INDIA

I.1 Introduction

Year of ratification 1977

Organization submitting the report
- Natural Heritage Section I:
  Ministry of Environment & Forests, New Delhi, India
- Cultural Heritage Section I:
  Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), New Delhi, India

I.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

The status of national inventories
- NH: In 1988, the Wildlife Inst. of India initiated a “comprehensive document on the wildlife protected area network in India”. The periodic review covers biogeographic classification (across all biomes); important ecological, floral, geomorphological & zoological areas; and proposes recommendations for new protected areas. The 3rd updated edition was published in 2002.
- NH: All state governments have detailed inventories of significant protected/forest areas. Concerned forest & wildlife divisions maintain detailed accounts of each site.
- CH: Inventories of monuments & sites of national importance (currently 3,611) and state-level significance are maintained by the ASI (since 1904) and the respective state Archaeology Departments.
- CH: NGOs and municipalities have undertaken the listing of buildings & sites at the local level.

The preparation of a Tentative List
- 15 sites, revised in January 2001 after discussion between the ASI and the Dept of Culture.
- CH: In view of the WH Committee decision to include under-represented categories of sites, “the tentative list is being revised with state government authorities and different ministries… local bodies and NGOs are being involved on a regional basis.”

Nominations and the nomination process
- 1982 10 nominations (submitted in incomplete form)
  (a) Red Fort, Delhi
  (b) Excavated remains at Lothal, Gujarat
  (c) Martand Temple, Jammu & Kashmir
  (d) Gol Gumpaz, Karnataka
  (e) Monuments at Aihole, Karnataka
  (f) The Caves of Karla, Maharashtra
  (g) Chittorgarh Fort & Monuments, Rajasthan
  (h) Akbar’s Tomb, Sikandra
  (i) Itimad-ud Daula Tomb, Agra
  (j) Excavated remains Kalibangan, Rajasthan
- 1983 4 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Ajanta Caves
  (b) Ellora Caves
  (c) Agra Fort
  (d) Taj Mahal
- 1984 2 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Sun Temple, Konarak
  (b) Group of Monuments, Mahabalipuram
- 1984 3 nominations (deferred)
  (a) Ranthambore National Park
  (b) Kahna National Park
  (c) Rann of Kutch Sanctuary
- 1985 3 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Kaziranga National Park
  (b) Manas National Park
  (c) Keoladeo National Park
- 1986 4 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Churches & Convents of Goa
  (b) Khajuraho Group of Monuments
  (c) Hampi Group of Monuments
  (d) Fatehpur Sikri
- 1987 4 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Pattadakal Group of Monuments
  (b) Elephanta Caves
  (c) Brihadisvara Temple
  (d) Sundarbans National Park
- 1988 1 nomination (inscribed)
  (a) Nanda Devi National Park
- 1989 1 nomination (inscribed)
  (a) Buddhist Monuments, Sanchi
- 1990 1 nomination (deferred)
  (a) Silent Valley National Park
- 1991 1 nomination (not inscribed)
  (a) Gir National Park
- 1992 1 nomination (not inscribed)
  (a) Wild Ass Sanctuary
- 1993 2 nominations (inscribed)
  (a) Humayun’s Tomb, Delhi
  (b) Brihadisvara Temple
  (c) Red Fort (deferred)
- 1998 11 nominations (all deferred)
  (a) Buddhist Monastery Complex at Alchi
  (b) Temples at Bishnupur, West Bengal
  (c) Golkonda Fort, Andhra Pradesh
  (d) Mattancherry Palace, Kerala
  (e) Dholavira, a Harappan City, Gujarat
  (f) Ancient Buddhist site, Samath, Bihar
  (g) Group of Monuments Mandu, Madhya Pradesh
  (h) Tomb of Sher Shah Suri, Bihar
  (i) Rani-ki-vav, Gujarat
- 2000 1 nomination (inscribed)
  (a) Mahabodhi Temple Complex, Bihar
- 2002 3 nominations (deferred from 1998)
  (a) Champaner-Pavagadh
  (b) Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka
I.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

Integration of heritage and planning
- NH: Site managers prepare park management plans for a period of 5-10 years in consultation with NGOs, people’s representatives & research institutions. These are later submitted as ‘state plans’ to the MOEF.
- NH: Some of the important schemes supported by the central government include: (i) ecodevelopment in & around protected areas; (ii) Project Tiger; (iii) Project Elephant; (iv) Wetland Conservation Programme; (v) conservation & management of coral reefs; and (vi) biosphere reserves.
- NH: Important legislation includes the Indian Forest Act (1927); Wildlife Protection Act (1972); Forest Conservation Act (1980); Environment Protection Act (1986); and Biodiversity Conservation Act (2002).
- NH: The MOEF is also the nodal agency for 9 multilateral environmental conventions (CBD, CITES, Ramsar, UNCLOS, Kyoto Protocol etc.).
- CH: A detailed cultural policy is being drafted by the Dept. of Culture, which includes tangible and intangible heritage of the country.
- CH: ASI has formulated a 5-year ‘Perspective Plan’ (2002-2007) handled at both national & local levels.
- CH: The ‘Central Advisory Board of Archaeology’ (CABA) comprises of representatives from different universities, state governments, and the ASI.

Participation of local communities
- NH: Since 1990, 63,000 Joint Forest Management Committees have been established covering 14.25 million ha of forests.
- NH: 1400 NGOs work in the field of environment & conservation. 14 major partners are listed.
- CH: Local civil bodies are “always consulted” in the preparation of nominations, and enlisted for their artisanal skills as sculptors, masons & stone cutters.

Tourism Development
- NH: The ‘National Tourism Policy 2002’ recognises the “deep-rooted relationship with natural and cultural heritage” and seeks to improve sanitation, circuit roads, rail & waterways; and develop village, adventure & wildlife tourism.
- CH: The national tourism strategy focuses on economic & social development. Visitor flow is nonetheless regulated with admission tickets.
- CH: A danger from tourism is recognised of “uncontrolled insensitive and illegal commercial activity [which] continues unabated.”

Financial measures and budget allowance
- NH: “Funds are provided annually from state plan and non-plan schemes and centrally sponsored schemes”. 15 areas are listed. No figures supplied.
- CH: Funds for World Heritage are part of the regular budget. No figures supplied.
- CH: “Access to old revenue data is another problem as [it is] scattered and under the control of numerous State and Government agencies.”
- CH: A ‘National Culture Fund’ (NCF) was established in 1996 to encourage private-public partnership in the restoration of heritage. Donors include the Indian Oil Corporation; Aga Khan Foundation; Oberoi Group of Hotels; Tata & Apeejay Groups.

Professional
- NH: The Indian Forest Service has some 2500 officers throughout the country (100 at the national level).
- NH: 12 specialised training institutes are listed including the: (i) Wildlife Inst. of India; (ii) Indian Council of Forestry, Research & Education; (iii) Indira Gandhi Forestry Academy; (iv) Indian Inst. of Remote Sensing; (v) G.B. Pant Inst. of Himalayan Environment & Development.
- CH: Specialized studies have covered stereophotographic studies, micro-earthquake and environmental impact assessments. A list of advanced training centres is attached.
- CH: Advanced technology for stone conservation, GIS, remote sensing, and the preservation of paintings can be transferred from other UNESCO state parties through international & regional co-operation.

New and improved services
- NH: Numerous scientific and technical research projects include: (i) Mangrove Atlas of India; (ii) coral reef monitoring; (iii) in vitro propagation of medicinal plants; (iv) phyto-diversity inventorization by the Botanical Survey of India; (v) national vegetation mapping & thematic maps; and (vi) ‘People’s Biodiversity Register’ of traditional knowledge.
- CH: The ‘Science Branch’ of the ASI has extended technical expertise to different (private) organisations to take up the chemical cleaning of cultural properties.
- CH: Master Plans and buffer zones are being elaborated by the respective state governments.
Application of the World Heritage Convention by the States Parties

Issues to be addressed

- **NH:** Areas for improvement include: (i) reducing man-wildlife conflicts; (ii) assessment of threat status of endangered species; (iii) restoration of degraded habitats; (iv) poaching control; (v) community participation; (vi) conflict resolution; (vii) intelligence gathering; (viii) education; and (ix) ecotourism.

- **CH:** “Efforts are being made to augment and upgrade the existing basic amenities to the public.”

- **CH:** Areas for improvement include: (i) environment impact studies; (ii) training programmes for site managers; (iii) digital documentation; and (iv) youth education with electronic & print media.

I.4 International co-operation and fund raising

National and International Fund Raising

- **CH:** On a request from the government of Cambodia, the Indian government participated in the conservation of the WH site of Angkor Wat.

- **CH:** India was also involved in the UNESCO campaign to salvage the Nubia monuments, and in the earlier restoration of the Bamiyan Buddhas in the 1970s.

- **NH:** Regional & global cooperation is sought for WH sites ‘in danger’ to ensure that these properties are taken out of danger in a fixed time frame.

- **CH:** It is proposed to develop “a documentation centre exclusively dealing with the issues relating to WH sites. The Centre could act as a catalyst in integrating conservation, tourism, funding, evaluation of sites, and take requisite action to formulate site management… and develop an information database.”

- **CH:** Extra-budgetary funds mobilised by the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage include:
  - 1994-2003 $500,000 Conservation, preservation of the Buddhist monuments at Sanchi & Satdhara (Japan)
  - 1998-2003 $158,200 Research, conservation training for Taj Mahal (Fondation Rhône-Poulenc)

I.5 Education, information and awareness-building

Information and awareness measures

- **NH:** ‘Eco-clubs’ have been set up all over the country as “a non-formal proactive system to involve school children in conservation education”. ‘World Heritage Week’ is observed each November.

- **NH:** The MOEF has set up an environmental information system with 25 ‘ENVIS’ centres.

- **CH:** The motivation to enter WH nominations “emanates from the latent desire to bring out the universal value and hidden symbolic meaning of a given property to humanity at large.”

- **CH:** A new series of Guide Books has been published along with postage stamps & short films.

I.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

Conclusions and proposed actions

- **NH:** India has increased the number of protected areas from only 65 in the 1970s to 587 national parks and sanctuaries for wild flora & fauna in 2002. The periodic review of protected area coverage seeks to further ensure the coverage of a range of representative biomes.

- **NH:** Integrated landscape-level conservation will in the future address “regional planning connecting vital ecological corridors and preventing fragmentation of natural ecosystems.”

- **NH:** “Enormous benefits are foregone especially by the local people due to the establishment of protected areas in a developing country. Such opportunity costs of heritage sites must be met to maintain its effectiveness… [WH properties] should get priority in international funding.”

- **CH:** As part of an “urban organism”, concerned municipal agencies should be made “accountable for acts of omission and commissions” arising in and around WH properties (including buffer zones).