

TESTIMONIALS FOR THE CLIMATE VULNERABILITY INDEX

"Congratulations to the Climate Vulnerability Index - Gondwana Rainforests of Australia (Qld Section) for winning the National Trust of Australia (Qld) Landscape Award. This innovative project stood out for its clear, systematic assessment of climate risks to the Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage Area, creating a strong base for ongoing management in the face of an existential threat to heritage. It brought together a wide range of people and expertise, strengthening relationships and understanding, supporting the kind of co-management needed to care for the landscape and the communities connected to it. The Gondwana Rainforests (Queensland section) assessment joins a diverse array of natural and cultural World Heritage properties globally in which the CVI has been applied - a methodology of global application developed right here in Australia."

Leslie Shirreffs Natural heritage expert on the Australian Heritage Council, former Chair of the Queensland Heritage Council.

"As a proud Orcadian, I am pleased that the Heart of Neolithic Orkney was the first [cultural] World Heritage Site in the world to undergo the Climate Vulnerability Index assessment. Historic Environment Scotland worked in partnership with James Cook University not only to determine the vulnerability of the OUV and the social, economic and cultural impacts of climate change in Orkney, but also to apply this process to the Flow Country in Scotland, the first World Heritage nominated site to be assessed in this way. Scotland is the first nation in the world to commit to these important assessments for each of its World Heritage Sites."

Neil Gray MSP Scottish Government Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development.

"The CVI takes a different approach from other vulnerability assessments because along with vulnerability of the property, it also incorporates the vulnerability of the community, which is such an important aspect of World Heritage. Historic Environment Scotland is proposing to repeat the CVI application as part of the five-yearly management review cycle for each World Heritage property in Scotland."

Ewan Hyslop Head of Technical Research & Science, Historic Environment Scotland.

"The CVI is a really useful tool that hopefully enables a repeatable result in terms of assessment of the vulnerability of people and places to climate change impacts ... It will enable us to communicate and raise awareness about the impacts of climate change on both the natural assets and also the economic, social and cultural impacts."

Phil Scott Chair, Shark Bay World Heritage Advisory Committee, Western Australia.

"It has been an excellent process to develop the list of key values, because it makes you really dig into what the Statement of OUV says."

Patrik Bylund World Heritage Coordinator at High Coast. [OUV – Outstanding Universal Value]

“The CVI process and especially the workshop, proved to be a really well-structured way of working. It was great to see how one thing laid the ground for another and how the structure guided the workshop participants through the process. The participants with different backgrounds and from different parts of our site appreciated the chance to get together and discuss these important matters. Taking part in the process gave them better understanding of the Site and it’s values as well as the results of the CVI process.”

Malin Henriksson World Heritage Coordinator at Kvarken Archipelago.

“The [Aldabra] report looks brilliant. The whole CVI process has been eye-opening and extremely valuable for our whole team. We particularly appreciated how inclusive and participatory the exercise was. A big thank you from me for the process and the final result.”

Nancy Bunbury Director of Research and Conservation, Seychelles Islands Foundation, Republic of Seychelles.

“I would like to express SIF’s deep appreciation to you for jumping into the deep with us to undertake the CVI Snapshot within a very tight timeline. The exercise has been extremely beneficial and valuable in many ways to SIF, the team and to Aldabra. We are truly grateful for your guidance that has enabled us to understand and look at the climate vulnerability of Aldabra much more comprehensively and urges us to look at ways that this work can continue, not only for Aldabra but also for Seychelles’ other World Heritage area, the Vallée de Mai ... we will definitely share this experience and its results within and outside Seychelles.”

Frauke Fleischer Dogley Chief Executive Officer, Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF), Republic of Seychelles.

“Thank you so much once again for your very kind invitation to the CVI training session in Edinburgh ... I learnt a lot about the CVI process, assessing risk from climate change and World Heritage processes in general. I will certainly take this knowledge forward as the collective plans for securing funding for the nomination of the African limes unfold.”

Anna Walas Knowledge Exchange and Research Impact Officer, University of Nottingham.

“The Edinburgh CVI training workshop was timely, thought-provoking and very well presented and run ... I hope that in Ireland the process can be adopted here as well.”

Rosemary Bradley Conservation Architect, Office of Public Works, Dublin.

“Through its Climate Action Working Group, ICOMOS has been involved in a number of CVI projects, including its first application to a cultural WH property in Orkney and, more recently, as institutional partner in the CVI Africa project. This important collaboration worked with partners in Tanzania and Nigeria to assess the vulnerability of two very different WH properties with considerable success. The CVI is a powerful tool for assessing the vulnerability of cultural heritage sites and the skills and techniques learned during both projects remain invaluable to both ICOMOS and our partners.”

Will Megarry Focal Point for Climate Change at the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and Senior Lecturer at Queen’s University Belfast

“As the then County Archaeologist working for the Orkney Islands Council, I am pleased to say that the CVI rapid assessment worked well for The Heart of Neolithic Orkney, even though we were only the second site in the world to pilot the system. One of the things that worked best for us was assembling of a wide range of scientists, academics and curators including many local experts who are engaged daily with the monuments. This enabled us to test current and predictive statements against observed reality”.

Julie Gibson UHI Archaeology Institute; previously County Archaeologist, Orkney Islands Council.

“With using the CVI approach for the UNESCO World Heritage Wadden Sea, for the first time, a common tool was jointly applied for such a complex and dynamic ecosystem and in a transnational context. The different experts from various disciplines as well as the site managers came together and applied the CVI. Thanks to this very transparent methodology, based on OUV, key values and attributes, it really helped us all to enhance awareness of OUV, the values, and how to integrate these into science, monitoring and assessment. Although we have really good scientists and really good managers, making the links to OUV and what does that mean in such a complex topic as climate change is not always as obvious as one might assume.”

Barbara Engels Chair of the Task Group, World Heritage for the Wadden Sea World Heritage Area (Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands).

“The work with CVI has been a game changer in the First Nations space and I’m incredibly proud of the team that is working together to co-develop something so important. You are both so generous in your thought leadership and flexible in your learning journey – it’s been a pleasure to work with you both.”

Karin Gerhardt Associate Director, Traditional Owner Partnerships, Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

“I am very impressed – I didn't expect this. I've been on the Board of the Bryggen Foundation for 35 years and I think this is one of the best workshops I've been on. You've done an absolutely brilliant job. A valuable workshop on how Bryggen will be impacted by climate change. Excellently facilitated!”

Gudrun Mathisen Board member Bryggen Foundation and former Head of Climate, Hordaland County Council.

“The CVI has been helpful to further cooperation and dialogue on climate change adaptation management between scientists and stakeholders directly related to the management of Bryggen. The CVI has provided valuable and updated input to include in the Periodic Reporting to UNESCO, and to incorporate into the management plan and yearly action plans.”

Hege Bakke-Alisøy World Heritage Coordinator for Bryggen (Norway).

“The process of identifying the values of the heritage, the scientific approach to the climate scenarios together with the focus on the community and the capacity to adapt, makes the CVI process a valuable framework for assessing the vulnerability of archaeological heritage in different environments.”

Hanne Merete Moldung Senior Advisor/Archaeologist, Directorate for Cultural Heritage, Norway.

“The application of the CVI process to the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site was a success despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced us to run an online workshop. Scott and Jon’s facilitation of the workshop was remarkable and ensured high quality and insightful results that will contribute to the future management of the property. The CVI process is a powerful tool, as it allows a quick yet thorough assessment of the climate vulnerabilities of a given World Heritage property and its communities - involving the property’s diverse stakeholders from heritage experts to representatives of residents. The workshop is well complemented by the report that summarises its results, in addition to raising awareness on the property’s outstanding universal and local values, its management and associated challenges....”

Yann Grandgirard Head of Climate Change, Edinburgh World Heritage, Scotland.

“The CVI workshop for St Kilda was the first time the process was applied to a mixed World Heritage Site (natural and cultural). It was so valuable to get people from different disciplines and backgrounds together to focus on the impact of climate change on the different values of St Kilda. The blended workshop went really well and was expertly facilitated by Scott and Jon, who kept us on track and away from rabbit holes! We are now in the process of integrating the recommendations into our management of the islands and having such a robustly researched report is really helpful in arguing our case and pushing for change.”

Susan Bain Western Isles Manager, National Trust for Scotland.

“The entire process of CVI workshops and report preparation has once again demonstrated the critical importance of collaborating with experts from various fields and local communities. This collaboration is essential not only for assessing the potential future condition of heritage sites under the impact of climate change but also for understanding the community’s relationship with heritage. Only through communication and joint action can we identify the most effective solutions for adapting to a changing environment.”

Justė Zavišaitė Specialist for UNESCO-Related Matters, Curonian Spit National Park Administration.

“Understanding climate change and addressing its impacts are among UNESCO's most important strategic goals. The CVI outcomes will encourage further study of climate factors and their impact on cultural heritage. Management and planning documents must incorporate climate-related factors and include collaboration with cultural heritage specialists, owners of buildings and reflect community needs.”

Renata Vaičekonytė-Kepežinskienė Head of Heritage Programs at the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO.

August 2026