

Protected Landscapes and Cultural Landscapes: Taking Advantage of Diverse Approaches

Protected landscapes and cultural landscapes share much common ground: both are focused on landscapes where human relationships with the natural environment over time define their essential character. In protected landscapes, the natural environment, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem integrity have been the primary emphases. In contrast, the emphasis in cultural landscapes has been on human history, continuity of cultural traditions, and social values and aspirations. Yet in spite of the strong dichotomous tradition, recent experience has demonstrated that in many landscapes the natural and cultural heritage are inextricably bound together and that the conservation approach could benefit from more integration. This paper explores the recent recognition of the value of both cultural landscapes and protected landscapes and the convergence in conservation strategies.

International Recognition of Cultural Landscapes through the World Heritage Convention and the Relationship with Natural Heritage

The concept of cultural landscapes is not new, although it has only relatively recently become a prominent part of the international cultural heritage movement (see Rössler's paper, this volume). After nearly a decade of debate, in 1992 the World Heritage Committee (an international committee with responsibilities for implementing the World Heritage Convention, adopted in 1972) agreed that cultural landscapes

could meet the criteria of "outstanding universal value" and revised the convention's guidelines accordingly. In doing so, the committee recognized that cultural landscapes have values in their own right that are different from the scientific and the perceptually based scenic qualities of properties valued for their natural characteristics.

The guidelines also specifically address the relationship between cultural heritage and natural resource values by acknowledging that cultural landscapes represent the "combined works of nature and of man" as designated in Article 1 of the con-

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vention: "They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal" (section 36 of the guidelines). In section 37, the term "cultural landscape" was defined as "a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment."

By this definition, a cultural landscape is created through the interrelationship of culture and nature, which shapes environments over time and results in landscapes of today.

The World Heritage guidelines also specifically integrate nature conservation into the definition of cultural landscapes, referring to the role of cultural landscapes in sustainable land use and to their importance, in certain situations, for maintaining biological diversity. As these sections state:

Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature. Protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land-use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. The continued existence of traditional forms of land-use supports biological diversity in many regions of the world. The protec-

tion of traditional cultural landscapes is therefore helpful in maintaining biological diversity (section 38).

The committee also recognized the great diversity of cultural landscapes around the world. To distinguish their different values, they defined three categories of cultural landscapes.

Category 1, the "*clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man*," largely concentrates on parks and gardens (section 39-i). Certain World Heritage landscapes, like the Cultural Landscape of Sintra in Portugal and the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape in the Czech Republic (Figure 1), whose principal values are clearly rooted in their design, are equally clearly "working landscapes" that reflect particular cultural responses to the natural environment. A recent presentation on the 200-sq-km Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape pointed out that "human creativity has completely changed the natural environment and created a complex cultural landscape producing new natural environments."

Category 2, "the *organically evolved landscape*," reflects that process of evolution of cultural factors in association with the natural environment over time in their form and component features. Such landscapes derive "from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative" and have de-

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Figure 1. In the Lednice-Valtice cultural landscape of the Czech Republic, human creativity has completely changed the natural environment and created a complex cultural landscape, producing new natural environments.
Photograph by Jessica Brown.

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veloped their present forms by association with and in response to their natural environment. "Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features." They fall into two sub-categories:

- "A *relict (or fossil) landscape* [such as an archaeological landscape] is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. 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 same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time" (section 39-ii; for an example, see Figure 2).

By virtue of their organic nature and continued management and use over time, all landscapes may be said to have evolved. The essence of the organically evolved cultural landscape, whether relict or continuing, is that its most significant values lie in the material evidence of its evolution in the context of a natural environment that influenced and shaped it. Evolved continuing cultural landscapes, such as the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras and the

Hallstatt-Dachstein Salzkammergut Cultural Landscape in Austria, are traditional settlements that embody cultural adaptations to specific natural environments through which they have shaped both a livelihood sustained over time and a distinctive sense of place.

Category 3, the "*associative cultural landscape*," derives its significance from "the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent" (section 39-iii).

A 1995 workshop on associative cultural landscapes, held in the Asia-Pacific region "where the link between the physical and spiritual aspects of landscape is so important," elaborated on their essential characteristics: "Associative cultural landscapes may be defined as large or small contiguous or non-contiguous areas and itineraries, routes, or other linear landscapes—these may be physical entities or mental images embedded in a people's spirituality, cultural tradition and practice. The attributes of associative cultural landscapes include the intangible, such as the acoustic, the kinetic and the olfactory, as well as the visual" (Australia ICOMOS 1995). Tongariro National Park in New Zealand and Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in Australia are World Heritage Sites designated for both their natural and cultural qualities. They are also tra-

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Figure 2. Woman planting rice in Ban Lac village near Mai Chau, Vietnam—a continuing landscape of Southeast Asia. Photograph by Barbara Slaiby.

ditional homelands of indigenous peoples who have lived on these lands for centuries and have powerful spiritual associations with these places, often most vividly expressed in their oral traditions passed from generation to generation. An international symposium, "Natural Sa-

cred Sites – Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity," convened in the fall of 1998 further explored this important dimension of associative cultural landscapes (UNESCO 1998).

Since many of the World Heritage nominations for cultural landscapes include natural resources as well,

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teams of cultural resource experts from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and natural resource experts from IUCN-The World Conservation Union conduct the evaluations. Adrian Phillips, chair of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas, has written about the importance of recognition of cultural landscapes by the World Heritage Committee: "The significance of this development is not confined to the relatively few sites which will be recognized under the convention. Just as important in the long run is the encouragement that the international interest in World Heritage cultural landscapes will give to the conservation of landscapes generally and to the collaborative working between experts in cultural conservation and the conservation of natural values" (Phillips 1998, 29).

International Recognition of Protected Landscapes through the Work of IUCN and the Relationship to Cultural Heritage

IUCN distinguishes protected areas in six categories. Category V, Protected Landscape/Seascape, is defined as "a protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation. It is an area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological

and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance, and evolution of such an area" (IUCN 1994).

The key areas of significance of protected landscapes, as described in IUCN's "green book," are high scenic quality, diverse associated habitats, flora and fauna along with manifestations of unique or traditional land use patterns, and social organizations as evidenced in human settlements and local customs, livelihoods, and beliefs (IUCN 1994). Opportunities for public enjoyment through recreation and tourism are found within its normal lifestyle and economic activities. Harmonious interaction of nature and culture, diversity of landscape and habitat, biodiversity, and preservation of the social and cultural fabric characterize protected landscapes. The paper by Beresford and Phillips in this issue further elaborates on the IUCN's categories of protected areas and on the importance of protected landscapes and their critical role in conservation today.

The IUCN system of categories has been used successfully by many countries as a management framework (see papers by Romulus and Lucas and by Brown and Mitchell in this volume). Protected landscapes in this system are a complement to traditional national parks and provide

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opportunities to directly engage local communities in stewardship.

**The Great Divide: A
Dichotomous Tradition**

Examining the fields of nature conservation and cultural resource preservation side by side illustrates the dramatic dichotomy in the perception of landscape and the relationship of humans and the environment. One perspective is biocentric, based on the intrinsic value of wildness and its complex of species in the absence of humans; the other, anthropocentric, celebrating the many aspects of cultural achievement and development.

Harald Plachter and Mechtild Rössler, reflecting on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention which recognized both natural and cultural heritage, noted that the World Heritage Committee tried to avoid separation between nature and culture, but that there was difficulty in bridging this gap:

The distinction between different ways of thought and scientific backgrounds, particularly between art history and nature protection, was evident. While art historians took single monuments as their main focus, the natural scientists did not recognize the immense cultural influences on nature. For natural scientists the protection of threatened species and of 'untouched' natural areas from human influence was the main goal. Nature modified by humans seemed beside the point to them, had little value and was not recognized as a genuine problem for conservation.... Dealing with cultural landscapes has moved our attitude on and our evalua-

tion of 'monuments' and 'wilderness' (Plachter and Rössler 1995, 16).

IUCN's Adrian Phillips also has noted the long tradition of this dichotomy. "The separation of nature and culture—of people from the environment which surrounds them—which has been a feature of western attitudes and education over the centuries, has blinded us to many of the interactive associations which exist between the world of nature and the world of culture" (Phillips 1998, 36).

Environmental historian William Cronon has argued that the dichotomy we have created to conceptualize nature and culture does not assist in developing integrated models (Table 1). He writes that "we need to embrace the full continuum of a natural landscape that is also cultural, in which the city, the suburb, the pastoral, and the wild each has its proper place, which we permit ourselves to celebrate without needlessly denigrating the others" (cited in Phillips 1998, 29). This middle ground is fertile ground for new directions in conservation.

Given this divergence in traditions and values, the challenges of multidisciplinary work are clear—but so is its importance. Many places do have a complex of resources and multiple values and it is therefore critical to be able to recognize this in the development of management programs. A review of a few recent trends in each field illustrates the

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Culture	Cultural Landscapes / Protected Landscapes Middle Ground “Home”	Nature
<i>civilization</i> <i>human</i> <i>profane</i>		<i>wilderness</i> <i>natural</i> <i>sacred</i>

Table 1. The dichotomy of culture and nature. Adapted from Cronon 1995.

convergence that creates opportunities for collaboration. In natural resource preservation:

- There is increasing recognition that to protect species and their habitats, it is often important to encompass larger areas than have traditionally been protected. This increase in the size of areas of concern enhances the proximity to where people live and work.
- Ecological research has demonstrated the pervasiveness of human influence and illuminated an appreciation of the role of disturbance—either natural or human-generated—in shaping ecological systems. Both research and management experience illustrate that active intervention in certain situations may be required to sustain habitat for certain species.
- The recognition of the importance of incorporating people into conservation programs is increasing. In many countries

throughout the world, the importance of working with local people and their cultural traditions in developing nature conservation programs is receiving increasing emphasis.

In cultural resource conservation:

- The recognition of cultural landscapes is representative of the broadening of the definition and scope of cultural heritage. There is specific recognition of the potential natural resource values in cultural landscapes.
- The places of cultural interest may be large—hundreds or even thousands of acres. Cultural landscapes of this size would have tremendous potential to include important natural areas.
- As with nature conservation, there is a growing recognition that the values and priorities of people today are integral to resource evaluation and ultimately critical to the success of any conservation effort.

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Each of these current trends contributes to a new climate that encourages collaboration across disciplines.

**Finding the Interface between
Cultural Landscapes and
Protected Landscapes**

“Cultural landscapes are at the interface between nature and culture. They represent the permanent interaction between humans and their environment, shaping the surface of the earth. With the rapid social and economic development cultural landscapes belong to the most fragile and threatened sites on earth. Adapted protection and proper management is urgently needed” (von Droste, Plachter, and Rössler 1995).

A number of recent initiatives have highlighted the common ground between cultural landscapes and protected landscapes. The proposed anthropological approach for the World Heritage Committee's Global Strategy, for example, focuses on two themes: human co-existence with the land and human beings in society. This direction reflects the growing recognition that material and immaterial, natural, spiritual, and cultural factors are complexly intertwined in the heritage of many countries.

An international expert meeting organized by the World Heritage Centre in Amsterdam in March 1998 examined the issue of amending the method for assessing nominations by establishing a single set of criteria in

place of the long-standing separate criteria for natural and cultural properties. Most of the case studies at that conference illustrated places that are characterized by a combination of natural and cultural landscapes, and a number are already inscribed on the World Heritage List (see Rössler's paper in this volume). The concept of a single integrated set of criteria, articulated at the 1996 meeting in La Vanoise, is now endorsed by the World Heritage Committee's three advisory organizations: IUCN, ICOMOS, and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Rather than initiating a new set of criteria, they propose amalgamating the existing natural and cultural criteria into a single set, which would be applied for all properties. Conditions of integrity are also proposed to be applicable to all nominated properties. While the Committee has not yet acted on the recommendations from the meeting, the proposed amendment would facilitate recognition of the diverse values of both cultural landscapes and protected landscapes.

Adrian Phillips recently noted a growing interest in cultural landscapes within the nature conservation community. He attributes this to many factors, including the “declining power of the idea of pristine wilderness, the realization that many disturbed ecosystems are important

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to [nature] conservation, that agri-biodiversity is a resource to be protected along with wild biodiversity, and the need to find models of sustainable land use" (Phillips 1998, 21).

One of the contributions of cultural landscapes to World Heritage Site management is the recognition that inscription and ongoing conservation must involve the people who live in the designated area. The importance of local involvement in the processes and decision-making related to cultural landscapes—from identification to description of their values, to nomination, implementation, educational role, and long-term outcomes—is crucial to their sustainability. In Canada, the involvement of aboriginal elders in the early stages of the designation process has now become standard in federal designations involving lands associated with the history of aboriginal peoples. In at least three significant projects, the involvement of elders led to a substantially different exploration and identification of place that is more adequately rooted in the culture of the aboriginal people. It is instructive to recognize how results differ between consultation and involvement. For a wide variety of reasons, involvement of associated people and communities in the identification of cultural landscapes, and the description of their values, is fundamental to an effective process for both the short- and the long-term manage-

ment of these places. The experience with protected landscape conservation has also demonstrated that working with local communities is a critical component in a conservation strategy (see the paper by Romulus and Lucas in this volume).

From the experience of cultural landscapes we have also learned the importance of listening to the values, priorities, needs, concerns, and aspirations of the associated communities. These will shape their working relationship with conservation objectives, whether commemorative or ecological. These places embody their history, and it is they who have been, and will be, their stewards. They know these places, where they have often lived all their lives, and their ancestors have likewise lived in them for centuries. They know them from close observation as well as from cultural transmittal from one generation to the next. It is important to respect their traditions and the rhythms of their culture, embodied in cosmologies, stories, behavior, rituals, and traditional environmental knowledge, to come to an understanding of these landscapes.

Mechanisms are needed for the effective participation of communities in the management and development of cultural landscapes and protected landscapes as well as in the development of sustainable approaches for them. The distinctiveness of local planning environments must be recognized and respected.

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Management approaches that are based on principles (e.g., public benefit, understanding, integrity, and respect) and on values, rather than on regulations, can encourage community involvement. Requiring environmental assessments to include traditional environmental and cultural knowledge as an integral part of the knowledge base and links the processes and outcomes more closely to the community. Issues will often be multi-jurisdictional and multi-cultural, with a need for processes to help stakeholders deal with conflicting interests and objectives.

Concluding Remarks

A cultural landscape perspective explicitly recognizes the history of a place and its cultural traditions in addition to its ecological value. Thus, this approach is appropriate for places with a settlement history. A landscape perspective also recognizes the continuity between the past and with people living and working on the land today. It explores how sense of place, cultural identity, and connections to the past can become touchstones for deepening and broadening the impact and relevance of conservation. Concurrently, the concept of protected landscapes has advanced the practice and thought for natural area conservation. Today, the field of natural resource conservation recognizes an ecosystem approach and the importance of work-

ing with people, their knowledge of the local ecology, and their cultural traditions in developing conservation strategies. These concurrent developments in cultural and natural conservation have set the stage for a rethinking of landscape conservation and an unprecedented opportunity for collaboration.

These observations on recent trends in conservation set the stage for an evolving new approach to landscape stewardship. This approach recognizes the multiple values of places with a complex of natural, historic, and cultural resources. It re-connects a fragmented perspective of the environment and is grounded in the way people view places and the values of those places in relation to their lives. The result is a gradual, but fundamental change in the way we look at the world and at the very purpose of conservation. Given the strong wilderness preservation tradition in the USA and many other countries, this represents an important expansion of conservation theory and practice. This shift has implications for stewardship, encouraging a vision that is respectful of natural processes and cultural traditions and relevant to community needs. This new approach holds great promise for furthering individual and community commitment and involvement in conservation action.

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