



Holistic Definition for Cultural Heritage Conservation

Conservation has a uniquely positive and powerful role to play in shaping a sustainable future: it preserves cultural heritage for current and future generations and supports economic and societal stability. Climate change and its destructive impacts endangers cultural heritage. So a vital part of cultural heritage conservation is assessing and adapting professional practices to help combat these foremost agents of change. Embedded within this sustainability context, green conservation prioritizes the environment, and human health and wellbeing, through holistic decision-making. Aligned with conservation ethics and values, it allows for future developments and considers the entirety of consequences within investigative, interventive and preventive practice. It involves a considered balancing of the impacts, before, during and after any decision or approach. Cultural heritage professionals should actively adopt a green conservation approach, with institutional support in accordance with the Economic, Social and Environmental pillars of sustainability.

Green Conservation

Green conservation is an aspirational, consultative process and always comparative in practice. A green conservation approach is minimally harmful to the environment and humans. Aligning with the circular economy, green conservation is decarbonizing, zero-waste, accessible, and available. Green conservation is achieved through decision-making and evolving practice, which takes all these aspects into consideration in balance with professional guidelines, and current and continuing research. Green conservation practices encompass the decisions made within the context of collection management and storage, any investigative, preventive or interventive measure, their documentation, the materials used, the frequency of treatment and long-term impacts. Green conservation reinforces and furthers the positive role of conservation in the sustainability of our culture.

Green Parameters descriptors for green conservation ([see website](#) for details)

Hazard impacts on human and environment	G1	Toxicity and hazard metrics for the natural environment
	G2	Toxicity and hazard metrics for humans
Impacts on climate change	G3	Energy – Indoor climate control impacts
	G4	Energy – Consumption in approach / application
	G5	Energy – Conservation approach / treatment-associated materials / products to be used
Impacts on resources	G6	Availability – water & resource use
	G7	Availability – Biodiversity impacts
	G8	Waste
Art work, cultural heritage object specific / professional parameters	G9	Material / product selection and application method
	G10	Efficiency – Number of applications / consumption / quantities of materials / products used
	G11	Longevity of result
	G12	Accessibility – Availability of approach / used materials / products
	G13	Accessibility – Ease of use and time
	G14	Quality / value impacts of result in meeting preservation goals



Want to know more?

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