



Co-funded by
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Policy Brief

GreenHeritage

The impact of Climate Change on
Intangible Cultural Heritage

Aguilar de Campoo, December 2023

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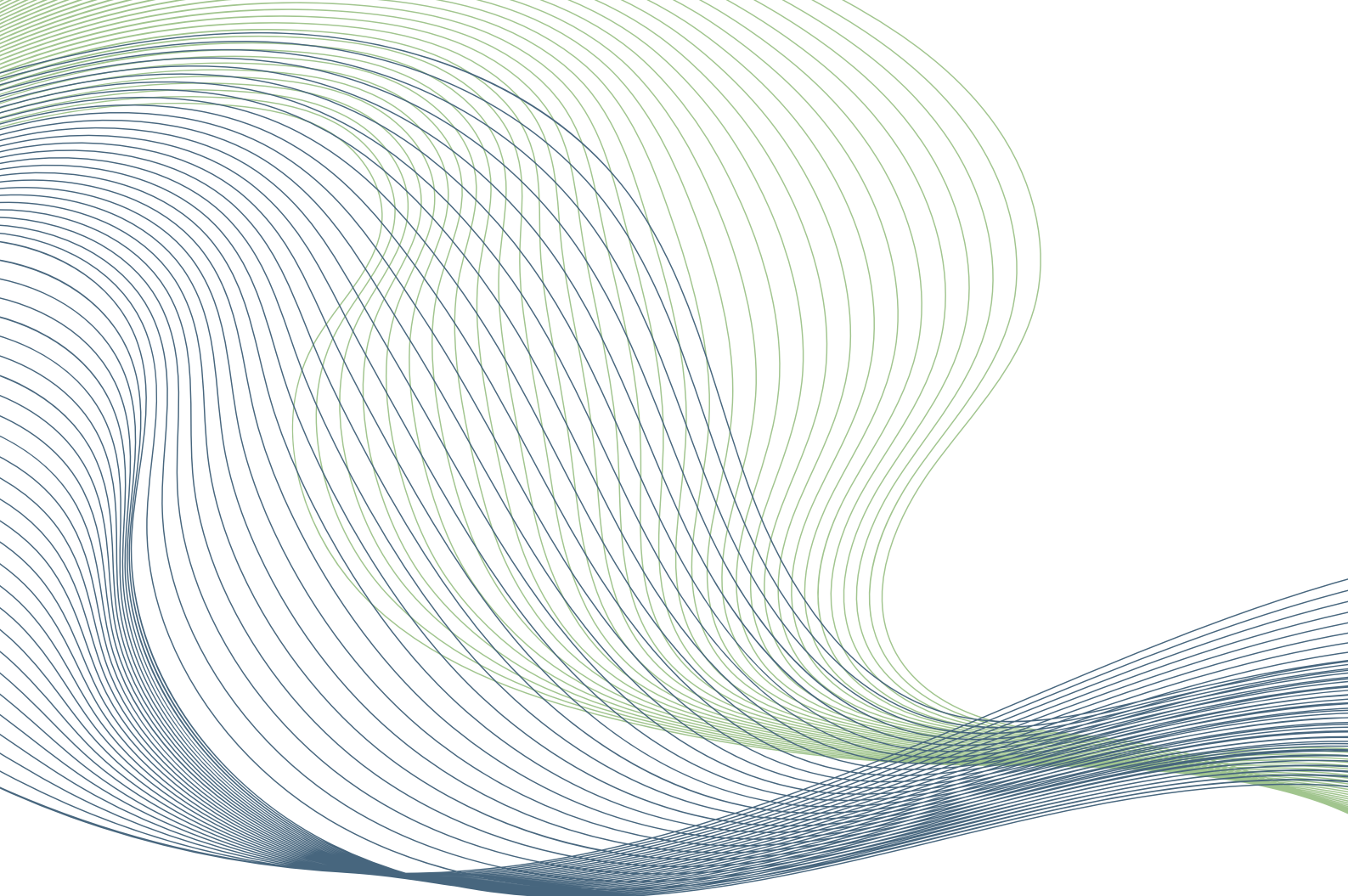
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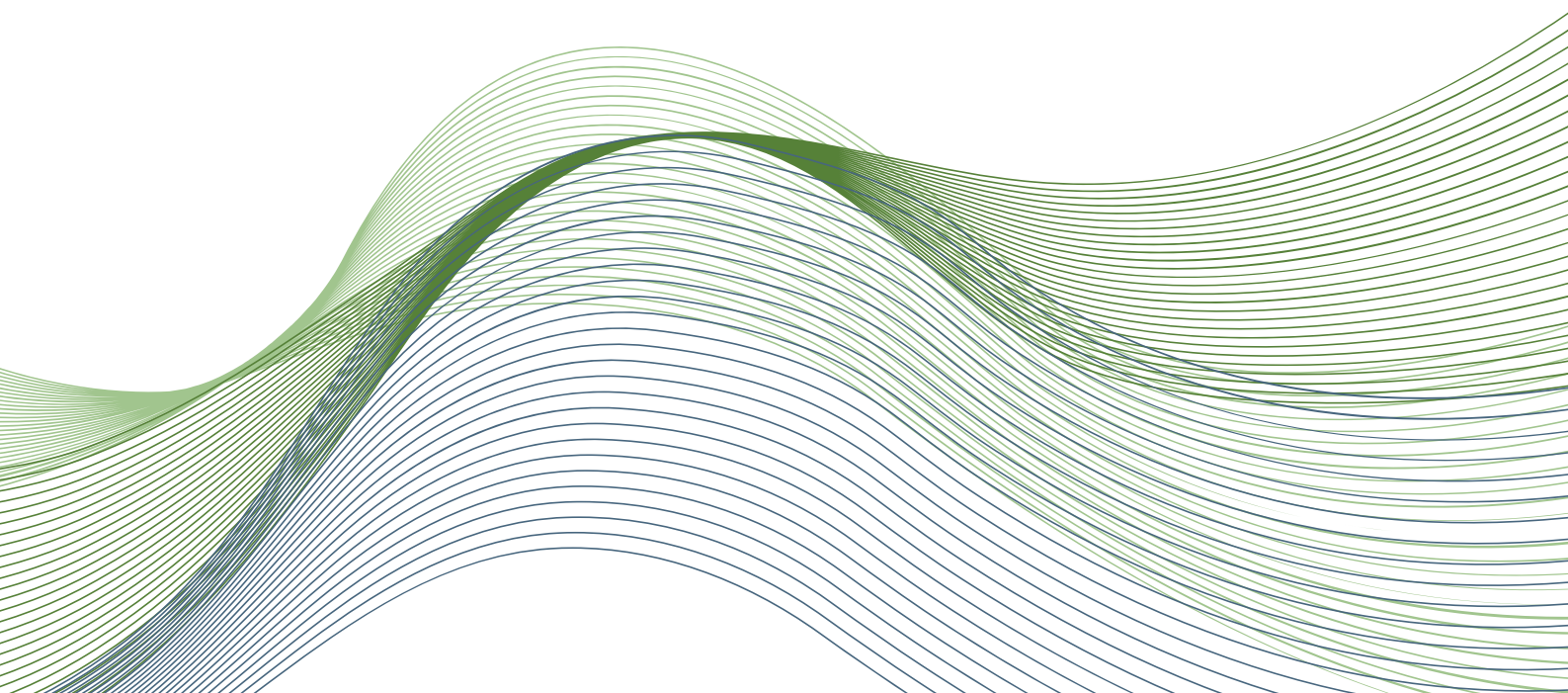
1 - THE **GREENHERITAGE** PROJECT

The European GreenHeritage project was launched in December 2022, aiming to develop a holistic, innovative and inclusive approach to the direct and indirect impact of **Climate Change** on **Intangible Cultural Heritage**. To this end, it seeks innovative tools and methodologies capable of promoting adaptive and systemic approaches to better manage climate change issues and effects. It aims to be an urgent reminder that this issue is present, affecting both directly and indirectly all aspects of Europe's heritage.

The project, co-funded by the **European Union**, through the **Erasmus+** programme, is being carried out in **5 European countries** (Belgium, Greece, Italy, Latvia and Spain) by the following consortium: CNR - Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche-Leader (IT); CUEBC - Centro Universitario Europeo per i Beni Culturali (IT); CMCC - Fondazione Centro Euromediterraneo sui Cambiamenti Climatici (IT); FSMLR - Fundación Santa María la Real del Patrimonio Histórico (ES); ReadLab P.C. - Research Innovation and Development Lab (GR); ILFA LU - Institute of Literature, Folklore and Art of the University of Latvia (LV); UAEGEAN - University of the Aegean (GR); CANDIDE - International (BE), ELORIS S.A. - Research, Education, Innovation and Development Company of the North Aegean Region (GR); ALLI - Athens Lifelong Learning Institute (GR).

1 - THE GREENHERITAGE PROJECT

One of the challenges of the project is to suggest and promote policies enabling to address the needs derived by climate change, that policymakers can consider in the design or adaptation of policies from the national to the EU levels. To address this challenge, GreenHeritage is developing, among other activities, **5 policy roundtables**, leading to **5 policy briefs** and a **final handbook** on the impact of Climate Change on Intangible Cultural Heritage at the national and EU level, including key findings of the project and the final recommendations for policy change.



2 - IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE: THE CASE STUDIES IN SPAIN

Aiming to identify the stakeholders' knowledge level and awareness related to the challenges produced by the interaction of climate change with immaterial cultural heritage, and to co-define the necessary policies, stakeholders were invited to give their opinion to the following question:

Have you ever wondered if Climate Change is affecting or could affect such well-known dishes as paella, or if any of our traditions are endangered for that reason?

Climate Change has emerged as one of the greatest threats to people, communities and their cultural heritage. While the effects on tangible cultural heritage have been widely addressed, Intangible Cultural Heritage (referring to manifestations such as practices and expressions, rituals, orally transmitted stories, languages, songs, dances, traditions, food ingredients, festivals and skills, among others) has received considerably less attention. These manifestations are invaluable to European identity, culture, history and heritage, although they do not leave material traces. However, by relying on specific, often limited resources, such as particular food ingredients or materials, they become highly vulnerable to environmental and climatic changes. Intangible cultural heritage remains notably absent from climate discourse and research in general, despite the clear scientific evidence of the deep threat that climate change poses to all forms of cultural heritage.

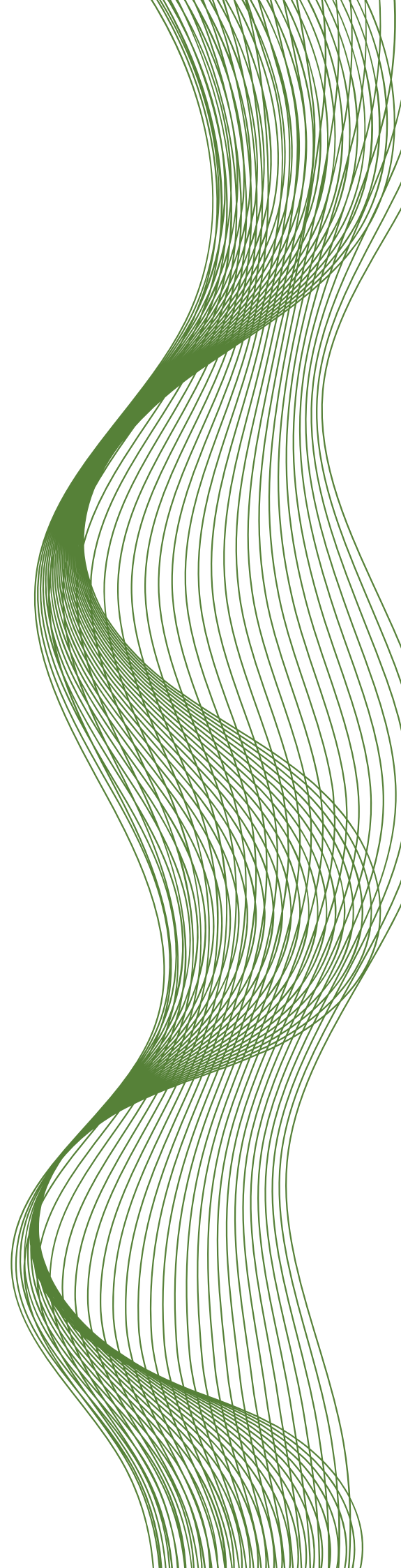
It is crucial to recognise that it is necessary and possible to address this issue and protect our intangible cultural heritage. With **awareness, collective action and tailored policies** it will be possible to work towards the **preservation** of these unique manifestations that make up our **cultural identity**. It is necessary to ensure that future generations can also enjoy and appreciate this cultural wealth.



2 - IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE: THE CASE STUDIES IN SPAIN

A **team** of 29 people consisting of representatives of different stakeholders' groups (universities, governmental entities, associations, companies, among others) met in Aguilar de Campoo (Palencia) on 22 and 23 November 2023 to tackle this problem during the first policy roundtable of the GreenHeritage project.

Connections, issues between Climate Change and Intangible Cultural Heritage, as well questions and potential solutions were analysed through different round tables. The **debate** ranged from the most general to the most specific aspects, with three thematic tables discussing: technical knowledge and skills, food customs and, finally, traditions, performing arts and others. The work carried out resulted in **25 recommendations**, 16 are general and 9 are specific.



3 – THE TARGET AUDIENCE

The policy recommendations described in this policy brief identify as primary target **governmental entities** at different scale, involving authorities from the local to regional, national and European level. Through laws and policies definition and implementation, the different institutions can play a crucial role in mitigating the impacts of Climate Change on Intangible Cultural Heritage.



This set of suggestions should guide and orient decision-making in this field. Note that even if policymakers are the primary target, all the stakeholders of the quadruple helix are included in the target audience, as they should be engaged in the implementation of the policies and the identification of new emerging needs and potential new proposals. Indeed, information, suggestions and policies given in this policy brief are also valuable for experts and researchers in the field of Intangible Cultural Heritage, culture in general and heritage, as well as for those involved in areas such as science, entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainable development. In addition, the information contained in this document may be of interest and use to entrepreneurs and economic leaders, too. Finally, it seeks to generate interest in society in general through civil society organisations, foundations, and other related groups. The aim is to raise awareness and make visible a problem that currently goes often unnoticed on the public agenda.

4 – RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Awareness and education:

1

Education:

A **comprehensive educational approach** is needed to promote knowledge and understanding of ICH, including its relationship with the environment and CC. This should be integrated into primary and secondary school curricula, but without neglecting early childhood education, baccalaureate and university studies. The most effective formula is to work on this issue in a cross-cutting manner in the main subjects of the school curriculum, but also to encourage workshops or activities outside the classroom. This guarantees a global approach from an early stage.

2

Awareness-raising:

Develop programs for improving **adults' awareness** that incorporate the relevance of ICH and CC, as well as awareness-raising activities that address the interrelationship between CC, sustainable practices, traditions and social, economic, environmental and cultural impacts.

Legislation:

3

Legislation:

It is essential to **review and update laws** to recognize, prevent/mitigate and manage the CC effects on ICH. This means incorporating cultural heritage considerations into environmental and sustainability laws and regulations, as well as into the protection regulation for the areas of interest.

4

Legislation:

Establish **flexible legal frameworks** at different levels, from the local to the European level, to protect ICH in relation to CC, aiming to mitigate emerging risks.

5

Legislation:

The implementation of these laws and regulations must be accompanied by continuous monitoring, with the aim to assess their effectiveness and to make adjustments if necessary. It is essential to deepen the **study of the jurisprudence**. Community participation in decision-making and implementation of measures to protect ICH should also be encouraged.

4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Conservation and management:

6

Management tools:

Develop inventories, risk maps, training for technicians and carry on scientific studies and research to safeguard ICH from CC risks.

7

Community participation:

Involve **carrier communities** in decision-making and management of ICH to ensure its preservation.

8

Research support:

Promote interdisciplinary research on how CC affects ICH, fostering collaboration between experts in the humanities, environment and sustainability. Furthermore, disseminate these studies using the media to raise awareness in society.



4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies:

9

Policies for the conservation of cultural landscapes:

Develop policies that protect areas of cultural and ecological value, balancing the implementation of specific activities such as, for example those related to renewable energy, with the preservation of ICH. Establish regulations that consider the CC impact on communities and cultural practices.

10

Inclusion of ICH in policies related to climate change:

Recognise the importance of adaptation and mitigation policies for ICH in relation to CC. Consider ICH role in transferring knowledge to address environmental and social challenges.

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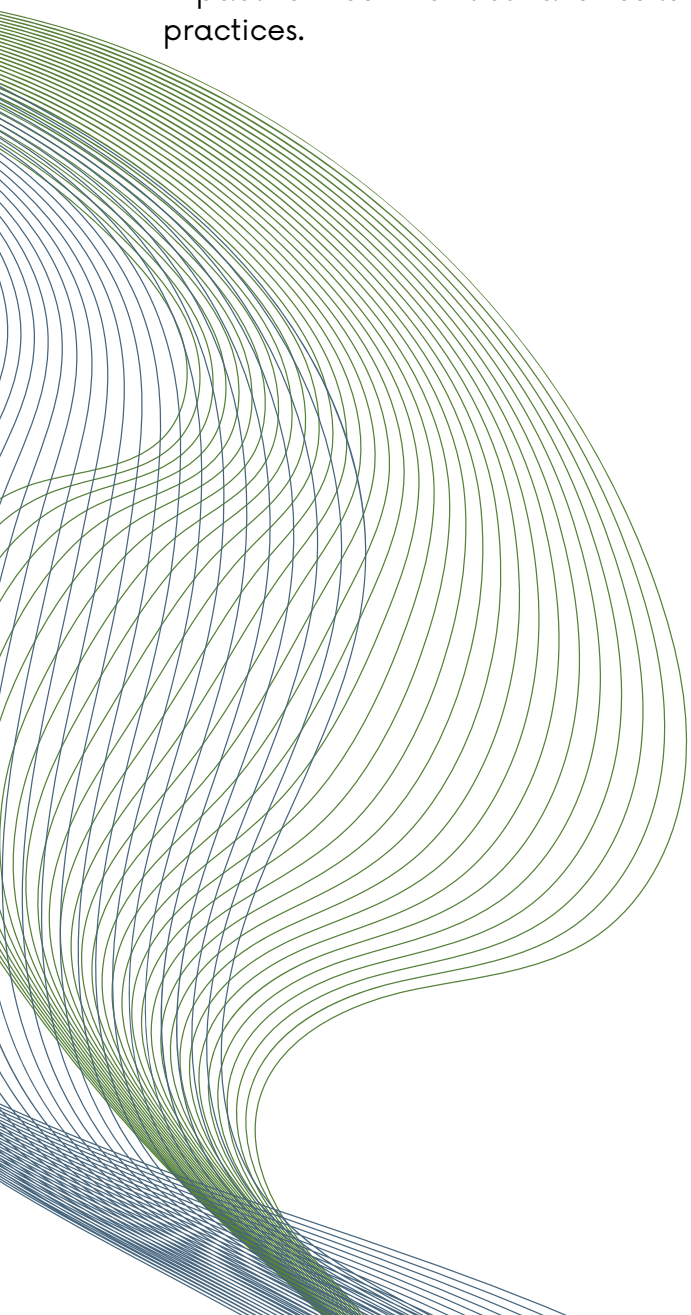
Provide support to bearer communities, local initiatives, and associations:

Encourage the creation of associations and organizations that promote the conservation of ICH and its relationship with the natural environment. Facilitate access to financing and resources for projects that safeguard demonstrations. The key for the survival of ICH are the **carrier communities** whose influence must be increased.

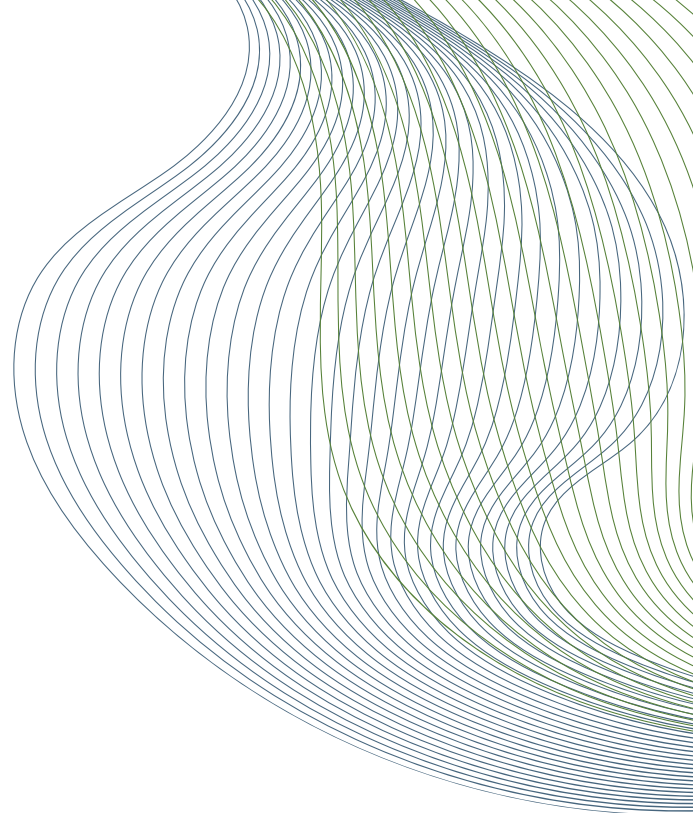
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Decentralization and local participation:

Empower local territories and affected communities for the safeguarde of their ICH and identity.



4 - RECOMMENDATIONS



Tourism:

13

Tourism control:

Implement strategies to manage mass tourism and protect ICH events. The most important recommendation is the need to define and manage solutions to reduce the impact of mass tourism. To achieve this, different options should be studied, such as promoting access prices to the event, the use of technology that allows to better control capacity and/or organisation of vehicle flows.

14

Awareness:

Educate tourists about the cultural respect and the impact of mass tourism on ICH to reduce its negative influence.

4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

15

Promotion of sustainable tourism:

Promote responsible tourism that values and respects local traditions, avoiding practices that could damage the authenticity of the ICH. Establish guidelines for cultural tourism that promote the sustainable development of communities.

Communication and dissemination:

16

Dissemination and communication:

Use audiovisual media, social networks, and clear messages that generate interest and awareness about the importance of the ICH and its relationship with the CC.

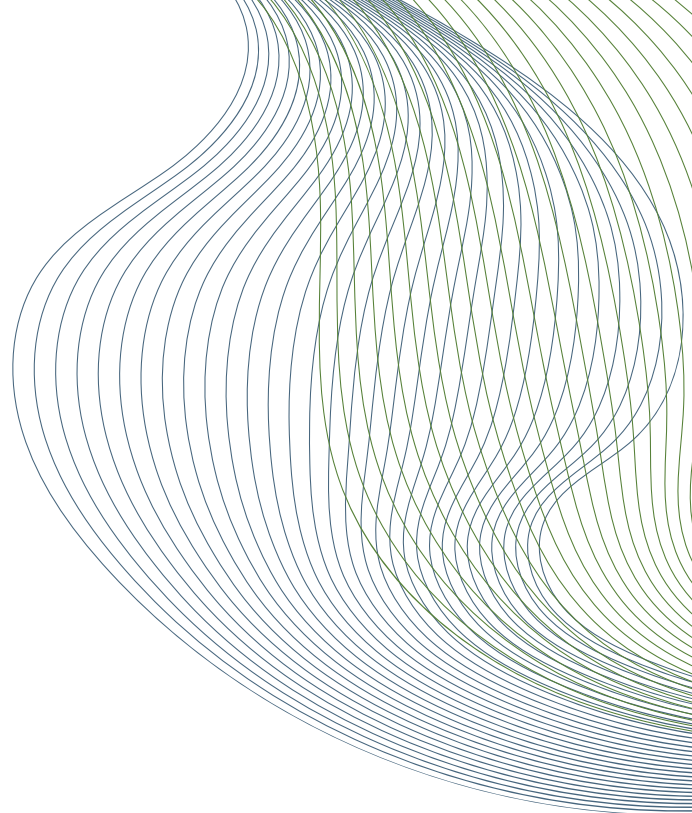
SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Food customs

17

Altered phenology:

Promote research and support for sustainable agricultural practices that adapt to phenological changes, reducing the use of pesticides and promoting genetic diversity of crops.



18

Impact on traditional agriculture:

Establish policies that encourage sustainable agriculture, preserving local varieties and traditional cultivation practices.

19

Variations in the marine environment and water resources:

Develop strategies for marine conservation and sustainable water management, involving local communities in the protection of resources relevant to their food habits.

20

Extreme events:

Implement community resilience and adaptation measures to extreme weather events, including early warning systems and crisis management plans

4 - RECOMMENDATIONS

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Preservation of cultural meaning:

Support awareness and education campaigns that highlight the cultural importance of food customs, promoting their appreciation and preservation.

Technical knowledge and skills

22

Promoting economic diversification:

Laws should promote economic diversification in rural areas by supporting ICH-related activities. This would include financial support for artisans, cultural events and traditional activities that can generate sustainable income in communities affected by climate change.

23

Inclusion of traditional knowledge in environmental policies:

Legislation can integrate communities' traditional knowledge into environmental policies for sustainable natural resource management. This could involve the participation of local groups in decision-making on land and resource use.

Traditions, performing arts and others

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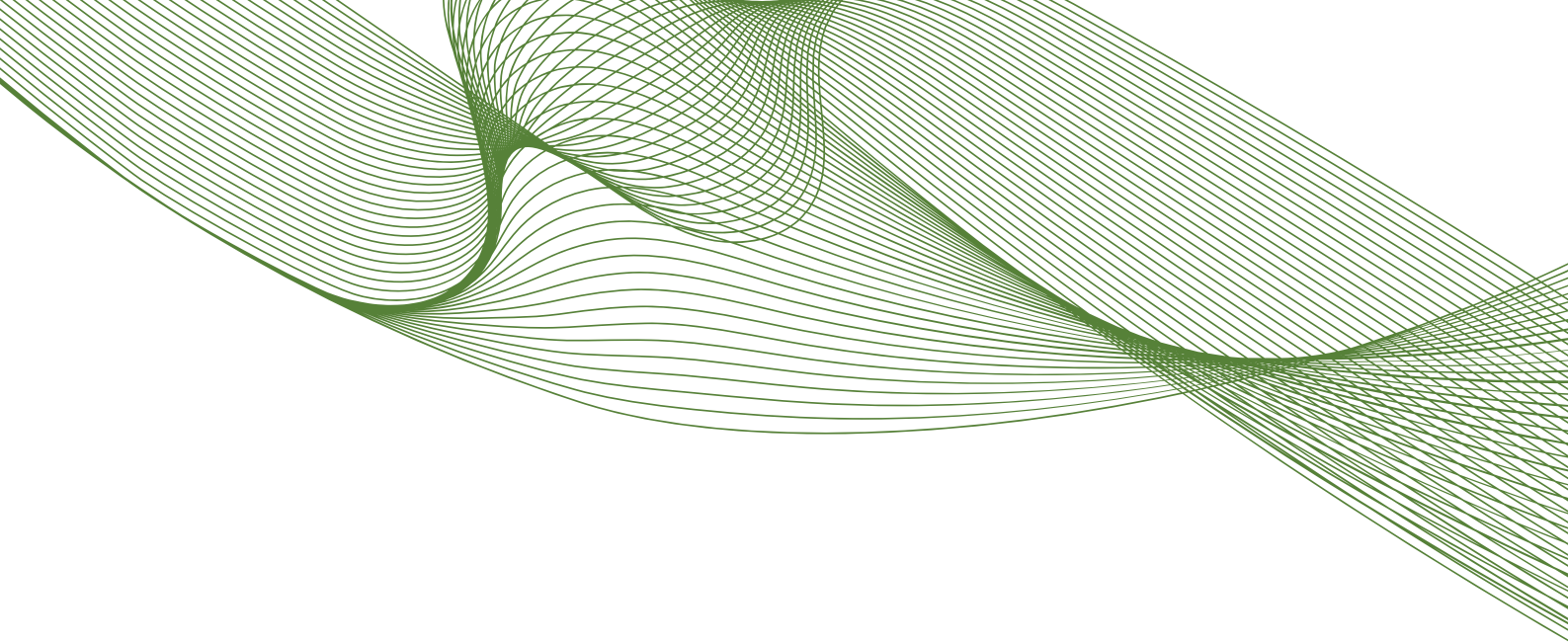
Creation of a climate-cultural registry:

Establish a register documenting how climate change is affecting festivals and traditions. This register would serve as a tool for decision-making and long-term planning.

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Revaluation of traditional crafts:

Encourage the revaluation of traditional crafts through training programmes, financial support and promotion of local craft products.



Thanks.

GreenHeritage Project
www.greenheritage-project.eu
giuseppina.padeletti@cnr.it

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