

## **Guidelines on the inclusion of Cultural Landscapes, Towns, Canals, Cultural Routes and Fossil Sites on the World Heritage List<sup>1</sup>**

1. The World Heritage Committee has identified and defined several specific categories of cultural and natural properties and has adopted specific guidelines to facilitate the evaluation of such properties when nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List. To date, these cover the following categories, although it is likely that others may be added in due course:

- (a) Cultural Landscapes;
- (b) Historic Towns and Town Centres;
- (c) Historic Canals;
- (d) Cultural Routes; and
- (e) Fossil Sites

2. It must be stressed that these are definitions and guidelines. They must be used in association with paragraph 47 of the *Operational Guidelines* which contain the criteria for inclusion of properties on the World Heritage List.

### **Cultural Landscapes<sup>2</sup>**

#### **Definition**

3. Cultural landscapes represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the *Convention*. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal. They should be selected on the basis both of their outstanding universal value and of their representativity in terms of a clearly defined geo-cultural region and also for their capacity to illustrate the essential and distinct cultural elements of such regions.

4. The term "cultural landscape" embraces a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment.

5. Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature. Protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land-use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. The continued existence of traditional forms of land-use supports biological diversity in many regions of the world. The protection of traditional cultural landscapes is therefore helpful in maintaining biological diversity.

#### **Categories of Cultural Landscapes**

6. Cultural landscapes fall into three main categories, namely:

- (i) The most easily identifiable is the clearly defined **landscape designed and created intentionally by man**. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed

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<sup>1</sup> The World Heritage Centre suggest that this annex be renamed Annex 4 "Guidelines on the inclusion of Cultural Landscapes, Towns, Canals, Cultural Routes and Fossil Sites on the World Heritage List".

A typology of cultural and or natural properties may emerge as a result of the analyses of the World Heritage List and Tentative Lists and could be included in an annex in future years if required by the World Heritage Committee.

<sup>2</sup> *Operational Guidelines* (1999), paragraphs. 35-42

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for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.

- (ii) The second category is the **organically evolved landscape**. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two sub-categories:
  - a relict (or fossil) landscape is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form.
  - a continuing landscape is one which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.
- (iii) The final category is the **associative cultural landscape**. The inclusion of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.

### Inclusion of Cultural Landscapes on the World Heritage List

7. The extent of a cultural landscape for inclusion on the World Heritage List is relative to its functionality and intelligibility. In any case, the sample selected must be substantial enough to adequately represent the totality of the cultural landscape that it illustrates. The possibility of designating long linear areas which represent culturally significant transport and communication networks should not be excluded.

8. General criteria for conservation and management are equally applicable to cultural landscapes. It is important that due attention be paid to the full range of values represented in the landscape, both cultural and natural. The nominations should be prepared in collaboration with and the full approval of local communities.

9. The existence of a category of "cultural landscape", included on the World Heritage List on the basis of the criteria set out in paragraph 48 of the *Operational Guidelines*, does not exclude the possibility of sites of exceptional importance in relation to both cultural and natural criteria continuing to be included. In such cases, their outstanding universal significance must be justified under both sets of criteria.

## Historic Towns and Town Centres<sup>3</sup>

### Definition and Categories

10. Groups of urban buildings eligible for inclusion in the World Heritage List fall into three main categories, namely:

- (i) towns which are **no longer inhabited** but which provide unchanged archaeological evidence of the past; these generally satisfy the criterion of authenticity and their state of conservation can be relatively easily controlled;
- (ii) **historic towns which are still inhabited** and which, by their very nature, have developed and will continue to develop under the influence of socio-economic and

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<sup>3</sup> *Operational Guidelines* (1999), paragraphs. 27-34

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cultural change, a situation that renders the assessment of their authenticity more difficult and any conservation policy more problematical;

- (iii) **new towns of the twentieth century** which paradoxically have something in common with both the aforementioned categories: while their original urban organization is clearly recognizable and their authenticity is undeniable, their future is unclear because their development is largely uncontrollable.

### **Inclusion of Historic Towns and Town Centres on the World Heritage List**

#### **(i) Towns no longer inhabited**

The evaluation of towns that are no longer inhabited does not raise any special difficulties other than those related to archaeological sites in general: the criteria which call for uniqueness or exemplary character have led to the choice of groups of buildings noteworthy for their purity of style, for the concentrations of monuments they contain and sometimes for their important historical associations. It is important for urban archaeological sites to be listed as integral units. A cluster of monuments or a small group of buildings is not adequate to suggest the multiple and complex functions of a city which has disappeared; remains of such a city should be preserved in their entirety together with their natural surroundings whenever possible.

#### **(ii) Inhabited historic towns**

In the case of inhabited historic towns the difficulties are numerous, largely owing to the fragility of their urban fabric (which has in many cases been seriously disrupted since the advent of the industrial era) and the runaway speed with which their surroundings have been urbanized. To qualify for inclusion, towns should compel recognition because of their architectural interest and should not be considered only on the intellectual grounds of the role they may have played in the past or their value as historical symbols under criterion (vi) for the inclusion of cultural properties in the World Heritage List (see paragraph 48 (vi) of the *Operational Guidelines*). To be eligible for inclusion in the List, the spatial organization, structure, materials, forms and, where possible, functions of a group of buildings should essentially reflect the civilization or succession of civilizations which have prompted the nomination of the property. Four categories can be distinguished:

- (a) Towns which are typical of a specific period or culture, which have been almost wholly preserved and which have remained largely unaffected by subsequent developments. Here the property to be listed is the entire town together with its surroundings, which must also be protected;
- (b) Towns that have evolved along characteristic lines and have preserved, sometimes in the midst of exceptional natural surroundings, spatial arrangements and structures that are typical of the successive stages in their history. Here the clearly defined historic part takes precedence over the contemporary environment;
- (c) "Historic centres" that cover exactly the same area as ancient towns and are now enclosed within modern cities. Here it is necessary to determine the precise limits of the property in its widest historical dimensions and to make appropriate provision for its immediate surroundings;
- (d) Sectors, areas or isolated units which, even in the residual state in which they have survived, provide coherent evidence of the character of a historic town which has disappeared. In such cases surviving areas and buildings should bear sufficient testimony to the former whole.

Historic centres and historic areas should be listed only where they contain a large number of ancient buildings of monumental importance which provide a direct indication of the characteristic features of a town of exceptional interest. Nominations of several isolated and

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unrelated buildings which allegedly represent, in themselves, a town whose urban fabric has ceased to be discernible, should not be encouraged.

However, nominations could be made regarding properties that occupy a limited space but have had a major influence on the history of town planning. In such cases, the nomination should make it clear that it is the monumental group that is to be listed and that the town is mentioned only incidentally as the place where the property is located. Similarly, if a building of clearly universal significance is located in severely degraded or insufficiently representative urban surroundings, it should, of course, be listed without any special reference to the town.

### **(iii) New towns of the twentieth century**

It is difficult to assess the quality of new towns of the twentieth century. History alone will tell which of them will best serve as examples of contemporary town planning. The examination of the files on these towns should be deferred, save under exceptional circumstances.

Under present conditions, preference should be given to the inclusion in the World Heritage List of small or medium-sized urban areas which are in a position to manage any potential growth, rather than the great metropolises, on which sufficiently complete information and documentation cannot readily be provided that would serve as a satisfactory basis for their inclusion in their entirety.

In view of the effects which the entry of a town in the World Heritage List could have on its future, such entries should be exceptional. Inclusion in the List implies that legislative and administrative measures have already been taken to ensure the protection of the group of buildings and its environment. Informed awareness on the part of the population concerned, without whose active participation any conservation scheme would be impractical, is also essential.

## **Historic Canals<sup>4</sup>**

11. The concept of "canals" is discussed in detail in the Report on the Expert Meeting on Heritage Canals (Canada, September 1994).

### **Definition**

12. A canal is a human-engineered waterway. It may be of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history or technology, either intrinsically or as an exceptional example representative of this category of cultural property. The canal may be a monumental work, the defining feature of a linear cultural landscape, or an integral component of a complex cultural landscape.

### **Inclusion of Historic Canals on the World Heritage List**

13. Authenticity depends holistically upon values and the relationships between these values. One distinctive feature of the canal as a heritage element is its evolution over time. This is linked to how it was used during different periods and the associated technological changes the canal underwent. The extent of these changes may constitute a heritage element.

14. The authenticity and historical interpretation of a canal encompass the connection between the real property (subject of the Convention), possible movable property (boats, temporary navigation items) and the associated structures (bridges, etc) and landscape.

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<sup>4</sup> Report on the Expert Meeting on Heritage Canals (Canada, September 1994) (WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.10)

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15. The significance of canals can be examined under technological, economic, social, and landscape factors as outlined below:

### **(i) Technology**

Canals can serve a variety of purposes: irrigation, navigation, defence, water-power, flood mitigation, land-drainage and water-supply. The following are areas of technology which may be of significance:

- (a) The line and waterproofing of the water channel.
- (b) The engineering structures of the line with reference to comparative structural features in other areas of architecture and technology.
- (c) The development of the sophistication of constructional methods
- (d) The transfer of technologies.

### **(ii) Economy**

Canals contribute to the economy in a variety of ways, e.g. in terms of economic development and the conveyance of goods and people. Canals were the first man-made routes for the effective carriage of bulk cargoes. Canals played and continue to play a key role in economic development through their use for irrigation. The following factors are important:

- (a) Nation building
- (b) Agricultural development
- (c) Industrial development
- (d) Generation of wealth
- (e) Development of engineering skills applied to other areas and industries
- (f) Tourism.

### **(iii) Social Factors**

The building of canals had, and their operation continues to have, social consequences:

- (a) The redistribution of wealth with social and cultural results
- (b) The movement of people and the interaction of cultural groups.

### **(iv) Landscape**

Such large-scale engineering works had and continue to have an impact on the natural landscape. Related industrial activity and changing settlement patterns cause visible changes to landscape forms and patterns.

## **Cultural Routes<sup>5</sup>**

**16.** The concept of "routes" or cultural itineraries was discussed by the Expert Meeting on "Routes as a Part of our Cultural Heritage" (Madrid, Spain, November 1994).

### **Definition**

**17.** The concept of heritage routes is shown to be a rich and fertile one, offering a privileged framework in which mutual understanding, a plural approach to history and a culture of peace can all operate.

**18.** A heritage route is composed of tangible elements of which the cultural significance comes from exchanges and a multi-dimensional dialogue across countries or regions, and that illustrate the interaction of movement, along the route, in space and time.

### **Inclusion of Cultural Routes on the World Heritage List**

**19.** The following points should be considered when determining whether a cultural route is suitable for inclusion on the World Heritage List:

- (a) The requirement to hold exceptional universal worth should be recalled.
- (b) The concept of heritage routes:
  - is based on the dynamics of movement and the idea of *exchanges*, with *continuity* in space and time;
  - refers to a *whole*, where the route has a worth over and above the sum of the elements making it up and through which it gains its cultural SIGNIFICANCE;
  - highlights exchange and dialogue *between countries or between regions*;
  - is *multi-dimensional*, with different aspects developing and adding to its prime purpose which may be religious, commercial, administrative or otherwise.
- (c) A heritage route may be considered as a specific, dynamic type of cultural landscape, just as recent debates have led to their acceptance within the *Operational Guidelines*.
- (d) The identification of a heritage route is based on a collection of strengths and tangible elements, testimony to the significance of the route itself.
- (e) The authenticity test is to be applied on the grounds of its significance and other elements making up the heritage route. It will take into account the duration of the route, and perhaps how often it is used nowadays, as well as the legitimate wishes for development of peoples affected.

These points will be considered within the natural framework of the route and its intangible and symbolic dimensions.

## **Fossil Sites**

### **Definition**

**20.** Sites containing remains or traces of a prehistoric animal or plant.

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<sup>5</sup> Routes as part of Our Cultural Heritage, Report on the Meeting of Experts (Madrid, 24-25 November 1994) (WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.13)

**Inclusion of Fossil Sites on the World Heritage List**

21. In evaluating prospective fossil sites for inscription on the World Heritage List, IUCN has prepared the following ten questions which provide some indicative measures of significance. These questions are not meant to be binding, but for evaluation purposes it would be expected that fossil sites of truly outstanding universal value would rate highly in most, if not all, of the following:

- a) Does the site provide fossils which cover an extended period of geological time? ie. how wide is the geological window?
- b) Does the site provide specimens of a limited number of species or whole biotic assemblages? ie. how rich is the site in species diversity?
- c) How unique is the site in yielding fossil specimens for that particular period of geological time? ie. would this be **the** type locality for study or are there other similar areas that are alternatives?
- d) Are there comparable sites elsewhere that contribute to the understanding of the total "story" of that point in time/space? ie. is a single site nomination sufficient or should a serial nomination be considered?
- e) Is the site the only or main location where major scientific advances were (or are being) made that have made a substantial contribution to the understanding of life on earth?
- f) What are the prospects for on-going discoveries at the site?
- g) How international is the level of interest in the site?
- h) Are there other features of natural values (eg. scenery, landform, vegetation) associated with the site? ie. does there exist in the adjacent area modern geological or biological processes that relate to the fossil resource?
- i) What is the state of preservation of specimens yielded from the site?
- j) Do the fossils yielded provide an understanding of the conservation status of contemporary taxa and/or communities? ie. how relevant is the site in documenting the consequences to modern biota of gradual change through time?