The Swedish National Heritage Board
A government agency for cultural heritage.
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Tools and methods for sustainable maintenance of cultural heritage of stone

Photo: H. Simonsson, the manor house of family Trolle Ljungby from the 17th century, Skåne.
Sustainability for the sake of our children:

“Sustainability focuses on meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.”


”The regulations in this law are aiming at safeguarding the future generations access to a variety of cultural heritage sites.”

The Swedish Cultural Heritage law, 1 §

Photo: H. Simonsson, a runestone on Öland, in a world heritage area
What the Heritage Board are working with:

Some examples:

- 15 world heritage sites
- 41 cultural reserves (with high natural values)
- 1,771 areas of national interest, cultural heritage and nature sites
- 2,500 listed buildings (with their surroundings)
- 3,700 churches
- 10,000 rural or local folk museums
- 100,000 public art
- 700,000 registered archaeological sites
- 63,000,000 museum objects

Photo: Hélène Edlund (1858-?), Saami woman.
Our target groups for advice, standards and information:

• 21 County boards
• Other government agencies
• Museums
• Entrepreneurs and consultants

Photo: H. Simonsson, a world heritage site, Falun Copper mine, Dalarna.
We need to take good care of the cultural heritage of stone we`ve got

All the advice the Heritage Board give about stone conservation, should be anchored in a sustainability and climate change awareness,

and in an awareness that stone is a finite, non-renewable material that is lost once the original stores are depleted.

Photo: H. Simonsson, the old lime quarry of Bungenäs, Gotland
Sustainability through:

• Planning and documentation.

• Preventive work and measurements.

• Usage of materials and methods that don’t make future maintenance more difficult.

• Minimum intervention, don’t make more changes/repairs than necessary.

• Resusage of materials (building materials or museum exhibition materials).

• Keeping craftsmanship alive.

Photo: H. Simonsson, two picture stones and a kiln in Buttle on Gotland
How is the Heritage Board encouraging a more sustainable approach?

Collaboration:

• MNKA (network of 50 government agencies working with adaptation),

• TVÄRS (project about integrating cultural heritage values in the strategy plans of 10 other government agencies),

• CEN and SIS-standards.

Photo: H. Simonsson, Släbro rock art, Södermanland
How is the Heritage Board encouraging a more sustainable approach?

Implementation:

• A manual for conservation management plans on our web page
• Translations of international standards and guidelines,
• Information leaflets and lectures,
• Guest colleague concept in our laboratory.
• Action plan for cultural heritage and adaptation.

Photo: H. Simonsson, sgraffito on a house from 1885 in Stockholm
MNKA = Network of 50 Swedish government agencies working together with climate adaptation

Started 2016, working with action plans.

Aim:

• To avoid that different governmental bodies are giving advice or are financing projects with conflicting objectives. Greater impact when we are cooperating.

A possibility for the National Heritage Board to make other sectors aware of sustainability, cultural significance and the benefits of traditional methods and reuse of building materials.

Photo: H. Simonsson, the medieval church and defense tower of Lärbro, Gotland
"TVÄRS" an interdisciplinary project 2018-2021

The Swedish government gave 10 governmental agencies the task to write strategies for how to safeguard cultural heritage in their daily work.

The aim was to enhance the awareness on how cultural heritage can be an asset and for the agencies to get a new approach on how to work better with sustainability.

The work is carried out with the support of the Heritage Board.

Photo: H. Simonsson, Hammarby, a culture reserve, the birth house of Carl von Linné, Uppland.
Communication - Why it is important to get other government agencies to know what we are safeguarding and why

The great threat against our cultural heritage sites or buildings is loss of significance because of:

- Undefined significance of cultural heritage object ("this is old"),
- Unplanned and reactive maintenance, often done in panic,
- Unawareness of how cumulative changes can have a bad impact in the long run.

Photo: H. Simonsson, Glimminge, a medieval house in Skåne
A digital manual on how to make conservation management plans

The key to good maintenance of buildings or other cultural heritage sites, is a long-range conservation management plan.

Long-range planning recognizes a responsibility to the future generations by aiming at preventing or slowing deterioration and damage from climate, natural or man made causes.

Risk assessment is an important part of the planning.

https://www.raa.se/kulturarv/forvaltning-av-kulturarv/
"We remove the appendix on every patient no matter the illness"

Photo: H. Simonsson, the lighthouse at the island Stora Karlsö, the Baltic Sea
Sometimes an entrepreneur got a speciality and want to solve every problem with the same solution or method.

If the commissioner is not aware of this risk, he might be paying for work that was not necessary.

The CEN-standards and guidelines about the conservation process can be a help in procurement processes.

Photo: H. Simonsson, two church ruins in the medieval town of Visby, Gotland
Different sectors are using same terms but with different definitions!

In the cultural heritage sector:

• Terms and definitions from the CEN-standard for conservation of cultural property

• The Venice and Burra charters.

In the building sector they are using:

• Terms and definitions from “Aff”, a glossary made by an organisation for property owners, builders and maintenance professionals.
The importance of speaking "the same language"

One of our goals is to make the cultural sector and the modern building sector aware of their usage of terms – that they are often using the same term, but with different definitions!

A translated CEN-standard can be used to bridge "the language gap" between different professionals.

When a CEN-standard is translated it could be used by government agencies and communities in procurement processes.

Picture: The Bedford master, the building of the tower of Babylon. Folio 17v. Public domain. This file has been provided by the British Library from its digital collections.
Method used to implement CEN-standards

An agreement between the National Heritage board and SIS (Swedish Standards Institute):

Standards are free of charge for three years for professionals in Sweden, 2018-2020.

Photo: H. Simonsson, the medieval city wall of the World heritage town Visby
Guest colleagues in our laboratory

A way of implementing new standards and guidelines is the guest colleague concept.

County boards, researchers and entrepreneurs are invited to work together with our skilled staff and carry out research projects in our laboratory.

It is important that the projects can become well known and useful for more people in the cultural heritage sector than only the research group.
With a conservation management plan, well defined significance, and a risk assessment plan, a property got a greater chance to withstand the climate changes without losing its significance.
Photo: H. Simonsson, norhtern light over the border between Sweden, Finland and Norway

Thank you!