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| **Project ID: 2021-1-CZ01-KA220-SCH-000034484**  Ein Bild, das Grafiken, Grafikdesign, Cartoon, Text enthält.  Automatisch generierte Beschreibung  **COURSE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**  *e-Modules: Teaching Learning activities and their technology enhanced material set to develop*  Ein Bild, das Text, Schrift, Logo, Grafiken enthält.  Automatisch generierte Beschreibung  **Thematic Units for Week-Long Workshop Sessions:**  **Inquiry-Based Integrated Learning Workshop Series**  **on the Intersection of Arts, Science, and Policy"**  **M5: The impact of Environmental Problems and Climate Change on cultural Practices: Women.Arts.Solidarity**  **COURSE AUTHOR:**  ***©Tatjana Christelbauer MA (TC)*** ACD Team, Austria   |  | | --- | |  |   ***DISCLAIMER***  *Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.*  **COURSE SHARING LICENSE CC BY-NC-SA**=   **Canonical URL:** <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>  **MODULE: 5**  **LESSON: Women.Arts.Solidarity. example from dance arts practice** |

**"The Impacts of Environmental Problems and Climate Change on Education and Cultural Practices"**

**Guiding Questions to Spark Interest**

*How do environmental problems and climate change affect cultural practices and traditions around the world?*

*In what ways can digital platforms and virtual projects help preserve and adapt cultural practices disrupted by environmental challenges?*

*How can solidarity and humanitarian actions support communities in maintaining their cultural heritage in the face of environmental and climate disruptions?*

1. **Introduction**

Environmental problems and climate change are not just issues of science and politics; they deeply affect cultural practices and traditions. From indigenous rituals tied to the land to national festivals dependent on specific weather patterns, the disruption of the natural environment can lead to significant changes in cultural expressions and practices. This introduction will explore the impacts of environmental problems and climate change on cultural practices, focusing on both individual and national levels, and highlight how digital cultural diplomacy and virtual platforms can support well-being and cultural preservation.

According to The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OECD, ´*Extreme weather events have far-reaching implications that affect human lives, well-being, infrastructure and property. By extension, they pose a significant threat to school buildings, accessibility, and the educational experience overall. Extreme weather events can require students' relocation to alternative areas, lead to the closure of schools, hinder the learning of students, and increase the poverty and vulnerability of students and their families. At present, it is estimated that extreme weather events disrupt the education of approximately 40 million children worldwide and this number is only expected to increase in the near future (Theirworld, 2023[149]; UNESCO, 2023[150]). Subsequently, it is important for governments to make their education systems more resilient against extreme weather events and the consequences of climate change in general. (OECD, 2023[151]) describes resilience as comprising four key stages: awareness, assessment, action, and adaptation: • Awareness refers to enhancing understanding of the potential impacts of climate change on different sectors, regions, and communities. • Assessment involves measuring the exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity of different systems to climate change. • Action involves the implementation of the most appropriate and effective responses. • Adaptation applies to a set of actions that reduce the vulnerability of individuals and societies to the impacts of climate change.*

*This includes building safe and flexible learning spaces, the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services and protecting students’ and teachers’ health and well-being.´[[1]](#footnote-1)*

1. **The Impact of Environmental Problems on Cultural Practices**

Environmental changes can disrupt the very foundation of many cultural traditions. For example, in Austria, the Alpine region's traditional practices like yodeling, cattle drives, and alpine farming festivals are threatened by changes in climate. Melting glaciers and changing snow patterns not only affect the region's biodiversity but also the cultural events and practices that are integral to local identity and tourism.

**3. Navigating Cultural and Educational Disruption in the Face of Climate Change**

**Introduction:** guiding insights for engaging in research, reflection, discussion, and project activities on the topic, on the intersection of cultural and educational disruption with climate change and environmental challenges. In this lesson, we will explore how environmental issues pose threats to cultural practices, traditions, identity, and heritage, and how we can understand and address these challenges.

* 1. **Entry guide on the topic: Pandemic: #blueprint responses, social climate acts**

*What does it mean to ´navigate´?*

In the political context, means to design and to follow a detailed plan or program of action, such as ´Blueprint´policy documents.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

is fully committed to addressing the impact of climate change on culture, and to enhancing the potential of culture for global climate action, through natural areas protected by the World Heritage Convention, the safeguarding of intangible heritage and traditional knowledge, and support to cultural institutions and actors, drawing on all its international conventions in the field of culture.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The EU Solidarity Fund can provide funding to protect cultural heritage in the event of natural disasters, once the EP and the Council have approved specific Commission proposals. Over €7 million has been devoted to the reconstruction of Greek cultural heritage sites after the November 2015 earthquake in the Ionian Islands. The Cohesion Fund can also be used in such cases. It is to provide €5 million for the reconstruction of the Basilica of Benedict of Norcia (Italy), after an earthquake destroyed it in October 2016. The reconstruction effort has also benefited from the help of European Solidarity Corps volunteers since August 2017[[3]](#footnote-3)

Across the globe, youth-led climate movements such as Fridays for Future, Extinction Rebellion, and the Sunrise Movement are gaining momentum. Inspired by the urgency of the climate crisis, young activists organize strikes, protests, and grassroots campaigns to demand bold action from policymakers and corporations. Their art often reflects themes of environmental justice, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable living, serving as a powerful tool for raising awareness and mobilizing collective action on climate change.

For youth growing up in regions affected by wars and conflicts, such as Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan, the consequences are profound. Displacement, trauma, and loss of life disrupts their sense of identity and belonging, leaving a lasting imprint on their cultural expression.

Through art, poetry, and storytelling, young people in conflict zones often grapple with themes of resilience, loss, and hope, offering poignant reflections on the human cost of war and the enduring power of resilience.

Art and culture supports the positive social climate, helps to promote acceptance of environmentally related measures and strengthen the cooperation of all parties involved to achieve ecological sustainability.

"In 2024, a total of 23.6 million euros will be available to secure the operation of arts and culture in austria. Of this amount, 12.4 million euros are allocated to federal cultural institutions, 5.17 million to federal museums, and 7.23 million to federal theaters, and 11.2 million euros to the field of art promotion."

In 2020, by the outbreak of the pandemic, during the first lockdown, many museums and schools could transition their activities to virtual platforms and outdoor settings to continue engaging with their audiences. For instance, Austrian museums offered virtual tours, allowing people to explore their collections online and have provided digital educational resources for students. This shift to virtual and outdoor activities played a crucial role in mitigating feelings of isolation and supporting mental health by maintaining cultural and educational connections.

During the first lockdown in 2020, Austria implemented various measures to ensure the continuation of art and cultural activities, recognizing their importance for mental health and societal cohesion.

Here are a few examples of how Austria funded and supported the arts and culture during this challenging period:

**COVID-19 Support Fund for Artists**:

The Austrian government established a support fund specifically for freelance artists and cultural workers who were severely affected by the lockdown. This fund provided financial assistance to help cover their basic living expenses and support their artistic activities.

**Cultural Institutions Support Package**:

Austria allocated significant funds to support cultural institutions, such as museums, theaters, and galleries, that faced financial difficulties due to the pandemic. This package aimed to ensure that these institutions could continue their operations, maintain staff, and plan for post-pandemic activities.

**Digital Cultural Initiatives**:

The Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport (BMKOES) funded various digital initiatives to help cultural institutions and artists transition to online platforms. This included support for virtual exhibitions, online performances, and digital archives, enabling the public to continue accessing cultural content from home.

**Outdoor Cultural Projects**:

Recognizing the restrictions on indoor gatherings, Austria supported outdoor cultural projects that adhered to health guidelines. This included funding for open-air concerts, outdoor theater performances, and public art installations, allowing people to safely engage with the arts.

These initiatives not only helped sustain the cultural sector during the lockdown but also underscored the importance of the arts in fostering resilience and community during times of crisis.

**For more detailed information, you can refer to the following sources:**

Country reports: <https://www.culturalpolicies.net/covid-19/country-reports/austria/>

[European Museum Academy (2020).](https://europeanmuseumacademy.eu/) "Museums in the Pandemic: Impact, Innovation, and Planning for Post-COVID-19."

[UNESCO (2020).](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000373530) "Museums Around the World in the Face of COVID-19."

Austrian Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, the Civil Service and Sport (BMKOES). "COVID-19 Support Measures for the Cultural Sector."

[ORF.at](https://orf.at) (2020). "Government Support for Artists and Cultural Institutions During the Pandemic."

[European Commission](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/). (2021). "Creative Europe: Support Measures for the Cultural and Creative Sectors."

1. ***Examples from good practices***

***4.1. The Wachau Valley***

One notable example of the protection of cultural heritage in Europe threatened by environmental issues is the **Protection of the Wachau Cultural Landscape:**

The Wachau Valley, the green heart of the Lower Austria province is an UNESCO World Heritage[[4]](#footnote-4) site along the Danube River, which faces regular flooding which threatens its vineyards, medieval towns, and historical buildings. Due to the climate change,increasing temperatures and changing precipitation patterns are impacting the region's viticulture, an integral part of its cultural landscape.

Efforts to protect the region's historical architecture and archaeological sites are crucial for maintaining the cultural identity of the Wachau Valley.

Protecting the Wachau Valley from environmental threats supports the local economy, which relies heavily on tourism and wine production.

Projects have been undertaken to restore natural floodplains along the Danube, allowing the river to flood areas that can absorb excess water without damaging property or cultural sites.

Construction of dikes, levees, and mobile flood barriers to protect key areas during high water events. Viticulturists are researching and implementing new practices to adapt to changing climate conditions, ensuring the preservation of traditional grape varieties and the cultural practices associated with winemaking.

These examples highlight the efforts in Austria to protect cultural heritage from environmental threats and the role of influential individuals like Hundertwasser in advocating for the preservation of natural and cultural landscapes.

Ein Bild, das Panorama, draußen, Himmel, Wolke enthält.

Automatisch generierte Beschreibung

By Wolfgang Glock - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=29304695>

Ein Bild, das Baum, draußen, Wasser, Landschaft enthält.

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By Walter Hochauer (= Hochauer on de.wikipedia, Hochauer on Wikipedia Commons) - selbst fotografiert durch Walter Hochauer, CC BY-SA 2.0 de, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1259136>

**Engage in research:** How is the environmental and cultural heritage protected in your country and in your local community?

Create a weeks-long project for research and communication. Engage in conversation with local authorities, ask for informations, create together an art project inspired by environmental and cultural heritage to promote its protection. More by your ideas …

**Guiding Questions designed to engage learners in exploring the intersection of cultural and educational disruption with climate change and environmental challenges:**

*° Reflect on some examples of cultural practices or traditions in your daily life and community, and if that have been affected by environmental changes or climate-related*

*events? How have these changes impacted your personal or collective cultural identity?*

*°How, and throughout you define your cultural identity: in terms of practices, lifestyle, …?*

*° From your understanding, what is perceived as "cultural heritage"? And how would you describe the "environmental sustainability"?*

*Can you think of ways in which preserving cultural heritage and promoting environmental sustainability might support each other?*

*° Reflect on a time when you or your community faced an environmental challenge, if any, or remember if you have followed some news in the media about.*

*How did it affect your daily life, education, and cultural practices, or of those affected?*

*What measures were taken to address or adapt to these challenges?*

*° In what ways can we use arts, science, and policy to raise awareness about the impact of climate change on cultural heritage? Can you propose a project or activity that combines these fields to promote both cultural preservation and environmental sustainability?*

*° Discuss the importance of inclusivity in addressing climate change and cultural disruption. How can we ensure that diverse voices, including those of visually impaired individuals, are heard and considered in environmental and cultural policymaking?*

*Document your discussion points and key insights.*

***Follow-Up Exercise: Project-Based Learning Activity***

***Objective:*** *To explore and address the impact of environmental challenges on cultural practices, traditions, identity, and heritage through research, reflection, discussion, and creative project activities. Based on your research and discussion, develop a creative project that addresses the intersection of cultural preservation and environmental sustainability. The project can be an art performance, a short documentary, a blog series, a podcast episode, or any other format that combines arts, science, and policy. Prepare a presentation to showcase your project, invite guests for other educational institutions, policy makers, art professionals, engage in collaborative discussions and create further activities together Reflect on how the projects can inspire further actions and initiatives within the school or community.*

* 1. ***Alpen.Mythen.Frauen[[5]](#footnote-5) ACD-Agency for Cultural diplomacy project***

*"Alpen.Mythen.Frauen”* project series by ACD-Agency for cultural Diplomacy explores the intersection of arts with current societal and political discourses in the Alpine region. It discusses the importance of sustainable development in the Alps and the role of art in promoting awareness and action towards this goal, as well as the project's alignment with the principles of the Alpine Convention which was groundbreaking as the first international treaty for sustainable development in the Alps.

Excerpt from the Alpine Convention: *"A sustainable development in the Alps can only be successful if the social and economic models take into account the needs and opinions of the people living in the Alpine region. This also includes focusing on and raising awareness of the essential and intrinsic role of intact nature for the quality of life in the Alps: as a basis for agriculture, tourism, and recreation, for protection against natural hazards, and for many other important ecosystem services."*

The general obligations set out in the framework convention mention as the first point (Article 2, 2a) Population and Culture with the aim of

*"Respect, preservation, and promotion of the cultural and social independence of the resident population and the safeguarding of their livelihoods, namely environmentally friendly settlement and economic development, as well as the promotion of mutual understanding and partnership behavior between alpine and non-alpine population".*

*Based on this obligation, the "Declaration on Population and Culture" was adopted in 2006, and in the Multiannual Work Programme 2017-2022, the Alpine population is once again a priority action area of the Alpine Convention.[[6]](#footnote-6)*

In recognition of the significant principles of the Alpine Convention, and insights reflected from their art practice, acknowledging that arts and cultural education enable a diversity of methods for knowledge transfer based on experience and engagement, thereby increasing awareness of the 'essential and intrinsic role of intact nature for the quality of life in the Alps',

the project team, consisting of 5 women artist from Austria and Slovenia, and Switzerland has decided to support the implementation of Alpine Convention goals with their project activities, connecting with existing initiatives and developing further partnerships.

In particular, the team situates their activities around the Sustainable Development Goal 4, which focuses on Quality Education, SDG 15 Life on Land, and the SDG 17.17., through strategic partnerships in the Alpine region and beyond.

Through contributions from artistic fields, high-quality education which promotes inclusive, diversity-sensitive, and fair education for all should be conveyed and enabled, thereby also supporting the realization of further goals, such as SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being, through SDG 17.17

The multimedia project "Alpen.Mythen.Frauen” has been developed as extension of the virtual art project which started in 2020, during the outbreak of the Corona pandemic and the 1st lockdown under the title: *“Women.Art.Solidarity 2020..."*[[7]](#footnote-7) Urgency was given by the COVID-19 Crisis

and its effects on existential uncertainty especially for professionals from arts and cultural fields, due to the canceled working projects, mental health, and

perspectives toward the development of new opportunities by use of digital tools, that will last beyond the crisis.

The virtual project was situated in a closed Fb group and was characterized by a shared vision of the project participants to support each other in challenging times and to generate the impact of art practice on health and wellbeing; to encourage cultural political discussion related to remote work, existential uncertainty due to the canceled and postponed art events and activities; to provide an example on solidarity and to build together a base for further cooperations and develop together new formats for community outreach.

Collection of artworks (paintings, drawings, poetry, dance pieces, music composition, and photography has been documented and summarized in the virtual album and short summary with images form activities shared by project participants video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJgLUBxkZxs> and an ArtManifest C-19 response has been drafted by the project team and shared via media pages: <https://www.acdvienna.org/art-health-2030/artmanifesto-c-19/>

By imagining the future within a virtual space, project participants have created opportunities for economic progress in the fields of art and culture through their engagement in the actual political initiatives such as the [Fair Pay](https://www.igkultur.at/projekt/fair-pay) initiative, [Initiative Tanz&Bewegungskunst in Österreich](https://www.facebook.com/initiativetanzbewegung/), by signing petitions and delivering evidence-based data and suggestions for changes and establishment of the sustainable financial base for professionals in the field of art and culture.

Resources developed during the virtual project has been further adapted in various projects and platforms for international collaborations, such as the platform d.a.4h dance arts4 health. <https://www.acdvienna.org/art-health-2030/d-a4h-dance-arts4health/>

**Guiding questions for analyzing the topic of green skills and green jobs in dance arts:**

*How does the multimedia art project "Alpen. Mythen.Frauen” (Alps, Women, Mythology) " reflect the principles of the Alpine Convention regarding sustainable development*

*in the Alps?*

*What specific skills can be observed in the artistic endeavors of the project team and what an impact may have had artistic practice on health and wellbeing of the project team?*

*Reflecting on the project's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, how did the virtual realization of certain project elements during the lockdown period demonstrate adaptability and resilience, and what lessons can be drawn from this experience for future green initiatives in the arts?*

**Exchange** your impressions with your colleagues, reflect on your practices in the time of the lockdown, make a collection of good practices in challenging times. Connect, present, practice ..



1. Source: OECD, 2024: Rethinking Education in the Context of Climate Change: Leverage Points for Transformative Change OECD Education Working Paper No 307 ( p.38, 4.3)

   <https://one.oecd.org/document/EDU/WKP(2024)02/en/pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNESCO documents, webpages related to the topic: <https://www.unesco.org/en/climate-change/culture>

   <https://www.un.org/en/actnow/ten-actions-world-working-together>

   <https://www.un.org/en/actnow/communication-materials> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Briefing EU: Cultural Heritage in EU Politics p.7: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2018/621876/EPRS_BRI(2018)621876_EN.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Webpage UNESCO: Wachau valley: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/970/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Project info Webpage: <https://www.acdvienna.org/art-health-2030/alpenmythenfrauen/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Source: <https://www.alpconv.org/de/startseite/themen/bevoelkerung-kultur/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Project info webpage: <https://www.acdvienna.org/acd-dance-arts/c-19-women-art-solidarity2020/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)