
ICOM SUSTAIN 2024 Update

From ICOM Sustain Secretary <secretary.sustain@icom.museum>

Date Tue 10/8/2024 9:59 AM

To Debra Reid <DebraR@thehenryford.org>

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Dear colleagues, members of, and those interested in SUSTAIN,

Late summer greetings from the Norwegian mountains where I am drafting this information letter to bring you up to date with the ongoing process to establish the secure foundations of SUSTAIN. In the future communication will morph into a regular newsletter from the SUSTAIN board, its goal, as we move through our three-year probationary period. to keep you all informed on the status of the development of the IC, (And before I forget, if any of you would like to take on the task of translating future newsletters into French and Spanish - or any other language - let me know).

It seems opportune that, from where I write, I can see the flank of the Norwegian mountain range Hallingskarvet (skarvet means naked mountain) where the last wild reindeer herds in Europe are to be found. Just visible to the naked eye is the small timber cabin built by the founder of Deep Ecology, the Norwegian philosopher, Arne Næss. And for those of you who might be interested, I enclose a couple of links to articles Næss wrote about sustainability:

Arne Næss (1993) "Sustainability! the integral approach," Paradigms, 7:1, 66-72, DOI: 10.1080/13600829308443040

Arne Næss (2005) "An Example of a Place: Tvergastein." Available through OpenAirPhilosophy

This latter text focused on Tvergastein, the cabin mentioned above. It was built in 1930s on Hallingskarvet's flank so that it was 'not too high or difficult to reach for transporting materials over snow.' Unexpectedly, it took 62 trips with a horse to carry the timbers and roof shingles. Everything is relative...

Alone here he came up with an eight-point summary for his ecological philosophy or 'ecosophy' of deep ecology. It was attacked by others as being 'eco-la-la' and too 'New Age'. Here they are, what do you think?

1. The flourishing of human and nonhuman life on earth has inherent value. The value of nonhuman life-forms is independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life-forms are also values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on earth.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population.
5. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease. [This, his most controversial point, attracted much criticism. He clarified that "the stabilization and reduction of the human population will take time." He acknowledged that "it may be validly objected that if the present billions of humans deeply changed their behaviour in the direction of ecological responsibility, nonhuman life could flourish."]
6. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive and the situation is rapidly worsening.
7. In view of the foregoing points, policies must be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present and make possible a more joyful experience of the connectedness of all things.
8. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes.

Please find attached a brief account of our first four months and the present status of ICOM SUSTAIN.

Kindest regards,

Morien

Morien Rees

Chair, ICOM SUSTAIN

An account of the activities of the ICOM Sustain board March-September 2024

1.0 Introduction

The inaugural general assembly of ICOM SUSTAIN was held on the seventh of March 2024. The following members were elected to the board:

Clémence Aycard ICOM UK, Mohamadou Moustapha Dieye ICOM Senegal, Susan Edwards ICOM US, Marina von der Heyde, ICOM Argentina, Mårten Janson, ICOM Sweden, Dr Jamie Larkin ICOM UK, Lucimara Letelier ICOM Brazil, María Auxiliadora Llamas Márquez ICOM Spain, Ben Melham ICOM UK, Dr Jenny Newell ICOM Australia, Dr. Debra A. Reid ICOM US, Michela Rota ICOM Italy, Johanna Sentef ICOM Germany, Hélène Vassal ICOM France, Dr. Siyi Wang ICOM China.

2.0 ICOM SUSTAIN Administrative Committee.

At the inaugural board meeting the following members were selected to fill the role of chair, vice-chair, treasurer and secretary:

- Chair: Morien Rees ICOM NORWAY
- Vice Chairs: Lucimara Letelier ICOM BRAZIL and Siyi Wang ICOM CHINA
- Treasurer: Marina von der Heyde ICOM ARGENTINA
- Secretary; Debra Reid ICOM USA
- Our contact in the ICOM secretariat is Marine Walon, International Committee Coordinator.

3.0 Organization

3.1 At the board's inaugural meeting it was agreed to hold board meetings on the last Thursday of each month, with the Administrative Committee meeting on the previous Tuesday. Contact with the board should be addressed to our secretary Debra Reid, at secretary.sustain@icom.museum We have held four subsequent meetings; our next meeting is scheduled for the 31st of October.

3.2 The board has agreed to focus initially on four areas to establish a solid platform for the future development of the IC: Strategic planning, Communications, Capacity building, and Membership,

At present the board has created a subcommittee for each of the four areas with members from the board allocated to each to address the specific issues within the subcommittee's mandate.

You will be kept informed of the developments within these four areas in future newsletters and through direct communications from these subcommittees. As we move forward through the probationary period, more areas of interest will be added. The membership will be canvassed to identify these areas of interest and invited to join the committees addressing them.

We also plan to investigate how to establish a digital forum for all members to contribute ideas, information, requests etc. One such platform has been suggested, Padlet. We would be more than happy to receive suggestions for other platforms to create this inclusive digital forum to facilitate direct contact between members and board and members and members.

The present status of the four subcommittees is as follows:

- 3.31 The Strategic Planning subcommittee has drafted a strategic plan currently under review and pending adoption at the October SUSTAIN board meeting;
- 3.32 The Communication subcommittee has submitted content for a mini-website and ICOM's webmaster is building it. Hopefully it will be up and running in October. SUSTAIN's web manager is Johanna Sentef.
- 3.33 The Membership committee has defined criteria for a Young Professionals Grant and a survey to benchmark interests and identify best approaches to meet them.
- 3.34 The Capacity building committee will address future SUSTAIN conference offerings and engagement with other ICOM International Committees, among other agendas.

SUSTAIN is much in demand from other parts of ICOM's organization and indeed from the museum sector outside ICOM. Evidence of this is its role in the planning and realization of the IMREC / ICOM KOREA conference on sustainability held in Seoul in July 2024. Board members Lucimara Letelier and Michela Rota contributed to the conference programme, and were also mainly responsible for a workshop held in connection with the ASAPAC Regional Alliance general assembly - a part of the pre-conference programme. The theme of the workshop was ICOM's Sustainability Action Plan and feedback from the participants and organizers was unequivocally favorable. As such, the workshop in Seoul can be viewed as a pilot for capacity building for other Regional Alliances, and a similar workshop will occur during the conference in Livingstone, Zambia in November (see below).

Here are other conferences that SUSTAIN has been invited to in autumn 2024:

- ICOM-ICEE Exhibitions: annual conference – Momentum: Exhibitions and Memory, Estonia (29 Sept-1 Oct): <https://icee.mini.icom.museum/momentum-exhibitions-and-memory/>
- 2024 International Forum for Art and Sustainability, Taiwan 4-5th October
- ICOM-AFRICA / SAREK (Burkina Faso, October 14 - 18): "Enhance Museums in Africa: Capacity Building for African National Committees".
- ICOM Zambia /Intercom/ Nathist /ICOM Africa (Livingston, Zambia, 1-5 Nov) A panel debate and workshop: <https://intercom.mini.icom.museum/call-for-papers-museum-leadership-in-the-21st-century-regional-challenges-and-global-impacts/>
- ICOM-ITC partner in China, The Palace Museum: Zero Waste and Environmental Protection (23 October-1 Nov): <https://icom.museum/en/news/call-for-icom-itc-grants-sustainable-museum-management-local-challenges-and-best-practices/>
- International Congress of Culture in Climate Action: Organized by the Institute for Urban and Sustainable Territorial Development of the City of La Plata Foundation, Sustainable Heritage Forum, Heritage and Climate Change Initiative, and the Climate Heritage Network. The congress is sponsored by ICOMOS Argentina, ICOM Argentina, ICOM Brasil, ICOMOS Climate Action Working Group (ICOMOS CAWG), and the Museum of Contemporary Art Beato Angelico UCALP. December 4, 5, 6, 2024 (Virtually)
- Heritage Middle East 2024 "2nd International Exhibition and Conferences for Museum & Library Technologies, Restoration, Archaeology and Cultural Tourism" scheduled 10-12 December 2024 at ADNEC, in Abu Dhabi – UAE.

Sustain has been awarded a budget of 4298 euro for the current year of 2024, of which 1200 euro are for grants for young members. In dialogue with the secretariat, we were informed that our budget for future years will be dependent the IC's activities.

5.0 Research and Development.

SUSTAIN is involved in, or considering involvement in, the following R&D initiatives.

- SUSTAIN is a partner in the SAREC (Strategic Allocation Review Committee) Solidarity in Times of Crises 2024 project: Enhance Museums in Africa. [[Projet ICOM-Afrique_SAREC_2024](#)], Mohamadou Moustapha DIEYE will be the board member responsible.
- Lucimara Letelier reported on a project between two universities in Brazil and ICOM-Brazil re. relationship between museums, local development and sustainable development goals.
- A request from Dr. Henrietta Galambos, Chair of the sub-working group on sustainability within ICOM LEAC, to Antonio Rodriguez chair of the Advisory Council, Marion Torterat Legal Coordinator at the secretariat and SUSTAIN, regarding collaboration on a feasibility study "to determine research opportunities" in the cross section of law-museums-sustainability.
- Julio Alexander Gonzalez Liendo a proposal for collaboration around the dissemination of his PhD thesis: " Framework Model of Indicators for Museum Sustainability." Jamie Larkin supported development of the thesis.
- Christian Breternitz, curator at the Berlin Musikinstrumenten-Museum contacted SUSTAIN with a wish to draft ideas on developing a clear definition as well as clear tasks of how musical instrument museums and collections can contribute to achieving congruence with the UN SDGs and the ICOM 2030 Action Plan on Sustainability.
- SUSTAIN has been informed of a February 2025 effort to be undertaken by non-ICOM member Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage – INTACH - to collect oral histories of personal observations of climate change.
- SUSTAIN has been informed of a model of urban sustainability - 2030 Districts Network - based in partnerships between private property owners, business interests, city planners and sustainability managers, and cultural attractions, including museums. The network supports 2030 District members and partners on the quest to reduce emissions and reach net zero by 2040. A Museum Best Practices Working Group formed in 2021.

6.0 Annual meeting in Marseille 2024

Morien Rees, SUSTAIN Chair, participated in the ICOM annual meeting in Marseille which was also streamed live. The online question and answer session on the last day was unfortunately cut short due to the earlier programme overrunning, resulting in little or no discussion on the themes of the General Conference in 2025. As a result, board member Johanna Sentef has initiated and carried out the drafting of a statement on behalf of SUSTAIN to be sent to the Director General, regarding the General Conference's theme The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities. The statement focuses on LGBTQIA+ and virtual communities to build sustainable futures. The SUSTAIN board discussed the letter at its 29th of August meeting, agreed with its content, and supported sending it on to the ICOM Director General.

7.0 ICOM Award for Sustainable Development Practice in Museums

The Chair of ICOM SUSTAIN will lead the jury for the Inaugural award to be presented at the General Conference 2025 in Dubai.

You can find more information about this award [HERE](#).

8.0 General Conference 2025

Further information about the Dubai symposium November 2024 and the Dubai General Conference in 2025 will be made available on the SUSTAIN mini website. Here is the latest information on ICOM Museum: <https://icom.museum/en/news/call-for-papers-museum-international-general-conference-dubai-2025-youth-intangible-heritage-and-new-technologies-in-museums/>

9.0 *Museum International* on Sustainability

Here is the link to the recent edition of *Museum International* on sustainability: <https://icom.museum/en/news/publication-of-museum-international-museum-sustainabilities/>

Submitted to ICOM SUSTAIN members (individual and institutional) and ICOM members interested in SUSTAIN:

Morien.Rees, Chair, Oslo, Norway 23.08.24

Debra Reid, Secretary, Dearborn Michigan, USA 5.10.24

<https://icom.museum/en/committee/international-committee-on-museums-and-sustainable-development/>



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