



CLIMATE SENSITIVE CONSERVATION OF COLLECTIONS

Operating challenges in Heritage Sector

The challenges of the current operating context makes it increasingly difficult for museums to meet environmental guidelines for their collections



Fewer than 1 in 10 museums

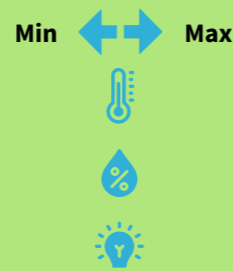
have completed an analysis about challenges associated with climate change region.



+2 to 4°C

Climate change is making it harder to meet environmental guidelines

Hotter summers mean that it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain temperature control.



Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS)

The GIS environmental standards [3] have previously recommended that collections are maintained in certain condition ranges for temperature, relative humidity and light. These standards are currently under review and for more information see Arts Council England website [4].



“70% of our energy bill is spent on climate control”

The rising costs of energy impacts on museums’ ability to meet environmental guidelines because of the costs associated with running their mechanical environmental control.

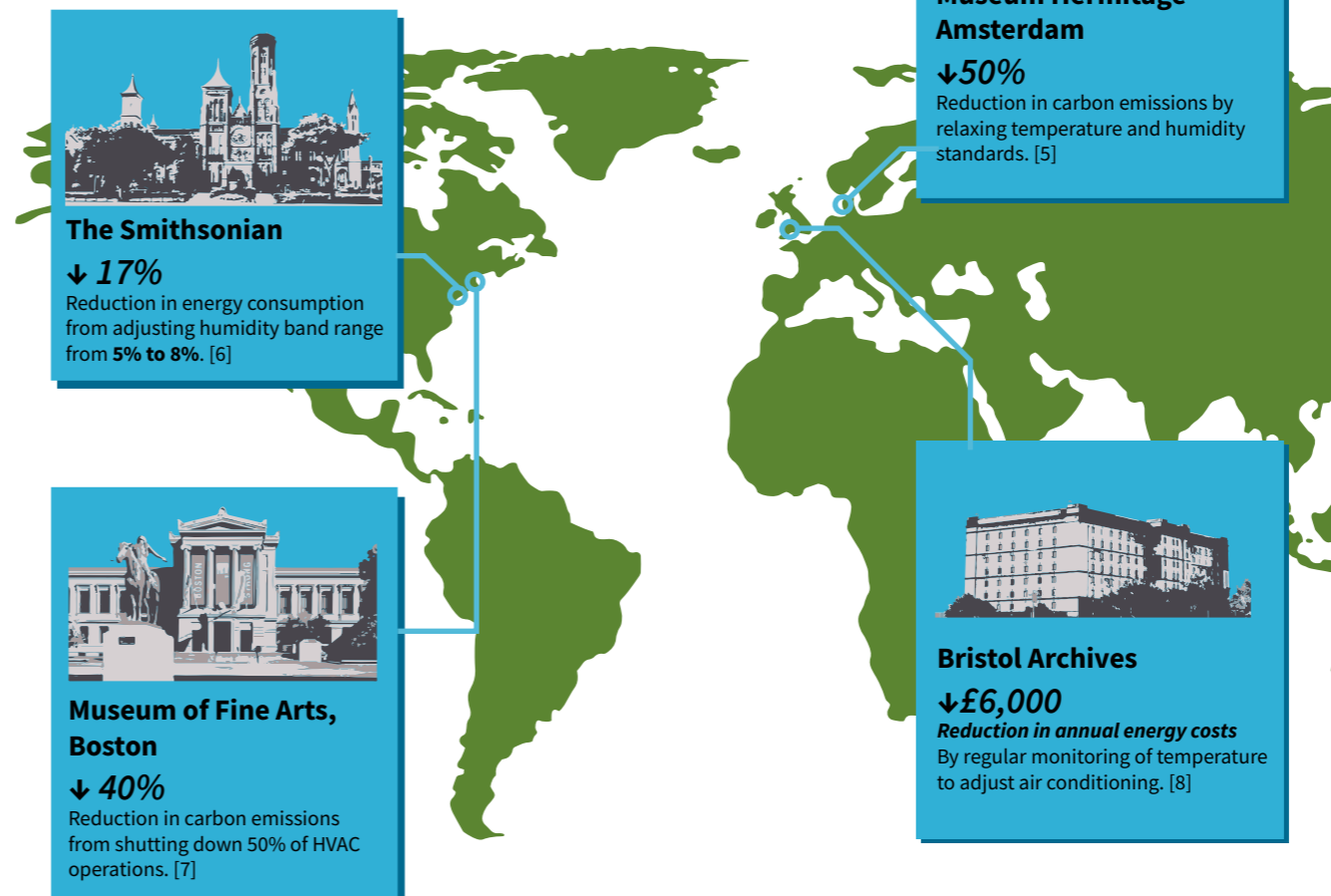
Introduction

Climate sensitive conservation of historic collections in the UK focuses on integrating sustainability and climate adaptation into heritage preservation. Key trends include the adoption of passive environmental controls, which reduce reliance on mechanical systems and promote natural ventilation, and energy-efficient retrofitting of historic buildings, balancing thermal comfort with the preservation of historical integrity.

British Standards such as BS EN 16893:2018 [1], which outlines specifications for building modifications and environmental strategies, and BS 4971:2017 [2], focusing on the care of archive and library collections, guide these efforts. These measures aim to protect historic collections from climate change impacts while ensuring their sustainability for future generations.

What have others done to reduce emissions and save costs?

Adjusting controls of relative humidity and temperature can significantly reduce the environmental impact without significantly affecting conservation efficiency. Here’s what others have done:



References

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