

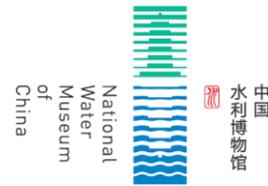


Hangzhou Manifesto

of the Global Network of Water Museums

January 26, 2021

We, representatives of the Global Network of Water Museums (WAMU-NET), participants in the webinar entitled “Embracing Changes”, organized in cooperation with the National Water Museum of China (Hangzhou) and the UNESCO Beijing Office, after extensive discussion and reflection, declare that while the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a catastrophic impact on all museums and cultural institutions worldwide, our courage and determination to build a more sustainable future concerning the planet’s water and its uses will never fail. While a few water museums have reopened, others remain closed. We call on our Global Network to work together with a renewed spirit of solidarity and mutual cooperation to explore new opportunities, to design and share new approaches and solutions that will enable us to overcome the effects of the pandemic and to make full use of advanced technologies - such as digital technology



and artificial intelligence - to address the new challenges that are emerging.

We attach further importance to cherishing clean water resources for the protection of the environment and of human health, strengthening the connections between water museums and local communities, and disseminating the concept of a New Water Culture for the protection and sustainable use of all water resources, thus contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

To this end, we jointly agree to:

Strengthening our Partnership

Water museums participate already in the activities coordinated by the Global Network of Water Museums in order to share best practices and resources through seminars, enhance mutual understanding of different water cultures through joint research projects, and mobilize a wide range of publics and audiences, as in *The Water We Want* Youth Contest and Campaign. We commit to providing further cultural water services to the public through the Internet and social media, and to achieving the all-round development of water museum practitioners through new distance training programs.



Fostering more enlightened water perceptions and more sustainable uses and practices

Conscious that culture plays a fundamental role in uniting and inspiring people and in building the foundations of a peaceful and prosperous humanity, we agree to strengthen the future activities of water museums to develop visitors, and especially young generations, into “ambassadors” of a New Water Culture characterized by new awareness and more sustainable water uses and practices, through education activities, positive attitudes, social mobilization and a sense of responsibility. The dissemination and popularization of scientific knowledge about our water heritage and its integration into modern and more sustainable water management approaches shall be pursued both by individual water museums and by the Global Network as a whole. Learning from the ancient water wisdom and the assets of our water heritage is crucial for achieving future sustainability. To this end, we shall begin new activities focusing on sustainable water management models that must be disseminated urgently to responsible agencies and the general public.

Promoting smart development models

While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought many new challenges, it has also brought new opportunities concerning the development of water museums. We recognize that digital and



virtual exhibitions in museums in general will become a “new normality”. Therefore, we are committed to promoting the smart development of water museums and of agile structures such as ecomuseums and interpretation centers, where new educational approaches on water awareness can be developed; and sharing the benefits of scientific and technological progress by providing multiple services through all the tools available in the age of digital communication.

Building new solidarity and international cooperation

The Global Network of Water Museums represents a unique platform, acknowledged by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme, that helps water museums to join forces with all sectors – locally and globally - to bring a new water culture more widely into communities, schools, public administrations and the private sector. By supporting efforts for solidarity and mutual help in dealing with challenges such as the pandemic, we will work to inspire dedication and a spirit of responsibility in transmitting the benefits of our water heritage to future generations. We therefore unite behind a vision of water museums as cultural, even spiritual vehicles helping to carry people towards a better world.