

Core Principles and Ethics



Vision Statement

The **Ocean Decade Heritage Network** is an international NGO that has the aims of *raising awareness* in the cultural heritage community about the [UN's Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030](#), *coordinating a targeted global response* from the community to improve the integration of cultural heritage within the marine sciences during the Decade's Implementation Phases (2021-30), and *informing the ocean science community* about the significance and contribution of cultural heritage to data sets and sustainability goals and practices.

We want to ensure that in raising awareness about the Decade and related activities, we are inclusive. Through our outreach endeavours and advisory activities, we share information on upcoming conferences and meetings, network activities, projects, policy points and resources. We aim to make this information publicly available and accessible through the network, colleagues and partners.

Core Principles

We encourage all ODHN members and collaborators to uphold the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in research, policy engagement, outreach, and knowledge exchange. Cultivating an ethical, safe, inclusive, and diverse culture—whether in the workplace, in the field, or in the classroom—fosters an environment built on trust, respect, and equity.

ODHN seeks to strengthen our core principles through the following actions:

1. **Raise Awareness, Coordinate, and Facilitate Knowledge Exchange.** ODHN is committed to raising awareness within the global cultural heritage community about the Decade and enabling meaningful, coordinated engagement with its objectives by:
 - **Providing** an open platform for information sharing and resources
 - **Facilitating** dialogue and collaboration across heritage, ocean science, and policy communities and other related stakeholders of the Decade
 - **Encouraging** constructive participation at international, regional, and national levels

2. **Foster Ethical Stewardship and Protection of Ocean Heritage.** ODHN is committed to safeguarding Ocean Heritage (marine, maritime, underwater, and coastal tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage). We acknowledge we are stewards of this irreplaceable and finite resource, recognise heritage as a contributor to well-being and resilience, and will work to promote activities that lead to its protection, conservation, and public understanding by:
 - **Integrating** cultural and natural heritage perspectives in our engagements
 - **Addressing** threats through responsible and evidence-based practice
 - **Ensuring** ethical handling and sharing of cultural and digital heritage data

3. **Advance Accountability, Partnerships, and Inclusive Governance.** ODHN is committed to advancing accountability through equitable partnerships that support just, transparent, and inclusive ocean governance by:
 - **Promoting** and **engaging** in respectful, mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders
 - **Prioritising** local, coastal, and descendant community engagement
 - **Furthering** ethical integration of heritage knowledge into governance and policy processes

4. **Commit to Anti-Racism, Equity, and Historical Justice.** ODHN is committed to promoting anti-racist, inclusive, and equitable approaches to Ocean Heritage research, governance, and knowledge production by:
 - **Committing** to meaningful and long-lasting change in research and practice that broaden and diversify historical narratives, including centring voices of historically silenced or marginalized peoples
 - **Supporting** scholarship and policy engagement that explores voices that have been silenced by systemic racism