

IS CANADA MEETING ITS GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE?

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There are polite disagreements as to whether cultural heritage is a global asset or a national asset. The various legal instruments, policies, and guidance mechanisms usually require implementation in some form, sometimes requiring national legislation.

Canada professes a commitment to protecting national cultural heritage, whether tangible examples such as buildings or archaeological sites, or intangible, such as cultural traditions. Canada also speaks of commitment to addressing issues related to climate change. It might be logical, then, to think that Canada would create policies and legislation that specifically addressed the impacts of climate change on Canadian tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

This paper will discuss the benefits and limitations of Canadian cultural heritage protection policies in relation to global climate change. The paper will also consider whether Canada is addressing and meeting global responsibilities for the protection of cultural heritage affected by long-term and rapid climate change.