

LEGAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*

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SUMMARY

This article introduces some legal perspectives on the role of culture in sustainable development. The authors agree that sustainable development has been designed as an environmental concept but that room exists for the more prominent inclusion of some form(s) of the notion "culture" in the sustainable development equation. It is shown that the fluid nature and meaning of "culture" may require a distinction between the role of "culture" per se and the role of "cultural governance" in the sustainable development context. It is suggested that "cultural governance" as a notion may be more distinct and exact than "culture" itself. The more functional notion of "good cultural governance" is preferred as a benchmark in the sustainable development equation, with the implication that cultural governance occurs in accordance with a certain standard. This standard is briefly considered by looking at the meaning of good cultural governance as a notion that encompasses both cultural governance and good governance generally. The article is set in the South African context but also invokes some law and policy developments

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internationally, regionally and sub-regionally to depict how issues of culture have been infiltrating the sustainable development discourse and to distil some of the substantive benchmarks for good cultural governance.

Keywords: sustainable development; role of culture in sustainable development; culture; definition of culture; environmental law; cultural governance; good cultural governance