



24 March 2025
9.00 am - New York time

THE AGORA MEETING

[#Culture2030Goal](#)

On 24 March 2025, the [#Culture2030Goal](#) campaign held the first meeting of its Agora, bringing together partners and supporters to strengthen collective advocacy for a stand-alone Culture Goal in global development agendas. The session introduced the Agora as a key space for shared strategy, highlighting the need for unity, outreach, and engagement to amplify impact.

Over 150 participants registered and were warmly welcomed into this growing network. The session covered a range of key topics, including the following:

1. PRESENTATION OF THE STEERING GROUP OF THE CAMPAIGN

Representatives of Arterial Network, Culture Action Europe, the International Music Council (IMC), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Council on Museums (ICOM), the International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) introduced themselves.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE AGORA

An overview of the role of the Agora, as set out in the [Governance Document](#) of the campaign, was provided. The importance of mobilising a wide range of stakeholders in achieving the goals of the campaign was clear, but also how the campaign's resources could help in national and local advocacy.

3. PLANS FOR 2025

In this segment, John Crowley presented the [roadmap for 2025](#), which sets out a path towards developing a revised draft of our [Culture Goal](#) proposal (zero-draft), presented in 2022. This zero-draft also includes an assessment of why we do not have a Culture Goal today.

John Crowley encouraged participants in the Agora to share expertise with the campaign, in particular around indicators. The campaign has prepared a document for networks and organisations to provide inputs on this work package (see annex 1).

4. THE SURVEY

The roadmap for 2025 of the campaign also includes an open [survey](#) into views of the contents of the Culture Goal, and potential indicators. This survey will remain open until 30 April 2025, and it is available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Chinese.

Participants were invited to respond to the survey and share it with others.

5. THE CAMPAIGN IN UNESCO'S MONDIACULT 2025

Jordi Pascual (UCLG) highlighted preparations for MONDIACULT, with an important event presenting the new version of the Culture Goal on 27 September 2025, in the Civic Agora to be organised in Barcelona in the frame of MONDIACULT. More details are still expected about MONDIACULT, which will be shared via the Agora list.

It was noted that it was important that MONDIACULT come out with a strong result, but the message needs to be taken elsewhere.

6. PLANNING AHEAD

The logic shared in the document about actions needed by 2027 was presented (see [here](#), and see also annex 2), with a strong need to identify champions and engage stakeholders outside of the culture field as well as the own colleagues of the campaign.

There was a valuable debate about potential allies, the need to find ways to integrate culture into debates about the key issues of our time (such as AI), as well as a warning that we should not take the future of the multilateral system for granted.

7. ADVOCACY

It was noted that while we focus, in our name, on the UN system, ultimately the goal was to change policy and practice at the national and local levels. If, through our advocacy, we can already improve this, that is a positive impact.

8. CULTURE IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL SPACES

It was shared that any comments on the [draft survey](#) would be very welcome, before there is a broader launch, likely in May.

9. OTHER KEY ACTIONS:

- | Interested individuals can formally sign up to join the Agora by following this [link](#).
- | The [survey on culture and sustainable development](#) is open for answers.
- | Inputs on indicators of culture and development can be shared with the campaign and with John Crowley by emailing john.crowley@phgd.group.

ANNEX 1: PREPARING THE INDICATORS OF THE CULTURE GOAL

The [Culture 2030 Goal campaign](#) will release a version 1 of the Culture Goal proposal in June 2025. This proposal will be explained in detail in the frame of UNESCO's Mondiacult (Barcelona, 29 September – 1 October 2025)

Work package 2 of the [Detailed Roadmap](#) (January-October 2025) towards developing a Culture Goal focuses on indicators. It is a basic principle of the SDG architecture that each target should be associated with indicators which provide a basis for mandatory as well as voluntary reporting. The SDG indicators are quantitative and uniform, based on validation by the UN Statistical Commission. Experience has shown that targets with weak indicators (of which SDG 16 targets 6 and 7 are good examples) tend to be neglected not just in reporting but in policy design and implementation.

The “zero draft” of #SDG18 published in 2022 does not contain a suite of indicators, though it does provide suggestions as to how indicators might be developed, focusing in particular on recognized and validated indicator suites, connected e.g. with the UNESCO culture conventions. Without prejudicing discussion to come on the targets to be included in the “first draft”, to be published in June 2025, the target numbering and wording of the “zero draft” are used hereafter for convenience. The full text of the “zero draft” is also attached as an appendix for reference.

The current challenge is to turn the suggestions in the “zero draft” into a credible suite of indicators covering all proposed targets. The first step, and the only one realistically achievable by June 2025, is systematic mapping, which involves two complementary tasks which can be conducted as distinct workstreams.

- A. Review of existing technical basis (e.g. in connection with UNESCO's conventions) in order to identify Culture Goal indicators by target that are ready for adoption under existing statistical standards, bearing in mind the ongoing update of UNESCO's culture indicators. This task relates mainly to targets 1-5.
- B. Identification of key gaps, notably relating to targets 6, 7, 8, a, and b, and mapping of possible strategies to address them, which in turn cover two distinct areas: (i) In the short-/medium-term, the drafting work can be based on an experimental approach reflecting existing voluntary practices e.g. at city level; (ii) Looking towards the longer term, proposals can be made for development of properly harmonized indicators in new areas.

Each task requires collecting

- 1. Information about existing indicators (what they're based on, how they're used, how widely recognized they are, how closely they map on to the proposed targets of the “zero draft”).
- 2. Reflections on indicators that could/should be developed, including methodological reflection on qualitative indicators, which may not fit within the intergovernmental framework of the SDGs, but could nonetheless be valuable in the “shadow” phase of voluntary adoption. Of particular importance in this regard are indicators that can give substance to targets a and b, reflecting the “quality” of cultural institutions and of transversal inclusion of cultural issues in the other 17 SDGs.

The members of the Steering Group, as well as other cultural networks (Culture Next and with the NGO community of the 2003 UNESCO Convention) are working in the collection of those indicators.

Other members of the Agora, as well as other key international networks and organisations are invited express interest (end on March) and submit a note in this regard (30 April 2025) on existing and/or new indicators, following to the guidance note attached.

GUIDANCE NOTE

The [Culture Goal Zero Draft](#) (September 2022) reads “Ensure cultural sustainability for the wellbeing of all” and has 10 targets. The table below provides a guidance for organisations to explain the indicators that are already in use and fit to any of the targets of the Culture Goal, as well as the “non-existing” and would be feasible to build in the coming years.

TARGETS	EXISTING (please indicate source)	NON-EXISTING
1. Realize cultural rights for all, by fostering inclusive access to and participation in cultural life, creativity and diversity of cultural expressions, in particular for women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities and vulnerable populations.		
2. Promote a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity.		
3. Protect and safeguard all forms of heritage, harness them as a resource for sustainable development, through existing conventions and other policy frameworks, as well as such new mechanisms as may be appropriate.		
4. Protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions to strengthen the creativity and development capacity of individuals and communities, through existing conventions and such new mechanisms as may be appropriate.		
5. In devising and implementing policies on cultural and creative industries, sustainable tourism and digital technologies, promote local culture and products, the economic and social rights of artists and cultural professionals and artistic freedom, and develop and implement appropriate monitoring tools.		

TARGETS	EXISTING (please indicate source)	NON-EXISTING
<p>6. Enhance legal conditions and practical opportunities for mobility of cultural professionals and cross-border creativity in the creation of cultural goods, services and practices through international multi-stakeholder collaboration.</p> <p>7. Empower indigenous peoples to strengthen their own institutions, cultures and languages, and to pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.</p> <p>8. Develop a cultural approach in environmental protection and sustainable urbanization, including land planning, landscape management, protection of biodiversity, agriculture and natural areas management, through heritage, local cultures and knowledge, creativity and arts.</p> <p>a. Strengthen cultural institutions, including through international cooperation, to build capacity at all levels to realize cultural rights and sustain cultural pluralism.</p> <p>b. Ensure, through transversal, multi-stakeholder collaboration, that cultural considerations are taken into account in all international development goals, at the outset of and throughout all policy-making processes, through engaging cultural sector actors, whether or not associated with pre-existing cultural targets.</p> <p>Is there a new target that you believe it is totally fundamental the campaign adds, now, in 2025?</p> <p>Name of your organisation</p> <p>Your name</p> <p>Date</p>		

ANNEX 2: TOWARDS 2030 (AND BEYOND)

KEY EVENTS

2025

- | HLPF (July)
- | Mondiacult (September)
- | World Social Summit (November)
- | COP (November)

2026

- | Selection of new UN Secretary General
- | COP (ongoing)

2027

- | HLPF (ECOSOC) (July)
- | HLPF (UNGA) (September): likely to be the formal start of discussions about post-2030

2028

- | Negotiation of post-2030 agenda (if there is one)
- | HLPF (ongoing)

2029

- | Agreement of post-2030 agenda (if there is one)
- | HLPF (ongoing)

IMPLICATIONS

By mid-2027, we need to have:

- Established a culture goal as a self-evident and broadly consensual topic among Member States
- A range of Member States willing to champion this (setting it as a red line)

By end-2026, we need to have:

- Built strong relationships with active Member States at the UN, ensuring that they are in turn aligned with their capitals (i.e. the relevant ministries are on board);
- A very strong of evidence and well worked-out plans for a Culture Goal, and wide awareness of these;
- A strong and diverse set of stakeholders supporting our work

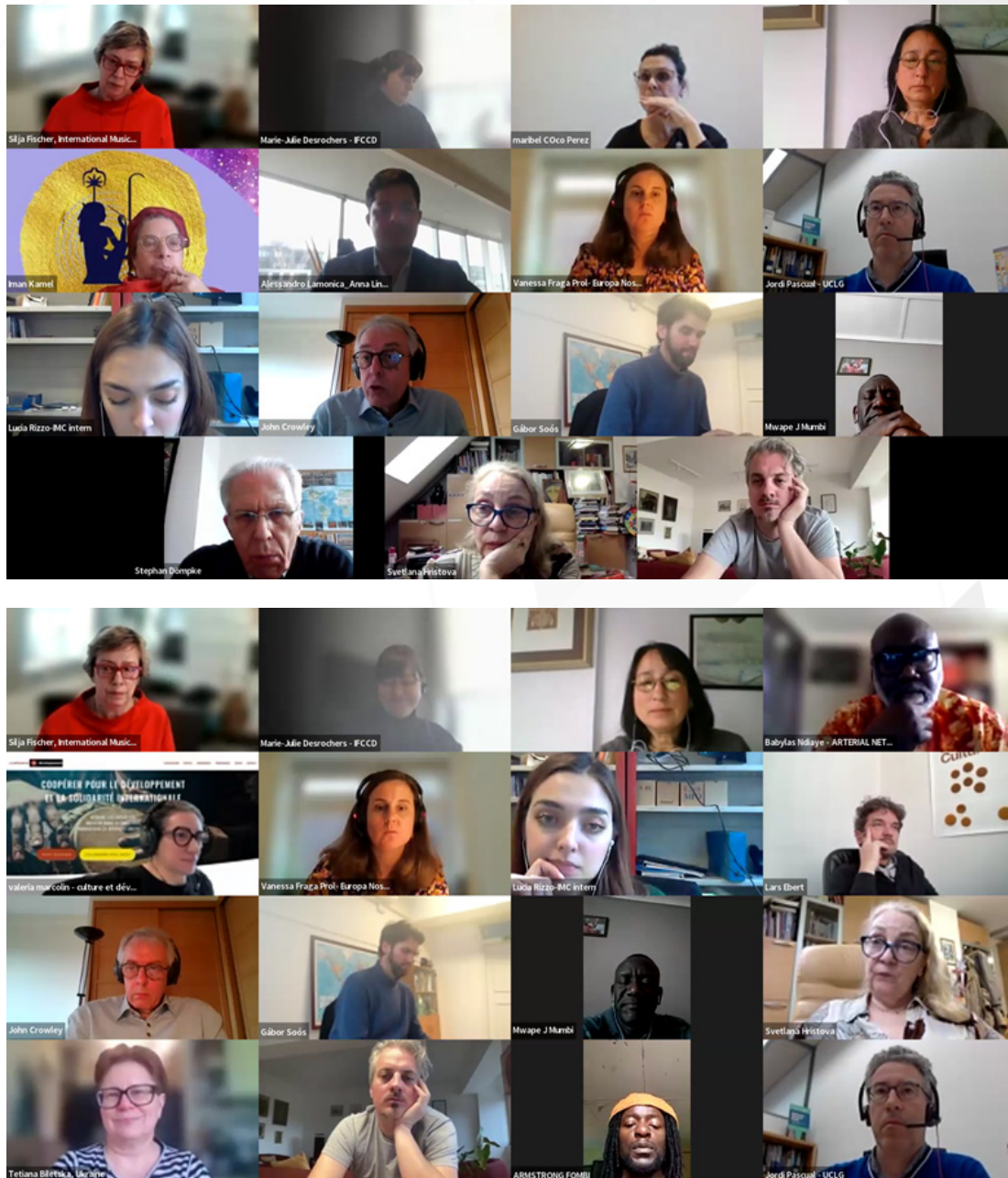
By mid-2026, we need to have:

- Widely disseminated and discussed the updated Culture Goal, including outside of the culture community
- Be well advanced in work to build complementary evidence and materials around the goal, notably to engage other stakeholder groups and relevant actors for agreeing the post-2030 Agenda
- Invested in building relationships with Member States (including in New York), including featuring them in events
- Strong alliances with some stakeholders and contacts with all other key ones

By end-2025, we need to have:

- Secured strong language in the UNGA Resolution on Culture and Development
- A strong and consistent output from MONDIACULT 2025, including a plan to disseminate this effectively among other ministries
- Expand the network of potentially friendly NY missions drawing on analysis of culture in VNRs

ANNEX 3: PICTURES OF THE MEETING



BACKGROUND

During the process of creation and adoption of the UN 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, several cultural global networks campaigned, under the banner '[The Future We Want Includes Culture](#)', for the inclusion of one specific Goal devoted to Culture, and the integration of cultural aspects across the SDGs. In the context of this #Culture2015goal campaign, 4 documents were produced: a [Manifesto – Proposal for a Goal](#) (September 2013), a [Declaration on the inclusion of culture in the 2030 Agenda](#) (May 2014), a [proposal of indicators for measuring the cultural aspects of the SDGs](#) (February 2015), and a [Communiqué on the final 2030 Agenda](#) (September 2015) which highlighted “progress made” but also noticed that “important steps remain ahead”.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the #Culture2030goal campaign released on 20 April 2020 a Statement entitled “[Ensuring culture fulfils its potential in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)”, which was [officially launched](#) on 21 May 2020, on the occasion of the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. The Statement has been [endorsed by the President of the United Nations General Assembly](#) and signed by more than 280 individuals and organisations worldwide.

The campaign has published two analytical (and critical) reports on the cultural dimension of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: “[Culture in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda](#)”, analysing the National Voluntary Reviews, in 2019, and “[Culture in the Localization of the SDGs: An Analysis of the Voluntary Local Reviews \(VLRs\)](#)”, in 2021. The campaign has also promoted several discussions in the context of the [2020](#) and [2021](#) United Nations High-Level Political Fora (HLPF).

In 2021, the campaign published its [strategic vision](#). The campaign wants a stronger place for culture throughout the implementation of the current UN 2030 Agenda, the adoption of an explicit Goal for Culture in the Post-2030 Development Agenda, and the adoption of an ambitious and comprehensive Global Agenda for Culture.

In 2022, in the context of the UNESCO Global Conference on Cultural Policies organised in Mexico City, Mondiacult 2022, the campaign launched a [Zerodraft of a future Culture Goal](#), and welcomed the undertaking in the Final Declaration of the Conference to integrate a specific Culture Goal in the post-2030 development agenda, with the Statement “[Commitment to an explicit culture goal in MONDIACULT Declaration welcome: now is the time to deliver](#)”.

In 2023, we have seen five key high-level, cross-governmental declarations that recognise the need for an explicit culture goal.

- I First of all, on 23 August 2023, the leaders of the [BRICS group](#) committed to integrate culture into their national development policies as a driver and an enabler for the achievement of the SDGs.

- I Second, on 9-10 September 2023, G20 heads of state and government released their [G20 Leaders Declaration](#) including a whole heading on culture as a transformative driver of the SDGs. In particular, they called to advance the inclusion of culture as a standalone Goal in future discussions on a possible post-2030 development agenda.
- I Third, all UN Member States, meeting at the [SDG Summit](#) on 18 September 2023, reaffirmed the role of culture as an enabler of sustainable development, contributing to more effective and sustainable development policies and measures at all levels.
- I The Ministers of Culture of the European Union adopted the [Caceres Declaration](#) on 26 September 2023, committing to work for culture to be recognised in and of itself as a new sustainable development goal.
- I The UCLG Culture Summit, on 30 November 2023, in the [Dublin Statement](#) reaffirmed the commitment of cities and local and regional governments in favour of a Culture Goal.
- I The [version 1 of the Pact for The Future](#) included the sentence “Integrate culture into economic, social and environmental development policies and strategies as a standalone goal, and as a central consideration to enhance implementation of the 2030 Agenda” in Action 7 “We will protect and promote culture as an integral component of sustainable development”.

These declarations point to a strong and positive trend in favour of substantial efforts to integrate culture into development agendas.

The Culture2030Goal campaign and its members stand ready to accelerate work in this area, working in partnership with relevant actors at all levels. The campaign looks forward to leading cross-governmental work programmes around the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the Pact for the Future. This includes the publication of a more in-depth proposal of a Culture Goal (to be published in July 2025 and to be presented in Mondiacult 2025) and the exploration of the feasibility of a Major Group within the UN system.



| **Arterial Network**

Web: www.arterialafrica.org



| **Culture Action Europe**

Web: www.cultureactioneurope.org



| **ICOM - International Council of Museums**

Web: www.icomos.org



| **ICOMOS - International Council on Monuments and Sites**

Web: www.icomos.org



| **IFCCD - International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity**

Web: www.ficdc.org



| **IFLA - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions**

Web: www.ifla.org



| **IMC - International Music Council**

Web: www.imc-cim.org



| **UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) Committee on Culture - Agenda 21 for culture**

Web: www.agenda21culture.net



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