Welcome to the Inaugural World Monuments Summit and Celebration

Since our founding in 1965, World Monuments Fund (WMF) has worked with local communities in 112 countries to help conserve over 700 sites. With your support, we have grown to be the leading independent organization dedicated to safeguarding the world’s shared heritage.

This year, we are proud to come together for the inaugural World Monuments Summit and Celebration. The virtual Summit will commence with a presentation from Susan Goldberg, Editor in Chief, National Geographic, and Editorial Director, National Geographic Partners. The online program will also include three panel discussions exploring the driving issues behind WMF’s work at sites around the world and some of the modern challenges of cultural heritage preservation.

We hope you enjoy this one-of-a-kind gathering of WMF’s international network of cultural heritage experts and advocates in support of our efforts to preserve a myriad of sites and monuments around the world.

World Monuments Summit (online)

9:30 to 10:30 am ET
Keynote - Rising to the Challenge: Covering Cultural Heritage in a Changing World
Susan Goldberg, Editor in Chief, National Geographic, and Editorial Director, National Geographic Partners
Followed by a Q&A with Bénédicte de Montlaur, President and CEO, WMF

11 am to 12 pm ET
Heritage in the Time of Climate Change in the Maldives, Tanzania, and the UK
Moderated by Bénédicte de Montlaur with John Darlington and Stephen Battle, WMF, and Dr. Rohit Jigyasu, Project Manager, Urban Heritage, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management, Programme Unit, ICCROM

1 to 2 pm ET
Striking a Balance: Heritage Tourism in Spain and Peru
Moderated by John Darlington with Pablo Longoria and Elías Mujica, WMF, and Fergus Maclaren, President, International Cultural Tourism Committee, International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

3 to 4 pm ET
Untold Stories: Underrepresented Heritage from Africa and North America
Moderated by Jonathan Bell with Ann Cuss and Stephen Battle, WMF; Ibrahim Tchan, Executive Director of the Corps des Volontaires Béninois; and Dave Thomas, President, Friends of the African-American Cemetery
Summit Panels

9:30 to 10:30 am ET
Keynote – Rising to the Challenge: Covering Cultural Heritage in a Changing World
With Susan Goldberg, Editor in Chief, National Geographic, and Editorial Director, National Geographic Partners. Followed by a Q&A with Bénédicte de Montlaur, President and CEO, WMF

From Bears Ears National Monument to prehistoric Stonehenge, cultural heritage tells powerful stories across generations and civilizations. In a keynote address, National Geographic’s Susan Goldberg will reflect on the power of storytelling through cultural heritage at a time of immense global crisis, from climate change to human conflict and social inequity. How can these incredible places tell a larger story about the challenges we face and inspire positive action across the globe?

11 am to 12 pm ET
Heritage in the Time of Climate Change in the Maldives, Tanzania, and the UK
Moderated by Bénédicte de Montlaur with John Darlington and Stephen Battle, WMF, and Dr. Rohit Jigyasu, Project Manager, Urban Heritage, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management, Programme Unit, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Climate change is one of the most significant threats to heritage places worldwide. From the Coral Stone Mosques of the Maldives, threatened by rising sea levels and intensifying storms; to the historic sites of Kilwa Kisiwani in Tanzania, ravaged by the elements and coastal erosion exacerbated by the loss of mangrove forests; to the Great Palm House at Kew Gardens in the UK where WMF is embarking on an ambitious project to make the site carbon neutral; this panel will consider current attempts to adapt, mitigate, and prepare for climate-related loss. How can cultural heritage serve as a platform to build resilience and sustainability at some of the areas most affected by climate change?

Have questions?
During all sessions, you will be able to enter your questions at any time through the chat function on Zoom.

Bears Ears National Monument, United States

Blackpool Piers, United Kingdom
1 to 2 pm ET
**Striking a Balance: Heritage Tourism in Spain and Peru**
Moderated by John Darlington with Pablo Longoria and Elías Mujica, WMF, and Fergus Maclaren, President, International Cultural Tourism Committee, International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

In 2019, the world spent nearly one tenth of the global GDP on tourism, bringing critically needed funding to the world’s heritage places and their surrounding communities. And yet, tourism can simultaneously present multiple challenges to cultural heritage. Large numbers of visitors, especially in the absence of effective management, can result in damage to heritage places and the loss of key values associated with them. Sustainable tourism represents a careful balancing act between threats and benefits to help foster excellence in conservation, engage all stakeholders, support a healthy natural environment, and secure reliable funding.

From the Alhambra in Granada to Huaca de la Luna in La Libertad, panelists will explore the role of tourism in shaping WMF’s work. How can heritage preservation strategies balance tourism’s potential for economic development with its ability to denigrate the environment and alter surrounding communities?

3 to 4 pm ET
**Untold Stories: Underrepresented Heritage from Africa and North America**
Moderated by Jonathan Bell with Ann Cuss and Stephen Battle, WMF; Ibrahim Tchan, Executive Director of the Corps des Volontaires Béninois; and Dave Thomas, President, Friends of the African-American Cemetery

Many of the world’s celebrated monuments are reflections of historic power and privilege that often fail to represent the full human experience. Recognizing diverse perspectives and places of importance to all groups and communities is critical to understanding the breadth of cultural heritage. From Old Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, the first European-style university in sub-Saharan Africa and a symbol of emancipation; and Koutammakou cultural landscape in Benin, where WMF is working with local stakeholders to promote traditional knowledge and gain global recognition; to African American burial grounds across the U.S. where community-led efforts are raising awareness, opening dialogue, and creating new opportunities, panelists will discuss how cultural heritage can serve as a meaningful tool to address broader questions of agency, equity, and representation.
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as of 11/1/2021

Huaca de la Luna, Peru

Speakers

STEPHEN BATTLE
Principal Project Director, WMF
Stephen Battle is an architect with three decades’ experience managing conservation projects in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. From 1998 to 2008, he managed conservation and urban rehabilitation projects in Syria, Tanzania, and Pakistan for the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. Battle joined World Monuments Fund in 2009 as Program Director, managing its projects in Africa. He has led major multi-year conservation projects in over 12 African countries. From 2017 to 2020, he developed and implemented a project in Jordan and Lebanon to train Syrian refugees and local residents in stonemasonry conservation.

JONATHAN S. BELL
Vice President of Programs, WMF
Dr. Bell came to World Monuments Fund from National Geographic Society, where he managed projects including archaeological research and cultural heritage. During his career, he worked with the Getty Conservation Institute on World Heritage Sites in China and Egypt, evaluated cultural site management from Kazakhstan to Colombia, and oversaw strategic planning for large-scale flood infrastructure in Los Angeles. Dr. Bell serves on multiple ICOMOS scientific committees and on the Journal of Architectural Conservation Editorial Board. He holds a BA from Harvard University, a DEA from the Sorbonne, an MSc in Historic Preservation from Columbia University and a PhD in Urban Planning from UCLA.

ANN CUSS
Regional Director of North America, WMF
Ann Cuss joined World Monuments Fund as Regional Director of North America in 2021. Her work encompasses all aspects of cultural heritage for a variety of public, private, and government partnerships with a particular focus on public lands. Cuss’s professional role is multifaceted and involves a mix of performing on-site condition assessments, hands-on treatments, and training young emerging historic preservation professionals in the care of historic materials. She coordinates multidisciplinary teams of tradespeople, architects, historians, and stakeholders for a holistic preservation approach. Cuss holds a BA and MA in Archaeology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

JOHN DARLINGTON
Executive Director, WMF Britain
John Darlington, an archaeologist and author, joined World Monuments Fund (WMF) in 2015 to lead its British affiliate. Prior to joining WMF, he led the UK’s National Trust in North West England with a portfolio focused on historic mansions, gardens, and landscapes. He holds a number of graduate and postgraduate degrees, and is a Professor of Practice at the University of Wales and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He is also the author of over 50 publications, and a regular contributor to The Art Newspaper and other journals.
BÉNÉDICTE DE MONTLAUR
President and CEO of World Monuments Fund

Bénédicte de Montlaur is President and CEO of World Monuments Fund (WMF), the world’s foremost private organization dedicated to saving extraordinary places while empowering the communities around them. She is responsible for defining WMF’s strategic vision, currently implementing that vision in more than 30 countries around the world and leading a team that spans the globe. Her background mixes culture and the arts, politics, international diplomacy, and human rights. Prior to joining WMF, Montlaur spent two decades working across three continents as a senior diplomat at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

SUSAN GOLDBERG
Editor in Chief, National Geographic, and Editorial Director, National Geographic Partners

Susan Goldberg is editor in chief of National Geographic and editorial director of National Geographic Partners. As editorial director, she leads all journalism across platforms, including digital journalism, magazines, podcasts, maps, newsletters, and Instagram. She was named editorial director in October 2015 and editor in chief of National Geographic magazine in April 2014. She is the 10th editor and first female editor of the magazine since it was first published in October 1888. Under her leadership, National Geographic has been honored with ten National Magazine Awards, including the top prize for General Excellence in 2019.

DR. ROHIT JIGYASU
Project Manager, Urban Heritage, Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management Programme Unit, International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Dr. Rohit Jigyasu is a conservation architect and risk management professional serving as Project Manager on Urban Heritage, Climate Change, and Disaster Risk Management at ICCROM. Jigyasu previously served as UNESCO Chair at the Ritsumeikan University Institute for Disaster Mitigation of Urban Cultural Heritage in Japan. He was elected President of ICOMOS-India from 2014–2018 and of ICOMOS’ International Scientific Committee on Risk Preparedness from 2010–2019. A Member of ICOMOS’ Executive Committee since 2011, he served as its Vice President from 2017–2020. Rohit previously worked with organizations including UNESCO, UNISDR, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the World Bank.

PABLO LONGORIA
Executive Director, WMF Spain

As Executive Director for WMF Spain, Pablo Longoria has managed the restoration of the Salon Rico Hall in Medina Azahara, various projects in the Alhambra, and the conservation studies and production of the virtual reality experience at La Garma cave in Cantabria, among other projects. Longoria holds a master’s degree in Architecture and Urban Planning, as well as Urban Planning Laws, and is a specialist in cultural heritage conservation. A member of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Longoria has worked as a heritage specialist in Spain, Oman, Turkestan, Republic of Kazakhstan, and Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan.

FERGUS T. MACLAREN, M.E.DES
President, International Cultural Tourism Committee, International Council for Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)

Fergus Maclaren is a Canadian sustainable tourism and cultural heritage management professional with 25+ years of experience in North America, Asia and Africa, specializing in tourism to World Heritage sites and 2030 UN SDGs implementation. His background incorporates tourism planning, destination management and community development. Previously, Maclaren served as Director of the International Year of Ecotourism; taught sustainable tourism at McGill University; and lectured at post-secondary institutions internationally. He currently works in Expert and professional capacities for UNESCO, UNWTO, the Organization of World Heritage Cities, the Economic Innovation Institute for Africa, and the Heritage and Cultural Society for Africa. He has his own private consulting firm, MAC-DUFF Tourism | Heritage | Planning.

ELÍAS MUJICA
Executive Director, WMF Peru

Elías Mujica, an archaeologist and anthropologist, joined World Monuments Fund in 2021 to lead the Peruvian affiliate. His main interest is the management and development of cultural and natural heritage with social inclusion, the transformation of the territory and development of traditional technologies, the role of heritage in tourism and the economic impact of cultural projects on communities. He holds a BA from Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (Lima), and a MA from Cornell University (New York).

IBRAHIM TCHAN
Executive Director of the Corps des Volontaires Béninois (Corps of Benin Volunteers)

Ibrahim Tchan is a Beninese jurist specializing in cultural heritage. He is Director and Co-Founder of the Tata Somba Ecomuseum, the first ecological museum in West Africa. Tchan coordinates the Koutammakou Cultural Landscape Preservation Project in Benin and Togo with his organization, Corps of Benin Volunteers and support from World Monuments Fund. A member of the Climate Heritage Network (CHN), he is the Africa Region Representative in the CHN-GlobalABC / Green Solutions Award Engagement Task Team. Focused on projects involving the local communities in world heritage management, Tchan designed ConP’Art (Knowing my world heritage), a didactic tool educating children on African world heritage.

DAVID THOMAS
President, Friends of the African-American Cemetery

David Thomas is the President and Founder of the Friends of the African American Cemetery in Rye, New York, which he has been involved with for more than a decade. The cemetery is one of 13 sites on Westchester County’s African American Heritage Trail. Thomas has also worked as a software trainer and technical writer for several companies and has volunteered for the Community School Advisory Board for Thomas Edison Elementary School. He has been a consultant for the Town of Rye and a software instructor for Family Services of Westchester. A graduate of Wilkes College in Wilkes Barre, PA, he earned his BS in Commerce and Finance.
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