

WHV – Public Conservation Actions for Foguang Temple under Climate Change

Mount Wutai, China

PROJECT DATES

Cultural property inscribed on the World Heritage List (2009) 15 April – 15 December 2025

THE SITE - With its five flat peaks, Mount Wutai is a sacred Buddhist Mountain. The cultural landscape is home to forty-one monasteries and includes the East Main Hall of Foguang Temple, the highest surviving timber building of the Tang dynasty, with life-size clay sculptures. It also features the Ming dynasty Shuxiang Temple with a huge complex of 500 statues representing Buddhist stories woven into three-dimensional pictures of mountains and water.

OBJECTIVES - The project aims at engaging both domestic and international participants in understanding and participating in the conservation of Foguang Temple, a significant ancient Chinese architecture site, in the face of challenges posed by climate change. Through workshops, material collection, and public science efforts, the project seeks to cultivate a group of informed volunteers, establish communication channels between various stakeholders, and promote public awareness and participation in heritage protection.

ACTIVITIES - The project includes awareness-raising activities such as workshops to educate participants on the history of Foguang Temple and the impact of climate change, on-site investigations and guided tours, and visits to ancient architecture renovation and component manufacturing factories. Hands-on activities involve shooting promotional videos for Foguang Temple's protection, organizing science popularization activities, and formulating public response plans for extreme weather and natural disasters. The project's activities focus on developing volunteers' skills, involving international volunteers, site management, local authorities, and the community, and sharing best practices through social media and other channels.

PARTNERS – Shanxi Provincial Department of Ecology and Environment; Shanxi Academy of Ancient Building and Painted Sculpture & Fresco Preservation; Taiyuan Global Children Future School; Global Gap Year Student Services.

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