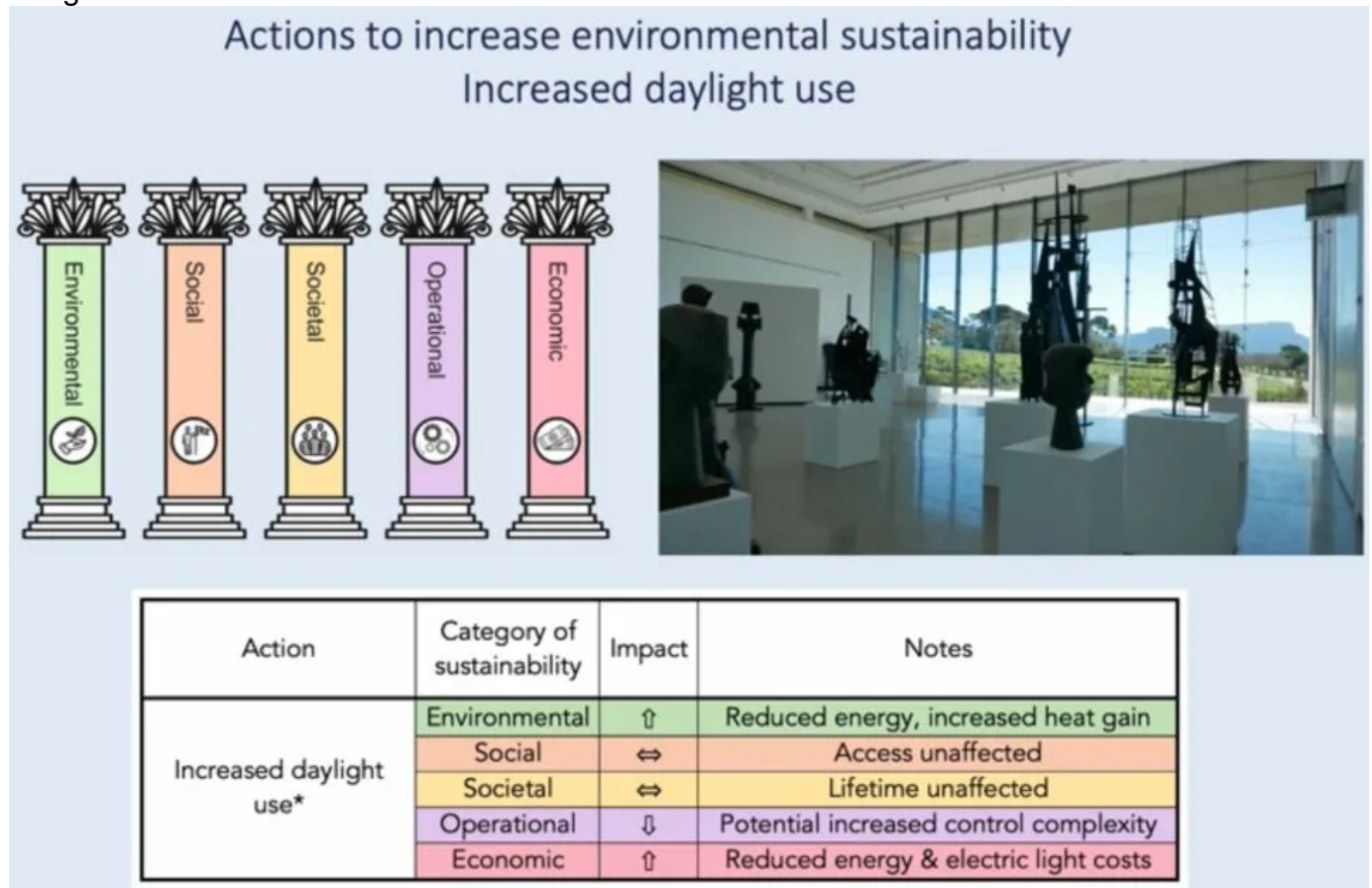


Regional Live Hub 2 (Part 1)

Submitted by Kate Smith on 07 Sep 2022

Image



Wed, 07/09/2022 - 11:03

Genevieve Sullivan

Tuesday, REGIONAL LIVE HUB (2) FOR INDIA AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

The Second Live Hub of the IIC Wellington Congress welcomed authors from Australia, China and the UK to present their projects which covered a range of topics including preventive monitoring, risk assessments, data sharing and the ongoing need to implement sustainable practices in conservation. An extended Q&A was facilitated by co-chairs Aditya Prakash Kanth, assistant professor and programme chair for the Centre for Heritage Management, Ahmedabad University, and Chaitra Sharad, assistant professor at IES College of Architecture, Mumbai.

The session began with Anthanasios Velios addressing an often-overlooked component of conservation: documentation. In collaboration with Kristen St John, Velios' publication Linked

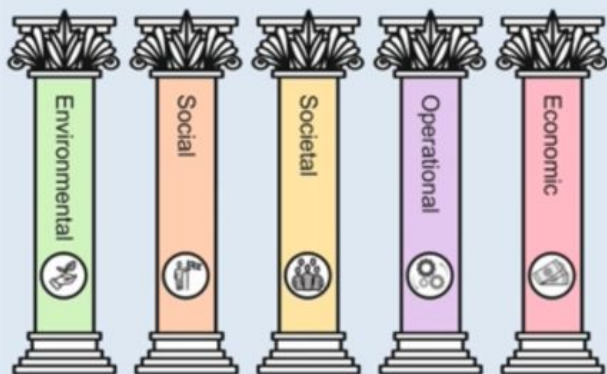
Conservation Data: Driving Change in Documentation Practice reported on work undertaken by the Linked Conservation Data consortium which develops resources for the use of linked data for conservation. Questions for Anthanasios were largely centred around the role of machine learning within the project and the need for conservators to embrace technology and learn the necessary skills to utilise it as a method of sharing documentation on cultural collections.

Katy Lithgow and Helen Lloyd were next to impart their knowledge to the audience, sharing their research on the changing role of caring for historic houses and their associated collections, published in their work, *A Long View Of Change In Caring For Historic House Interiors: From Housekeeping To Preventive Conservation, Collections Care And Beyond*. Tasks, such as closing windows to prevent dust from entering the home and covering furniture with cloth to prevent light damage, once fell to housekeepers. But now preventive conservators use digital monitors and risk assessments to limit the impact of the agents of deterioration. Lithgow and Lloyd advocate for a conservator not fearful of displaying objects but one able to collaborate with owners, curators and other professionals to take measured risks. Questions about Lithgow and Lloyd's work led to discussion of the sometimes perceived conflict between accessibility and conservation and the need to balance these needs.

This conversation was taken up by David Saunders whose presentation *A Methodology for Modelling Conservation, Access and Sustainability* similarly addressed these ideas with the additional consideration of sustainability. Saunders presented a detailed analysis of how conservators and other heritage professionals need to consider sustainability not only in terms of environmental protection but also social, societal, operational and economic terms. This is summarised in the table from Saunders' presentation considering these elements with the action of allowing increased daylight use in a museum. One of the most memorable comments from the Q&A came from Saunders who remarked that museums, and other heritage spaces, are often a refuge for those who may not be able to afford to heat their homes and that these buildings not only have historical and cultural relevance but social value too.

Actions to increase environmental sustainability

Increased daylight use



Action	Category of sustainability	Impact	Notes
Increased daylight use*	Environmental	↑	Reduced energy, increased heat gain
	Social	↔	Access unaffected
	Societal	↔	Lifetime unaffected
	Operational	↓	Potential increased control complexity
	Economic	↑	Reduced energy & electric light costs

The topic of sustainable conservation practice was continued by Amanda Paliarino whose talk titled Climate Change, Climate Action And Cultural Heritage Collections In Australia addressed the need for immediate and significant climate action to protect our cultural heritage legacy. Paliarino encourages use of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials Climate Adaptation Resource which provides access to 180 maps demonstrating potential future climate scenarios, based on research by Paliarino and Meredith. Questions from attendees were largely focused on how Australian museums were responding or adapting to climate change and concluded that reducing energy usage is a particularly useful process as it also reduces energy costs.



To complete the session, Guoqing Zhang presented his work titled Risk Assessment And Monitoring of Termites In The Forbidden City Under Global Warming. Termites pose a significant threat to ancient wooden buildings and given the warming climate, their activity is expanding. Just as the session opened on the development of a new system for data sharing, the session closed on the innovation of a real-time termite monitoring system introduced by Zhang and his team. Zhang assured the audience that this system would be suitable in other museums after the risk of termites had been properly assessed.

While not the intentional focus of the session, all six authors in some way addressed the changing role of conservators, the importance of access within historical institutions or the increasing need to mitigate the impact of climate change, often considering several of these themes within their presentations.

Author:

Genevieve Sullivan is a student object conservator at the University of Melbourne.

Image Captions:

Image 1- Screen shot from 'A Methodology for Modelling Conservation, Access and Sustainability. Image taken by Genevieve Sullivan from India and South East Asia Live Hub.

Image 2- Screen shot of authors, co-chairs, DEVs and IIC congress organisers during the Q&A for the India and South East Asia Live Hub. Image taken by Genevieve Sullivan.