

HERITAGE AS A DRIVER FOR DEVELOPMENT

Its contribution to sustainable tourism in contemporary society

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Abstract. The Paris 2011 ICOMOS Scientific Symposium will explore how Heritage can contribute to and stimulate development in a modern world. Theme 3 - *Tourism and Development* focuses on the role of heritage in the development of sustainable tourism and on the potential for tourism to be a major factor in building public awareness and support for heritage conservation.

The contribution that tourism can make to poverty alleviation, to conservation of the natural and cultural heritage and to overall sustainable development, can be substantial. Tourism and culture are seen as two powerful drivers for growth in many parts of the world. They play a vital role in fostering a greater understanding of the rich diversity of regional cultures. Cultural tourism is an inevitable component of cultural heritage. Tourism has the power to deliver significant earnings for environmental protection, as well as giving economic value to cultural heritage. It is a sector built on bringing people together in order to learn about and understand each other, fostering mutual respect and tolerance.

As one of the world's most powerful economic and social forces, well managed tourism can and does give heritage, both tangible and intangible, a major role in contemporary society, reinforcing cultural identity and diversity as key reference points for development. The tourism sector is well aware of the issues surrounding heritage conservation and its role in contemporary development. Natural and cultural heritage sites are now major components of the world's tourism assets. The UN World Tourism Organization research demonstrates that interest in the environment, culture and heritage is a primary motivation for more than 50% of travel, and is consistently growing as a market sector.

The paper will summarise the contribution of the ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee and others over the last decade to the development of well managed tourism as a major contemporary force for heritage conservation and human development.

The 2004 UNDP Development Report ('Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World') states that freedom of cultural expression is a necessary precondition "to build inclusive, culturally diverse societies." In this process ... the ability of the World Heritage sites to attract the attention of hundreds of million travellers every year, contributes to provide better living conditions for poor communities. At the same time, it can help promote the cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue much needed in today's world.

Nordic World Heritage Foundation, *Final Project Report, "Cultural Heritage and Tourism: Models for Co-operation among Stakeholders"*.

Cultural Tourism and its Relevance to ICOMOS

The 2011 Scientific Symposium, held in conjunction with the 2011 ICOMOS Paris General Assembly has selected "Tourism and Development" as one of its major themes. The discussion will enable the wider ICOMOS membership to explore and understand

the enormous potential for the world's heritage resources combined with well-managed "tourism" to be a major driver for the intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual "development" of the communities that sustain that heritage.

The ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC) is committed to the principle that tourism, with its presentation and communication of the significance of heritage places, has great relevance to every ICOMOS National Committee and most ICOMOS International Scientific Committees. The role of every ICOMOS National Committee includes the communication of their national and regional heritage to their own people as well as to visitors. Such communication and promotion are as important as the work of protection and conservation. Without public awareness and support there will be little political and funding support for conservation. The sustainable contribution of the world's heritage to local community development relies to a large degree

on this public support.

In addition to the work of ICTC and the ICOMOS International Committee on Interpretation and Presentation, many other ISCs focus on aspects of the world's cultural heritage and cultural landscapes that are enormous sources of pride, identity and interest to the wider population, as well as being drivers for local development. ICOMOS International Committees such as Intangible Heritage, Archaeological Management, Historic Towns, Cultural Routes, Polar Heritage, 20th Century Heritage, Vernacular Architecture, Industrial Heritage, Underwater Heritage, Cultural Landscapes, Shared Heritage, Fortifications and Military Heritage and Pacifica all focus on heritage resources that interact with local people and visitors. The communication and presentation of their work should be a fundamental component of their missions within the broader ICOMOS family and of their contributions to community development.

The Fundamental Relationship between Heritage and Tourism

The fundamental relationship between heritage and tourism is grounded in three concepts, all of which combine as major drivers of tourism interest and development activity:

- Physical Heritage
- Cultural Diversity
- Intangible Heritage

At the international level these concepts are captured and managed by three major instruments:

- Physical Heritage by the *World Heritage Convention*, 1972
- Cultural Diversity by the *UNESCO Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity*, 2001
- Intangible Heritage by *The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, 2003

For the tourism sector, the most important international instrument is the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, managed by the UN World Tourism Organisation. For ICOMOS it is the *ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter*, 1999.

Together these various international instruments strive for improving the qualities of development as defined in the *UNESCO Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity*: "Development" does not simply mean economic growth but should be a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and

spiritual existence.

In December 2010 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution that specifically emphasises culture as an important contributor to sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Culture and cultural heritage are now widely perceived to be important contributors to sustainable development. Among the recommendations are specific mentions to:

- Support the emergence of local markets for cultural goods and services
- Preserve and maintain local indigenous traditional knowledge and community practices in environmental management
- Promote capacity-building, where appropriate, at all levels for the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector, in particular by encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Tourism as a Driver for Development

Tourism is one of the world's largest and most dynamic forms of social and cultural exchange. It is also one of the largest forms of economic activity and a driver of development. While international visitor arrivals are predicted by the UN World Tourism Organisation to reach 1,000 million within the next few years, domestic tourism is estimated to be more than five times that amount. Their research demonstrates that interest in the environment, culture and heritage is a primary motivation for more than 50% of travel, and is a consistently growing market area.

In November 2006, Europa Nostra published a *Position Paper on the Encouragement of Cultural Tourism and the Mitigation of its Effects*.

Tourism is a growing and complex business. It is fast becoming one of the world's most significant economic activities. In the European Union the direct and indirect impact of tourism accounted for about 11.5% of GDP and generated about 24.3 million jobs in 2005. Tourism and culture are seen as two powerful drivers for growth across Europe. They play a vital role in fostering a greater understanding of the rich diversity of regional cultures in Europe and a deeper appreciation of the common European heritage... Cultural tourism is an inevitable component of cultural heritage. Our common European heritage also constitutes a key ingredient of the European identity. Cultural tourism is not only one of the key engines of economic growth.

The concrete discovery of cultural diversity, common identity and pluralism are equally important stakes for cultural tourism. It as a vital role to play in encouraging both greater understanding of the rich diversity of the national and regional cultures of Europe and the greater appreciation of our common European heritage, roots and culture. Cultural tourism can therefore help the cause of European integration and identity by fostering a better understanding between the peoples of Europe.

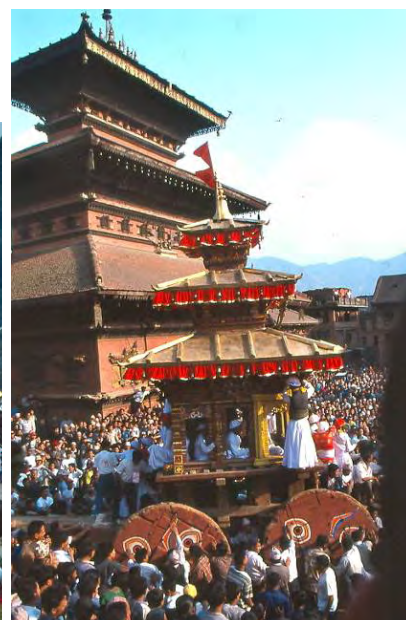
Linking Tangible and Intangible Cultural Diversity at World Heritage Sites

The UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is the leading international body for the Tourism Sector. In cooperation with many public and private sector stakeholders UNWTO strives for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism.

The UNWTO submission to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg stated:



Pilgrimage Festival, Kandy, Sri Lanka



Community Festival, Bhaktapur, Nepal

The contribution that tourism can make to poverty alleviation, to conservation of the natural and cultural heritage, and to overall sustainable development can be substantial. This is especially so in developing countries, where natural resources and landscapes are still relatively untouched and where few other activities have a sustainable development potential, from an economic or environmental perspective. Furthermore, tourism has proved to be in many countries a much more sustainable development option that intensive agriculture, forestry, extractive mining or other primary activities.

In discussing various trends in 20th century tourism, UNWTO noted the continuing geographical spread and diversification of tourist destinations. In 1950, the top 15 tourist destinations, all of which were in Europe or North America, attracted 97% of the world's total arrivals. By 1999 this figure had dropped to 62%, with market shares increasing for developing countries and economies in transition. In 2008 UNWTO recognised China as one of the top four destination countries for international tourism arrivals.

Some key qualitative development trends in tourism include those related to nature, wildlife, rural areas and culture. Consumers' motivations and behaviour are increasingly characterised by a more selective choice of destination, greater attention to the tourism experience and its quality, and a greater sensitivity to the environment, traditional culture and local people at the destinations.

At the international level the contribution of tourism to development is well recognised. UNWTO and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) have prepared an Open Letter to Heads of State, as part of their Global Leaders for Tourism Campaign.

Travel and Tourism is one of the major export sectors of developing countries and the primary source of foreign exchange earnings in the vast majority of these, creating much needed employment and opportunities for development. At the same time, it has the power to deliver significant international earnings for environmental protection, as well as giving economic value to cultural heritage. It is also a sector built on bringing people together, in order to learn about and understand each other, fostering mutual respect and tolerance.

Through the creation of sustainable enterprises and decent jobs, Travel and Tourism provides the necessary security and stability to millions of people world wide to build better lives. As a fast entry point into the workforce for young people and women, it provides crucial opportunities for fair income, social protection, gender equality, personal development and social inclusion.

In joining this campaign in June 2011, the President of Indonesia, Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono stated that "tourism plays a significant role, not only in the preservation of cultural values, but also in increasing people's welfare."

In his opening to the 2007 UNWTO *Asia Pacific Newsletter*, Mr Xu Jing, Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific noted that "more and more Asian countries are crafting pro-development strategies to encourage tourism for the advancement of economic well being, social development and mutual understanding".

The Maldives, being one of the least developed states in the 1970s, now stands on top in South Asia in terms of its economic prosperity and living standards as a result of tourism development.... Thailand has already put tourism at the centre of its national development agenda.

Mr Xu also observed:

In philosophical terms, the issue of climate change and sustainable tourism development is no longer perceived as a topic of social responsibility or a noble idea. Rather, it has become an issue of business survival and business viability. Otherwise the very resources that tourism depends on, such as pristine beaches and lush green forests as well as the beautiful fauna and flora, will be destroyed due to tourism.

Following their meeting in Honduras in June 2011, the Ministers of Tourism in the Central American region and their representatives concluded, among other things:

Tourism in Central America continues to be a fundamental pillar of Central American integration and a motor of economic and social development, given its significant contribution in terms of jobs, income, foreign exchange revenue, contribution to the Millennium Development Goals and the eradication of poverty in Central America.

The contribution of tourism in advancing development was addressed during a Special Event on Tourism for Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction, organised by the recently created UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development during a major UN Conference in Turkey in May 2011. In his opening speech, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, observed that "most Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are rich in resources. All have young and vibrant populations. These men and women need decent jobs, education, training so they can make the most of their countries assets – minerals and other commodities, farmland, rich stores of biodiversity and tourism potential". The UNWTO Secretary-General responded that "in spite of tourism's proven contribution to foreign exchange, job creation and socio-economic development, low priority has so far been assigned to the (tourism) sector in the development agenda. This is particularly surprising given that tourism has been clearly identified by developing countries themselves as a priority for the economic advancement".

Of the 48 Least Developed Countries, more than half have World Heritage Sites within their borders. The potential for cultural tourism to contribute to their development is considerable. Some of the reasons for this are tourism's fast geographic expansion and constant growth, the wide variety of economic activities it involves, the fact that it can be developed in isolated locations where other activities would be impossible, its unique characteristic in that

the customer comes to the product, and the fact that it largely comprises small and micro enterprises.

The public and private tourism sectors are thus well aware of the issues surrounding tourism, its role in contemporary development and the importance of natural and cultural heritage sites as major components of the world's tourism assets. ICOMOS and IUCN have a major role in the protection and conservation of these cultural and natural resources. Both the heritage and the tourism sectors must work together to achieve and sustain their individual objectives.

Tourism support for Local Enterprises



Summer tourism subsidises year round community bus service, Mykonos, Greece



Tourism employment, Lijiang, China

The fundamental relationship between heritage and tourism

All tourism involves the consumption of experiences, products and resources. To facilitate this consumption, access by tourists and visitors to natural and cultural heritage sites needs to be facilitated through the development of tourism products such as transportation, travel providers and interpretation programmes. Tourism based on the heritage values of a region or destination is inherently place-specific, and stems from the unique character of the place. It is the heritage identity or attraction of the place that is marketed, followed by the tourism products that enable tourists to actually experience and appreciate the place.

Cultural heritage sites and places represent a huge and varied collection of human creation across the entire globe and the entire span of human history.

With the enormous growth of knowledge, increasing mobility and the increased accessibility of travel there is widespread curiosity about other places and a huge demand to visit and personally experience other societies. As a result the vast majority of cities, towns, villages and settled landscapes experience some form of tourism activity.

The tourism and cultural sectors have emerged worldwide as leaders in the revitalisation of redundant buildings and open spaces for contemporary purposes, and provide opportunities for sustaining traditional and contemporary cultural values. Historic buildings and open spaces that are left abandoned are at risk of physical decay or redevelopment, and represent a loss of opportunity to revitalise structures that contribute to the identity of a community and its social traditions. Hotels, restaurants, offices, shopping precincts and revitalised urban wastelands complement art galleries, museums and performance

venues for their re-use or revitalisation of heritage places as creative and attractive venues for tourists and local residents alike.

The wide spectrum of continuing traditions in host destinations provides interesting opportunities for tourism. It enables tourists to gain a deeper or more holistic understanding of the social characteristics of a destination or site. Continuing traditions are manifested in live performances, festivals, events, storytellers and local markets are expressed through the daily life and activity of the host population. Tourists often talk about “absorbing” the local culture. Simply attending local events and festivals is generally more satisfying than the special “cultural performances” that are only staged for tourists.

Culture is not a static concept. Every culture evolves over time. If it does not, it will die. Every society has the right to embrace the benefits of progress offered by the modern world. If communities control the absolute amount and rate of change to their own heritage and creative traditions, adverse effects can be minimised. At stake is the rate of change, the purpose of the change, the instigator of the change and its relationship to the core values of the culture, whether it is “modern” or “traditional”.

Contemporary cultural and sporting events have become a major motivator for travel. Seasonal or annual arts, film, food and music festivals generate huge amounts of publicity and create strong demand for domestic and international tourism. The energy and focus of special events complement regular programmes by art galleries, museums, libraries, theatre, ballet, concerts, opera and other live music venues.

There can be no doubt that heritage is a major component of contemporary tourism and that this reality will continue. Fundamental to the relationship is the survival, protection, conservation and management of the wide spectrum of heritage sites and traditions. It is essential that the tourism sector and its clientele participate in and support conservation at every opportunity.

A new paradigm needs to emerge, one which actively engages influential members of the public and private tourism sector with a growing percentage of tourists as active participants in the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. Tourists need to be encouraged to change from passive observers to well informed allies, and become supporters of cultural heritage protection. Although most of the hundreds of millions of tourists will not be able to make a direct or personal contribution to the conservation of heritage places,

their power as consumers can motivate influential members of the tourism sector to take action. With widespread public support and active social networking, small initial steps can readily grow into major campaigns.

Communicating Heritage in the Tourism Context

Well-informed tourists are at the very centre of all sustainable tourism activity. With good preparation, they are more likely to appreciate the distinctive features of a destination or heritage site, to enjoy the visit, to make return visits, to recommend the experience to others, to develop a long term interest in the place and perhaps to become ambassadors for its conservation.

Article 4 of the *World Heritage Convention* identifies one of the main obligations of conserving World Heritage places as the presentation of their significance to the public. The *ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter* promotes two major concepts:

- *That one of the major reasons for undertaking any form of conservation is to make the significance of the place accessible to visitors and the host community, in a well managed manner.*
- *That both the conservation community and the tourism industry must work cooperatively together to protect and present the world's cultural and natural heritage, given their mutual respect for it and their concern for the fragility of the resource.*

In this context there are three audiences for the world's cultural and natural heritage:

- International tourists
- Domestic visitors
- The local or host community

In recent decades, the general public's concept of heritage has expanded far beyond famous monuments, archaeological sites, major museums and spectacular landscapes into every aspect of daily life and community memory. Heritage places presented to tourists now include historical and continuing religious centres, former industrial works and defensive complexes, railway and water transportation corridors, historic battlefields and places of confinement and punishment. Abandoned or neglected historic urban quarters are revived and enlivened with new uses, memorials and monuments multiply, and historic exploits

are re-enacted. Natural heritage places are increasingly being opened by parks authorities for general



Indigenous peoples' festival, Mexico City



Candlelight tour, Canterbury Cathedral

visitation. Twentieth century buildings and urban ensembles are as popular as classical or medieval sites. Physical heritage is complemented by all forms of traditional and popular culture, including language and literature, music and dance, rituals and festivals, cuisine and the culinary arts, oral traditions and customs as well as popular sports.

Tourism enables multiple dimensions of cultural exchange

In this context, the relationships between heritage, tourism and development is both dynamic and interactive – the physical and intangible heritage of destinations, sites and local communities can be protected, conserved and invigorated while tourists and visitors learn, appreciate and enjoy the cultural, emotional and intellectual exchange. Heritage conservation and tourism activity exist in close proximity, not in parallel universes. Both heritage conservation and the communication of that heritage are becoming increasingly dependent on creative and well managed tourism programmes.

Management of Tourism and Mitigation of its Impacts

Tourism's ever increasing scale and activity creates strains and generates threats on places and peoples that were never envisaged or experienced in the past. Poorly managed tourism or excessive visitor numbers

at a site can pose major threats to the heritage significance of the place and degrade the quality of the visitor experience. Tourism development and visitor activity should embrace opportunities to enhance the visitor's understanding and appreciation of the heritage values through interpretation, presentation and visitor services. Sustainable tourism as a driver for development relies on the development and delivery of quality visitor experiences that do not degrade or damage any of a heritage site's natural or cultural values and visitor attraction. Equally, it must enhance the quality of life within the local community.

Much tourism promotion, visitor activity, cultural exchange and economic development associated with heritage sites takes place in the surrounding locality, the nearby tourism destination, elsewhere in the country or internationally. Sustainable and responsible tourism development and visitor management requires effective, cooperative commitment and coordination between site management and all relevant public agencies and private enterprises. Stakeholder consultation is essential.

Over the last ten years a number of major initiatives to develop best practice management in the relationship between heritage and tourism have been in progress. Strong support has been provided by a number of international organisations, national governments, World Heritage Committee members, National UNESCO offices and non-government

organisations.

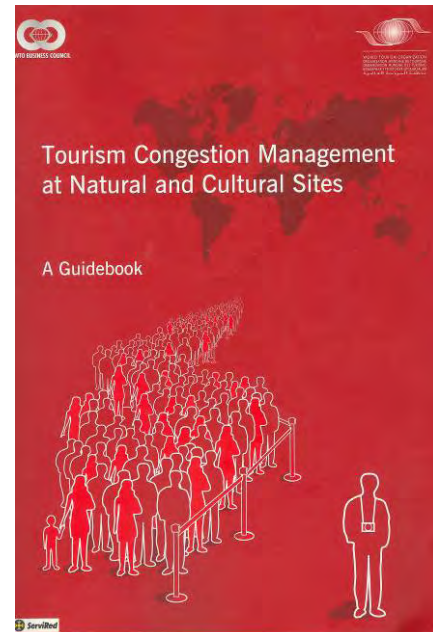
The three major objectives for the protection and sustainability of heritage in the context of tourism are:

- Conservation of Heritage Significance
- Communication of Heritage Significance
- Enhancement of the Quality of Life of the Local Community

A number of major international initiatives have been undertaken over recent years in response to these objectives:



Elevated walkways, The Vatican, Rome



Tourism Congestion Manual for UNWTO

- *Tourism Congestion Management at Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites*, UNWTO
- *Communicating Heritage – A Handbook for the Tourism Sector*, UNWTO
- *Lijiang Models for Cooperation among Stakeholders*, UNESCO Bangkok
- *Draft Principles for Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites*,

Good communication and well managed tourism mitigates impacts on heritage sites

Draft World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Principles

The ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee has contributed to the formulation of the *Draft Principles for Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Properties*.

While World Heritage sites are important natural and cultural heritage resources for the whole of humanity they are also among the most popular, well known and heavily promoted tourist attractions in many

countries. Poorly managed tourism or excessive visitor numbers at a site can pose major threats to the heritage significance of the place and degrade the quality of the visitor experience. Well managed tourism development and visitor activity can greatly enhance public understanding and appreciation of the heritage values through interpretation, presentation and visitor services. The dramatic projected growth of international and domestic travel indicates that these challenges and opportunities are likely to increase for many World Heritage sites and the people who live nearby.

Over recent years the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, with the participation of a series of international agencies including UN World Tourism Organisation, UN Foundation, Nordic World Heritage Foundation, developed the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Initiative (WHSTI) to build cooperation between the heritage and tourism sectors. A series of workshops in France, Switzerland and India in 2008 and 2009 built on the foundations of earlier efforts and progressively developed a spirit of common purpose and

direction. The overall process culminated in a major international workshop held at the Mogao Grottoes World Heritage Site, Dunhuang, China in September 2009, where a set of proposed *Principles* were reviewed and endorsed. The workshop, *Advancing Sustainable Tourism at Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites*, was supported by the Governments of China and Australia and its outcomes were reported to the 2010 meeting of the World Heritage Committee in Brasilia.

Sustainable tourism relies on the development and delivery of quality visitor experiences that do not degrade or damage any of the property's natural or cultural values and visitor attraction. The Draft *Principles for Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Properties* are intended to be embraced by all stakeholders in recognition of a shared concern for the long term protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage places and their visitor attraction. They can provide a best practice framework that every stakeholder in the public, private and community sectors can apply in the achievement of their specific objectives.

At its 2010 meeting in Brasilia, the World Heritage Committee recognised the challenges and opportunities in the relationship between tourism and World Heritage and expressed its appreciation for the work that had been undertaken over recent years. It requested the World Heritage Centre to commence the development of a new and inclusive programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism. This

new programme is currently being formulated.

Principle 1: Contribution to World Heritage objectives

Tourism development and visitor activities associated with World Heritage Properties must contribute to and must not damage the protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of their heritage values. Tourism should also generate sustainable socio-economic development and equitably contribute tangible as well as intangible benefits to local and regional communities in ways that are consistent with the conservation of the properties.

Principle 2: Cooperative partnerships

World Heritage Properties should be places where all stakeholders cooperate through effective partnerships to maximise conservation and presentation outcomes, whilst minimising threats and adverse impacts from tourism.

Principle 3: Public awareness and support

The Promotion, Presentation and Interpretation of World Heritage Properties should be effective, honest, comprehensive and engaging. It should mobilise local and international awareness, understanding and support for their protection, conservation and sustainable use.

Principle 4: Proactive tourism management

Tourism at World Heritage Sites needs proactive and high quality management



*Tourists need time to absorb the heritage values
Greater Angkor, Cambodia*



Tourists need good quality information and experiences, Xian, China

The contribution of tourism development and visitor activities associated with World Heritage Properties to their protection, conservation and presentation requires continuing and proactive planning and monitoring by Site Management, which must respect the capacity of the individual property to accept visitation without degrading or threatening heritage values. Site Management should have regard to relevant tourism supply chain and broader tourism destination issues, including congestion management and the quality of life for local people. Tourism planning and management, including cooperative partnerships, should be an integral aspect of the site management system.

Principle 5: Stakeholder empowerment

Planning for tourism development and visitor activity associated with World Heritage Properties should be undertaken in an inclusive and participatory manner, respecting and empowering the local community including property owners, traditional or indigenous custodians, while taking account of their capacity and willingness to participate in visitor activity.

Principle 6: Tourism infrastructure and visitor facilities

Tourism infrastructure and visitor facilities associated with World Heritage Properties should be carefully planned, sited, designed, constructed and periodically upgraded as required to maximise the quality of visitor appreciation and experiences while ensuring there is no significant adverse impacts on heritage values and the surrounding environmental, social and cultural context.

Principle 7: Site management capacity

Management systems for World Heritage Properties should have sufficient skills, capacities and resources available when planning tourism infrastructure and managing visitor activity to ensure the protection and presentation of their identified heritage values and respect for local communities.

Principle 8: Application of tourism generated revenue

Relevant public agencies and Site Management should apply a sufficient proportion of the revenue derived from tourism and visitor activity associated with World Heritage Properties to ensure the protection, conservation and management of their heritage values.

Principle 9: Contribution to local community development

Tourism infrastructure development and visitor activity associated with World Heritage Properties should contribute to local community empowerment and socio-economic development in an effective and equitable manner.

The Challenge for ICOMOS

The Challenge facing ICOMOS and the conservation community is to actively embrace the opportunities and responsibilities offered by the rapidly increasing growth in public interest and support for Heritage, much of it generated through tourism.

Every ICOMOS National Committee and the majority of International Scientific Committees should embrace these opportunities to enhance and sustain the desired outcomes of their specialised fields of interest.

There is no doubt that Heritage in the context of tourism is a major driver of Development, providing a means for communities throughout the world to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence. Ultimately, it will be the passion and support of committed travellers that will save many of the world's heritage treasures.