

EUROPEAN
CULTURAL HERITAGE
SUMMIT 2026

EUROPEAN HERITAGE POLICY AGORA 2026

Mare Nostrum: Championing Environmental
Sustainability through Heritage

29 MAY | NICOSIA

10:00 / 9:00 | CYENS Centre of Excellence

EEST CEST



In partnership with
Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

Cultural
Protection
Fund

EUROPEAN HERITAGE POLICY AGORA 2026

Mare Nostrum: Championing Environmental Sustainability through Heritage

ORGANISED BY

[Europa Nostra](#)

[Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia](#)

IN THE FRAME OF THE

[European Cultural Heritage Summit 2026 in Nicosia](#) held under the

patronage of the [Cyprus Presidency of the Council of the European Union](#)

WITH THE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF

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EUROPEAN HERITAGE POLICY AGORA 2026

Mare Nostrum: Championing Environmental Sustainability through Heritage

CONTEXT AND CONCEPT

The Mediterranean & Middle East: A Shared Yet Fractured Geopolitical Space

The Mediterranean – *Mare Nostrum* – has historically been a space of circulation, coexistence, and creativity. From antiquity through the medieval and early modern eras, the basin fostered intellectual exchange, trade routes, and cross-cultural fertilisation between Europe, North Africa, and the Levant.

Today, however, this shared space faces acute geopolitical tensions:

- Armed conflicts in parts of the Middle East
- Political instability and social fragmentation
- Migration pressures
- Climate stress affecting coastal and urban heritage
- Rising polarisation and identity politics

In this context, cultural heritage emerges as a stabilising force – capable of strengthening dialogue, fostering mutual recognition, and anchoring long-term cooperation. Heritage becomes a vector for both sustainable development and peace-building.

Holding this year's Summit in Cyprus at this point of time is particularly meaningful. Situated at the crossroads of Europe and the Middle East, Cyprus experiences both the complexities and the opportunities of the shared heritage of the Mediterranean – *Mare Nostrum*. The island's experience both with division and with a challenging path towards reconciliation offers a fitting environment for discussions on heritage as a peace-building instrument.

Risks and Threats to Heritage Protection

Across the Mediterranean and Middle East, heritage faces escalating risks:

- Destruction and illicit trafficking in conflict zones
- Climate change impacts (coastal erosion, extreme heat, flooding)
- Rapid urbanisation and unsustainable tourism
- Underfunded institutions and weakened governance
- Loss of traditional craftsmanship and skills

These threats are interconnected. Climate vulnerability, social fragility, and economic instability amplify risks to heritage, while the loss of heritage further weakens community resilience.

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The Agora will explore the relationship between natural and cultural heritage, highlighting how heritage can serve as a driver of sustainable development. It will also address the growing risks posed by climate change, examining the need to protect heritage through effective mitigation measures while recognising its potential contribution to climate adaptation.

EU Policy Landscape: Culture and the Mediterranean

The Agora takes place within an evolving European policy framework:

- The [Culture Compass for Europe](#), which seeks to mainstream culture across EU external action and internal strategic policies.
- [The Pact for the Mediterranean](#), reinforcing cooperation with Southern Neighbourhood partners.
- The [European Green Deal](#) and climate adaptation strategies, increasingly recognising heritage as part of sustainable transition.
- The [European Ocean Pact - Oceans and fisheries - European Commission](#)

Cultural heritage is gaining recognition as a cross-cutting policy vector — bridging diplomacy, sustainability, innovation, and social inclusion.

Heritage as a Vector of Sustainability

Cultural heritage is often closely intertwined with natural heritage, and this interconnection strengthens efforts to address climate change, enhance ecosystem resilience, and promote a fair, inclusive and sustainable living environment.

- Integrated strategies that link the protection of natural and cultural heritage, illustrated by projects demonstrating sustainable and resilient practices.

The Mediterranean as a Laboratory for Strategic Partnerships

The Mediterranean is not only a shared cultural space — it is a laboratory for innovative cooperation models. Through small- and medium-scale heritage projects, NGOs and local actors have demonstrated that:

- Cross-border partnerships build durable trust
- Community-based approaches enhance sustainability
- Cultural projects can generate employment and social cohesion
- Heritage-led regeneration strengthens local resilience

The Agora will position these partnerships as scalable models for EU-Mediterranean cooperation.

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Friday, 29 May 2026

10:00 – 12:30 EEST (09:30 EEST Registration)

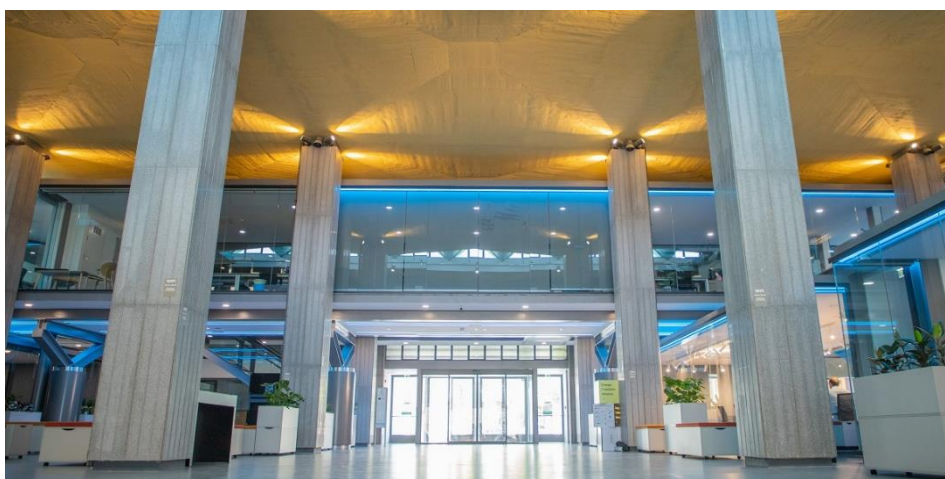
- 📍 **CYENS - Centre of Excellence (former Municipal Market-Agora)**
Mayor Lellos Demetriades Square 1, Nicosia

The Agora will explore how cultural heritage can drive sustainable development across the Mediterranean. By highlighting projects, this event will show how initiatives linking cultural and natural heritage strengthen climate action, boost the resilience of the heritage ecosystem, and promote inclusive communities.

The Agora will foster dialogue among heritage professionals, environmental experts and policy actors to better align cultural, climate and environmental strategies of the EU. Costas Kadis, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, will address the Agora.

The Agora is organised within the framework of the EU-funded [Europa Nostra Heritage Agora](#) project and has the support of the [Cultural Protection Fund of the British Council](#).

The Agora will be live streamed via the [Europa Nostra website](#).



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PROGRAMME

10:00 - 11:00

Opening Session

Host and Master of Ceremonies

- Androulla Vassiliou, Vice-President of Europa Nostra and Chair of the Board of the Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia

Introductory addresses

- Costas Kadis, European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans
- Dr Vasiliki Kassianidou, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus
- H.R.H. Princess Dana Firas of Jordan, President of the National Heritage Trust (Petra National Trust - PNT), ICOMOS - International Vice President, and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Cultural Heritage
- Luca Jahier, ESG & Euromed Vice-President and EESC President 2018-2020

11:00 - 11:45

Part I: Advocacy Action ahead of COP 31 in Antalya (Türkiye)

Setting the scene on heritage and environmental sustainability

- Andrew Potts, Heritage and Climate Action Advisor, Europa Nostra & Community of Practice Director, Preserving Legacies

Reactions

- Cristina Garzillo-Leemhuis, Head of Socio-Cultural Transformations, ICLEI
- Dr Ege Yildirim, Independent Expert, Vice-President of Europa Nostra Türkiye (*online intervention*)
- Nikolas Bakirtzis, Professor at the Science and Technology in Archaeology and Culture Research Center (STARC), The Cyprus Institute
- Jorge Chaminé, Centre Européen de Musique (*online intervention*)

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11:45 - 12:30

Part II: Best Practices in support of Advocacy Action

Moderator

- Catherine Leonard, Secretary General of INTO, member of the Jury of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards

Three partners of the INTO project "Withstanding change"

- Lama Abboud, Founder & Chairman of the Board of Trustees Turathuna Foundation in Syria
- Abdelhamid Salah Al-Sharief, Founder & Chairman of the Egyptian Heritage Rescue Foundation
- Dr. Dareen Al-Khoury, Executive Director of the Petra National Trust (*online intervention*)

12:30 Lunch

EUROPEAN HERITAGE HUB FORUM 2026

"Mare Nostrum: Fostering Peace through Heritage"

14:15 - 18:30 EEST

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The European Heritage Hub Forum will focus on cultural heritage as a powerful vector of peace across the Mediterranean, with special emphasis on the Middle East. It will highlight existing projects of Europe-Middle East cooperation, demonstrating how sustained collaboration between European civil society organisations and local partners from the Middle East can strengthen community resilience and foster peaceful engagement and advocating the need to further enhance the cultural dimension of EU's New Pact for the Mediterranean. [Read more and follow the live stream](#)

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SPEAKERS

Listed by order of appearance in the Programme



Androulla Vassiliou

Vice-President of Europa Nostra

Chair of the Board of the Europa Nostra Heritage
Hub in Nicosia

@VassiliouEU | @heritagehubnicosia

Androulla Vassiliou is a lawyer by profession with a post graduate degree in International Relations. She practiced Law for 25 years. Ms. Vassiliou was the First Lady of Cyprus from 1988-1993. She entered politics in 1996 and was elected for two consecutive terms of 5 years each, member of the Cyprus House of Representatives. She was appointed European Commissioner for Health from 2008-2010 and in 2010 European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. She retired from the Commission in the end of 2014.

Since 2015, Ms. Vassiliou is a member of Europa Nostra and served the organisation as a member of its Council, as a member of the Jury for the European Heritage Awards and as a Vice-President.

Throughout her life she has been very active in a number of fields of public life such as Human Rights and in particular Gender Equality, Racial Discrimination, the rights of the less privileged people of the society and in the field of the Arts and Cultural Heritage.

Ms. Vassiliou is Vice President of the Council of the University of Cyprus, a member of the International Board of Trustees of the Cyprus Institute of Research and Education and Chair of the Board of the 'Europa Nostra Heritage Hub in Nicosia'. She has been honored by the Governments of France, Spain and Greece as well as by many Cypriot Institutions.

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Costas Kadis

EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans

@CostasKadis | ec.europa.eu

Commissioner Costas Kadis leads the EU's Fisheries and Oceans policy, focusing on implementing a long-term vision for a resilient, competitive, and sustainable European fisheries and aquaculture sector to secure Europe's food sovereignty. He is also responsible for the EU's global efforts to restore ocean health, ensure maritime security, and support coastal communities across Europe.

A Professor of Biodiversity Conservation at Frederick University in Cyprus, Commissioner Kadis has held several ministerial positions for the Republic of Cyprus, including Minister of Health, Minister of Education and Culture, and Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Environment. He also led the Greek Cypriot Technical Committee on the Environment, engaging in reunification talks with his Turkish Cypriot counterpart.

Born in Nicosia in 1967, he graduated from the University of Athens with a degree in Biology in 1991 and earned a PhD in Conservation Biology in 1995. He furthered his education through postgraduate courses, including one on scientific research administration at Cornell University. His professional career began as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Athens before joining Frederick University in 2005, where he established the Nature Conservation Unit and served as Dean of the School of Education.

Prof. Kadis is an accomplished scholar, authoring or co-authoring six books and over 50 peer-reviewed scientific articles on natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, and environmental education. His extensive contributions reflect a lifelong commitment to sustainable development and ecological preservation.

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Dr Vasiliki Kassianidou

Deputy Minister of Culture
of the Republic of Cyprus

@LinaKassianidou | @DepMinCultureCy

Dr Vasiliki Kassianidou is the Deputy Minister of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus, a position she holds since 2023. Prior to her appointment, she was a member of the faculty of the Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Cyprus, which she joined in 1994. In 2013 she was promoted to the rank of Professor in Environmental Archaeology and Archaeometry.

Ms. Kassianidou studied Chemistry and Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology at Bryn Mawr College, USA (BA, cum laude) and completed her PhD at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London. Her research focused on ancient technology, with particular emphasis on the production and trade of Cypriot copper and its environmental impact. She has an extensive list of publications which include five edited volumes, two co-authored volumes and over one hundred articles in peer reviewed journals, edited volumes and conference proceedings. Dr Kassianidou has coordinated several research projects funded by the European Union (in FP7 and H2020) and by the Research and Innovation Foundation of Cyprus and has participated in many more.

Ms. Kassianidou has held senior leadership roles including Director of the Archaeological Research Unit of the University of Cyprus, Dean of the Faculty of Letters of the University of Cyprus, President of the Board of Directors of the Cultural Foundation of the Bank of Cyprus, member of the Board of the Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO and member of the National Board of Research and Innovation. In 2022, she was elected Corresponding Member of the Archaeological Institute of America, only the second Cypriot ever to have been given this honour.

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H.R.H. Princess Dana Firas of Jordan

President of the National Heritage Trust
(Petra National Trust)

ICOMOS - International Vice-President

UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Heritage

@DanaFiras1 | @PNTJordan

HRH Princess Dana Firas is a global advocate for heritage protection and preservation. She was designated a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador in June 2017 in recognition of her commitment to heritage protection and preservation as pillars for sustainable development, and her contribution to responsible tourism and community participation.

In September 2023, Princess Dana was elected as Vice President of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), Arab States Regional Group. She also serves as President of ICOMOS-Jordan, which she established in 2019. She is the President of the National Heritage Trust (Petra National Trust - PNT), Jordan's oldest national nongovernmental organization for heritage protection and preservation.

Internationally, Princess Dana has served as an Ambassador for the UK-based International National Trusts Organization since 2021 and assumed the role of Chair in 2024. She previously served as Co-Chair of the Climate Heritage Network's COP27 and COP28 Working Groups.

Princess Dana received several awards in recognition of her contributions to cultural heritage in Jordan and internationally. She is the author of *Unique and Outstanding: Jordan's World Heritage Sites*. She holds a BA degree in Economics and International Relations, an MSc in Development Studies and an MPA from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, where she was a Fulbright Scholar.

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Luca Jahier

ESG & Euromed Vice-President and EESC

President 2018-2020

@LJahierEU | EU_EESC

Luca Jahier was ESG & Euromed Vice-President and EESC President from 2018 until 2020. He is a journalist, economist, and expert in the third sector, social economy, international cooperation, Africa, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since 2002, Mr. Jahier has been a member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), the consultative assembly representing organized civil society at EU level, established by the Treaty of Rome. Within the EESC, he has served in several positions, most notably as President of Group III - Various Interests from October 2010 to April 2018, and as EESC President from April 2018 to October 2020.

Mr. Jahier currently serves as Euromed Vice-President and European Semester Group Vice-President, working on the assessment of National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) related to the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Annual Sustainable Growth Survey, and EU CSR policies. His work also focuses on civil dialogue, cultural diplomacy, economic security, reform of the Fiscal Pact and the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034, as well as the Civilian Compact of the EU Common Security framework. In addition, Mr. Jahier serves as EESC Rapporteur on the Cultural Compass initiative.

During his mandate as EESC President, Mr. Jahier promoted the motto *#rEUnaissance - Dare a Sustainable Europe*, based on three pillars: sustainability, peace, and culture. He was also the first President of an EU institution to identify culture as a key institutional priority.

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Andrew Potts

Heritage and Climate Action Advisor, Europa Nostra
Community of Practice Director, Preserving Legacies
@aspintl | @europanostra | @Future4past

Andrew Potts is the Community of Practice Director for the National Geographic Society-funded Preserving Legacies project. His works includes supporting the Heritage Adapts! campaign which aims to help thousands of heritage sites and cultural practices implement locally led climate adaptation strategies by 2030 in alignment with the UN Global Goal on Adaptation cultural heritage thematic target.

Mr. Potts also serves as Heritage and Climate Action Adviser to the Europa Nostra European Heritage Hub. He was the lead author of Europa Nostra's 2021 *European Cultural Heritage Green Paper*. In the United States, he served on the Expert Advisory Committee for the United States Advisory Council on Historic Preservation during the administration of former President Joseph R. Biden.

Mr. Potts founded and coordinated the Secretariat of the Climate Heritage Network. He also previously served as the Coordinator of the ICOMOS Climate Change and Heritage Working Group. Potts is the recipient of the 2025 World Monuments Fund Watch Award and of the US National Trust for Historic Preservation's John H. Chafee Trustees Award for Outstanding Achievement in Public Policy. A policy and finance for development (FfD) lawyer by training, he has made cultural and climate change policy his focus since 2015.

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Cristina Garzillo-Leemhuis

Head of Socio-Cultural Transformations

ICLEI

@iclei_europe

Cristina Garzillo-Leemhuis is Head of Socio-Cultural Transformations at ICLEI. Having more than 20 years of experience working in and for local governments, she is recognised for her work as expert in local sustainability processes, culture and cultural heritage, integrated management and governance as well as author of numerous publications in the field of local sustainability, knowledge brokerage and transition.

Ms. Garzillo-Leemhuis has been appraiser and expert for the URBACT Programme, the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative, the European Commission, the European Committee of the Regions and United Nations. She is currently a member of the European Commission's Expert Group on Culture and Cultural Heritage, the Partnership on Sustainable Tourism of the Urban Agenda for the EU, and the New European Bauhaus community.

Ms. Garzillo-Leemhuis also draws on a wealth of academic experience from her previous role as a contract professor at the University of Parma.

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Jorge Chaminé

President and Founder

Centre Européen de Musique (CEM)

@CemCentre

Jorge Chaminé is the president and founder of Centre Européen de Musique (CEM). He is a rare artist whose voice transcends the stage to embrace society. Born in Porto to a Spanish mother, with roots stretching from the Urals to the Atlantic, he has sung in many of the world's greatest venues, from Carnegie Hall to the Concertgebouw, the Tchaikovsky Hall, the Vienna Konzerthaus, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.

On stage, Mr. Chaminé has performed at the Paris Opera, Madrid's Teatro Real, and La Fenice in Venice, in a repertoire ranging from Mozart to contemporary creation. His deep, warm baritone has led him to collaborate with leading orchestras—from London to Berlin, from Boston to Barcelona—under conductors such as Ozawa, Menuhin, and Sinopoli.

Yet his vocation goes far beyond performance. Laureate of the Yehudi Menuhin Foundation (1988), recipient of the UNESCO Human Rights Medal (1993), first "Musician for Peace" (2011), Helena Vaz da Silva Prize (2023) and European Innovative Prize (2024), he has devoted decades to bringing music where it is most needed: prisons, hospitals, refugee camps and underprivileged youth.

As Founder-President of the Centre Européen de Musique (CEM), Mr. Chaminé has shaped a transdisciplinary project at the crossroads of heritage, creation, education and diplomacy. Artist and humanist, Jorge Chaminé, affirms music as a universal language and a vital necessity in a world striving for harmony.

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Ege Yildirim

Independent Expert

Vice-President Europa Nostra Türkiye

@ayseegeyildirim | @europanostraturkiye

Dr. Ayşe Ege Yildirim is an urban planner specializing in heritage conservation and management, with over 25 years of experience working in Türkiye and internationally. Her interest areas include cultural heritage policy, advocacy and governance, UNESCO World Heritage, and sustainable development. She was a Fulbright Scholar at Pratt Institute (New York, 2006-07), Senior Fellow for Archaeological Site Management at Koç University (AnaMed Research Center) (Istanbul, 2013-14) and a Salzburg Global Seminar fellow (2019).

Dr. Yildirim's previous positions include conservation planner at KA-BA Architecture Ltd, Ankara (2000-06), heritage planner at the Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture & Heritage (2008-12), heritage site manager and UNESCO World Heritage nomination coordinator for the Historic Guild Town of Mudurnu (2015-20); International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Focal Point for the SDGs (2016-20) and key expert at the EU-Turkey Anatolian Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Institute project (2019).

Dr. Yildirim is also an entrepreneur since 2021, having founded Terra Mudurnu, a social venture for cultural and natural heritage-based development. Since Fall 2025, she is part-time lecturer at Istanbul Bilgi University. Ege is a member, among other organizations, of ICOMOS, Europa Nostra Türkiye (Board member), the Climate Heritage Network, and the Istanbul Citizens Assembly (Cultural Heritage Working Group).

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Nikolas Bakirtzis

Professor Science and Technology in
Archaeology and Culture Research Center
The Cyprus Institute
@CyprusInstitute

Nikolas Bakirtzis is Professor at the Science and Technology in Archaeology and Culture Research Center (STARC) of The Cyprus Institute (Cyl) in Nicosia. His research explores the cultural landscapes of the Medieval and Modern Mediterranean. As the Director of the Andreas Pittas Art Characterization Labs (APAC Labs), he leads interdisciplinary work on the history, the materiality and provenance of artworks, archaeological sites and monuments.

Mr. Bakirtzis also led the Cultural Heritage Task Force of the Cyprus Climate Change Initiative with his interests focusing on the key role of cultural heritage in efforts to tackle the impact of climate change on local communities.

His research has received support from the European Commission, the Cyprus Research and Innovation Foundation, the Princeton Seeger Center for Hellenic Studies, the A.G. Leventis Foundation, the Getty Research Institute and the University of Tübingen.

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Catherine Leonard

Secretary General of INTO - the International
National Trusts Organisation

@Leonard_Write | @intoheritage

Catherine Leonard is the Secretary General of INTO - the International National Trusts Organisation. She joined the National Trust in 1999 from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with a background in modern languages and international public and cultural relations.

Prior to her appointment to INTO, Catherine was responsible for the Trust's work with overseas heritage conservation groups, managing the European Exchange Programme, the Arkell Youth Fellowship and the European Network of National Heritage Organisations (ENNHO).

Over the years, Ms. Leonard has been involved in establishing, supporting and championing national trusts all over the world (from Australia, Bavaria and China to Trinidad, USA and Zimbabwe!). She studied Russian and German at university and has spent time living and travelling in several European countries.

Ms. Leonard is a trustee of the Czech National Trust Abroad, and she serves on the board of directors of the French charity SMILO (Small Islands Organisation), as a Europa Nostra Council member and on the board of the National Trust of Georgia.

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Lama Abboud

Founder and Chairman of The Board of Trustees
Turathuna Foundation
@TurathunaSy

Lama Abboud is the founder of Turathuna Foundation and a founding member and former vice president of ICOMOS Syria. She is a Syrian expert in cultural heritage preservation, with over 14 years of experience in restoration, disaster risk management, and community engagement.

A member of ICORP, and a former ICCROM Mentor, Ms. Abboud has led significant restoration projects, including the revival of the First Ancient Theater in Homs. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Heritage Management at Leiden University, combining academic research with hands-on action to safeguard heritage in both peace and crisis contexts.

Ms. Abboud continues to lead initiatives, design training programs, and share her expertise to empower local communities through cultural heritage.

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Abdelhamid Salah Al-Khoury

Founder and Chairman of the Egyptian Heritage
Rescue Foundation

@ Abdelhamid_EHRF | @EgyptianRescue

Abdelhamid Salah currently serves as Chairman of the Egyptian Heritage Rescue Foundation (EHRF) and Manager of the Risk Assessment Unit at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in Egypt. He is an international expert with over two decades of experience in cultural heritage conservation and more than 13 years specializing in disaster risk management and emergency response for heritage.

Mr. Al-Khoury holds a PhD in Heritage Conservation and Site Management, with a research focus on "Risk Management Plans as a Decision-Making Tool for Historic Cities: A Case Study on a Selected Area in Historic Cairo." His academic and professional work bridges theory and practice, advancing integrated approaches to risk-informed decision-making for historic urban environments.

Mr. Al-Khoury has collaborated extensively with leading international organizations, including UNESCO and ICCROM, contributing to major initiatives such as emergency interventions at the Odesa Archaeological

Museum and the Heritage Recovery Programme in Mosul. His expertise encompasses risk assessment, preparedness planning, emergency response, and post-disaster recovery in both conflict and climate-affected contexts.

He has designed and delivered numerous regional and international training programmes strengthening institutional capacities across the Middle East, Africa, and Europe. In parallel, he contributes to higher education as a lecturer in international master's programmes in heritage conservation and site management. His professional profile integrates policy advisory, field implementation, and strategic planning, with contributions to national disaster risk frameworks, museum risk mitigation strategies, and World Heritage site protection.

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Dr. Dareen Al-Khoury

Executive Director
Petra National Trust
@PNTJordan

Dr. Dareen Al-Khoury is the Executive Director of Petra National Trust (PNT), Jordan's first national organization dedicated to cultural heritage conservation. She leads a multidisciplinary team advancing work across heritage protection, community engagement, climate resilience, research, and policy advocacy at local, regional, and international levels.

With over 20 years of experience, Ms. Al-Khoury specializes in strategic communication, research, and institutional positioning. She has a strong track record in building teams, developing organizational frameworks, and aligning communication with programmatic and policy priorities. Her work focuses on program development, strengthening public engagement, and positioning cultural heritage as a driver of sustainable development and climate resilience.

Ms. Al-Khoury holds a PhD in the Analysis of Social and Economic Processes and has contributed to research and publications on media, conflict, and information literacy.

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ABOUT

Europa Nostra

[Europa Nostra](#) is the European voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting cultural and natural heritage. It is a pan-European federation of heritage NGOs, supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals, covering over 40 countries. It is the most representative heritage network in Europe, maintaining close relations with the European Union, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and other international bodies. Europa Nostra celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2023.

Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through the [7 Most Endangered Programme](#). It celebrates and disseminates excellence through the [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](#). Europa Nostra contributes to the definition and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a participatory dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance. It is also a partner of the New European Bauhaus initiative developed by the European Commission, and a European member and supporter of the Climate Heritage Network.

Since 2023, Europa Nostra has led the European consortium selected by the European Commission to run the [European Heritage Hub](#) project. Since 2025, it has implemented the network project [Europa Nostra Heritage Agora](#) with the support of the EU Creative Europe Programme.

Creative Europe

[Creative Europe](#) is the European Union's flagship programme to support the cultural and creative sectors, including cultural heritage, enabling them to increase their contribution to Europe's society, economy and living environment. With a budget of over €2.4 billion for 2021-2027, it supports organisations from various cultural and creative sectors such as heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, and cultural and audiovisual professionals.

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Cultural Protection Fund of the British Council: 10 Years of Europe–Middle East Cooperation

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2026, the Cultural Protection Fund (CPF) has been supporting transnational partnerships between European NGOs (based in Germany, France, Spain, and Italy) and local organisations in the Middle East.

CPF's model connects field-level action with European civil society and policy discussions. By empowering local actors, fostering long-term collaboration, and linking heritage protection with climate resilience and social recovery, these projects demonstrate how cultural cooperation can contribute to sustainability, stabilisation and peacebuilding.

The Agora will highlight these projects distinctive contribution:

- Bridging European and Middle Eastern expertise
- Grounding policy in lived experience
- Promoting replicable models of cross-border heritage protection
- Positioning heritage as part of climate action and sustainable development strategies

Objectives

1. Strengthen strategic partnerships between Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean through heritage cooperation.
2. Highlight heritage protection as a vector of sustainability, climate adaptation, peace and resilience.
3. Showcase projects, including 10 years of CPF-supported initiatives and extract policy lessons.
4. Promote scalable funding and cooperation models for cross-border heritage protection.
5. Enrich EU policy debates with field-based experience from Mediterranean and Middle Eastern contexts.
6. Enhance collaboration among NGOs, policymakers, cultural networks, and international organisations.

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BOOKLET

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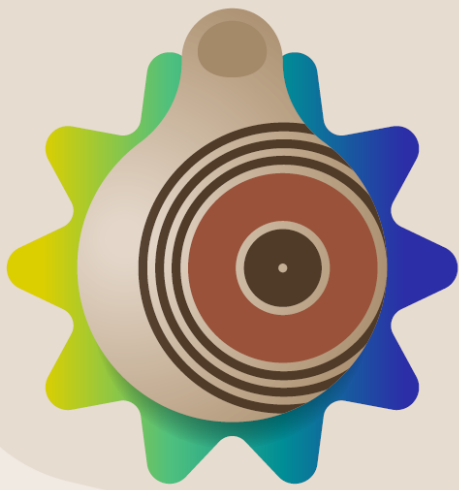
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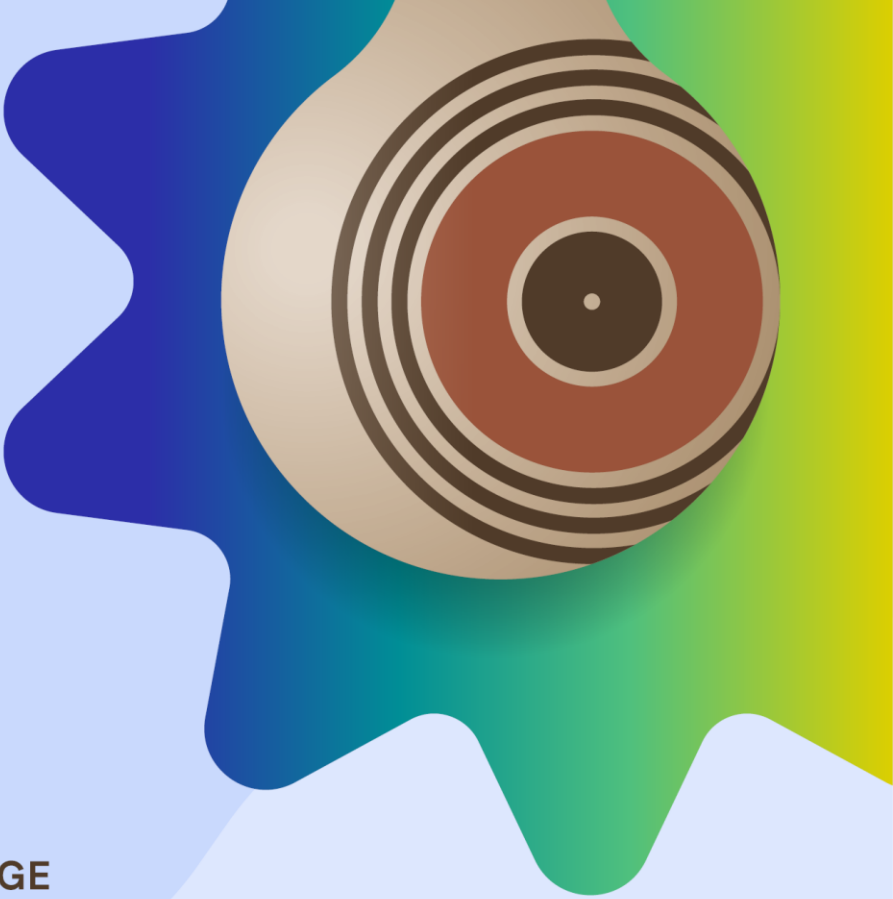


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EUROPEAN HERITAGE POLICY AGORA 2026

Mare Nostrum: Championing Environmental Sustainability through Heritage

29 MAY | NICOSIA

10:00 / 9:00 | CYENS Centre of Excellence

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