



Netherlands' contribution

Climate Change and
Sustainable development
prepared by Flora van Regteren
Altena

CDCPP THEMATIC SESSION

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT AS RELATED
TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY,
and specifically, culture, heritage and landscape
resources**

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Discussion on climate change and sustainable development as related to human rights and democracy, with specific reference to culture, heritage and landscape.

The Netherlands minister of Culture stresses in her policy letter 'Culture for an Open Society' the value of culture, both the intrinsic value as values for society: contributing to feeling of the temperature of our time. Climate change is literally a phenomenon where we can feel the temperature of our time.

In our specific heritage policy, 'Heritage Counts' the need to connect our heritage with major challenges in our living environment is emphasized. This is the reason for which we protect heritage and keep it accessible; our heritage counts because of its historic value, its value for our living environment and its unifying value.

It is clear that our country will change in the next decades, the challenge is that it will still be recognizable as the Netherlands in 50 years time. That the inhabitants will continue to recognize and identify themselves with it. Also, it will be easier to accept transitions or changes if you are part of creating them. Heritage and landscapes have an important role to play here.

The national framework for the physical environment are present as the '**Environment and Planning Act**' and '**National environmental strategy**'. In the law the Council of Europe heritage and landscape conventions are implemented, Granada, Valletta and Florence principles are included in this framework.

In the national environmental strategy cooperation across policy area's and through different layers of government is an important principle. Different ministries are involved, as well as, all levels of government: national, regional and local level, all directed towards the Environment.

By working on 'deals' such as a heritage deal, a climate or energy deal, cooperation across government is promoted. Also non-governmental and market parties become involved in coalitions of stakeholders. Together they work on regional agenda's, or territorial agenda's. This way of working is inspired by the cooperation that was needed to keep the Dutch polderland dry. It is known as the 'polder model'.

The Netherlands faces several major spatial challenges, including the energy transition, climate adaptation, accessibility and the construction of new houses. As part of these changes, it will be essential both to protect and develop heritage by taking inspiration from the past as we shape an attractive and recognizable living environment. For example, old maps, can help in bringing back water and green parts in the environmental plans of cities. In this process, the Netherlands will use its long tradition of design and creativity.

Challenges include raising sea and water levels, extreme weather, including heavy rainfalls. The Energy transition has major consequences for the landscape, the re ordering of our physical environment is necessary and will happen anyway. That's why from the side of heritage and landscape the choice has been made to be part of these developments, so that heritage becomes part of the transition challenge. In the Heritage Deal this is the central idea for which the national government also has made funding available. By investing this strategically it is foreseen that through matching by other players as other layers of government, these funds will be doubled.

Also, in the EU it is foreseen to have in 2021 and 2022 a broad exchange between member states on the adaptation to climate change in relation to sustainability in cultural heritage. It is part of the Workplan for culture 2019-2022. The exchange, as a follow up to the Paris Agreement from 2015, should not only lead to awareness-raising and capacity building, but also to measures in Europe and on national level. This could be connected to a thematic session of Herein and the work of the Council of Europe on this.