

# SILK ROAD

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*UNESCO World Heritage Site*  
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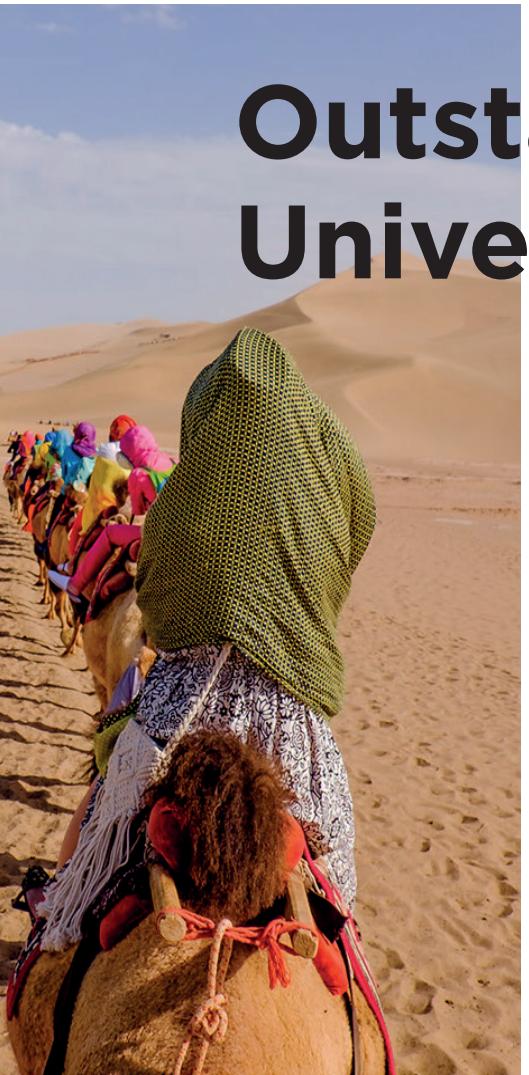
# SILK ROAD

*THE ROUTES NETWORKING OF  
CHANG'AN TO TIANSHAN CORRIDOR*

## Brief Description

This property is a 5,000 km section of the extensive Silk Roads network, stretching from Chang'an/Luoyang, the central capital of China in the Han and Tang dynasties, to the Zhetysu region of Central Asia. It took shape between the 2nd century BC and 1st century AD and remained in use until the 16th century, linking multiple civilizations and facilitating far-reaching exchanges of activities in trade, religious beliefs, scientific knowledge, technological innovation, cultural practices and the arts. The thirty-three components included in the routes network include capital cities and palace complexes of various empires and Khan kingdoms, trading settlements, Buddhist temples, ancient paths, posthouses, passes, beacon towers, sections of The Great Wall, fortifications, tombs and religious buildings.

# Outstanding Universal Value



The Silk Roads were an interconnected web of routes linking the ancient societies of Asia, the Subcontinent, Central Asia, Western Asia and the Near East, and contributed to the development of many of the world's great civilizations. They represent one of the world's preeminent long-distance communication networks stretching as the crow flies to around 7,500 km but extending to in excess of 35,000 km along specific routes. While some of these routes had been in use for millennia, by the 2nd century BC the volume of exchange had increased substantially, as had the long distance trade between east and west in high value goods, and the political, social and cultural impacts of these movements had far-reaching consequences upon all the societies that encountered them.

The routes served principally to transfer raw materials, foodstuffs, and luxury goods. Some areas had a monopoly on certain materials or goods: notably China, who supplied Central Asia, the Subcontinent, West Asia and the Mediterranean world with silk. Many of the high value trade goods were transported over vast distances – by pack animals and river craft – and probably by a string of different merchants.



The Tian-shan corridor is one section or corridor of this extensive overall Silk Roads network. Extending across a distance of around 5,000 km, it encompassed a complex network of trade routes extending to some 8,700 km that developed to link Chang'an in central China with the heartland of Central Asia between the 2nd century BC and 1st century AD, when long distance trade in high value goods, particularly silk, started to expand between the Chinese and Roman Empires. It flourished between the 6th and 14th century AD and remained in use as a major trade route until the 16th century.

The extremes of geography along the routes graphically illustrate the challenges of this long distance trade. Falling to 154 metres below sea level and rising to 7,400 metres above sea level, the routes touch great rivers, alpine lakes, crusty salt flats, vast deserts, snow-capped mountains and 'fecund' prairies. The climate varies from extreme drought to semi-humid;

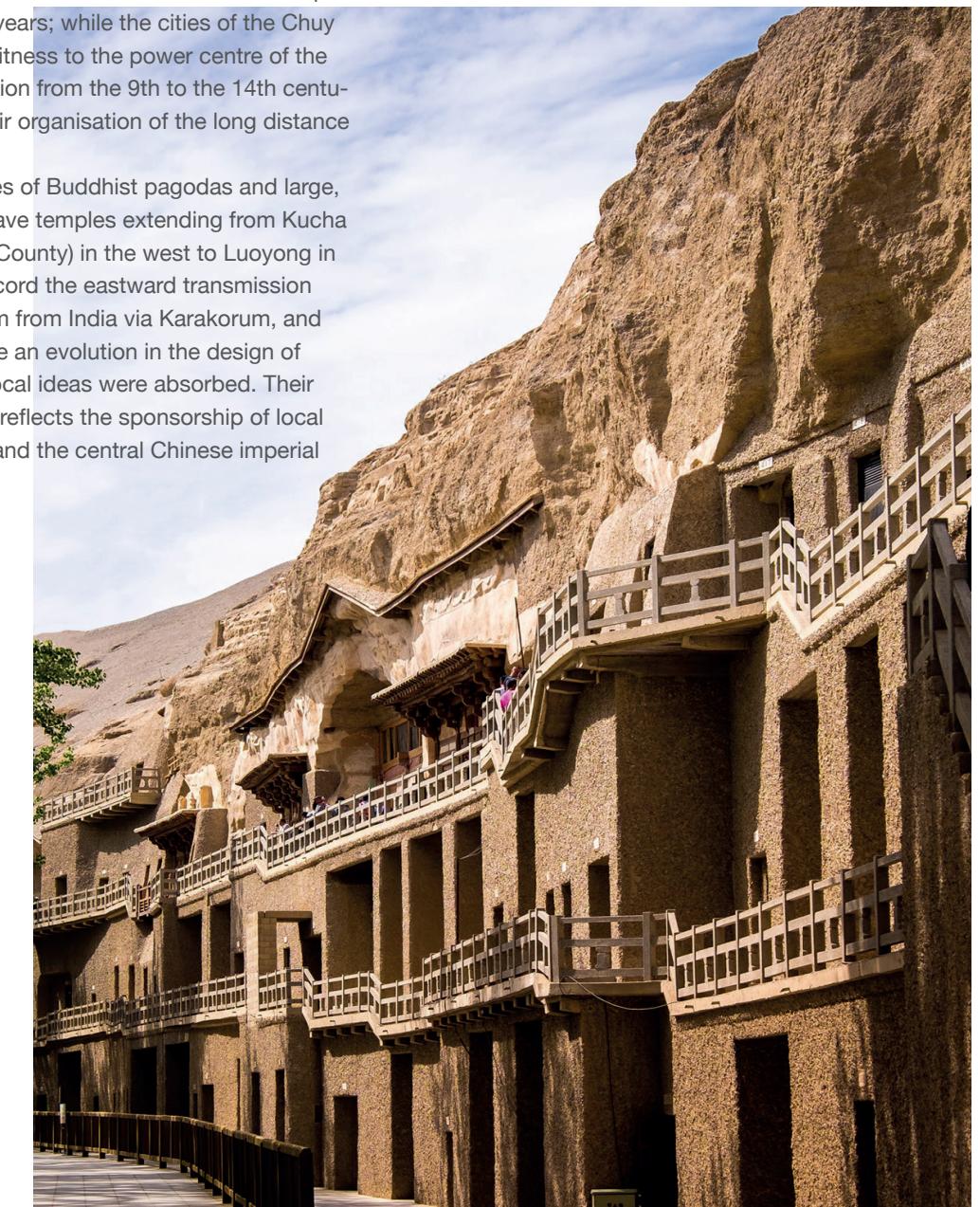
while vegetation covers temperate forests, temperate deserts, temperate steppes, alpine steppes and oases.

Starting on the Loess plateau at Chang'an, the central capital of China in the Han and Tang Dynasties, the routes of the Tian-shan corridor passed westwards through the Hosi Corridor across the Qin and Qilian Mountains to the Yumen Pass of Dunhuang. From Loulan/Hami, they continued along the northern and southern flanks of the Tian-shan Mountain and then through passes to reach the Ili, Chuy and Talas valleys in the Zhetysu Region of Central Asia, linking two of the great power centres that drove the Silk Roads trade.

Thirty-three sites along the corridor include capital cities palace complexes of various empires and Khan Kingdoms, trading settlements, Buddhist cave temples, ancient paths, posthouses, passes, beacon towers, sections of the Great Wall, fortifications, tombs

and religious buildings. The formal system of posthouses and beacon towers provided by the Chinese Empire facilitated trade, as did the system of forts, caravanserai and way stations operated by states in the Zhetysu region. In and around Chang'an, a succession of palaces reflect the power centre of the Chinese Empire over 1,200 years; while the cities of the Chuy valley are witness to the power centre of the Zhetysu region from the 9th to the 14th centuries and their organisation of the long distance trade.

The series of Buddhist pagodas and large, elaborate cave temples extending from Kucha (now Kuqa County) in the west to Luoyong in the east, record the eastward transmission of Buddhism from India via Karakorum, and demonstrate an evolution in the design of stupas as local ideas were absorbed. Their elaboration reflects the sponsorship of local authorities and the central Chinese imperial



government as well as donations of wealthy merchants, and the influence of monks that travelled the routes, many of whose journeys were documented from 2nd century BC onwards. Other religious buildings reflect the co-existence of many religions (as well as many ethnic groups) along the corridor including Zoroastrianism, the main religion of the Sogdians of Zhetsu region, Manichaeism in the Chuy and Talas valleys and in Qocho city and Luoyong, Nestorian Christianity also in Qocho city, around Xinjiang and in Chang'an, and Islam in Burana.

The massive scale of the trading activities fostered large, prosperous and thriving towns and cities that also reflect the interface between settled and nomadic communities in a variety of ways: the mutual inter-dependence of nomads and farmers and different peoples such as between Turks and Sogdians in the Zhetsu region; the transformation of nomadic communities to settled communities in the Tian-shan mountains, resulting in highly distinctive construction and planning such as semi-underground buildings; and in the Hosi corridor the planned agricultural expansion of the 1,000 mile corridor after the 1st century BC as an agricultural garrison and its transformation to settled agricultural communities. Diverse and large scale water management systems were essential to facilitate the growth of towns, trading settlements, forts, and



caravanserai and the agriculture necessary to support them, such as the extensive Karez underground water channels of the extremely arid Turpan basin, many still in use, that supplied water to Qocho city, and were supplemented by deep wells inside Yar city; the grand scale of the network of open canals and ditches along the Hosi corridor that drew river water to the settlements, 90 km of which survive around Suoyang city; and in the Zhetsu region, river water distribution through canals and pipes and collection in reservoirs.

As well as conduits for goods and people, the routes allowed the exceptional flow of ideas, beliefs and technological innovations such as those related to architecture and town planning that shaped the urban spaces and peoples' lives in many fundamental ways.

The vastness of the continental routes

networks, the ultra-long duration of use, the diversity of heritage remains and their dynamic interlinks, the richness of the cultural exchange they facilitated, the varied geographical environments they connected and crossed, clearly demonstrates the extensive interaction that took place within various cultural regions, especially the nomadic steppe and settled agrarian/oasis/pastoral civilizations, on the Eurasian continent between the 2nd century BC and the 16th century AD.

These interaction and influences were profound in terms of developments in architecture and city planning, religions and beliefs, urban culture and habitation, merchandise trade and interethnic relations in all regions along the routes.



The Tian-shan corridor is an extraordinary example in world history of how a dynamic channel linking civilizations and cultures across the Eurasian continent, realized the broadest and most long-lasting interchange among civilizations and cultures.

The Tian-shan corridor bears an exceptional witness to traditions of communication and exchange in economy and culture, and to social development across the Eurasian continent between the 2nd century BC to the 16th century AD.

Trade had a profound influence on the settlement structure of the landscape, through the development of towns and cities that brought together nomadic and settled communities, through water management systems that underpinned those settlements, through the extensive network of forts, beacon towers, way stations and caravanserai that accommodated travellers and ensured their safety, through the sequence of Buddhist shrines and cave temples, and through manifestations of other religions such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Nestorian Christianity and Islam that resulted from the cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic communities that

organised and benefitted from the high value trade.

The Tian-shan corridor is an outstanding example of the way high value, long-distance trade prompted the growth of sizeable towns and cities, supported by elaborate, sophisticated water management systems that harvested water from rivers, wells and underground springs for residents, travellers and the irrigation of crops.

The Tian-shan Corridor is directly associated with Zhang Qian's diplomatic mission to the Western Regions, a milestone event in the history of human civilization and cultural interchange in the Eurasian Continent. It also reflects in a profound way the tangible impact of Buddhism into ancient China which had significant impact on cultures of East Asia, and the spread of Nestorian Christianity (which reached China in 500 AD), Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism and early Islam. Many of the towns and cities along the corridor also reflect in an exceptional way the impact of ideas that flowed along the routes related to harnessing water power, architecture and town planning.





# Integrity

The nomination sets out clearly why the nominated series as a whole should be seen to have integrity and, through a detailed analysis, how each of the individual sites can also be seen to have integrity.

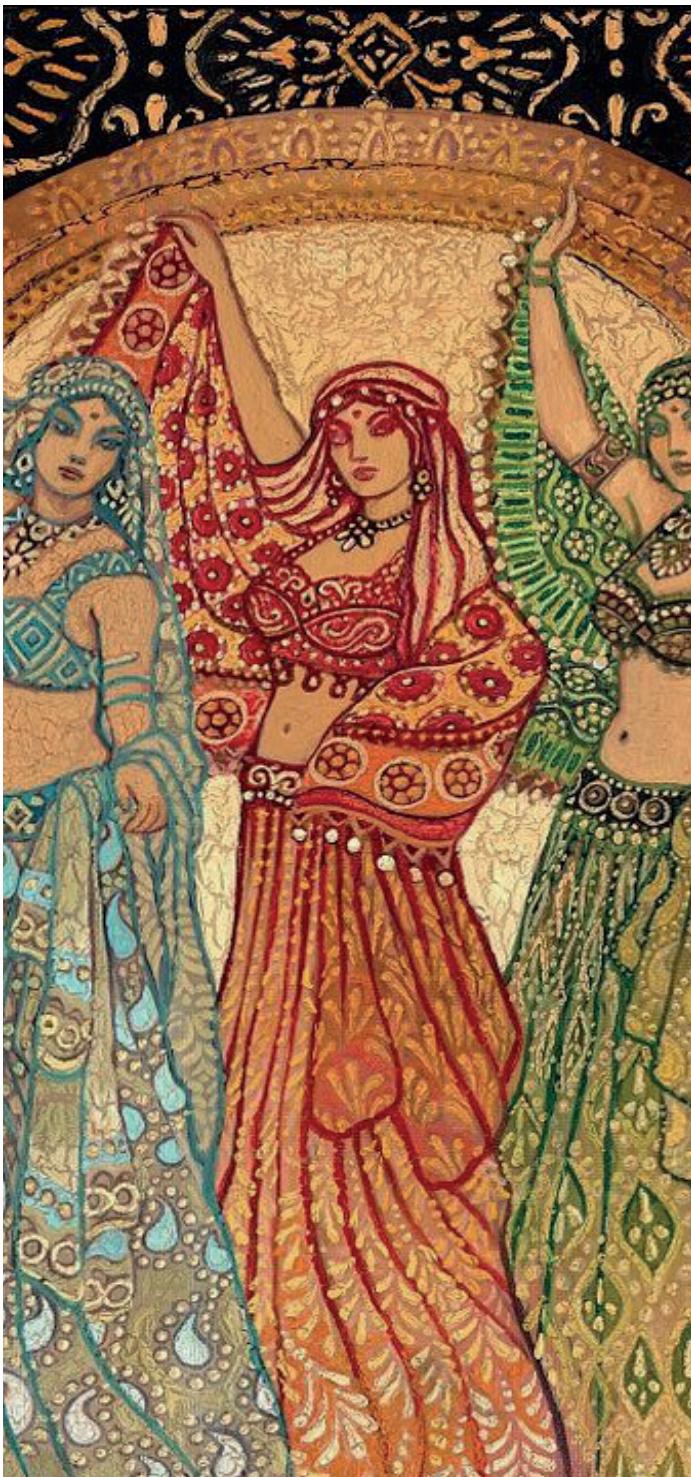
The overall series adequately reflects the significant characteristics of the Tian-Shan corridor and the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value in terms the representation of towns and cities, smaller trading settlements, transport and defence facilities, religious sites and tombs and water management. The one area that could be strengthened is the ensemble of way stations, beacons, watch towers and caravanserai that facilitated regular trade and reflects the everyday use of the route. One watch tower has been nominated and one post house. Although these are significant, they do not fully demonstrate the extent of the formal support that was provided for trade and travellers. The numerous sites of beacon towers and

forts that survive between the Hoxi corridor and the Tian-shan range need further survey and research in order to identify those that might be added to the series. Likewise formal structures in Zhetysu region also need further identification and research.

In terms of individual sites, although it is recognised that some are vulnerable in the face of pressure including urban, rural development, infrastructural development, tourism or changes in agricultural practices, for the majority of these the pressures are adequately contained. There is a need to ensure that new interventions such as screen walls at some sites built in traditional style do not confuse the archaeological record.

For some sites, in order to fully understand the relationship between urban areas and their surrounding desert landscapes, and in particular the trade routes, there is a need for further ground surveys or remote sensing of surrounding areas.

The extensive, intact water management systems, necessary for their survival, are currently outside the boundaries of some sites and in some cases outside the buffer zones. Consideration needs to be given to assessing the way these water management systems contribute to the integrity of the sites and in places minor adjustments to the boundaries need to be considered.



# Protection and Management Requirements

An Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee for the overall Silk Roads was formed in 2009. This is a steering committee composed of representatives of all States Parties involved in the nominations of all Silk Roads corridors. The ICOMOS International Conservation Centre – Xi'an (IICC-X) is the Secretariat for Committee. The Committee oversees the development of trans-national serial nominations of corridors identified in the ICOMOS Silk Roads Thematic Study. In terms of management, this Committee aims to implement a coordinated management system based on mutual agreement and to provide guidelines on conservation principles, methods, and management.

For the Tian-shan corridor, the formal agreement between all the participating States Parties in the Committee has been augmented with a specific agreement between the three States Parties, in particular for the coordinated management of the sites in the corridor. A first agreement between the three States Parties was signed in May 2012 and a further detailed agreement was signed in February 2014. These agreements set out the management



mechanisms, and identify principles and rules of conservation management. They also set out suggestions for exchange and collaboration on conservation, interpretation, presentation and publicity. The Steering Committee for the corridor consists of Vice Ministers. There is also a Working Group consisting of two experts and one government official from each State Party, and a Secretariat - the ICOMOS International Conservation Centre in Xi'an (IICC-X). Regular meetings are held between the three States Parties. Collaboration is supported by the development of an on-line platform at the IICC-X. This is in three languages,





English, Russian and Chinese. It collects and promotes information on the conservation initiatives along the Silk Roads.

This international collaboration needs to be supported by national collaboration, particularly in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, if the many fragile archaeological sites are to share information on the most advanced techniques and conservation measures that are appropriate and beneficial for the sites. Within China, this management structure is well developed and appears effective. Within Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan this collaboration needs to be reinforced.

Management Plans are in place for all the individual sites in China. For Kazakhstan a timetable for developing detailed management plans that would provide strategies for conservation and visitor management, including interpretation, for all sites had been

approved and the work will be undertaken between 2014 and 2016. It is essential that these plans go beyond archaeological excavation to encompass on-going management, site surveillance, conservation, environment protection and tourism management. In Kyrgyzstan, all three sites have management plans for 2011 – 2015 that include proposals for improving the conservation of the sites, visitor facilities, and monitoring.

Although the need for tourism plans is acknowledged in each of the three countries, and these have been put in place in China and are being implemented, and a plan has been approved for the Chuy Valley, there is an urgent need to tourism plans to be put in place for the remaining sites and implemented to ensure they are well prepared for an increase in visitors, who do not become the agents of their destruction.

A dramatic, low-angle photograph of snow-capped mountain peaks under a dark sky, with sunlight highlighting the ridges.

# UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE



# Mission Statement

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. This is embodied in an international treaty called Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO in 1972.

Cultural heritage refers to monuments, groups of buildings and, sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value.

Natural heritage refers to outstanding physical, biological and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants and areas with scientific, conservation or aesthetic value.

UNESCO's World Heritage mission is to:

- encourage countries to sign the World Heritage Convention and to ensure the protection of their natural and cultural heritage;
- encourage States Parties to the Convention to nominate sites within their national territory for inclusion on the World Heritage List;
- encourage States Parties to establish management plans and set up reporting systems on the state of conservation of their World Heritage sites;
- assist States Parties in safeguarding World Heritage sites by providing technical assistance and professional training;
- provide emergency assistance for World Heritage sites in immediate danger;
- support States Parties' public awareness-building activities for World Heritage conservation;
- encourage participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage;
- encourage international cooperation in the conservation of our world's cultural and natural heritage.



# A Brief History

**1959** UNESCO launches an international campaign and collects US\$80 million to save the Abu Simbel temples in the Nile valley. A draft of the convention on the protection of cultural heritage is prepared.

**1962** UNESCO presents its Recommendation on the Safeguarding of the Beauty and Character of Landscapes and Sites. This recommendation covers the preservation and the restoration of the aspect of natural, rural and urban landscapes and sites, whether natural or man-made, which have a cultural or aesthetic interest or form typical natural surroundings.

**1965** A White House . Conference in Washington, D.C., in 1965 called for a 'World Heritage Trust' to protect 'natural and scenic areas and historic sites.'

**1968** IUCN develops a proposal similar to the 'World Heritage Trust' for its members.

**1966** UNESCO spearheads an international campaign to save Venice after disastrous floods threatened the city.

**1972** Following a united Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972 and the work of expert groups involving IUCN, ICOMOS and UNESCO, all the proposals came together in the Convention concerning the Protection



of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris on 16 November 1972.

**1978** First twelve sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List.

**1992** Marks the 20th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, the creation of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the adoption of the cultural landscapes category by the World Heritage Committee, making the World Heritage Convention the first international legal instrument to recognize and protect cultural landscapes.

**1994** The Global Strategy for a Balanced and Representative World Heritage List is adopted by the World Heritage Committee with the goal of achieving better regional balance and greater thematic diversity in the World Heritage List. It encourages the nomination of sites in underrepresented parts of the world and especially in categories which are not yet fully represented on the List.

**1994** UNESCO launches the Young People's participation in World Heritage Preservation and Promotion Project with the aim to develop new educational

approaches to mobilize young people in becoming involved in the protection and promotion of heritage.

**2002** The United Nations proclaims 2002 the International Year for Cultural Heritage.

**2002** To mark the 30th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO, with the help of the Italian Government, organizes in Venice the International Congress ·World Heritage: Shared Legacy, Common Responsibility, with the objective to assess the past 30 years of implementation of the World Heritage Convention and to strengthen partner-

# The Nomination Process

Only countries that have signed the World Heritage Convention, pledging to protect their natural and cultural heritage, can submit nomination proposals for properties on their territory to be considered for inclusion in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

## The criteria for selection

To be included on the World Heritage List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten selection criteria. These criteria are explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention which, besides the text of the Convention, is the main working tool on World Heritage. The criteria are regularly revised by the Committee to reflect the evolution of the World Heritage concept itself.

Until the end of 2004, World Heritage sites were selected on the basis of six cultural and four natural criteria.

With the adoption of the revised Operational Guidelines for the Implemen-

tation of the World Heritage Convention, only one set of ten criteria exists.

Selection criteria:

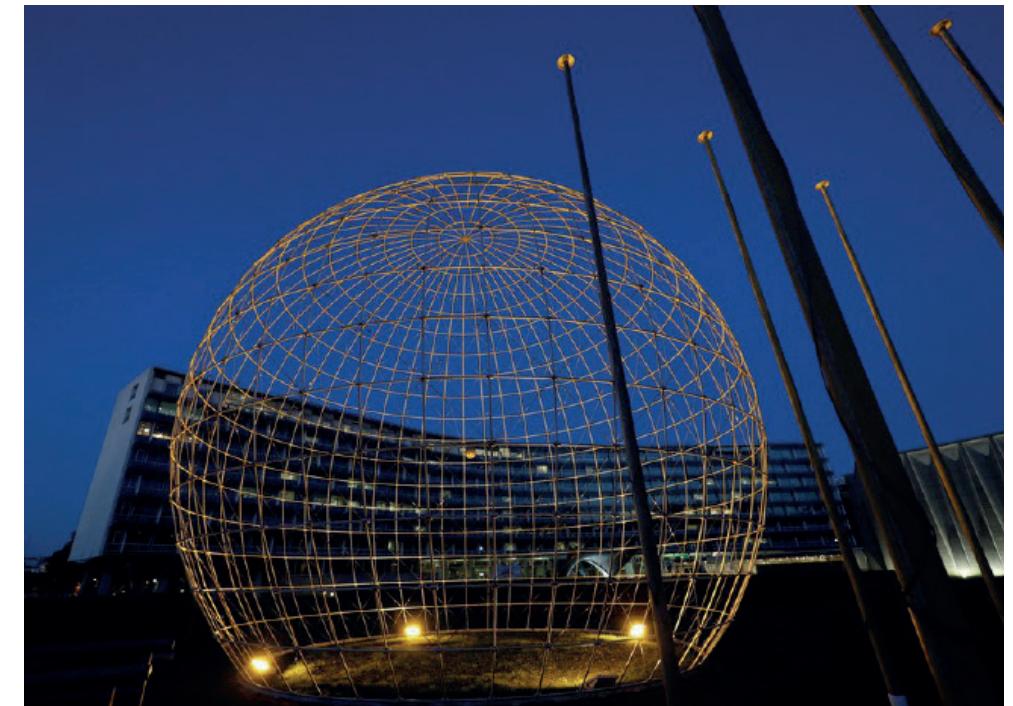
(i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

(ii), exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town planning, or landscape design;

(iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

(iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it



has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

(vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);

(vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

(viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;

(ix) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial,

(x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

The protection, management, authenticity and integrity of properties are also important considerations.

Since 1992 significant interactions between people and the natural environment have been recognized as cultural landscapes.



# List of World Heritage Sites in Danger

Armed conflict and war, earthquakes and other natural disasters, pollution, poaching, uncontrolled urbanization and unchecked tourist development pose major problems to World Heritage sites. These can threaten the very characteristics for which a site was originally inscribed on the World Heritage List. Dangers can be 'ascertained', referring to specific and proven imminent threats, or 'potential', when a property is faced with threats which could have negative effects on its World Heritage values.

Some illustrative cases of sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

## **City of Bam in the Islamic Republic of Iran**

The ancient Citadel and surrounding cultural landscape of the Iranian city of Bam, where 26,000 people lost their lives in the earthquake of December 2003, was simultaneously inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List and on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2004. Important international efforts are mobilized to salvage the cultural heritage of this devastated city.

## **Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan**

This cultural landscape was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003

simultaneously with its inscription on the World Heritage List. The property is in a fragile state of conservation considering that it has suffered from abandonment, military action and dynamite explosions. Parts of the site are inaccessible due to the presence of antipersonnel mines. UNESCO, at the request of the Afghan Government, coordinates all international efforts to safeguard and enhance Afghanistan's cultural heritage, notably in Bamiyan.

## **Kathmandu Valley in Nepal**

The exceptional urban and architectural heritage of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur has been severely affected by uncontrolled urban development. The property, composed of seven Monument Zones, which, since the time of inscription in 1979, have unfortunately been seriously altered, resulting in a general loss of authenticity and integrity of the property as a whole. For these reasons the site was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003. UNESCO is working with the Nepalese authorities to help them develop a long-term management plan to conserve the remaining World Heritage values of the property and adopt corrective measures to address illegal building activities.

# SUCCESS STORIES

## **Walled City of Baku in Azerbaijan**

Representing an outstanding and, rare example of medieval architecture at 'the crossroad of the many different cultures in the region, the Walled City of Baku sustained significant damage during the earthquake of November 2000 and has been increasingly affected by the pressure of urban development, the absence of conservation policies and by questionable restoration efforts. For these reasons it was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2003. Since then, UNESCO has been working with the State Party and the Advisory Bodies to set up a plan of action to address the conservation issues as well as with stakeholders to coordinate the implementation of safeguarding measures.

## **Historic Town of Zabid in Yemen**

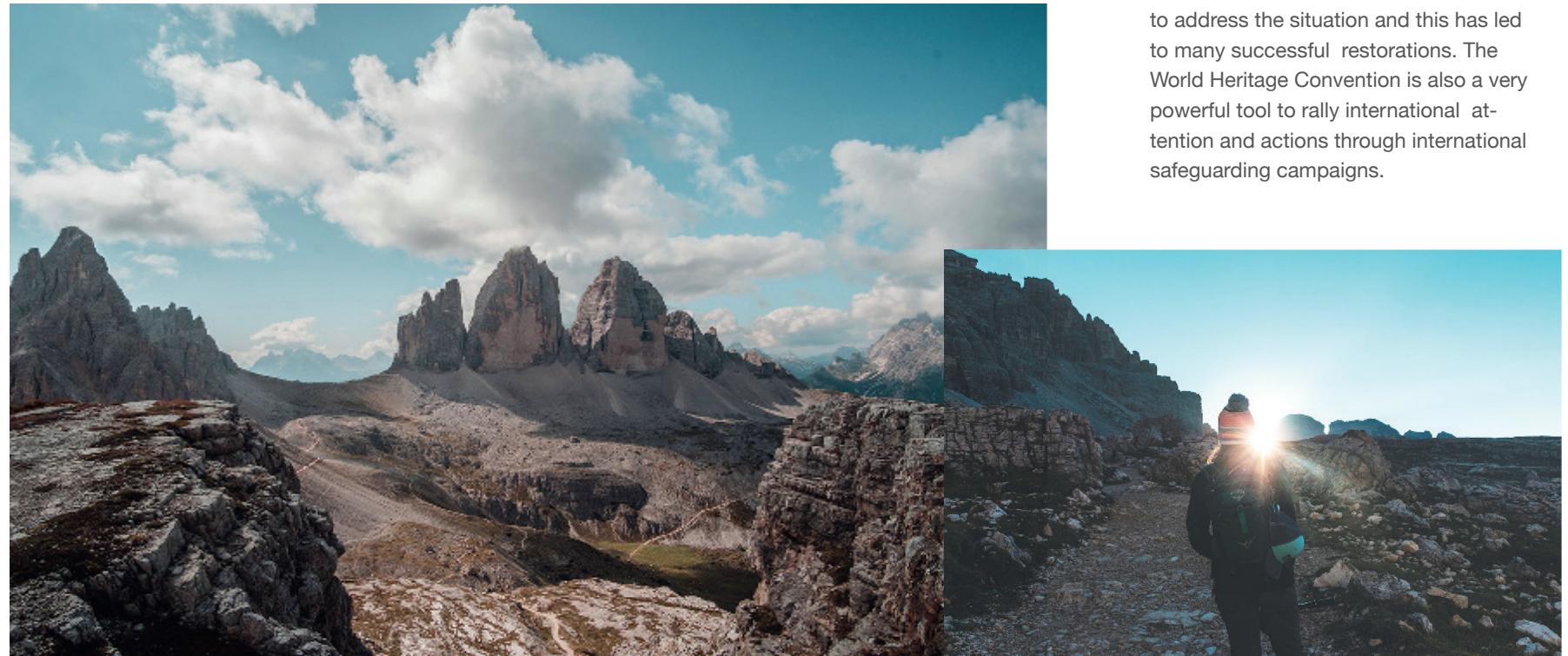
The outstanding archaeological and historical heritage of Zabid has seriously deteriorated in recent years. Indeed, 40% of its original houses have been replaced by concrete buildings. In 2000f at the request of the State Party, the Historic Town of Zabid was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. UNESCO is helping the local authorities to develop an urban conservation plan and to adopt a strategic approach for the preservation of this World Heritage site. Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras Commercial and agricultural intrusions into the site threaten the World Heritage values for which it had been inscribed in 1982. The advancing agricultural frontier at the west side of the reserve, pushed by small farmers and cattle ranchers, is already reducing the Reserve's forest area. The southern and western zones of the Reserve are subject to

massive extraction of precious wood such as the caoba. The site was thus inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1996. An eleven-point corrective action plan has been elaborated and the management plan for Rio Platano is being carried out with a World Heritage Fund contribution.

## **National Parks of Garamba, Kahuzi-Biega, Salonga, Virunga and the Okapi wildlife Reserve in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Since 1994, all five World Heritage sites of the DRC were inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger as a result of the impact of the war and civil conflicts in the Great Lakes region. In 1999, an international

safeguarding campaign was launched by UNESCO together with a number of international conservation NGOs to protect the habitat of endangered species such as the mountain gorilla, the northern white rhino and the okapia. This resulted in a 4-year US\$3.5 million emergency programme to save the five sites, funded by the United Nations Foundation and the Government of Belgium. In 2004, international, donors, non-governmental organizations and the governments of Belgium and Japan pledged an additional US\$50 million to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo rehabilitate these World Heritage parks.



The' World Heritage Convention is not only 'words on paper' but is above all a useful instrument for concrete action in preserving threatened sites and endangered species. By recognizing the outstanding universal value of a site, States Parties commit to its preservation and strive to find solutions for its protection. If a site is inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, the World Heritage Committee can take immediate action to address the situation and this has led to many successful restorations. The World Heritage Convention is also a very powerful tool to rally international attention and actions through international safeguarding campaigns.

# Finding Solutions



Often, the World Heritage Committee and the States Parties, with the assistance of UNESCO experts and other partners, find solutions before a given situation deteriorates to an extent that would damage the site.

## Giza Pyramids in Egypt

These pyramids were threatened in 1995 by a highway project near Cairo which would have seriously damaged the values of this archaeological site. Negotiations with the Egyptian Government resulted in a number of alternative solutions which replaced the disputed project.

**Royal Chitwan National Park in Nepal** This Park provides refuge for about 400 greater one-horned rhinoceros characteristic of South Asia. The World Heritage Committee, in the early 1990s, questioned the findings of the environmental impact assessment of the proposed Rapti River Diversion Project. The Asian Development Bank and the Government of Nepal revised the assessment and found that the River Diversion project would threaten riparian habitats critical to the rhino inside Royal Chitwan. The project was thus abandoned and this World Heritage site was saved for the benefit of future generations.

## Archaeological Site of Delphi in Greece

At the time of its nomination in 1987, plans were underway to build an aluminium plant nearby the site. The Greek Government was invited to find another location for the plant, which it did, and Delphi took its rightful place on the World Heritage List.



## Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino in Mexico

In 1999, the World Heritage community campaigned against a plan for enlarging an existing salt factory to commercial scale in Laguna San Ignacio in El Vizcaino Bay, the last pristine reproduction lagoon for the Pacific grey whale.

The World Heritage Committee forewarned the Mexican Government of the threats posed to the marine and terrestrial ecosystems, the grey whales as key species as well as the overall integrity of this World Heritage site by locating saltworks inside the Sanctuary. As a result, the Mexican Government refused permission for the saltworks in March 2000.

## Mount Kenya National Park/Natural Forest in Kenya

The nomination of this site was first referred back to the State Party on the basis of findings during the evaluation that suggested there were serious threats to the site, primarily illegal logging and marijuana cultivation inside the Park. The State Party responded with an action plan which included provision of additional vehicles, increased patrols, community awareness pro-

jects, training of forest guards and a review of the policy affecting the adjacent forest reserve. Based on these assurances, the Committee inscribed the site in 1997.

Today, some threats still remain but there has been significant progress in the management of the site. Successful restorations Angkor in Cambodia One of the most important archaeological sites in South-East Asia, Angkor Archaeological Park contains the magnificent remains of the different capitals of the Khmer Empire, from the 9th to the 15th century. In 1993, UNESCO embarked upon an ambitious plan to safeguard and develop the historical site carried out by the Division of Cultural Heritage in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre. Illicit excavation, pillaging of archaeological sites and landmines were the main problems. The World Heritage Committee, having noted that these threats to the site no longer existed and that the numerous conservation and restoration activities coordinated by UNESCO were successful, removed the site from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2004.

#### **Old 'City of Dubrovnik in Croatia**

The 'pearl of the Adriatic', dotted with beautiful Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque buildings had withstood the passage of centuries and survived several earthquakes. In November and December 1991, when seriously damaged by artillery fire, the city was immediately included on the List of World Heritage in Danger. with UNESCO providing technical advice and financial assistance, the Croatian Government restored the facades of the Franciscan and Dominican cloisters, repaired roofs and rebuilt palaces. As a result, in December 1998, it became possible to remove the city from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

#### **Wieliczka Salt Mine in Poland**

This property was inscribed in 1978 as one of the first twelve World Heritage sites. This great mine has been actively worked since the 13th century. Its 300 kilometres of galleries contain famous works of art with altars and statues sculpted in salt, all of which were seriously threatened by humidity due to the introduction of artificial ventilation at the end of the nineteenth century. The site was placed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1989. During nine years of joint efforts by both Poland and the international community, an efficient dehumidifying system was installed, and the Committee, at its session in December 1998, had the satisfaction of removing the site from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

#### **Ngorongoro Conservation Area in the united Republic of Tanzania**

This huge crater with the largest concentration of wild animals in the world was listed as an endangered site in 1984 because of the overall deterioration of the site due to the lack of management.

By 1989, thanks to continuous monitoring and technical cooperation projects, the situation had improved and the site was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.



# UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE

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