

World Heritage Cultural Landscapes

The International Convention for the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, often referred to as the World Heritage Convention, was adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1972. This international treaty established a unique international instrument for recognizing and protecting both the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value. It was not until 1992, however, that this Convention became the first international legal instrument to protect cultural landscapes.

In December 1992 the World Heritage Committee adopted three categories of cultural landscapes to be integrated into their operational guidelines.

1. The most easily identifiable is the clearly defined *landscape designed and created intentionally by humans*. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.
2. The second category is the *organically evolved landscape*. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, 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 subcategories:
 - 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 of time. 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

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same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.

3. 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.

These revisions to the World Heritage Committee operational guidelines were based on recommendations prepared by an expert meeting, held in La Petite Pierre in France in October 1992. The World Heritage Committee adopted the revisions to the cultural criteria with the intention of including exceptional outstanding cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List. With this decision, the World Heritage Convention became the first international legal instrument to identify, protect, conserve, and transmit to future generations cultural landscapes of outstanding universal value.

An *Action Plan for the Future* was adopted by the World Heritage Committee in December 1993, based on the recommendations of an international expert meeting on cultural landscapes held in Germany in October 1993. This plan recommended regional expert meetings to

assist with comparative studies of cultural landscapes and development of a thematic framework to assist the World Heritage Committee with the evaluation of cultural landscape nominations. A number of regional and thematic expert meetings have been held on cultural landscapes and related issues in the context of an overall global strategy for a representative and balanced World Heritage List:

- International Expert Meeting on "Cultural Landscapes of Outstanding Universal Value" (Germany, October 1993)
- Expert Meeting on Routes as Part of the Cultural Heritage (Spain, November 1994)
- Heritage Canals (Canada, September 1994)
- Asia-Pacific Workshop on Associative Cultural Landscapes (Australia, April 1995)
- Asian Rice Culture and its Terraced Landscapes (regional thematic study meeting, Philippines, March–April 1995)
- Expert Meeting on European Cultural Landscapes of Outstanding Universal Value (Austria, April 1996)
- Expert Meeting on Cultural Landscapes of the Andean Region (Peru, May 1999)
- Expert Meeting on Cultural Landscapes in Africa (Kenya, March 1999)
- Expert Meeting on Cultural

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Landscapes in Eastern Europe
(Poland, September–October
1999)

These expert meetings have served as milestones in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by assisting States Parties in recognizing and nominating cultural landscapes for inclusion on the World Heritage List (e.g., Figure 1). Methodologies for identifying cultural landscapes were developed and suggestions made towards the classification and evaluation of cultural landscapes. Specific legal, management, socioeconomic, and conservation issues related to cultural

landscapes were also addressed and examples of outstanding cultural landscapes discussed, which illustrated the general landscape categories in the regions. Many discussions among experts from all regions of the world also gave consideration to the need to recognize the associative values of landscapes and landscape features for indigenous people and to the importance of protecting biological and cultural diversity within cultural landscapes.

In December 1993 at its seventeenth session, the World Heritage Committee inscribed Tongariro National Park in New Zealand as the first cultural landscape on the World



Figure 1. Vernazza, one of the five villages that make up the Cinque Terre, Italy—a cultural landscape on the World Heritage List. *Photograph by Linas Sinkevicius.*

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Heritage List. The site was already included on the List in recognition of its outstanding natural values and had been resubmitted as an associative landscape under the revised criteria for cultural properties. The mountains of Tongariro National Park have cultural and religious significance for the Maori people and symbolize the spiritual links between the people and their environment. In 1994, another cultural landscape was added. Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park in Australia was inscribed as both a living and an associative cultural landscape of the traditional

owners, the Anangu Aboriginal people (Figure 2). Following the regional thematic study meeting on Asian Rice Culture and its Terraced Landscapes, the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras were included as an exceptional example of a 2,000-year-old tradition forming a landscape of great beauty. Table 1 lists the 16 cultural landscapes currently inscribed on the List.

It is evident that the World Heritage Convention can serve as a catalyst for the recognition and protection of the world's diverse landscapes. Even though only a selection



Figure 2. The 1994 inscription of Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park as a cultural landscape gives universal recognition to its cultural significance to the Anangu people of central Australia.

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Cultural Landscape	Year of Inscription	Country
Tongariro National Park	1993	New Zealand
Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park	1994	Australia
The Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras	1995	Philippines
Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape	1996	Czech Republic
The Sintra Cultural Landscape	1996	Portugal
Hallstatt-Dachstein / Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape	1997	Austria
Pyrenees Mount Perdu Patrice de Belfon	1997	France/Spain
The Costiera Amalfitana	1997	Italy
Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands (Palmaria, Tino, and Tinetto)	1997	Italy
Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park with the Archeological Sites of Paestum and Velia, and the Certosa di Padula	1998	Italy
Quadi Quadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz el-Rab)	1998	Lebanon
Vinales Valley	1999	Cuba
Jurisdiction of Saint-Emilion	1999	France
Hortobagy National Park	1999	Hungary
Sukur Cultural Landscape	1999	Nigeria
Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: The Mannerist Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park	1999	Poland

Table 1. Cultural landscapes currently inscribed on the World Heritage List

of landscapes can be inscribed on the World Heritage List, the international recognition of this type of property enhances protection by other means, including stimulating additional regional and national protection. For example, with its ex-

perience in implementing the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre provided advice to the Council of Europe on the preparation of a European Landscape Convention. The World Heritage Committee welcomed this

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initiative by the Council of Europe and encourages other regional and national efforts that serve heritage conservation.

The adoption of the revised criteria for the inclusion of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List is one of the great success stories of the implementation of the Convention because it provides opportunities for the protection of the "combined works of nature and of man" as defined in Article 1. At the last session of the World Heritage Committee in Marrakech, Morocco, in December 1999, five new cultural landscapes were added to the World Heritage List. Four of these were from regions of the world currently under-represented on the List, including the first cultural landscapes from sub-Saharan Africa and from Latin America (see Table 1).

At this meeting, the World Heritage Committee had a lengthy debate on the Loire Valley, a 200-km linear cultural landscape along the Loire River between Maine and Sully-sur-Loire. It was generally recognized that the Loire Valley had outstanding universal value and was worthy of being inscribed as a cultural landscape on the World Heritage List under cultural criteria. It was also noted that a steering committee, with representation from territorial authorities and institutions with involvement in the region, had been established to oversee the area and that the management of this complex

and extensive cultural site was exemplary, innovative, and appropriate. However, several delegates raised concerns about the nuclear power plant located within the boundaries of the proposed site. The World Heritage Committee therefore deferred the consideration of the matter.

This discussion illustrates the complexity of cultural landscape conservation, particularly for living cultural landscapes. To provide assistance to current and potential World Heritage Site managers in charge of cultural landscapes, an international group of experts, the World Heritage Centre, and the advisory bodies to the Convention (IUCN-The World Conservation Union, the International Council on Monuments and Sites {ICOMOS}, and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property {ICCROM; see Box 1}) are collaborating on the development of management guidelines. They will be designed as an illustrated booklet on the everyday management and protection of landscapes of outstanding universal value.

In 1992, the World Heritage Convention became the first international legal instrument to recognize and protect cultural landscapes of outstanding universal value. This made the recognition and nomination of heritage more accessible to regions currently under-represented

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Box 1. ICCROM's Heritage Settlements Program

ICCROM is an intergovernmental expert organization concerned with training and conservation of cultural heritage. It was founded by UNESCO in 1956 and is based in Rome. ICCROM's Heritage Settlements Program focuses on urban and territorial conservation issues, including cultural landscapes. This program aims to improve the integration of cultural heritage with sustainable planning, management, and development of heritage resources associated with human settlements, both urban and rural. At the international level, the program provides a forum for sharing ideas and practices. At the regional level (currently in northeastern Europe, Latin America, and Southeast Asia), the focus is on the specific needs and circumstances of the area. At present, the territorial management aspect of the program includes a global survey of initiatives and activities concerning cultural landscapes, pilot projects for cultural landscape management (for example, in the World Heritage Site of Cinque Terre, Italy), and participation in the development of management guidelines for World Heritage Cultural Landscapes. Partners include local authorities, universities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and development agencies. For more information, see the ICCROM Web site, <http://www.iccrom.org>.

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on the World Heritage List and gave new momentum to the interpretation of heritage. Since 1993, numerous States Parties have identified potential candidates and have nominated landscape properties. Collectively, these countries, working through the

World Heritage Convention, have contributed to ensuring that our global cultural landscape heritage receives appropriate conservation and recognition at the international level.

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