Many of the world’s most unique cultural heritage sites have no established policies or procedures in place for managing or reducing the risks associated with natural disasters. While the foremost priority for emergency responders is always the preservation of human life, measures aimed at strengthening cultural heritage protection during and immediately following natural disasters should be integrated into existing disaster management policies and mechanisms.

While the integration of cultural heritage sites into established disaster management plans and the implementation of appropriate risk mitigation measures significantly minimises the threat of damage to cultural sites, there still remains a critical need to ensure that dedicated heritage professionals are rapidly deployed immediately following a natural disaster to assess damage and secure sites from further losses caused by looters. Although the key to protecting cultural heritage at risk is advance planning and preparation, post-disaster response and conservation efforts are also vital to securing the survival of cultural heritage sites damaged by natural disasters. Following the protection of human life, the protection of cultural heritage sites should be considered to be of the utmost importance during emergencies.