

## ICOM-CC Preventive Conservation Group Newsletter

Dear colleagues,

I am writing this first newsletter of the new triennium 2020-2023, with the triennial conference of 2020 still to come in May 2021. Everything has been different in 2020, and while I am grateful that the conference organising committee has found a way to host our ICOM-CC triennial conference in Beijing online, I have greatly missed the opportunity to catch up with colleagues, meet new ones and exchange ideas.

ICOM-CC triennial conference Beijing will now take place 17-21 May 2021 entirely online. You can find all details on the dedicated [website](#). If you haven't registered for the conference, I would like to encourage you to do so. The online edition of the conference is a great opportunity to enjoy great content from the comfort of your home at a much reduced rate compared to a live conference.

I am excited at the programme we have put together for Preventive Conservation, touching on some well-known issues such as light exposure, pests and environment, but also bringing us some food for thought on new developments in the way we work with colleagues and our museum audience.

I am very grateful for my team of Assistant Coordinators for the triennial 2017-2020, without whom it would have not been possible to put together this programme.

They were: Dr Bart Ankersmit, ICOM Netherlands; Marjolijn Debulpaep, ICOM Belgium; Jane Henderson, ICOM UK; Simon Lambert, ICOM Canada; Vesna Živković, ICOM Serbia

It has been an outstanding team to work with. Thank you!

## Triennial Programme 2020-2023

For our programme this triennium we have decided to take a different approach to previous years. We have not as such formulated research themes, but rather want to capitalise on the range of expertise we cover within the regions of the world we represent as a group. Rather than exploring the cutting edge of research we want to see what we, as a group within ICOM, can do to ensure that existing knowledge is being shared as broadly as possible.

Within the Triennial of 2020-2023 we will therefore in the first instance take stock of preventive conservation expertise and requirements across the network of ICOM-CC. Spanning a wide range of different continents, and using the broad individual networks of the team, we plan to investigate what the issues and challenges in different regions are, and what the Preventive Conservation Working Group can do to support the wider community. Themes will be based on global issues such as sustainability, human health and well-being, and communication. We will structure emerging themes within the framework of the 10 agents of deterioration (physical forces, fire, water, pests, incorrect temperature and humidity, light and radiation, contamination, criminal activity and dissociation).

We will plan a number of virtual knowledge exchange sessions which will be open for all Preventive Conservation Working Group members, inviting feedback, and hopefully reporting back via the newsletter and other media. We also want to actively participate with ICCROM's 'Our collections matter' project and explore collaboration with the ICOM International Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) in connection with the above mentioned knowledge exchange sessions.

I hope to meet many of you at the upcoming triennial conference 'in Beijing'! Best wishes, Anna Bülow, Working Group Coordinator

### Assistant coordinators for the triennial 2020-2023

For the coming triennial, I have tried to give voice to a broader group of colleagues, in order to foster international exchange in terms of knowledge and ideas. They are introducing themselves on the pages of this Newsletter.

I am thankful for these colleagues to put themselves forward, and I am excited to work with them for the coming three years. The pandemic has taught us to organise meetings online, however, living between Wellington (New Zealand) and Bogota (Colombia) means that there is no convenient time for us all. Our first two meetings have been at 6:00 AM for me. Not my favourite, but I must admit, I would also not like to meet at midnight – thank you David!

### Inside this issue

Triennial 2020-2023 assistant coordinators bios

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## Personal view

‘A significant turning point was when I had the chance to be involved in the local organizing of the international ICCROM Course: Reducing Risk to Collections. This was a challenge for a better understanding of this approach and the use of method as, a few years later, I had taken two risk assessment courses (the CCI-ICCROM course and the Rob Waller’s course). These helped me a lot when it came to one of my greatest achievements in planning, developing, and integrating preventive conservation solutions through the implementation of a European Economic Area funded complex project. The specific concerns I was responsible with referred to the design of the collection storages and the restoration laboratory, as well as the endowment of ASTRA Centre for Heritage – a new conservation facility. Although, various technical issues emerged (shelving system, freezing chamber, specific treatments), my experience enlarged out of the inter-exchange of knowledge among complementary fields and my soft skills improved.

I am very confident that this opportunity of being part of the Assistant Coordinators team for the ICOM CC - Preventive Conservation Working Group is a challenge worth taking, as my contributions in such a group would also enhance my professional development.’ Dr Andrea Bernath, ICOM Romania

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## Dr Bart Ankersmit, ICOM Netherlands

Bart started working at the Central Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science (now Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands: RCE) in 1996. After a 4 years EU project on the preventive conservation of silver his interests shifted to collection risk management. Bart is active as a museum climate consultant trying to look for ways to make museums more sustainable. Recent projects involved the renovation of Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, the new storage facility for the Rijksmuseum, State collections, Open Air museum and the Royal Palace and a new display case for the manuscripts of Anne Frank. In the publication ‘Managing Indoor Climate Risks’ a risk based decision making process is suggested to find the optimum solution to mitigate risks due to an incorrect climate. Bart has been program manager of the program ‘Historic Interiors’ (2015-2018) at the RCE. In this program several projects were developed that aim to better help owners and care takers to manage historic interiors in historic buildings.

## Dr Andrea Bernath, ICOM Romania

My name is Andrea Bernath and my professional interests regard preventive conservation. Since 2010, I am head of a Collection Care department at ASTRA National Museum Complex in Sibiu, Romania, an institution responsible of both built-heritage and ethnographic collections – over 300 vernacular monuments and around 200.000 artefacts. I have graduated from a five years university program obtaining a degree equivalent to an MA in conservation and restoration of objects at Lucian Blaga University Sibiu, Romania. The subject of my PhD which I completed at the Lucian Blaga University as well, has focused on the study of the local conservation profession and how its transformations reflect on the oldest collections in town.



## Dr Naoko Sonoda, ICOM Japan

Naoko is currently a professor at the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, and at the Graduate University for Advanced Studies, SOKENDAI (Japan). She obtained the MST (Maîtrise des Science et Technique: Conservation et restauration des biens culturels), then her doctorate from University of Paris I. She began her career at the Laboratoire de Recherche des Musées de France (LRMF), and at the Service de Restauration des Peintures des Musées Nationaux (SRPMN, France) where she mainly carried out scientific studies on painting, in particular the study of modern painting materials. Back in Japan, she joined the National Museum of Japanese History, then the National Museum of Ethnology. Since then, she has developed a particular interest in research related to preventive conservation (control of the museum environment, storage re-organization, IPM). Since 1994, she has been actively involved in the

international museology course for museums in developing countries, provided by the National Museum of Ethnology and JICA



## Dr David Cohen Daza, ICOM Colombia



David Cohen is currently an assistant professor at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the Universidad de Los Andes in Bogota. For almost 20 years he has worked in the field of preventive conservation as a consultant in many museums in Colombia, incorporating conservation as part of the decision-making process within museological plans and developing tools for it. He has collaborated on some international projects with ICROM focused on risk management and values assessment. He has several publications on these topics.

## Vesna Živković, ICOM New Zealand

Vesna is a preventive conservator and risk management professional, at present working in the National Library of New Zealand as Senior Conservator - Preventive Conservation. She acts as a subject matter expert on preventive systems and processes used for collections preservation and provides advice on the development of preservation policy and strategy for Alexander Turnbull Library collections.

Before joining ATL Vesna worked at the National Museum, Belgrade, as curator for preventive conservation. She was also responsible for the Centre for the Preventive Conservation in the Central Institute for Conservation in Belgrade and has been instrumental in developing preventive conservation services and activities in Serbia. Furthermore, Vesna has been an invited resource person and lecturer and acted as course leader and project assistant for international and regional educational projects dealing with preventive conservation, risk and emergency management for cultural heritage, as well as storage reorganization.





## Dr Suruchika Chawla, ICOM India

Dr. Suruchika Chawla is Supervisor of projects at the Archaeology and Museums Department, Haryana, India. She completed her Doctorate in Archaeology and Ancient History from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Vadodara, Gujarat, India. Her research focused on archaeology and museum education. She had conducted workshops for children on archaeological learning throughout various museums in India. Her research publications reflect the same. Her main interests are promotion, display and exhibition planning. She has extensively worked in the field as a teacher, curator, museum professional since a decade.

Suruchika worked on the collections database and display of the Harappa Gallery at National Museum, New Delhi. She participated in International Training Program sponsored by British Museum (2018). She has developed content for National Museum website, adding downloadable teaching aids, and for the present department where apart from workshops, she worked on souvenirs, seminar, and events.

She is member of ICOM and Museum Association of India. In 2019, she took part in the ITP+ Course on Museums and Education held at CSMVS Mumbai, India. Currently she is working on creating content for Haryana State schools and heritage education, and other catalogues of the collection and sites of Department. Apart from publications, presentations, lectures and poster presentations, she also created virtual exhibition to promote the organizations she was associated with.

# Our Collections Matter Project

ICOM CC Preventive Conservation Working Group joined the coalition of international partners covering all typologies of heritage collections in the framework of ICCROM's Our Collections Matter initiative with an aim to provide practical tools and build capacity to enable collections-based institutions to achieve their maximum potential of collections for the benefit of all people. The main goal of the project is to enable collections-based organizations to make concrete contributions towards sustainable development (for people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships) through heritage collections and their conservation.

The project would include activities on documenting and sharing, as well as field testing of available sustainability-oriented approaches, methods and tools, that these organizations could use in their operations and for their communities of users to contribute to sustainable development more effectively. Partners also agreed to identify eventual gaps in terms of lacking methods and tools, where the sustainability aspirations and challenges of the collection-based organizations are not matched by existing tools, for future research and development of new, self-made tools. Partner organisations in the project compiled so far more than 90 of the meaningful practical methods and tools for the OCM toolkit, which is currently being adapted to be integrated into the new OCM web-page, on the ICCROM website.

If you haven't done so already please complete [OCM survey](#) to help us gather information on the different types of collections the organizations work with, their communities of users, their current understanding of 'sustainability', and their current role in promoting sustainable development.

**WHAT IS ICCROM DOING?**

ICCROM firmly believes that collections and their conservation have a crucial role to play in sustainable development.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**"OUR COLLECTIONS MATTER"**

Our new project aims to help all collections-based institutions play their fullest part in sustainable development and advocate for collections and collections-based work.

Build a strong coalition of international partners. → Provide practical tools and build capacity. → Enable institutions to achieve their maximum potential to make this world a better place.

*Because heritage collections benefit all people.*

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## Working Group Assistant Coordinators

Dr Bart Ankersmit (ICOM Netherlands, Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands)  
Dr Andrea Bernath (ICOM Romania, ASTRA National Museum Complex)  
Dr David Cohen Daza (ICOM Colombia, Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the Universidad de Los Andes Bogota)  
Dr Naoko Sonoda, (ICOM Japan, ethnology Museum Osaka)  
Dr Suruchika Chawla (ICOM India, Archaeology and Museums Department)  
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## Editors

Dr Anna Bülow (ICOM Netherlands, Stedelijk Museum)  
Vesna Živković (ICOM New Zealand, National Library of New Zealand)