

*The project provides a comprehensive overview of the evidence which clearly demonstrates the wide-ranging benefits of investing in Europe’s cultural heritage. For example, how cultural heritage is an important source to creativity and innovation.*

**Europa Nostra in partnership with ICOMOS: “European Cultural Heritage Green Paper”. March 2021. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: demonstrates the relevance of cultural heritage for achieving the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal.

*Demonstrates the relevance of cultural heritage for achieving the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal. It proposes a series of concrete recommendations both for policy-makers and for cultural heritage stakeholders.*

**European Commission: “Getting cultural heritage to work for Europe – Report of the Horizon 2020 Expert Group on Cultural Heritage”. Busquin et al. 2015. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: Demonstrates that relatively modest investment in cultural heritage can pay substantial dividends.

*The report highlights that cultural heritage is now regarded as a positive contributor to European GDP. This is a significant change in focus as cultural activities traditionally have been regarded as costs to society.*

**European Commission: “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Accompanying the document Proposal for a Council Recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability”. January 2022. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: provides detail on the concepts and recommendations put forward in this new initiative and presents research evidence and good practice examples from across Europe.

*Serve as a guide for policy makers, educators and all individuals and organisations working on environmental sustainability in the education and training sector.*

**European Commission’s Joint Research Centre: “GreenComp. The European sustainability competence framework”. December 2022. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: promote learning on environmental sustainability in the European Union.

*GreenComp identifies a set of sustainability competences to feed into education programmes to help learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote ways to think, plan and act with empathy, responsibility, and care for our planet and for public health.*

**European Commission's Joint Research Centre: "Sustainability Competences – A systematic literature review". 2020.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: aims to support the implementation of, amongst more, the European Green Deal, in the area of the EU citizens' skills necessary to guarantee a smooth twin digital and green transition.

*This study underlines the need to develop a more encompassing system to identify and update the necessary sustainability (instead of green) competences critical to perform sustainability-related jobs and other jobs in a sustainable manner.*

**European Commission: "Proposal for a recommendation on learning for environmental sustainability". 14.01.2022.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: to recommend education and training to action to respond to the climate emergency and planetary crisis

*Highlights challenges regarding learning for environmental sustainability and embedding environmental sustainability in all education and training policies, programmes and processes is vital to build the skills and competences needed for the green transition.*

**European Commission: "European Green Deal". 11. December 2019** Link [here](#).

Purpose: EU striving to be the first climate-neutral continent

*Climate change and environmental degradation are an existential threat to Europe and the world. To overcome these challenges, the European Green Deal will transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy.*

**European Commission: "Strengthening cultural heritage resilience for climate change. Where the European Green Deal meets cultural heritage". 2022.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: The open method of coordination (OMC) expert group makes 10 recommendations.

*This report summarises the work of the EU Open Method of Coordination (OMC) group of Member States' experts on 'Strengthening cultural heritage resilience for climate change'. In their report, the OMC expert group formulates a set of key recommendations for policy makers, based on their findings.*

**European Council and Council of the European Union: Paris Agreement on climate change. 2015** Link [here](#).

Purpose: political agreement among EU-member states and international partners on climate.

*The EU and all its member states have signed and ratified the Paris Agreement and are strongly committed to its implementation. In line with this commitment, EU countries have agreed to set the EU on the path to becoming the first climate-neutral economy and society by 2050.*

**European Cultural Heritage Skills Alliance: “Interview With Johanna Leissner, Sustainability Expert And Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Scientific Representative”.** Viewed December 2022. Link [here](#).

Purpose: Discuss the need to better understand the consequences on cultural heritage caused by the climate crisis.

*Highlights that cultural institutions play an important role as they are considered to be role models and pioneers for society. This means they should lead by example and implement all available tools, methodologies, alternative energy sources, passive protection measures etc.*

**IETM Galway Satellite Meeting: Climate action and the performing arts IETM. 01.03.2021, Natalia Skolczyńska.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: To present some of the reflections and discussions on the relationships between performing arts and climate action held during the digital IETM Galway Satellite Meeting in December 2020.

*The report features some inputs, tools and experiences of experts in greening performing arts, as well as activists and advocates from outside and inside the arts scene who gathered at the meeting. For example, some considerations about how performance arts could be carbon-positive.*

**IETM: “Policy Statement: Report on the situation of artists and the cultural recovery in the EU”.** CULT Committee, 20.10.2021. Link [here](#).

Purpose: Elaborate their policy-statement regarding the new report from the CULT Committee.

*The Report sets a long-awaited and comprehensive vision on addressing a wide range of the most persistent matters linked to the situation of artists and cultural professionals and puts forward several viable proposals, such as remove the competition law obstacle to collective bargaining for self-employed.*

**IETM rewiring the network report. ‘Performing Europe Insights: Sustainability through innovation’.** The Perform Europe Platform (IETM, EFA, Circostrada, EDN and IDEA Consult). 22.06.2021, Europe. Link [here](#).

Purpose: Rethink cross-border performing arts presentation in a more inclusive, sustainable and balanced way.

*The report unfolds the status quo, especially the challenges, of the European landscape of performing arts presentation. They highlight three challenges: Geographic disparities are too big to be untackled, the current system is unsustainable, hence the urge for change and sustainable touring and presentation need sustainable cross-border support.*

**Kelly, L.: “Measuring the impact of museums on their communities: the role of the 21st century museum”. Taipei, 2006. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: Investigate the impact small museum have in their local communities and the role of museums in contemporary society

*Highlights that there is a need for museums to stay relevant and be responsive to pressing social and environmental issues. The project maps that even small local museums have an impact in their community, which indicates, that even small cultural actors can make a difference in relation to cultural sustainability (see diagram 1, page 3).*

**Nordic Co-operation: Action Plan Vision 2030. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: The strategic priorities and objectives govern all the activities of the Nordic Council of Ministers over the next four years.

*The action plan describes how the Nordic Council of Ministers will work to achieve the objectives of the vision through a series of initiatives linked to the vision’s three strategic priorities.*

**Perform Europe Consortium: “Perform Europe Insights: Sustainability through innovation. December. October 2021. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: brings together the main learning points we have drawn from the Perform Europe process.

*Highlights the urgency to rethink the current system of touring and distribution support in Europe, in order to make it more balanced, sustainable and inclusive.*

**Popakademie Baden-Württemberg: “Green Touring Guide: A guide for musicians, agents, tour managers, promoters, venues and booking agencies.” 2021. Link [here](#)**

Purpose: Reduce musicians’ carbon-footprints while on tour

*The guide offers alternatives to the traditional way of travelling while touring, for example with their seven steps for green touring.*

**United Nations: Sustainable Development Goals. 2015. Link [here](#).**

Purpose: adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

*The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.*

**UNESCO World Heritage Expert Group for climate change impacts on cultural heritage.**

**30.12.2019 – 31.01.2020.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Updating the policy document on the impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties

*The document highlights the areas in which the World Heritage policy have gaps and challenges regarding Climate Change. As an example, they mention that the document functions as an international tool for climate change but fails to focus on implementation guidelines.*

**University of west Scotland: Climate change impacts on cultural heritage: A literature review.**

**Elena Sesana, Alexandre S. Gagnon, Chiara Ciantelle, JoAnn Cassar and John J. Hughes.**

**04.05.2021.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Collect the literature in field in relation to the cultural heritage, historical buildings and their interior and archeological sites.

*The report highlights the limitations of previous research and provides recommendations for further studies, which could be relevant to look at before writing our report.*

**Voices of Culture: Brainstorming Report ‘Culture and the Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges and Opportunities’. Valeria Marcolin, Marshall Marcus, Jordi Pascual and Snenska Quaedvlieg-Mihalovic. Voice of Culture, February 2021.** Link [here](#).

Purpose: Provide a channel for the voice of the cultural sector to be heard by EU policymakers, a voice represented by a group of expert practitioners in Europe selected through an open call.

*The report unfolds the challenges and the current cultural context in relation to sustainability and environmental issues.*