

# culture | futures

## **Private Sector, Civil Society and Cultural Organisations Agree on Worldwide Collective Action for Climate**

Culture|Futures Collaboration Begins its Spiral of Engagement in Copenhagen

**14 December 2009, Copenhagen:** Following three days of discussions, there was agreement among organisations from the private sector, civil society and cultural bodies, to collaborate across all sectors and regions to act together for the climate. Actors including Arup, the Danish Cultural Institute, the British Council, Asia Europe Foundation, EUNIC, the RSA, IFACCA and very many other agreed to take positive action towards shaping and delivering a cultural agenda that supports the necessary transition to a sustainable way of life. The discussion was also attended by UNESCO.

There was an agreement to visualise this as living in the ecological age – living with efficient use of renewable resources and improving quality of life at the same time. In the coming months Culture|Futures will publish a strategy paper, that outlines how it will support, encourage and guide cultural players.

Culture is a crucial, and underestimated, dimension for achieving COP15's climate change goals. These trusted organisations are each able to influence individual and community attitudes and actions so that people act collectively and naturally, in ways that sustain our planet.

Olaf Gerlach-Hansen, Danish Cultural Institute and co-founder of Culture|Futures: "Culture can support the bridging between politics, policies and communities and help with the understanding that dealing with climate change is part of a transition to a more sustainable

future. The combined effort of cultural actors will be one of the most powerful agents for change that the world has ever seen.”

Arup Director, Peter Head, said: “A fast transition in lifestyle and of our global understanding of success, are essential to move to a low carbon resource efficient model of human development. The world’s arts and culture community are ready to play a key role and Arup’s research has provided a clearer vision of what a sustainable future might be. The connected energy of the culture community could help accelerate and ease the inevitable transition.”

Oleg Koefoed, who summarized conclusions at the Culture|Futures conference, and is a member of the international arts and culture network Cultura21, said: “Culture holds the power to engage people, we have seen many examples of this in the past three days at Culture|Futures. Cultural agents can make the difference between success and failure when it comes to reaching a sustainable or ecological age. This is the difference between a paragraph and poem, between a graph and a sculpture, or between a declaration and an installation.”

Culture|Futures is originally the brainchild of the Danish Cultural Institute and global engineering and design consultancy, Arup. Established within the cultural community, the alliance was inspired and underpinned by the concept of achieving an ecological age, articulated by Arup Director Peter Head in his Brunel Lecture and Report: Entering the Ecological Age. An ecological age is defined as one in which we take the following steps by 2050:

- Reduce carbon dioxide emissions by a global average of 50% compared to 1990 levels.
- Decrease the global Ecological Footprint (the amount of land it takes to produce the resources to support each member of the population) to 1.44gha/capita.
- Improve the Human Development Index.

For further information about Culture|Futures and its recommendations, please visit [www.culturefutures.org](http://www.culturefutures.org).

## ENDS

To arrange to speak with someone about Culture|Futures, please contact Olaf Gerlach-Hansen on [ogh@culturefutures.org](mailto:ogh@culturefutures.org) (+45 23608500) or [Martin.Farrell@get2thepoint.org](mailto:Martin.Farrell@get2thepoint.org) (+44 (0) 7971 885 991).

