

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT MEETING ON *Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity in the Caribbean Context*¹.

Barbados, 8-11 May 2006

GENERAL STATEMENT

The experts assembled in Barbados, 8-11 May 2006 participating in the meeting on "Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity in the Caribbean Context" and, building on the results of the meetings in Nara, Zimbabwe and Kazan, as well as those meetings held in the Caribbean² came to the following conclusions;

- ❖ The Eastern Caribbean sits along the perimeter of a very active Subduction Zone, where the Atlantic Plate is sinking below the Caribbean Plate, creating landforms of outstanding geological significance. Centuries of denudation have also created landforms of geomorphic importance where unique ecosystems have evolved;
- ❖ The Caribbean Archipelago has been, and continues to be, an important route of migration for diverse cultures over several millennia, beginning from Paleo-indian times to the modern era;
- ❖ The geologic history of the sub- region is exemplified in active, dormant and extinct volcanoes, underwater volcanoes, and volcanic domes of different kinds: calderas, craters, pyroclastic flows, warm and hot waterfalls, scenic vistas. These features combine to create a unique assemblage of sites of geologic significance in the neo tropical realm;
- ❖ Caribbean cultures are of outstanding importance because they are testimony to the interaction between diverse peoples which have contributed significantly to the economical, socio-political, and cultural morphology of the modern world;
- ❖ The specific parameters/expressions created through the creolization phenomenon have led to the development of a Caribbean cultural identity. It has been interpreted through our peculiar lifestyle which finds expression in such

¹ The conference was organized by the WHC in close collaboration with the UNESCO regional offices of Kingston and La Havana, with generous financial support from the Governments of Barbados and the Netherlands and in the framework of the implementation of the *Caribbean Action Plan for World Heritage*. The main purposes of the meeting were: to enhance understanding of the Outstanding Universal Value concepts in relation to the Caribbean; to facilitate preparation of improved nominations in the sub-region; and to provide for a solid foundation for World Heritage conservation and management (ref. 2004 Periodic Report, Summary version, August 2004, p. 30). Representatives of 18 Caribbean States Parties, the 3 Advisory Bodies (IUCN, ICOMOS and ICCROM), internationally and regionally renowned experts attended the conference.

² A summary of all the meetings held in the Caribbean up to 2004 is contained in the World Heritage Papers 15 *Caribbean Wooden Treasures* – <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/15/>. In 2004 The World Heritage Centre organized three main Caribbean sub-regional meetings being: Saint Lucia (23 - 27 February 2004), *Conference on the Development of a Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage* in the framework of the Global Strategy Action Plan for the Caribbean and finalization of the Periodic Reporting exercise for the region; Kingston, Jamaica, (27 - 29 September 2004) - Meeting on an Implementation Structure for the *Action Plan for World Heritage in the Caribbean*; and Martinique (20 -23 September 2004) *Identification des Sites Archéologiques Des Caraïbes en vue d'une Nomination au Patrimoine Mondial*.

Finally it is worth remembering that the Caribbean is the only sub-region where two Periodic Reporting meetings were held, respectively in Haiti in 2003 and in St. Lucia 2004. In ten years of World Heritage activities more than 10 meetings took place in the Caribbean.

An exhaustive overview of the progress made in the Caribbean from 1995 until 2003 is to be found in the LAC Periodic Report 2004 pages 35-36 (English version).

areas as our language, the arts (music, literature, and dance), cuisine and architecture. Creolization has also birthed philosophies and ideologies which have had global impact which when connected to specific sites, imbue them with a significance that transcends their relatively small size. These expressions have led to the recognition of Caribbean culture worldwide and have influenced the region's interpretation of Outstanding Universal Value.

OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE

Cultural heritage

Caribbean cultural heritage elements of outstanding value were analyzed following a chronological approach: **pre-Columbian, colonial and post-colonial eras**. The experts identified for each of the above mentioned periods a number of themes and typologies which were unanimously accepted as contributing to a Caribbean ethos.

As per the **pre-Columbian time** the following considerations were drawn:

1. The first peoples of the Caribbean represent the first example of genocide in the new world and their sites represent the only tangible remains of a partly extinct culture.
2. Caribbean Amerindian sites are unique and are not represented in the WH List;
3. Caribbean Amerindian sites are testimony to the interaction between diverse cultures;
4. Caribbean archaeological sites provide exceptional examples of the adaptation of the continental populations to an island environment.
5. The contribution of Amerindian language has enriched the vocabulary of the world's languages;
6. The fragility of the archaeological record in the region, and the pressures of development, threatens the integrity of these sites;
7. Many sites in the region are fundamental to an understanding of the first encounters between Amerindians, Africans and Europeans, and are still barely studied in their national and international significance;
8. Amerindian sites are culturally significant for helping us to understand the past, to enrich the present, and are of value to future generations;
9. The educational value of these sites elucidates the contribution and role of the Amerindian cultures in human history.

The following themes were considered as relevant to defining the cultural heritage of the sub-region during the **colonial and post-colonial periods**

1. Migration
2. Creolization/Syncretism/Multi-culturalism
3. Places of Worship
4. Resistance
5. Memory
6. Peaceful coexistence
7. Emancipation Socio-political -Revolution & resistance (Trade Unionism, Caribbean based movements)
8. Other world impacts (pan-Africanism, Garveyism, Negritude, Caribbean Nobel laureates)
9. First encounters
10. Religion/ Spirituality

11. Music/Arts
12. Agricultural & Industrial systems
13. Trade
14. Education
15. Tourism

As underrepresented **categories** of sub-regional cultural heritage were identified

1. Cultural Routes (e.g. Slave routes and Places of Memory)
2. Cultural landscapes
3. Vernacular architecture
4. Post-colonial Nineteenth and Twentieth century's architecture
5. Mixed sites
6. Places of Entertainment, Sports
7. Botanic Gardens /Research stations

Natural heritage

Outstanding Universal Value is demonstrated by the **high degree of endemism**. The **rich biodiversity** and the high degree of endemism that exist within the region make the Caribbean outstanding. The role of the wider Caribbean in certain evolutionary and biological processes for example migratory species is significant.

Despite their **smallness**, Caribbean States share a high degree of biodiversity and endemism. Therefore, smallness is not a problem, once the area is large enough to achieve the goals of protection such as the Pitons Management Area in St. Lucia, now a World Heritage Site.

The most representative features of **Natural heritage** in the region include:

a.) Ongoing geological processes (Criterion viii)

1. The evolution and development of the island arc system
2. Dome forming volcanic eruptions
3. Plate tectonics, plate boundary margins
4. Evolution and development of coral reefs
5. Development of karst landscapes

b.) Geomorphic features (criterion viii)

1. Rock formations
2. Waterfalls
3. Mountains
4. Karst features
5. Blue holes

c.) Habitat for conservation of biodiversity and biological processes (criteria ix & x)

1. High degree of endemism in most states (rare, endangered and threatened species); considered one of the world's eight hot spots
2. Habitat for migratory species such as turtles and migratory birds
3. Coastal and Marine ecosystems and biological processes,
4. Coral Reefs

5. Sea Mounts
6. Coastal areas
7. Sea grass beds
8. Nesting sites for turtles
9. Mangroves
10. Littoral forests
11. Wetlands
12. Terrestrial ecosystems
13. Wet, moist and dry vegetation
14. Montane and lowland vegetation

Considerations for **AUTHENTICITY** should include the following:

- ❖ Determination of authenticity depends on an objective evaluation based on: historical and archaeological research, the review of testimonials, observation and comparisons, and by verifying the correspondence between the significant historic functions and the existing main characteristics of the property;
- ❖ Authenticity should be established by sound scientific research and academic investigation which has produced considerable documentation and chronological confirmation;
- ❖ Spirit and feeling are important attributes of authenticity and may be expressed through: design, use of colour, detailing
- ❖ The recognition of replacement & repair is part of the Caribbean reality because of the susceptibility of the materials to harsh environmental conditions.
- ❖ Authenticity may be found where intervention in the form of conservation has focused on stabilization instead of reconstruction;
- ❖ The value of the property remains regardless of the additions that have occurred over time except in cases where it goes against its values;
- ❖ Many of the Amerindian sites are buried and therefore have remained undisturbed by modern human activities.

Considerations for **INTEGRITY** should include the following;

- ❖ Recognize that all Caribbean heritage sites are threatened by extensive and uncontrolled physical development and natural disasters.
- ❖ Based on the smallness of the areas, the impact on the natural properties of these islands from human influence, and their vulnerability to natural disasters is relatively high³.
- ❖ Because of the small size of the islands representation of part of the uniqueness of the geological formations of the Caribbean area may be submerged under the sea. A high percentage of positive responses to the art. 88 a, b & c⁴ will ensure that the integrity of sites are not endangered.

³ See Operational Guidelines 2005, art. 90 For all properties nominated under criteria (vii) - (x), bio-physical processes and landform features should be relatively intact. However, it is recognized that no area is totally pristine and that all natural areas are in a dynamic state and to some extent involve contact with people. Human activities, including those of traditional societies and local communities, often occur in natural areas. These activities may be consistent with the outstanding universal value of the area where they are ecologically sustainable.

⁴ See Operational Guidelines 2005, art. 88 Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires

- ❖ An effective management plan should be in place at the time of nomination including continuous monitoring and evaluation.
- ❖ Promotion of continuous research and scientific studies on the existing biodiversity and biological processes in the Caribbean region is essential to ensure compliance with art 80 of the Operational Guidelines 2005⁵.
- ❖ The information prepared for support of the nomination should be from a credible source or peer reviewed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To The World Heritage Committee:

- Recognize the contributions of the fauna and flora of the Caribbean to the world;
- Assist in the creation of transboundary nominations in the Caribbean;
- Provide funds as to allow for the inclusion of hands on training component within the Heritage Studies programmes of Caribbean Universities (e.g. UWI campuses of the West Indies, University of the Netherlands Antilles).

To The World Heritage Centre:

- Continue to support the work of conservation institutions of the Caribbean.
- Launch as soon as possible, as main action for the implementation of the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme, the heritage management training programme proposed by the UNESCO Regional Office for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean. Establish as soon as possible partnerships with different regional and sub-regional institutions;
- Make the *Caribbean Training Survey* (2004) available to the States Parties;
- Urgently create the possibility for the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme Steering Committee⁶ to meet in order to revitalize the initiatives related to training and other activities previously foreseen;
- Organize a conference or workshop for the creation of a manual on conservation techniques related to Integrity and Authenticity;

assessing the extent to which the property: a) includes all elements necessary to express its outstanding universal value; b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance; c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

⁵ Operational Guidelines 2005, art. 80: "The ability to understand the value attributed to the heritage depends on the degree to which information sources about this value may be understood as credible or truthful. Knowledge and understanding of these sources of information, in relation to original and subsequent characteristics of the cultural heritage, and their meaning, are the requisite bases for assessing all aspects of authenticity".

⁶ The Steering Committee was created during the 2004 Jamaica meeting and it is composed by representatives of the following countries: The Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts & Nevis, Project Manager for Ecole Carabienne du Patrimoine (ECP, or Caribbean School of Heritage) and the World Heritage Centre . Under the chairman and lead of University of West Indies the main task of the Committee was to further develop the Capacity Building Programme and in particular to provide a list of institutions, resource persons and available training (including curricula) existing in each territory and to consider a Terms of Reference not limited to, but including matters relating to accreditation, networking, funding, identification of courses and resource persons in existing institutions in States Parties and Associated Territories.

To The States Parties

- Show concrete commitment to the implementation of the Caribbean Action Plan (the first step in doing so would be to submit national Tentative Lists to the World Heritage Centre);
- Establish management mechanisms that will make Caribbean World Heritage Sites model of best practices by establishing effective partnerships between Governments, communities and the private sector and in preserving the values for which they were inscribed on the World Heritage List;
- Prioritize more research on the Geological and Geomorphic features in the Caribbean to ensure that they may be included on the Tentative Lists of States parties for World Heritage Status;
- Re-activate and support the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme Steering Committee in order to revitalize the initiatives related to training and other activities previously foreseen;
- The Caribbean Capacity Building Steering Committee should identify resource persons and collaborate with Caribbean and international institutions already active in capacity building such as: the Institute of Archaeology of Belize, the University of the West Indies, the University of the French Antilles, the University of the Netherlands Antilles, the Carleton University in Canada, and others;
- Prioritize more research on the Geological and Geomorphic features in the Caribbean to ensure that they may be included on the Tentative Lists of States parties for World Heritage Status.

Transboundary nominations:

- Where individual sites have all elements of OUV they should be nominated as such but where individual sites do not contain all elements of OUV consideration should be given to working towards grouping them in serial and or transboundary nominations;
- It is proposed that a transboundary geological nomination be considered. It is further proposed that specific and comparative studies be undertaken to establish the outstanding universal value of such sites;
- Recognizing that the archaeological record and sites are the primary voice by which this silenced culture can be expressed, it is recommended that where sites cannot stand alone States Parties be encouraged to develop trans boundary nominations.