



DATE: 10 October 2025

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OBJET/SUBJECT: **Call for submissions from the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights**

Please find attached a call for submissions from the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, available in English (original language), French and Spanish (unofficial translations).

Mandate of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

10 October 2025

Excellency,

I have the honour to address you in my capacity as the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution [55/5](#).

In my forthcoming report to the Human Rights Council, I intend to address the issue of nature conversation and cultural rights. In order to identify relevant experiences and challenges, I have prepared a questionnaire (attached), which I am hereby sending to States, United Nations agencies, national human rights institutions, academics, scientists, cultural workers and practitioners, as well as civil society organizations for their consideration. I look forward to benefiting from their diverse views and experiences.

Submissions should be sent electronically no later than **15 November 2025** to hrc-sr-culturalrights@un.org, using the email title: “Nature conservation and cultural rights”.

Please select and answer the questions most relevant for your country or organization / entity. Kindly limit your responses to **2,000 words** and attach annexes where necessary. To facilitate their consideration, please send responses in a Word document, and in English, French or Spanish. **Please clearly specify the entity making the contribution on the document itself and add paragraph numbers.**

Kindly note that all submissions will be posted on the OHCHR website.

I wish to thank you in advance for your cooperation and I hope to continue a constructive dialogue on issues related to my mandate.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration



Alexandra Xanthaki
Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

In her upcoming report to the Human Rights Council, to be presented in March 2026, the United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights, Ms. Alexandra Xanthaki, will consider **the intersections between nature conservation and cultural rights**.

The Special Rapporteur intends to explore synergies and challenges in ensuring both cultural rights and the conservation of nature at the same time. She intends to clarify how cultural rights – protecting identities, values and ways of life – are important to the field of nature conservation and vice versa. She will demonstrate that cultural rights are essential for a comprehensive understanding and plan of nature conservation, and vice versa. She will discuss how cultural rights amplify the implementation of the existing frameworks regarding nature conservation, and which types of situations and challenges demand particular attention to avoid infringing on cultural rights, which are universal human rights. She will also explore the issue of possible limitations to cultural rights in the name of nature conservation, and vice versa, under the conditions posed by international human rights law. The study will zoom in the sections of the population whose cultural rights are particularly affected by conservation practices; and will assess the work of the main stakeholders in this field.

In conducting this work, the Special Rapporteur will use the definition of cultural rights used by her mandate and other human rights mechanisms. Cultural rights protect the development and expression of cultural identities. At their core, they empower individuals and groups to express their humanity, worldviews and the meanings they attribute to their existence and development through various forms of human expressions. This can include the arts, cultural heritage or languages, as well as sciences, knowledge, convictions, religions and beliefs, sports and games, rites and ceremonies, production methods, technology, institutions and livelihoods, connections with nature and the environment, food and dress. They also encompass the rights to access and participate in heritage and resources that facilitate these processes of identification and development.

In order to identify relevant experiences and challenges, the Special Rapporteur has prepared a questionnaire, which is being sent out to States, United Nations agencies, national human rights institutions, academics, cultural workers and practitioners, as well as civil society organizations for their consideration. She looks forward to benefiting from the diverse views and experiences.

The call for contributions will be open from **10 October to 15 November 2025**.

Kindly limit your responses to 2,000 words and attach annexes where necessary. To facilitate their consideration, please send responses in a Word document, clearly specify the entity making the contribution on the document itself and add paragraph numbers. Responses can be sent in English, French or Spanish, to hrc-sr-culturalrights@un.org (email title: “Nature conservation and cultural rights”)

The contributions received will inform the report of the Special Rapporteur. Kindly note that all contributions received will be posted on the OHCHR website.

Questions

You may answer all questions or only those that are closer to your work and/or experience.

General

1. What are the main beliefs, practices, myths, stories, sports and ways of life in your country or territory, that foster the conservation of nature and the peaceful interaction between humans and nature?
2. In your country or territory, are there natural elements, resources or spaces that people are strongly tied to and wish to preserve as part of their heritage and are meaningful to their identities and ways of life? Please provide examples.
3. In your experience, what are the main beliefs and practices that impede nature conservation? What would be the most important cultural shifts needed to better protect natural resources and biodiversity?

Conservation projects, measures and policies

4. Please identify and share examples of conservation projects and measures that have involved traditional and/or local knowledges, languages, ways of life and practices in their elaboration and implementation. Provide information on how the use of these resources positively or negatively influenced outcomes of the project.
5. Please identify and share examples of conservation projects and measures that have failed, or that have met challenges because they did not respect the values and priorities of the people affected by them or did not align with their aspirations for development.
6. Please identify and share examples of measures taken to ensure respect, protection, promotion, and fulfilment of human rights in the context of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's goals and targets, as well as Section C. These could be the implementation of human rights impact assessments or the establishment of participation and consultation mechanisms with local and concerned populations. Please specify what impacts these measures have had on the implementation of the GBF.
7. Have you identified any human rights challenges related to biodiversity loss and/or measures adopted in the context of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? Please identify and share examples of conservation projects and measures that have implied restrictions to cultural rights, and explain the legitimacy such restrictions and under which provisions of international law?

8. What measures have been taken for the documentation and preservation of traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity, and for the recording and evaluation of the innovations, values and practices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities concerned by conservation efforts?
9. Please share information about any participatory approach that have been implemented in conservation projects, including measures to obtain free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and to involve people in awareness raising, at the local and national levels. Please explain the impact of promoting the contributions of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, people of African descent and local minorities, women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities, as active participants and partners in preserving biodiversity and enhancing nature conservation, restoration and sustainable use.
10. Please identify and share examples of how intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and donors have either advanced or impeded cultural rights in the context of conservation projects.
11. Please identify and share examples of how cultural rights are accounted for and protected in the scope of carbon markets and carbon offsetting schemes designed to protect biodiversity.
12. Please provide any additional information, examples and recommendations you believe would be useful to support the conservation of nature and biodiversity while promoting the full and effective enjoyment of cultural rights