

SALALAH GUIDELINES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Adopted by the 19th ICOMOS General Assembly, New Delhi, India, 15 December 2017

PREAMBLE TO GUIDELINES

Archaeological sites are under the rightful control of stakeholders residing in the country and region in which they are located. The guidelines to follow are suggestions made to those stakeholders, should they decide to open an archaeological site to the public. *These guidelines are not intended to be regulations or standards, and the many parties that have participated in developing these guidelines hereby declare our opposition to transforming what follows into regulations or standards.* The suggestions made in these guidelines are drawn from the collective experience of those who have been engaged with management of publicly accessible archaeological sites in many countries and in different regions around the world. They are offered with the understanding that each country and region is different, and that this cultural diversity enriches the lives of all humans. Any suggestions made in these guidelines that are not consistent with the regional and local cultural stewardship of archaeological sites, and especially those open to visitors, can therefore be modified. Archaeological sites in national park systems around the world and those within World Heritage Sites present particular challenges because the tourism industry markets them as premier destinations. This has become clear in the decades since the ratification of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Since then, similar sets of persistent problems have emerged at archaeological sites open to the public. These guidelines are intended to lessen the likelihood that such problems develop and become irremediable at archaeological sites opened to the public.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES OF THESE GUIDELINES

The purposes of these guidelines are:

- To identify the studies necessary to assess the feasibility of establishing a sustainable management framework and system for archaeological sites that are, or are likely to become, open to the public; and
- To guide the development of a sustainable management system by reference to such a feasibility assessment.

The ultimate objectives of these guidelines are summarized as follows:

- Preserving and maintaining archaeological features, materials and sites in context until they can be studied in a scientific manner;
- Providing a model of sound sustainable management practice (including the use) for the cultural and natural resources of archaeological sites that are open to the public;
- Making use of archaeological sites open to the public to build public awareness of the value of cultural diversity and the strength of interconnections between cultures in ways that can benefit all;
- Ensure that archaeological sites contribute to Sustainable Development by preserving and remediating where needed ecological services and providing opportunities and support for local populations to benefit economically in ways that do not incite social disruption.

Archaeological sites contain material evidence that when studied scientifically can inform us about the history of humanity; in that way, in the poetic language of the ICOMOS Venice Charter of 1964, they are “imbued with messages from the past”. A visit to an archaeological site conveys the human past with an immediacy that cannot be provided by other means. Therefore, the experience of visiting an archaeological site should be available to as wide an audience as possible, with the proviso that this does not compromise or destroy the physical evidence of what transpired in the past. While a standing structure can be cosmetically repaired, the historic and scientific value of an archaeological site resides completely in the ability to investigate original material in original: this sets archaeological sites apart from all other heritage sites.

A visit to an archaeological site can advance the wide spectrum of benefits - social, economic, and cultural - associated with heritage. Publicly, conscientiously presented heritage enriches our understanding of the

ongoing relationship between humans and nature, as well as the common and various means by which humans organize themselves and interact with other groups. These are critical contemporary issues. Heritage plays a fundamental role in developing collective identities. Where heritage is used to privilege narratives in ways that benefit certain groups, heritage studies drawn from archaeological research and its material evidence can just as surely be used to challenge these narratives.

Publicly accessible archaeological sites can generate economic benefit in ways that are both sustainable and unsustainable. Sustainable management of archaeological sites that are open to the public requires an understanding of how public access and experience combine to help protect the sites concerned. Sustainable management also requires the clear identification of how the development of public access might harm the sites concerned. By definition, unsustainable exploitation compromises sites that are open to the public and disrupts the endeavour to present human history in a manner that is as unbiased as possible, and thus in a useful way.

These guidelines are intended to apply to all archaeological sites open to the public, but they are of particular relevance to sites engaged with the World Heritage programme. The prestige that attends inscription on the World Heritage List encourages visitation and can foster important economic development locally.

Every site inscribed on the World Heritage List contains material remains of interest to the field of archaeology. World Heritage Sites include historic cities, all of which contain archaeological remains of the earlier “city below the city”. Other World Heritage Sites, inscribed by virtue of the Outstanding Universal Value attached to natural resources can possess archaeological remains. Relatively recent structures and landscapes that are regarded as works of architectural or engineering genius are of interest to the study of archaeology and related disciplines. Archaeological materials from all these kinds of sites, if properly studied, can yield detailed and fascinating information that enriches understanding of the sites concerned. Archaeology reveals human history and human experience in the past in ways that are pertinent to contemporary life, including evidence for the social and economic consequences of human conflict and the repercussions of overexploitation of the environment. The preservation of archaeological material, as an essential repository of information, is perhaps of particular importance at sites that are open to the public as scientific study can enliven and significantly add to the established knowledge and narratives of the sites concerned. Furthermore, all World Heritage Sites, with their Outstanding Universal Value, extraordinary qualities and global visibility, should be exemplars of sustainable management.

THE NEED FOR THESE GUIDELINES

These guidelines explicitly address the necessity for assessing the feasibility of establishing sustainable management of archaeological sites open to the public with as much, or in some cases more, attention and investment of time and funds than has been given to assessing the suitability of designating a place a special one that deserves the special notice and regard of the public. There are many useful documents that deal with the myriad issues associated with the management of World Heritage Sites. Because they are international in scope, these are useful to the purposes of these guidelines and some are relevant to archaeological sites. The guidelines presented here are, however, specifically intended to apply to all archaeological sites that are open to the public. Among those are archaeological sites recognized explicitly as such on the World Heritage List or those that may be inscribed on the List (that is, sites on the World Heritage Tentative Lists that have been established by States Parties to the World Heritage Convention). Sites on the World Heritage List should provide models of sustainable management that can be used elsewhere. They can demonstrate how institutions and programmes can be developed to protect all cultural and natural heritage sites, in accord with the objectives presented in Article V of the World Heritage Convention.

Many of the most prominent places and iconic sites on the World Heritage List, including, but not limited to, Petra, Machu Picchu, Angkor, and Pompeii were obvious choices for World Heritage inscription in terms of *suitability*. They all undeniably meet one or more of the criteria laid out in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, and they all possess Outstanding Universal Value. Yet the impact of inscription and the *feasibility* of sustainably managing them following inscription was not adequately understood at the time of inscription. Other candidate World Heritage Sites continue to be presented for nomination with inadequate management feasibility studies to guide the preparation of dossiers. Where a feasible framework for sustainable management has not been developed, the Outstanding Universal Value including integrity and authenticity of nominated sites is vulnerable. Indeed, management itself is one of the pillars of Outstanding Universal Value. Inattention to the feasibility of putting in place sustainable management before inviting the public to archaeological sites can only lead to depletion of the storehouse of scientific and historical information at archaeological sites and degradation of the experience of visiting these sites.

It is a daunting task to rapidly assemble a management system after the public has been invited to visit, particularly if this results in a significant increase in visitors (often the case when sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List). In the absence of regional planning and community support for zoning, it is common for development around and in the site to degrade the environment, often in ways that are destructive to the site itself. This can occur very rapidly, and damage can be irreversible. Once in place, structures and populations that occupy them have proven almost impossible to relocate. These issues are exacerbated if there is limited access to the necessary technological, regulatory, administrative, personnel, and financial resources. The results too often are very unsatisfactory for all stakeholders.

Feasibility in this context is dependent upon the ability of stakeholders to plan appropriately for protection and conservation of the site and the development of facilities and services required by the public visiting it. This presupposes the design and implementation of a sound management framework and system. Management must be founded, first and foremost, on an adequate knowledge of the site by all involved. It involves establishing capacities for monitoring together with regulating programmes and activities that are adequate for sustainable management. Management planning and implementation should be linked not only for the site itself, but also for the immediate surroundings of the site and region where development is planned that is related to visitation.

These guidelines provide a roadmap for the identification and development of effective management frameworks and systems, and the necessary improvement to those already in place.

There is additional strategic value in establishing accepted guidelines for the management of archaeological sites that are open to the public. Numerous governmental and non-profit development assistance programmes are available that can provide funds for State Parties and agencies seeking assistance with sustainable economic development. Adherence to approved guidelines can assist applications to these programmes and provide a rationale for requests of funding and technical support. The development of a multi-year plan for the sustainable management of an archaeological site that is open to the public provides a structure for effective development.

ANTECEDENTS

This document takes note of the work undertaken by ICOMOS in the past, particularly at Ma'agan in 2002, and has full regard for the guiding principles of that meeting (Cleere 2010, 5), which identified the following elements as essential to all management planning:

- a A thorough shared understanding of the property by all stakeholders;
- b A cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback;
- c The involvement of partners and stakeholders;
- d The allocation of necessary resources;
- e Capacity-building; and
- f An accountable, transparent description of how the management system functions.

THE CONCEPT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

A park is defined for the purposes of these guidelines as a protected area set aside for public access, enjoyment, and education. This definition is compatible with the *Salalah Recommendation on Archaeological Parks and Sites*, developed at the First International Conference of ICOMOS on Archaeological Parks and Sites, 23-25 February 2015, in Salalah, the Sultanate of Oman

As described in the Salalah Recommendation, archaeological parks contain both above-ground and below-ground archaeological remains and material. The Salalah Recommendation advises that the archaeological park should be seen “as a tool for conservation of archaeological sites on the one hand, and their presentation and interpretation as a means to understand the shared past of humanity on the other hand” (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1256>). As such, it can be seen to advance the overall objectives of the World Heritage Convention. It should serve as a didactic device because it can reflect the concept of shared humanity and, if sustainably managed, provide an example of how sustainable management can be accomplished in other vulnerable places where important cultural and natural resources are present.

GUIDELINES

1 Management Planning

1.1 Inventory and evaluation

Every effort should be made to employ cost effective, non-intrusive, and non-destructive technologies for the inventory and evaluation of cultural and natural resources. These technologies shall include, for example, direct detection of sites and resources or modelling the distribution of sites and resources.

1.1.1 *Cultural resources.* An inventory and evaluation of cultural resources is the first step in establishing the feasibility of developing a sustainable management system for archaeological sites, features, and landscapes. The evaluation should address vulnerability and threats as well as importance of cultural resources.

Those with stewardship for the area in question should:

- 1.1.1.1 Retain credentialed, accredited and internationally recognized archaeological experts to assist in the identification and evaluation of archaeological sites, features, landscapes, and all associated material; and
- 1.1.1.2 Ensure that well-documented and internationally recognized best practices for field-based study, documentation, evaluation, and protection of archaeological heritage are implemented.

1.1.2 *Natural resources.* An inventory and evaluation of natural resources is as important as that which should be done for cultural resources, and should be done in ways that will identify environmental changes that might threaten archaeological resources and environmental services that benefit the local human population, or might do so in the future.

Stewards of the area should:

- 1.1.2.1 Retain credentialed, accredited and internationally recognized experts in relevant fields. The inventory should be comprehensive for natural resources and identify those that are or may be:
 - 1.1.2.1.1 Threatened or endangered;
 - 1.1.2.1.2 Of central importance to the greater landscape, of which the archaeological site is a part, in particular those that are related to the preservation of archaeological materials in context;
 - 1.1.2.1.3 Integral to environmental services of value to local human populations.

1.1.3 *Infrastructure.* As-built surveys and specifications and current conditions of all infrastructure should be provided, along with known or estimated numbers of users. Infrastructure includes all buildings, utilities, roads, communication networks, and means of access and travel.

- 1.1.4 *Traditional use areas.* Traditional use areas should be identified. These are areas of particular value to contemporary inhabitants of the site and surrounding region, including those that might be considered sacred or are used for traditional purposes (e.g. view sheds, marriages or other celebrations, or the collection of medicinal or nutritional plants).

Those who have stewardship of archaeological sites open to the public should:

- 1.1.4.1 Retain credentialed, accredited and recognized experts on traditional use areas to identify and evaluate archaeological heritage in such areas; and
- 1.1.4.2 Ensure that well-documented and internationally recognized best practices for field-based study, documentation, evaluation and protection of archaeological heritage in traditional use areas are implemented.

1.2 Establish site boundaries and management zones

- 1.2.1 *Site boundaries.* It is essential that the proposed boundary of an archaeological site that might be opened to the public be accurately determined, as informed by the inventory of cultural and natural resources.
- 1.2.2 *Site size and configuration.* The site should be of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to render sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment possible and likely (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed boundaries).
- 1.2.3 *Cost considerations.* The characteristics of the site should not preclude efficient management and administration at a reasonable cost that can be borne by the party or parties with stewardship responsibility for the site.

Considerations should include:

- 1.2.3.1 Current and potential uses of the area within the site boundaries and surrounding lands within and beyond the buffer zone;
- 1.2.3.2 Land ownership and legal rights to use, including possible changes;
- 1.2.3.3 Public access and enjoyment potential;
- 1.2.3.4 Costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and day-to-day management and operation;
- 1.2.3.5 Access (e.g. routes in and out of the property, way-finding, circulation, and services);
- 1.2.3.6 Analysis of current degradation of the archaeological resources and its causes;
- 1.2.3.7 Current and potential threats to the archaeological resources;
- 1.2.3.8 The level of local and general public support (e.g. from businesses, governments, and landowners);
- 1.2.3.9 The social, political, environmental, and economic impacts of designation; and
- 1.2.3.10 The manner and degree to which public goods, such as the quality of the natural and social environments, education, and health and safety services, should be enhanced by the establishment of a public archaeological site.
- 1.2.4 *Buffer zones.* The boundaries of a buffer zone should also be accurate and well documented.
- 1.2.4.1 Because a buffer zone alone is usually not enough to ensure protection from encroachment, agreements with communities and government entities should be negotiated and formalized in order to accomplish this.
- 1.2.5 *Management Zones.* Within each site, Management Zones should be established, and for each the following should be identified:
- 1.2.5.1 Desired uses;
- 1.2.5.2 Desired conditions;
- 1.2.5.3 Essential visitor services;
- 1.2.5.4 Interpretive themes (the information that should be presented in each zone).

1.3 Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Impact Study

1.3.1 *Environmental impact.* An Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Impact Study should be performed for any proposed development activity that might affect the quality of the environment.

1.3.2 *Economic consequences of environmental impact.* An Environmental Impact Assessment or Environmental Impact Study should include an economic analysis of the potential economic benefits and liabilities that might accrue to private individuals, business interests, community groups, or local, regional, national, or global publics.

1.4 Monitoring Plan

1.4.1 *The monitoring plan.* The monitoring plan should specify the technologies, protocols, instruments, indicators, and standards that should monitor:

1.4.1.1 The condition of cultural resources of all types;

1.4.1.2 The condition of natural resources of all types;

1.4.1.3 Visitor numbers, circulation, and satisfaction;

1.4.1.4 Community satisfaction; and

1.4.1.5 The condition of facilities and infrastructure.

1.4.2 *Monitoring priorities.* Monitoring priorities should be set by considering which resources and experiences are:

1.4.2.1 Key to the natural or cultural integrity of the site and to the opportunities for enjoyment of the site;

1.4.2.2 Essential in order to maintain compliance with the criteria used to identify the site's Outstanding Universal Value; and

1.4.2.3 Identified in the site's general management plan or other relevant planning documents as significant.

1.5 Archaeological Research Plan

1.5.1 *The archaeological research plan.* A plan, including research priorities, should be developed to address needs for mitigation of archaeological resource disturbance from natural processes (e.g. flooding) as well as human activities (e.g. looting or development). The plan should also identify archaeological research that is relevant to the importance of the site, and especially research that might address issues of urgent concern to the field of archaeology, contemporary environmental policy, and improving international relations.

1.6 Interpretive Plan

1.6.1 *The interpretive plan.* An interpretive plan should be prepared that identifies the interpretive themes and sub-themes that best serve the didactic function of the site. The plan should be updated at least every five years.

1.7 Management Facilities

1.7.1 *Management facilities.* Management facilities include the structures, utilities, and equipment necessary for the sustainable management of the archaeological site. Those necessary to ensure the retention of the site's integrity, authenticity, and characteristics relating to its importance should be identified; further, the requirements for these facilities should be identified.

1.8 Staffing Plan

1.8.1 Sustainable management will require the services of a variety of well-trained people. These will typically include scientists and archaeologists with pertinent experience in the natural and cultural resources of the public archaeological site, maintenance staff, administrative staff having skills in budgeting and scheduling, interpreters to present the site to visitors, people with museum, curation and presentation skills, community liaisons, people trained in providing health and safety services, enforcement personnel, and managers who can coordinate develop and coordinate all necessary policies, programmes, and activities.

Staffing needs will vary; therefore, a staffing plan should be developed that is informed by the inventory and evaluation of cultural and natural resources and the identified vulnerability and threats to those resources, as well as the specific objectives associated with presenting the site to the public. The plan should include an organization chart, necessary qualifications for all required positions, and duties and responsibilities for all positions.

1.9 Community Engagement Plan

1.9.1 *The community engagement plan.* The community engagement plan should address how stakeholders should be identified, categorized, and engaged.

1.10 General Management Plan

1.10.1 *The General Management Plan.* Respecting the essential elements of effective management as presented above and below, a General Management Plan should be prepared. The plan should set out the framework, structure, system, policies, and actions that should be taken to ensure sustainable management. For each action, benchmarks, schedules, indicators, and budgets should be established.

The General Management Plan should include all the material described in Sections 1.1 through 1.9. More specifically, it should also include:

- 1.10.1.1 A financial plan, which should describe how entry fees and other fees should be allocated to the management of the site and a rationale for this;
- 1.10.1.2 A cyclical maintenance plan, which should describe appropriate programmes, staffing needs, equipment and supplies needs, and facility design;
- 1.10.1.3 A safety plan, which should include protocols for disaster response, search and rescue, and requirements for medical facilities; and
- 1.10.1.4 The inclusion of the staffing plan outlined above (1.9.), which presents required staff and identifies necessary qualifications, roles, and responsibilities for each staff member. The staffing plan should include an organization chart.

2 Management Implementation

2.1 Monitoring

2.1.1 *Monitoring system feedback.* The results of the monitoring system and programme should be used as decision support tools by site management. Decisions supported by monitoring should involve all aspects of management, including, but not limited to, cyclical maintenance and capital improvements; personnel acquisition and management; determination of carrying capacity (which should vary over time according to management capacity) and limits of acceptable change; and policy, programs, and activities needed for effective community involvement.

2.2 Transparency

2.2.1 *Transparency in monitoring and management.* Stakeholders, from local community groups to international organizations with an interest in the site, should be kept informed of any management programmes and activities related to their interest in the site. Monitoring results should be made available to all stakeholders on a regular basis.

2.3 Networking

2.3.1 *Communication and coordination among site managers.* It is recommended that representatives of public archaeological sites meet on a regular basis to share issues of common concern and the approaches, programmes, and activities that have helped resolve issues of common concern.