



Short Guide to Culture and Heritage in the Global Goal on Adaptation Framework

What is the Global Goal of Adaptation and the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience?

Like the more famous global mitigation target (limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C), the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) has its roots in the 2015 [Paris Agreement](#), which calls for a global goal for enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability. But, unlike the mitigation target, the GGA saw little action until six years after Paris when demands for parity between adaptation and mitigation began to take hold. The result was the adoption at the 2023 UN Climate Conference (COP28) in Dubai of the [UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience](#) (UFGCR), which provides a framework for the GGA that aims to guide efforts of national governments and others under the GGA to protect people and ecosystems from climate change. Advocates have observed that this first GGA framework is weak on means of implementation and finance, which, until addressed, limits its effectiveness especially for vulnerable populations and developing nations. Even so, the UFGCR breaks new ground by laying the foundation for objective, qualitative, and time-bound climate adaptation targets.

Why is the GGA Important for Culture and Heritage?

At the heart of the UFGCR is a call to national governments to accelerate “swift action” on seven thematic targets and four-dimensional targets. The thematic targets include, for the first time, **protecting cultural heritage** alongside more traditional topics like climate-resilient water supplies and adapting food and agricultural production, including the protection of heritage as one of only seven UFGCR thematic targets (as well as the valorization of Indigenous knowledge and traditional knowledge as UFGCR cross-cutting issues – see below) represents [a breakthrough moment](#) in the mainstreaming of culture into climate policy.

What is the UFGCR Thematic Target on Protecting Heritage from the Impacts of Climate-Related Risks?

The inclusion of cultural heritage as one of seven thematic targets under UFGCR paragraph 9 speaks to the urgent need to accelerate swift action to deliver adaptation options for cultural heritage that are effective, equitable, and accessible for a full range of climate change scenarios and at all levels, from local to global.

Paragraph 9(g) of the UFGCR establishes the following thematic target for protecting cultural heritage:

Urges Parties and invites non-party stakeholders to pursue the objectives outlined in paragraph 8 above and to increase ambition and enhance adaptation action and support, to accelerate swift action at scale and at all levels, from local to global, in alignment with other global frameworks, towards the achievement of, inter alia, the following targets by 2030, and progressively beyond ... :

(g) Protecting cultural heritage from the impacts of climate-related risks by developing adaptive strategies for preserving cultural practices and heritage sites and by designing

climate-resilient infrastructure guided by traditional knowledge, Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, and local knowledge systems;

What are the UFGCR Dimensional Targets?

In addition to the seven thematic targets, the UFGCR includes targets on the four dimensions of the iterative adaptation cycle. The iterative adaptation cycle is a framework that describes the adaptation process and is a key part of the UNFCCC National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process.

The four dimensions of the cycle, each of which has its own UFGCR target, are:

- **Impact, vulnerability, and risk assessment**
- **Adaptation Planning**
- **Adaptation Implementation**
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)**

Does the UFGCR identify a role for culture and heritage in the Iterative Adaptation Cycle and Broader Societal Adaptation?

Yes. While UFGCR Paragraph 9(g) focuses on protecting cultural heritage, three additional UFGCR paragraphs identify traditional knowledge, Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, and local knowledge systems, as well as attention to knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes as cross-cutting adaptation issues. HACA believes that each of these is relevant to the four dimensions of the iterative adaptation cycle.

In Paragraph 14, the UFGCR:

Emphasizes that adaptation action should be continuous, iterative, and progressive and be based on and guided by the best available science, including through use of science-based indicators, metrics, and targets, as appropriate, **traditional knowledge, Indigenous Peoples' knowledge, local knowledge systems**, ecosystem-based adaptation, nature-based solutions, **locally led and community-based adaptation**, disaster risk reduction, intersectional approaches, private sector engagement, maladaptation avoidance, recognition of adaptation co-benefits and sustainable development.

Equally importantly, UFGCR Paragraph 22

Recognizes the leadership of Indigenous Peoples and local communities as stewards of nature and encourages the ethical and equitable engagement with Indigenous Peoples and local communities and application of **traditional knowledge, the knowledge, wisdom, and values of Indigenous Peoples, and local knowledge systems** in implementing the framework for the global goal on adaptation.

Finally, UFGCR Paragraph 23

Encourages efforts by Parties to broaden climate education and empower people, particularly children and youth, with the **knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes** necessary for active action to combat climate change.