

**Zanzibar Recommendations on
the Application of the Concept of the Historic Urban Landscape in the African Context**

Zanzibar 30 November-3rd December 2009

Workshop on the application of the concept of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) in the African context

The meeting was co-organized with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, in partnership with the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority, Ministry of Water, Construction, Energy and Land of Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania.

The participants thanked the host country and supporters of this workshop.

The welcoming addresses were given by Mr Issa S. Makarani, Director General of the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority, and Mr Mwalim A. Mwalim, Principal Secretary of Ministry of Water, Construction, Energy and Land and Coordinator of the East African Secretariat of the Organization of World Heritage Cities; opening remarks were made by the UNESCO Dar-es-Salaam office representative, Mrs Adele Nibona, and the official opening address was given by Mr Mansour Yussuf Himid, Minister of Water, Construction, Energy and Land of Zanzibar.

Mr Mwalim A. Mwalim also made some closing remarks and the meeting was officially closed by Professor Mohammed S. Sheya, Minister Plenipotentiary, and Deputy Permanent Delegate of the United Republic of Tanzania to UNESCO.

The meeting recalled the current process of debate on the Historic Urban Landscape (*hereafter* HUL), the shift in paradigm regarding heritage and urban conservation and the broadening of the scope to integrate cultural responses in the relationship between people and their environment and the evolution towards a long term sustainable culturalist approach. It recalled the regional consultations on the subject of HUL, following previous regional meetings held in Jerusalem (June 2006), Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation (January 2007), Olinda, Brazil (November 2007) and two expert meetings held at UNESCO Headquarters (September 2006 and November 2008).

The Zanzibar workshop is a timely initiative, rooted in the framework of the drafting of the UNESCO Recommendation on the conservation and management of HUL (as per Resolution GC 35/42, adopted by the General Conference at its 35th session, UNESCO 2009; and as per Decisions 29 COM 5 and 33 COM 7.1 adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 25th (2005) and 33rd sessions (2009) respectively.

Forty experts from ten countries, amongst which representatives of six World Heritage cities of the African region, participated in this meeting which included ten presentations, three panel presentations, four plenary sessions and lively discussions, following which the conclusions and recommendations were adopted.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Noting that cities are the most represented category of properties on the World Heritage List including eight cities in the Africa region;

Further noting that there are universal generic values of cities, that most urban management challenges are the same, but that socio-economic and political conditions differ between regions and countries, consistent approaches should be developed regarding the documentation and integration of urban planning, development practice and heritage management systems, to allow for dialogue and cross-cultural debate;

I With regard to the global processes, the participants:

Welcomed the HUL initiative as an important process and mindset to develop new attitudes to conservation and comprehensive and integrated planning and its sustainability;

Acknowledging the fact that threats and challenges of African cities are shared around the world recognised the urban population's aspiration for betterment and change;

Stated that urban conservation is not limited to building preservation but is a component of environmental policies rather than an isolated action not acknowledging the dynamic, ever changing process nature of urban environments, hence the importance of strengthening the relevance of urban landscape to our built environment,

Recommended to identify the historic driving forces of cities, villages and settlements while anticipating their evolution, enhancing their connectivity and to consider heritage as a socio-economic and environmental resource;

Further recommended to improve, when appropriate, with focus on the continuity of the intergenerational links, the transmission of local knowledge, its global relevance, ecologically sound restoration, participatory urban planning and management, the development of technical assistance in areas such as building techniques, land-use;

Emphasized that detailed studies of the physical and social morphology, cultural, spiritual and economic components should be used as planning and decision-making tools and that consideration be given to: custodians and local communities' management systems, coordination and integration of global and local interventions, trans-generational skills transmission processes and practices, natural resources, land rights and infrastructure, which needs to include housing and social amenities, mobility, access to work, water and waste management;

Underlined that the Outstanding Universal Value of these layered urban landscapes lies in the long tradition of the linkages between tangible and social-cultural heritage, urban and rural components which create a unique form of patrimony;

Urged to take measures to integrate at a local, regional and national scale the adaptive planning of infrastructure projects taking into account their cumulative effects on the cultural environment as a whole and warned against the threats of non integrated public works and infrastructure works;

II With regard to the state of conservation in Africa, the participants:

Recommended to consider the identification and documentation of the rich diversity and complexity of African urban heritage, including archaeology, settlements, villages and cities in their relationship to the natural and rural environment, their regional specificities, their site-related intangible values and the dynamics of their contemporary transformation. These tasks of identification will be based on information and data collecting, inventories, specific studies and field exchanges paying special attention to the local values systems;.

Further recommended to foster and support primary research on African urban landscapes whilst developing research programmes in African Universities;

Encouraged the African countries to consider the integration of the concept of urban landscapes into their national, regional and local planning, environmental planning and impact assessments, land and water management, so that heritage development and protection systems would assimilate the above concept in legal provisions, safeguarding measures and conservation steps;

Considered that since urban landscapes encompass a multiplicity of fields and stakeholders, it is most important to develop and strengthen integrated planning and decision-making processes between the national, regional, and local authorities;

Proposed that support programmes as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building, particularly at the local level, should be facilitated by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, in particular in the coming cycle of the regional Periodic Reporting exercise in Africa with specific regard to the preparation of the retrospective statement of Outstanding Universal Value;

III With regard to implementation, the participants:

Debated the application of Historic Urban Landscapes under the headings of: “identification”, “challenges and opportunities” and “tools”, and agreed that the following issues should be further studied and prioritized:

Identification

The multilayered “mosaic” African landscapes with their close interrelation between urban and rural, highlight the need for an inclusive landscape approach which is based on the recognition of the continuity of local value systems and the dynamics of informal processes and community driven associations;

Identification of HUL in Africa is based on overlapping and sub-regional narratives. The regional patterns for urban landscape typologies suggested could include the Maghreb, Sudan, West Africa, the West African forest, Ethiopian highlands, Central Africa, the Zimbabwe plateau, the western coastline, the tropical belt, southern Africa and coastal Swahili towns. These general thematic, chronological and regional frameworks and headings need further studies regarding their functionality and comparative analysis;

Challenges, opportunities and tools

The discussions and debates acknowledged a series of challenges and opportunities and tools, which focused more specifically on:

- urban development strategies based on cultural values;
- integrated planning with a strong focus on sustainable local development;
- human dignity and betterment of quality of life;
- updating and reinforcement of the legal framework, ensuring consistency;
- empowerment of local communities and local authorities and strengthening of their relationship with the national government;
- awareness and communication including all parts of the community;
- transmission of local know-how;
- inter-relation between the historic city and its territory, the extended city;

The participants further recognized the need of good practices, capacity-building, training, research and communication regarding issues pertaining to urban landscape in an African context, and invited international stakeholders, UN agencies and the Advisory Bodies to integrate the HUL initiative in their programmes, action plans and field projects.

IV With regard to Zanzibar, the participants

Visited the Stone Town of Zanzibar and heard presentations on issues of conservation and city management and congratulated the authorities for their activities and efforts with the support of donors and development partners, especially regarding urban space, the reclamation of Tembo house open space an urban space threatened of privatization and the revitalization, of Forodhani park, a previously degraded urban space;

Further recommended that the Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority develop implementation strategies for its comprehensive management system and prioritized action plan, with the relevant authorities and stakeholders, to include the following topics:

Policies

- Base urban development on cultural values and promote integrated planning with a sustainable local development focus;
- Link heritage conservation actions (restoration, preservation, maintenance, adaptation etc) to upgrading quality of life;
- Update inventories and historical archives resources;
- Facilitate compatible, integrated and incremental infrastructure development above large-scale projects, favouring re-use and maintenance;
- Adapt and implement coherent urban scale traffic system with effective public transport and a pedestrian focussed core;
- Channel tourism development and promote cultural tourism;
- Curb excessive tourism and excessive land-use change
- Redirect tourism benefits to a local level for urban conservation and revitalization;
- Develop a sustainable financial resource system;
- Facilitate financial incentives to promote heritage management and urban planning processes;
- Micro-finance young and women entrepreneurs.

Decision-making

- Strengthen political decision-making and local authority capacities;
- Facilitate an integrated decision-making platform at all levels of government;
- Empower local communities by activating and supporting a participative forum;
- Communicate with the local communities;
- Promote education and awareness programmes;
- Promote “access to culture for all” policies (e.g. access to museums for local residents).

Actions

- Facilitate maintenance and prevent demolition by neglect;
- Integrate action-orientated projects;
- Identify immediate participatory actions (e.g. annual lime washing of facades),
- Continue uses of the public space and their integration in the urban life of the city;
- Capacitate local agents to sustain traditional skills;
- Consider differences of tempo, time and scale and complexity in planning processes

The participants further recognized the need of strengthening the relationship between Stone Town Conservation and Development Authority, the Zanzibar Municipal Council and the Zanzibar Government, and to promote good practices, capacity-building, training, research and communication regarding issues pertaining to urban landscape in Zanzibar and invited stakeholders involved at the local level to integrate the HUL initiative in their programmes and projects.

V Way forward, the participants

Recommended to bring forward the Zanzibar Recommendations to the next World Heritage Committee to foster best practices and case studies and develop an action plan for cities in the African Region.