



Bridging the Gap Between Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage Conservation in view (ICOMOS)

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ملخص

يتناول هذا البحث الدور المحوري الذي يضطلع به المجلس الدولي للمعالم والمواقع (ICOMOS) في سد الفجوة بين الحفاظ على التراث الثقافي غير المادي، بما يشمل من التقاليد الشفوية، والفنون، والمعارف المحلية، والمهارات والملابس التقليدية، وبين كونه منظمة عالمية مكرسة لحماية التراث. يلعب ICOMOS دورًا حاسمًا في الدعوة إلى نهج متكامل يأخذ في الاعتبار الأبعاد المادية وغير المادية للتراث الثقافي؛ حيث يركز البحث على الترابط الوثيق بين التراث المادي وغير المادي، ويبرز اعتراف ICOMOS بالتأثير المتبادل والأهمية المشتركة لكلا البعدين، كما يناقش كيف يروج المجلس لفهم أعمق مفاده أن الحفاظ على التراث لا يجب أن يقتصر على الجوانب المادية للمواقع والمعالم، بل يجب أن يشمل أيضًا العناصر غير المادية المرتبطة بها، مثل العادات، والطقوس، واللغات، والمعرفة التقليدية.

ويتطرق البحث كذلك إلى الاستراتيجيات التي يعتمدها ICOMOS لمواجهة التحديات المعقدة في صون التراث الثقافي غير المادي. كما يستعرض تطور المجلس لمجموعة من المبادئ التوجيهية والمواثيق والأدوات التي تشكل إطار عمل للمهنيين والمعنيين بالحفاظ على التراث، لدمج جوانب الحفاظ المادي وغير المادي بشكل فعال. وتعد هذه الموارد مراجع قيمة للعاملين في الميدان، تساعد في التعامل مع تعقيدات حماية التراث الثقافي بشكل شامل.

كما يُبرز البحث نهج ICOMOS التعاوني، مشددًا على دوره كمنصة للتعاون الدولي وتبادل المعرفة، ويعرض كيف يساهم المجلس في تيسير الحوار والمشاركة بين مختلف الجهات المعنية، بما في ذلك المختصين في مجال التراث، والمجتمعات المحلية، والشعوب الأصلية، وصناع السياسات. ومن خلال هذا النهج الشامل، يعزز ICOMOS فهمًا أعمق وتقديرًا أكبر للتكامل بين التراث المادي وغير المادي.

ويؤكد البحث على أهمية إسهامات ICOMOS في تعزيز نهج شامل ومستدام لحفظ التراث، ومن خلال اعترافه بالطبيعة غير القابلة للفصل للتراث الثقافي غير المادي، يدعو المجلس إلى حماية التنوع الثقافي، والهويات، والممارسات الحية المرتبطة بالتراث. كما تلهم الدروس المستفادة من عمل ICOMOS جهود الحفاظ المستقبلية، بما يضمن حماية تراثنا الثقافي المشترك ونقله للأجيال القادمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ICOMOS، الحفاظ، التراث الثقافي غير المادي، أصحاب المصلحة.

Abstract

This research examines International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) critical role in bridging gap between conservation of intangible cultural heritage, encompassing oral traditions, arts, local knowledge, and traditional skills and clothes, as global organization dedicated to heritage preservation. ICOMOS plays crucial role in advocating for integrated approach that considers both physical and intangible dimensions of cultural heritage; research emphasizes interconnectedness of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, highlights ICOMOS's recognition of their mutual influence and significance, and discusses how ICOMOS promotes understanding that heritage conservation should encompass not only physical aspects of structures and sites but also intangible elements, such as customs, rituals, languages, and traditional knowledge associated with them. Furthermore, research explores strategies employed by ICOMOS to address multifaceted challenges of conserving intangible cultural heritage. It examines ICOMOS's development of guidelines, charters, and tools that provide framework for professionals and stakeholders engaged in heritage conservation to integrate preservation of both aspects effectively. These resources serve as valuable references or practitioners, helping them navigate complexities of safeguarding cultural heritage holistically; research also highlights ICOMOS's collaborative approach, emphasizing its role as platform for international cooperation and knowledge exchange. It discusses how ICOMOS facilitates dialogue and engagement among diverse stakeholders, including heritage professionals, local communities, indigenous groups, and policymakers. Through this inclusive approach, ICOMOS fosters deeper understanding and appreciation of interplay between tangible and intangible cultural heritage; research underscores significance of ICOMOS's contributions in promoting comprehensive and sustainable approach to heritage conservation. By recognizing inseparable nature of intangible cultural heritage, ICOMOS advocates for preserving cultural diversity, identities, and living heritage practices; lessons learned from ICOMOS's work inform and inspire future conservation endeavors, ensuring protection and transmission of our shared cultural heritage for generations to come.

Keywords: ICOMOS, Conservation, Intangible cultural heritage, Stakeholders.

1. Introduction

International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is non-governmental organization dedicated to preserving and protecting cultural heritage worldwide. It was founded in 1965 and has become leading global authority in heritage conservation (ICOMOS, 2024). ICOMOS operates as advisory body to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2024) and collaborates with governments, professionals, and communities to promote understanding and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

ICOMOS comprises network of experts, including architects, archaeologists, historians, conservators, and other specialists, who share joint commitment to heritage preservation. Organization's mission is to promote conservation, protection, and enhancement of cultural heritage, recognizing its significance in fostering sustainable development, social cohesion, and cultural diversity.

ICOMOS operates through national committees in over 110 countries, with its headquarters in Paris, France; it provides platform for international cooperation, knowledge exchange, and developing best practices in heritage conservation. Organization actively engages in research, advocacy, capacity building, and formulating international standards and charters related to heritage conservation (Ulusoy, 2023).

One of ICOMOS's key contributions is bridging serving architectural and archaeological sites, ICOMOS has expanded its scope to recognize importance of intangible heritage elements, such as oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, and traditional knowledge. ICOMOS acknowledges that cultural heritage is multi-dimensional concept encompassing both physical structures and intangible practices, and it advocates for integrated approach to their conservation (Ducassi, 2005).

Through its initiatives, guidelines, and collaborations, ICOMOS has played critical role in shaping international policies and practices related to heritage conservation. Organization's expertise and recommendations have contributed to development of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention, which provides framework for identifying, protecting, and preserving sites of outstanding universal value (Skounti, 2023).

As noted in Charter of Venice (1964) “It is essential that principles guiding preservation and restoration of ancient buildings should be agreed and be laid down on international basis, with each country being responsible for applying plan within framework of its own culture and traditions.” Subsequent ICOMOS charters have taken up that mission, establishing professional guidelines for specific conservation challenges and encouraging effective communication about importance of heritage conservation in every region (Houbart, 2016).



Figure 1: Traditional house for Jordanian Bedouin in Jordanian Museum of Popular Tradition

These earlier ICOMOS charters stress importance of public communication as essential part of more extensive conservation process (variously describing it as

“dissemination,” “popularization,” (presentation,” and “interpretation”). They implicitly acknowledge that every act of heritage conservation—within all world’s cultural traditions - is, by nature, communicative; from vast range of surviving material remains and intangible values of past communities and civilizations, choice of what to preserve, how to maintain it, and how to be presented to public are all elements of site interpretation; they represent every generation’s vision of what is significant and essential and why material remains from past should be passed on to future generations (SITES, 2008).

ICOMOS's work extends beyond technical aspects of conservation and emphasizes heritage's social, economic, and cultural dimensions; it recognizes importance of local communities and stakeholders in decision-making processes related to heritage preservation and actively promotes their involvement.



Figure 2: Traditional (after The Jordan Times)

Bridging gap between tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation is paramount. Cultural heritage consists of tangible elements, such as physical structures and artifacts, and immaterial aspects, including practices, knowledge,

and traditions. Focusing on one dimension while neglecting other would result in incomplete understanding of community's identity and cultural practices. Recognizing and conserving tangible and intangible heritage, we preserve cultural diversity, acknowledging different societies' unique expressions, beliefs, and customs; this preservation also extends to living heritage, ensuring transmission of traditional knowledge and practices from generation to generation; by integrating both dimensions, we support sustainability of communities, fostering their cultural identities and resilience. Bridging gap between tangible and intangible cultural heritage requires interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing experts from various fields together and engaging local communities and policymakers; this inclusive approach leads to holistic understanding of heritage and promotes responsible tourism practices, sustainable development, and long-term preservation of our shared human heritage.

This research examines International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) critical role in bridging gap between tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation. Research aims to highlight ICOMOS's recognition of interconnectedness and significance of both dimensions of cultural heritage and to explore strategies employed by organization to address multifaceted challenges of conserving intangible cultural heritage.

Scope of research encompasses an analysis of ICOMOS's advocacy for integrated approach that considers both physical and intangible dimensions of cultural heritage; it investigates how ICOMOS promotes understanding that heritage conservation should encompass physical aspects of structures and sites and intangible elements, like customs, rituals, languages, and traditional knowledge. Research further explores development of guidelines, charters, and tools by ICOMOS, which provide framework for professionals and stakeholders engaged in

heritage conservation to integrate preservation of both tangible and intangible aspects effectively.

Research examines ICOMOS's collaborative approach, emphasizing its role as platform for international cooperation and knowledge exchange; it explores how ICOMOS facilitates dialogue and engagement among diverse stakeholders, including heritage professionals, local communities, indigenous groups, and policymakers, to deepen understanding and appreciation of interplay between tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Research also highlights ICOMOS's contributions in promoting comprehensive and sustainable approach to heritage conservation; it underscores ICOMOS's advocacy for preserving cultural diversity, identities, and living heritage practices by recognizing intangible cultural heritage's inseparable nature.

2. Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage: Interconnectedness and Significance

Tangible Cultural Heritage refers to physical artifacts created, preserved, and passed down through generations in society; these include artistic works, buildings, monuments, and other tangible products that hold cultural significance (Ahmad, 2006). On other hand, Intangible Cultural Heritage encompasses practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills, and associated objects and spaces that communities and individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (Garofolo, 2019). Examples of intangible heritage include oral traditions, performing arts, local knowledge, and traditional skills.

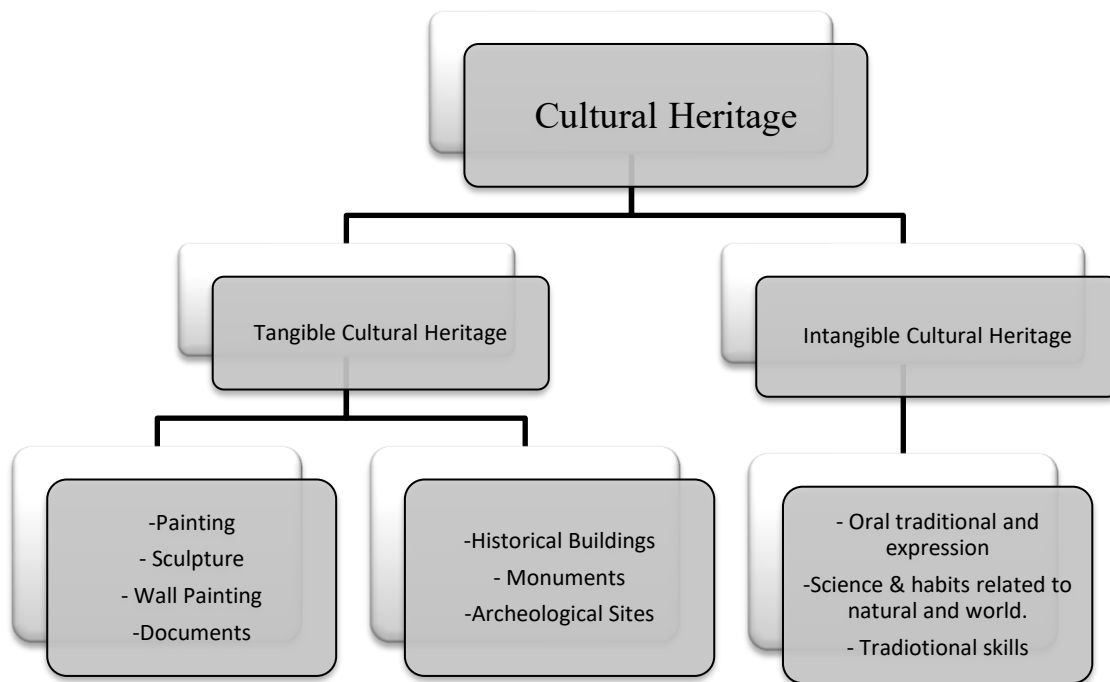


Figure 3:cultural heritage classification of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Preserving and safeguarding tangible and intangible heritage require different approaches, leading to establishment of 2003 UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. This convention recognizes interdependence between intangible cultural heritage, tangible cultural heritage, and natural heritage; it also acknowledges role of intangible cultural heritage in promoting cultural diversity and driving sustainable development (UNESCO, 2024). UNESCO has emphasized value of individuals as living human treasures who possess exceptional knowledge and skills required for performing and recreating specific elements of intangible cultural heritage (Skounti, 2023).

Cultural heritage encompasses tangible and intangible aspects of group or society's legacy, inherited from past generations and maintained for benefit of future generations; cultural heritage of Indigenous peoples is deeply interconnected and

rooted in their relationship to land, whether on broader scale or specific to locality (Félix, 2019).

Tangible heritage consists of physical objects like buildings, historic sites, monuments, and artifacts deemed worthy of preservation for future generations. These objects hold significance in archaeology, architecture, science, or technology and provide tangible evidence that validates historical ideas. Preserving tangible cultural heritage acknowledges importance of past and stories it tells, as these objects have physical presence (Avgerinou-Kolonias et al., 2015).



Figure 4: Arch Hadrian in Jordan as Tangible monument

In contrast, intangible heritage encompasses traditions and living expressions passed down from ancestors to descendants; this includes oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge about nature and universe, traditional craftsmanship, and digital heritage. Intangible cultural heritage does not have physical presence but is deeply ingrained in community's

practices, knowledge, and skills (UNESCO, 2018b). Exploration of interconnectedness and mutual influence between tangible and intangible cultural heritage

ICOMOS, International Council on Monuments and Sites, recognizes significance of tangible and intangible cultural heritage dimensions (Araoz, 2012). Organization acknowledges that both aspects are interconnected and play vital role in understanding and preserving our shared cultural legacy. ICOMOS promotes tangible and intangible cultural heritage integration in its conservation efforts and recognizes their complementary nature (Garofolo, 2019).

ICOMOS recognizes that tangible cultural heritage, like buildings, monuments, and artifacts, holds valuable historical, architectural, and scientific information; these physical manifestations provide tangible evidence of human creativity and historical development (Patiwael et al., 2019). ICOMOS emphasizes preserving and conserving these tangible elements to maintain authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage sites (Ulusoy, 2023; Garofolo, 2019).

At same time, ICOMOS acknowledges significance of intangible cultural heritage, which includes practices, knowledge, rituals, and traditions passed down through generations (Ducassi, 2005). Intangible cultural heritage represents communities' living expressions, identities, values, and ways of life. ICOMOS recognizes that intangible cultural heritage is integral to understanding and appreciating tangible cultural heritage; it considers the social, economic, and cultural value of intangible heritage and its contribution to the significance of cultural heritage sites (Kaufman, 2013).

ICOMOS advocates for holistic and comprehensive approach to heritage conservation, encompassing tangible and intangible dimensions. Organization promotes integration of intangible heritage in conservation planning, management,

and interpretation strategies; it recognizes that safeguarding intangible cultural heritage is crucial for maintaining vitality of cultural practices, promoting cultural diversity, and fostering sustainable development (Skounti, 2023).

ICOMOS encourages recognizing and including tangible and intangible dimensions in heritage conservation policies and practices through its charters, guidelines, and international collaborations; it highlights need for interdisciplinary approaches that consider interplay between material and immaterial elements of cultural heritage.

3. ICOMOS's Integrated Approach to Heritage Conservation

ICOMOS, International Council on Monuments and Sites, is crucial in advocating integrated heritage conservation approach. Recognizing multifaceted nature of cultural heritage, ICOMOS emphasizes significance of considering both physical and intangible aspects of heritage.

ICOMOS firmly believes that heritage conservation should encompass preservation of buildings, monuments, and sites and associated customs, rituals, languages, and traditional knowledge. This comprehensive understanding of cultural heritage acknowledges interconnectedness of tangible and intangible elements and their mutual influence on identity, community, and sustainability (Ulusoy, 2023).

Adopting an integrated approach, several benefits are realized; it fosters deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural significance of heritage sites, going beyond their architectural or historical value; this approach encourages engagement with local communities, enabling them to actively participate in conservation process and contribute their knowledge and expertise (UNESCO, 2018b).

Integrated approach promotes sustainable management of heritage sites; by considering social, economic, and environmental aspects, conservation efforts

harmonized with local development goals, ensuring long-term viability and well-being of communities (Garofolo, 2019).

ICOMOS also recognizes that integrated approach to heritage conservation enhances cultural diversity and fosters dialogue among different communities. Safeguarding intangible heritage alongside physical structures allows for transmission of traditional practices, knowledge systems, and cultural expressions, contributing to richness and resilience of societies.

4. Strategies Employed by ICOMOS for Intangible Cultural Heritage Conservation

ICOMOS has developed various strategies and resources to conserve intangible cultural heritage alongside tangible heritage effectively; these initiatives include development of guidelines, charters, and tools that serve as valuable references for practitioners in field of heritage conservation.

Guidelines and charters are crucial in providing framework for integrating tangible and intangible heritage preservation; they offer practical guidance and principles that help professionals navigate complexities of managing and safeguarding cultural heritage holistically ().

One notable example is "ICOMOS Charter Principles for Analysis, conservation and Structural Restoration of Architectural Heritage" developed by ICOMOS. This document recognizes importance of considering intangible values of architectural heritage and emphasizes need to integrate them into conservation practices. It guides identifying, assessing, and preserving intangible aspects such as cultural rituals, traditional craftsmanship, and social practices within architectural conservation.

Another significant resource is "ICOMOS Charter on Cultural Routes." Cultural routes encompass tangible and intangible heritage, representing paths of historical

and cultural significance. Charter guides identifying, planning, and managing cultural routes, considering their intangible dimensions, such as narratives, traditions, and cultural expressions associated with routes (ICOMOS, 2008).

Also, ICOMOS published many charters such as : Charter for Protection and Management of Archaeological Heritage - 1990, Salalah Guidelines for Management of Public Archaeological Sites - 2017, ICOMOS-IFLA principles concerning rural landscapes as Heritage - 2017, ICOMOS Guidelines on Fortifications and Military Heritage - 202, Charter on Built Vernacular Heritage - 1999 and Valletta Principles for Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns, and Urban Areas – 2011 (ICOMOS, 2024).

These guidelines and charters serve as valuable references for practitioners involved in heritage conservation; they comprehensively understand principles and methodologies needed to integrate tangible and intangible heritage preservation effectively; these resources ensure that conservation efforts are carried out consistently and informally by providing standardized framework.

Practitioners refer to these resources to gain insights into best practices, case studies, and methodologies for integrating tangible and intangible heritage; they guide documentation, inventorying, interpretation, and transmission of intangible cultural heritage within broader heritage conservation context.

5. ICOMOS's Collaborative Approach to Intangible Cultural Heritage Conservation

ICOMOS adopts collaborative approach to intangible cultural heritage conservation, recognizing significance of dialogue and engagement among diverse stakeholders. ICOMOS is platform for international collaboration that fosters cooperation and knowledge exchange.

One of critical aspects of ICOMOS's collaborative efforts is involvement of heritage professionals, including researchers, practitioners, and experts; these professionals contribute their expertise and knowledge to develop comprehensive approaches to conserving tangible and intangible heritage; through conferences, workshops, and training programs, ICOMOS facilitates exchange of ideas and experiences among professionals, promoting collective understanding of challenges and opportunities in intangible cultural heritage conservation (Patiwael et al., 2019).

In addition to heritage professionals, ICOMOS greatly emphasizes engaging with local communities and indigenous groups. Recognizing that intangible cultural heritage is deeply rooted in these communities' cultural practices and traditions, ICOMOS actively involves them in decision-making processes related to heritage conservation; this participatory approach ensures that voices and perspectives of communities most closely connected to heritage are heard and respected (Araoz, 2012).

ICOMOS also collaborates with policymakers at various levels, including national and international bodies, to advocate for integrating intangible cultural heritage conservation within policy frameworks; by engaging policymakers, ICOMOS seeks to influence legislation and policies that support safeguarding and promotion of intangible heritage; this collaboration helps create enabling environment for recognizing and protecting intangible cultural heritage at broader scale (Ahmad, 2006).

Examples of collaborative initiatives involving ICOMOS include joint research projects, capacity-building programs, and development of policy recommendations; these initiatives bring together heritage professionals, local communities, indigenous groups, and policymakers to work towards safeguarding

and promoting intangible cultural heritage (Avgerinou-Kolonias et al., 2015). For instance, ICOMOS collaborates with UNESCO in implementing Convention for Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, reinforcing international cooperation and exchange of expertise in this field (ICOMOS, 2024; UNESCO, 2018b).

Through these collaborative efforts, ICOMOS aims to ensure that intangible cultural heritage is conserved and transmitted in manner that respects its cultural significance, promotes community involvement, and contributes to sustainable development.

6. ICOMOS's Contributions to Comprehensive and Sustainable Heritage Conservation

ICOMOS has significantly promoted comprehensive and sustainable approach to heritage conservation. One of critical aspects of this approach is recognizing that intangible cultural heritage is inseparable from tangible heritage (ICOMOS, 2024). ICOMOS acknowledges that physical structures, sites, and landscapes are interconnected with intangible values, customs, traditions, and knowledge systems associated with them (Houbart, 2016).

By emphasizing inseparability of tangible and intangible heritage, ICOMOS underscores importance of preserving physical aspects and cultural diversity, identities, and living heritage practices that give meaning and significance to these places; this comprehensive approach recognizes that heritage is not static but evolves and thrives through active engagement of communities and continuation of cultural expressions and practices (UNESCO, 2018b).

Preserving cultural diversity is central tenet of ICOMOS's comprehensive approach; it recognizes that heritage conservation should not homogenize or standardize cultural expressions but instead celebrate and protect uniqueness and diversity of different communities and their heritage; this inclusivity ensures that

multiple perspectives, values, and practices are respected and maintained, contributing to richness and vibrancy of global cultural heritage (Skounti, 2023).

ICOMOS's comprehensive approach also has implications for protecting and transmitting shared cultural heritage; it highlights need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders, including local communities, heritage professionals, governments, and international organizations; by involving these diverse actors, ICOMOS promotes dialogue, knowledge exchange, and cooperation, fostering sense of shared responsibility and ownership in conservation and transmission of heritage (ICOMOS, 2024).

ICOMOS recognizes importance of sustainable heritage conservation; this entails considering heritage preservation's social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Sustainable practices ensure that heritage sites and their associated intangible values are managed to benefit local communities, support their livelihoods, and minimize negative impacts on environment.

7. Conclusion

Research findings highlight critical role of ICOMOS in bridging gap between tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation. ICOMOS emphasizes comprehensive and sustainable approach that recognizes inseparability of tangible and intangible heritage; this approach acknowledges that cultural heritage encompasses physical structures and associated values, practices, and traditions. ICOMOS's collaborative efforts involve engaging diverse stakeholders such as heritage professionals, local communities, indigenous groups, and policymakers. ICOMOS fosters shared understanding and responsibility for preserving and transmitting cultural heritage through dialogue, knowledge exchange, and cooperation.

Research findings also emphasize importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage holistically; this includes recognizing and respecting cultural diversity, identities, and living heritage practices; it involves actively involving communities in decision-making, ensuring sustainable practices, and promoting education and awareness.

ICOMOS's contributions, including its guidelines, charters, and collaborative initiatives, provide valuable insights and resources for practitioners and policymakers involved in heritage conservation. By following ICOMOS's lead, future conservation endeavors can benefit from comprehensive approach that integrates tangible and intangible heritage, engages diverse stakeholders, and promotes cultural heritage's holistic preservation and promotion. Protection and transmission of cultural heritage are vital for maintaining cultural diversity, fostering social cohesion, and promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of our shared human heritage. By comprehensively safeguarding cultural heritage, we can ensure its preservation for future generations and contribute to enriching our global cultural landscape.

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