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BUREAU OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

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**Information Document: Synthetic report of the Expert Meeting on African Cultural  
Landscapes, Tiwi, Kenya, 9-14 March 1999**

Summary

Nine African States Parties to the Convention were invited to this meeting which was organized by the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Office in Nairobi. The meeting was held with the participation of representatives from the advisory bodies (ICOMOS, IUCN) and an observer (Nordic World Heritage Office). The participants presented case studies illustrating the diversity of the notion of cultural landscapes in Africa and the importance of the link between nature, culture and spirituality. The discussions provided the opportunity to emphasize the specificity of some notions such as ownership, the definition of boundaries, and, more particularly, the necessary involvement of local communities at all stages of the inscription process and the management of the sites. The participants adopted recommendations for the systematic consideration of the cultural and natural values of African sites, the recognition of traditional rights for the protection and ownership of the sites, and for their management in a perspective of sustainable development. The expert group also expressed the wish that the conditions of authenticity and integrity be defined from the African point of view, and that the Guidelines include indications concerning the management of cultural landscapes. Furthermore, the need for an interdisciplinary approach in the evaluation of cultural landscapes was voiced in relation to the creation of an operational network of African experts for cultural landscapes. Finally, in response to the concern of local communities, the interest of the Kaya Forests of Kenya was the subject of a recommendation for their safeguarding and inscription.

**Action by the Bureau:** The Bureau may wish to take note of the report and the recommendations in Annex I.

## Introduction

A thematic expert meeting on “ *African cultural landscapes* ” was held in Tiwi (Kenya) from 9 to 14 March 1999 at the invitation of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. It was a follow-up to the decision taken during the twenty-first session of the World Heritage Committee in Naples in December 1997. The meeting was financed by the World Heritage Fund. It was organized by the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Office in Nairobi, with support of two key resource persons, Dawson Munjeri (Zimbabwe) and Michel Le Berre (France). This meeting was the fifth regional thematic expert meeting devoted to cultural landscapes in the world and a follow-up to the fourth Global Strategy meeting in Africa (Porto Novo 1998), after the one in Harare 1995 and Addis Ababa 1996. The third meeting was held in the Pacific in 1997.

Twenty experts representing nine African anglophone and francophone countries participated in this meeting (Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe) as well as representatives of ICOMOS, IUCN and UNESCO (cf. Annex II, List of Participants). The meeting was divided into four parts:

- 1) During the first day the objectives of the meeting were identified, and presentations reflected upon “ *The notion of cultural landscapes in the world* ” and the implementation of the “ *Global Strategy* ” in Africa since its adoption by the Committee in December 1994. The experts who had been appointed as key resource persons also made presentations of the problems and the challenges posed by cultural landscapes in sub-Saharan Africa. A jurist made a presentation with regard to the dilemmas of legal protection. Two presentations drew attention to the specificities of the site of Kaya.
- 2) The second day, after a visit to the sacred site of Kaya and an extremely rewarding meeting with the Elders who had authorized the visit to one of the most sacred areas of the forest, each invited expert presented a cultural landscape of outstanding universal value eligible for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- 3) The third day was devoted to the presentation by the advisory bodies of the format for the inscription of nominations, and working groups on the themes of “ *Living Cultural Landscapes* ” and “ *Routes and Technological Heritage* ” discussed the problems specific to these categories and prepared recommendations for the meeting. The representatives of the advisory bodies (IUCN, ICOMOS) explained their respective role in the process of the evaluation of nominations.
- 4) On the fourth day, following a visit to the Kaya Forests and the Old Town of Mombasa, the recommendations were adopted.

The UNESCO Representative, in welcoming the participants, explained the choice of the site for the meeting: the region of the Kaya Forests, in the coastal zone near to Mombasa, constitutes a remarkable ensemble of sacred woods, safeguarded and traditionally used by nine autochtone tribes. These forests are outstanding examples of safeguarding of the biodiversity and a remarkable associative cultural landscape.

He defined the principal objectives of the meeting:

- Contribute to a better representivity of the World Heritage List by identifying potential categories of cultural landscapes representative of African culture, within the framework of the Global Strategy, for a balanced and representative World Heritage List.
- Encourage recognition by the organizations responsible for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage and the scientific community of the region, of the World Heritage Convention and the category of cultural landscapes.
- Identify the particular characteristics of African sites of outstanding universal value with regard to authenticity and integrity.
- Strengthen the collaborative links between experts and representatives of the region and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

### **General aspects**

#### **Mechtild Rössler (UNESCO World Heritage Centre)**

In her presentation “ *The implementation of the World Heritage cultural landscape categories* ”, she recalled the origin of the concept of cultural landscapes defined in 1992 (La Petite Pierre, France) and listed the categories recognized to date by the World Heritage Committee (sixteenth session, 1992) and the state of implementation of this concept in the world.

According to the *Operational Guidelines*, cultural landscapes comprise three categories:

- Landscapes clearly defined, designed and created intentionally by man.
- Organically evolved landscapes which can be “relict” or “fossil” landscapes (testifying to lost civilisations), or “continuing” landscapes (where the evolutionary process is still in progress).
- Associative landscapes which are largely associated with beliefs, traditions and spiritual elements within a given space.

The relation between the six cultural criteria and the three categories of cultural landscapes was clearly demonstrated by a synthetic table.

Since 1992, eleven cultural landscapes have been inscribed on the World Heritage List. Several expert meetings have attempted to identify the particular problems and difficulties concerning the categories of cultural landscapes for inscription. For example, the need for their protection and traditional management was recognized by the Committee: in 1992 for cultural heritage and in 1998 for natural heritage. Other aspects remain to be considered such as the integration of natural and cultural criteria, as discussed by the Global Strategy meeting in Amsterdam (March 1998).

The cultural landscape appears as a federative concept, not only in the framework of the World Heritage Convention, (where it links natural and cultural heritages) but, also between several international conventions such as the Biological Diversity Convention. In this case, this involves the presence of domestic species (animal and vegetable) in the landscape, as much as the role played by certain types of landscape in the conservation of biodiversity. For example, the different categories of sacred sites (forests, rocks, ponds, springs, caves, mountains, etc.) have permitted, especially in Africa, to preserve species which have disappeared elsewhere. A UNESCO project “ Sacred Sites - Cultural Integrity and Biological Diversity ” is being developed in the Science Sector. This project, initiated in Ghana, is being extended on a worldwide basis.

One of the objectives of the meeting was to identify new types of sites to result in a better representation of the cultural and natural diversity of heritage. Due to their characteristics, the protection of these cultural landscapes is often complex, requiring adapted management methods, with the local communities playing an important role.

### **Galia Saouma-Forero (UNESCO World Heritage Centre)**

Gave an update on the “ *Global Strategy in Africa* ”. This Global Strategy stems from the concern of the World Heritage Committee to ensure a better representivity of the World Heritage List. In fact, the acknowledged disparities and imbalances of the List have led to the development of a methodology to ensure its re-equilibrium. This methodology engulfs an extremely wide anthropological definition of the notion of heritage, so as to take into account the cultural diversity of humanity. Themes have been retained as guiding lines: coexistence of man and Earth, interaction of societies with the environment and living cultures. The Global Strategy is now the frame of reference and methodology for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and the establishment of the List.

African heritage is under-represented on the World Heritage List. Only thirty of the forty-five African countries represented in UNESCO have signed the World Heritage Convention. At present, Africa lists sixteen cultural sites, thirty-one natural sites and one mixed site. Only seventeen African countries have submitted tentative lists concerning seventy-seven potential sites. From 1994 to 1998, several awareness-raising and information actions have enabled the diffusion of the Global Strategy in Africa: three expert meetings and two workshops have already been organized. One of the characteristics of African heritage is the nature-culture continuum. The categories identified as capable of diversifying African representation on the World Heritage List are archaeological heritage, living cultures, traditional know-how, technological heritage and cultural landscapes in the form of routes, itineraries and associative spiritual heritage.

In March 1998, in order to support efforts towards a better representation of African heritage, the World Heritage Centre, in co-operation with ICCROM, launched the “ Africa 2009 ” training programme for the conservation of immovable heritage. In June 1998, the southern states of Africa launched a common project on rock art sites to ensure their conservation and management.

The World Heritage Committee has approved the following activities for Africa in 1999:

- raise awareness, at national level, of the World Heritage Convention and the different issues linked to its implementation;
- strengthen the capacities of the national institutions responsible for cultural heritage;
- obtain a more representative World Heritage List.

Since 1994, progress made in the implementation of the Global Strategy is obvious. This has led to increased awareness of the 1972 Convention, the identification of sites of outstanding universal value and the creation of a network of African experts. However many priority issues still remain.

The new heritage concepts must gain wide acceptance and the conclusions of regional expert meetings must be transformed into decisional processes for States Parties. With regard to Africa, a particular effort should be made to improve the gathering and analysis of documentation and the preparation of conservation and management plans. The inscription of transborder sites and the recognition of the spiritual values of spaces should encourage the inscription process. Furthermore, it is important to develop the expert capacities of the African region in the heritage domain. The absence of inventories, legal protection and the weakness of national conservation agencies are major obstacles. It is therefore necessary to define national policy with regard to conservation and to increase the availability of funding, and especially to train conservation professionals and heritage experts in Africa.

The task of the States Parties to finalise inscriptions is important and concerns conservation policies as much as legal protection and the training of experts. The development of the Global Strategy has highlighted these needs and has also interested a large number of northern States Parties in the inscription of these new types of heritage and in providing funding for this purpose. However, the determination of the African States is decisive for world recognition of their heritage, as well as the creation of an international network of African experts. The African States which are more developed in this domain ( Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria) could play a determining role.

### **Dawson Munjeri (Zimbabwe)**

In his “ *Review of Cultural Landscapes in Africa* ” he highlighted some specific problems and particularities of African cultural landscapes, illustrated by numerous examples from the African experience. He also proposed ideas for pertinent solutions. Amongst the issues that present specifically African approaches, the following can be noted:

- The importance of the symbiotic relationship between the ecosystem and the ethnosystem which distinguishes a great number of issues subsequent to the inscription of landscapes on the World Heritage List, such as ownership or the boundaries of the sites. The problem of the boundaries of landscapes is often the result of a long and complex history. It is often preferable to consider the boundaries of a site more as a combination of stable and flexible elements, forming an approximate contour, rather than a lineal and exact boundary. The ownership of land and areas is particular in Africa. Therefore it is pertinent that the *Operational Guidelines* include elements concerning a traditional protection which could be

substituted for modern forms of protection (legal or reglementary). They must be taken into consideration for the conservation of the spiritual relationship established between man and his environment, which often dates back thousands of years.

- The local communities responsible for the establishment of these landscapes are an essential element which has proven its capacity to benefit from, in a sustainable manner, not only the revenue from them, but also to gain spiritual, social and aesthetic satisfaction from these landscapes. Thus, the involvement of the communities in conservation activities is normal and necessary. The conservation of sites or landscapes has requisite economic and cultural coefficients. It does not seem improper that the inhabitants wish to draw benefits from heritage conservation which can subsequently be true investments for future generations.
- The production of resources emanating from heritage exploitation of landscapes must not be carried out at the cost of the inhabitants. Development and conservation activities must be organized in the framework of a master plan. Their objectives shall be to strengthen heritage conservation and management, and to develop local and international tourism revenue in such a way that this income benefits the local communities and also the national bodies involved in conservation and development. There is a close interaction between conservation and development activities and cultural tourism, one supporting the other. It is important to ensure that the implementation of new activities does not affect certain aspects which were integral to the nomination of the site. Planning should incorporate elements which conserve the spirit of the relationship between man and the landscape.
- Planning of management activities should permit a correct balance between the conservation needs of the sites and the developmental needs of the peoples who have left their imprint on nature. To this effect, the knowledge and know-how of communities should be preserved. The teams in charge of the management of such sites should have received an interdisciplinary and specific training (due to the multiplicity of questions to be considered and the original character of each situation). The management plan should reflect a delicate balance between the divergent interests of the different parties concerned. The elaboration of these plans requires a rare expertise. It is also a costly operation in which the World Heritage Fund plays an important role.
- The requirement of authenticity and integrity to which the cultural landscapes are submitted perfectly suits the African situation where the natural and cultural aspects act in synergy. Because of this, it seems highly desirable to consider these two requirements simultaneously, as was emphasized during the meetings in Harare, Addis-Ababa and Porto-Novo.
- Cultural landscapes can act as periscopes for the discovery of the expectations, traditional knowledge, ways of thinking, values and reference models of communities. Therefore there is a new role to play in the field of conservation and development. It would be appropriate to define the rules, the first of which is a knowledge of the peoples and their culture.

### **Michel Le Berre (France)**

His presentation on the “*Genesis of African cultural landscapes* ” recapitulated the major stages of the establishment of African landscapes and outlined the future challenges of the 21st century for their conservation.

Africa is the continent where the human species differentiated itself. It is thus where the most ancient cultural landscapes can be found. These are the *original cultural landscapes*, particularly numerous in Africa, with the sites of the Omo (Ethiopia), Turkana (Kenya), Olduvai (Tanzania), Stekfontein (South Africa), Koro-Toro (Chad), etc. The privileged use of certain trees, such as the baobabs, is also apparent in certain *managed landscapes* even though they appear natural. Africa is rich in *fossil cultural landscapes* as numerous prehistoric sites bear witness. *Associative landscapes* are also numerous. They are amongst the living landscapes, and they constitute an essential element of the nature-culture link so important in African cultural heritage. African associative landscapes are diverse: woods, rocks, ponds, mountains, etc. *Pastoral landscapes*, in the arid and semi-arid zone, are an important characteristic, with distinctive elements such as the pastoral wells and cattle enclosures. *Itineraries and exchange routes* constitute a category of linear landscapes of diverse usage (commerce, religion, culture), particularly important in Africa. The examples of the Salt and Slave Routes are illustrative of the importance and diversity of this category. Finally, the *intensive agricultural landscapes*, terraced and with original irrigation systems, translate the efforts of survival under difficult environmental conditions. The *urbanised landscapes* are multiplying, around the cities, with a specific intanglement of rural practices and intermediary forms of sedentary habitat.

At the dawn of the 21st century, these different categories of landscapes are expected to evolve rapidly under the double action of increased demography and economic development. It is important therefore that during this meeting the means for the conservation of the most representative elements of the African landscape be envisaged, without hindering its necessary evolution towards sustainable development. In this perspective, the role of the World Heritage Centre is determining.

### **Albert Mumma (Kenya)**

His presentation on the “*Legal aspects of the protection of cultural landscapes in Africa* ” proposed the development of certain legal aspects for the application of the concept of cultural landscapes which would apply throughout the whole of Africa, rather than in individual countries. He illustrated that the evolution of the notion of heritage engenders a dilemma with regard to the functioning of the laws, making an adaptation of the law necessary. In view of the need to revise the legal mechanisms for protection, he emphasised the following:

- The involvement of local communities

In Africa, the man-nature interaction is important at the local community level. The inscription of cultural landscapes must be carried out with the involvement of the local communities, leaving the implementation of the law to the nation state. The hiatus stems from the replacement, throughout Africa, of customary rights by a modern regime of laws issuing from colonisation. Tradition is thus subordinate to the national law.

The classic protected areas exclude the local communities who are deprived of their traditional rights, for example in the national parks. The traditional activities and uses become reprehensible acts by the law. The right exists only if the tradition perpetuates itself and if it has continuity in its rights of use, for example, with regard to beliefs, the possibility to visit sacred sites.

Then, how should the involvement of local communities be defined, and how to determine who has management responsibilities? In Kenya, the law does not recognize the right of communities to ownership. The designation of persons responsible is necessary. For example, in the case of the Massai, the community is under the responsibility of ten elders who manage all the lands in the name of the community, at the risk of personal failings and appropriation of resources. The administrators become decision makers for the entire community, which raises a problem. In other cases, the chiefs of the community are named by the State and therefore are not very credible in the eyes of the community.

In Africa, the notion of legal pluralism is however slowly gaining ground. It means considering the legal aspects as a group (superposition) of layers of different valid and valuable systems according to the different domains of choice. In the example of a Kenyan marriage, there is the successive establishment of customary, religious and civil rights. The modalities of the conciliation and cohabitation of the different legal systems require definition.

- Impact studies

When considering a living cultural landscape, the World Heritage List inscription process should not result in a fossilisation of landscapes and should not impede local development. However, it is important to protect the parties or properties that facilitated the inscription. Often, it is indispensable to carry out environmental impact studies (EIS) which incorporate both a feasibility study (heritage and community interest) and a market study (economic impact). It is a procedure which is becoming general practice throughout the world, including in Africa where fifteen countries have already integrated the EIS into their legal system requirements. The impact study must integrate the entire landscape (all the analytic elements) and its long term evolution. In the case of living cultural landscapes, the different synergetic activities must be considered (agriculture, breeding, exploitation of wild life, for example), in the framework of integrated actions to limit conflict. Technological modification (use of synthetic additives and biocides) and potential speculations should also be considered. The role of new agricultural practices, such as monocultures, should be analysed in terms of evolution of the landscape.

- The difficulties in the implementation of the legal system

The establishment of the colonial laws and their revision has not been implemented with a view to the active protection of heritage and its natural resources.

The new laws introduce changes which are not always applied in practice and cause conflicts of interest. A relationship must be established between the law, the government and the communities in the implementation of the “right of justice” by the local authorities. For example, in the case of the extinction of the antelope, the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)



decided to relocate these animals in the north of the country in the Tsavo National Park. At the time of the operation, the local communities where the antelope lived opposed the action of the KWS, because the animals were one of the elements of the way of life of these populations. The conflict was resolved by a legal decision that gave reason to the populations concerned. In the framework of the legal jurisdiction, it is important that the communities may have real authority over their resources, even if they are of national importance. It is therefore important to develop the management of heritage resources at the local level in a participative manner.

Access to information must be opened up. Legal and administrative documents are often considered as state property by civil servants who develop policies without prior consultation on procedures.

- The international context

The existence of numerous international conventions makes it necessary to reflect upon a better manner to integrate progress in these legal texts in the particular context of national legislation. Thus, in the text of international conventions, it is important to mention the role which the local communities should play in order to avoid the hiatus between conservation and development.

### **African case studies**

Eight case studies had been prepared, but only seven were presented due to the absence of the expert from Madagascar.

#### **George Abungu (Kenya): The Kaya, Sacred Forests of the Mijikenda of Kenya**

This general presentation drew attention to the historical, spiritual, cultural and natural importance of sacred sites where, contrary to the traditional monumental ones, there are no apparent cultural landmarks.

The Kaya are sacred forests protected by tradition but also by the national legal system. According to legend, and ever since the 8th century, the migration of the Mijikenda, a Bantou group, occurs from the south towards the north of Kenya. The forests encouraged the installation of these communities upon their arrival in the country. At the outset, it involved settlements in certain forests having no sacred character. The groups settled in fortified villages built in clearings which later became sacred sites. These sites constitute centres of political and religious interest with dance and sacrificial areas. A social structure developed at these sacred sites with each sub-group of the community responsible for a particular function in the sacred forest. When security was no longer a problem, in the 19th century, these groups exploited the periphery of the sacred forests. The clearings of the forest continue today to play a spiritual role and to serve as a sepulchre, with the forest providing protection, like a buffer zone, for the exterior areas of activity. Later, tensions, conflicts and colonialism led to increased clearing of the forest and the abandon of the cemeteries and certain sacred sites. At present, intensification of economic exploitation of the region engenders new threats to these forested "islands". Many of these sites disappeared before 1980, after having been pillaged. The Kaya also constitute contained areas of remarkable vegetal diversity.

### **Anthony Githitho and Quentin Luke (Kenya): Introduction to a visit to some of the Kaya Forests**

This paper presented a Kenyan project for the preservation of sacred sites. The sacred woods or forests of Kaya are isolated parts of a large forest that stretch across the plain and the hills of eastern Africa, to Tanzania. These areas present a wide botanical diversity and are of great value for biodiversity conservation. Their study is conducted by the Kenya National Museums (KNM) with funding from WWF. The conservation of these forested islands is directly linked to the history, culture and beliefs of nine Mijikenda ethnic groups. Of the 47 sacred woods presently identified, 33 have been registered as national monuments. In agreement with the local communities, (Committees of Elders) the KNM has implemented a conservation and development programme which comprises the boundaries of the different Kaya identified, public education and awareness-building, economic action to reduce pressure around the forest zones and also the strengthening of national laws relating to heritage conservation.

### **Andrianaivoarivony Rafolo (Madagascar): Royal City, Royal sacred woods and trees of Madagascar**

Near Antananarivo, the Ambohimanga Hill constitutes a remarkable example of a cultural landscape in the Malagasy highlands. The site shelters numerous archaeological vestiges (pits, portals, barriers) set up as circular fortifications around the royal city. This developed from the 15th to the 18th centuries around a public square, organized in a symbolic manner. The royal city comprises palaces, basins, a cattle pit, an enclosure and several constructions. The spiritual heritage is represented by sacred royal tombs, sacred woods, royal trees, sacrificial stones, as well as a symbolic occupation of space. The association of all these values, where culture and nature are closely interlinked, makes for the originality and interest of this site inscribed on the tentative list of Madagascar.

### **Yvonne Dladla<sup>1</sup> (South Africa): Kruger National Park Cultural Landscape**

This presentation underlined the novel approach of the South African authorities who consider that the Kruger National Park has both cultural and natural values. Kruger National Park is a protected area created in 1898. The creation was accompanied by obligatory displacement of the populations. This vast area (2 million hectares) is very diverse: 155 types of natural landscapes have been inventoried. It also presents a large number of cultural landscapes that the park administration and the social ecology unit wish to rehabilitate (more than 254 cultural sites).

Kruger Park is rich in lithic vestiges retracing the cultural evolution of humanity throughout prehistory, over more than a million years. Vestiges of the Iron Age are proof of a technological mastery spread over nearly 2,000 years. In evidence, this technology was accompanied by numerous socio-economic and commercial activities carried out through contacts with neighbouring populations of the Monomotapa Empire and with foreign visitors, Arabs and Portuguese. The industrial era is marked, in Kruger, by the installation of the first European colonials in the 19th century, with the development of a railway and the increased mining activities in southern Africa. Kruger National Park played an important role during

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<sup>1</sup> The communication was presented by Zulaiga Rossouw (SANP)

the apartheid period in sheltering both the repressive forces as well as the freedom fighting groups.

The evolution of the national park, protected natural area cultural landscape, was facilitated by the creation of a department of social ecology in 1994. The project is to rehabilitate the cultural elements of this environment and to involve the local communities in its management, conservation and interpretative activities aimed at visitors. The development of a partnership with the local communities would allow the diversification of the resources of this environment and the reappropriation of this area by the communities who have been distanced for a century. This site figures on the tentative list of South Africa.

### **Yonas Beyene (Ethiopia): Konso-Gardula, Archaeological Site and Cultural Landscape, Witness to a Living Culture**

The site of Konso-Gardula is of exceptional archaeological interest as it harbours Achelian objects and numerous remains of Hominides (of 1.4 to 1.7 M years BP). It also represents a living cultural landscape comprising an original technology of agricultural terraces, fortified stone towns and a living Megalithic culture. The Konso are, at present, the only population who continue to prepare Megalithic monuments, the Waka, dedicated to the worship of community heroes. This ensemble constitutes a living cultural landscape of exceptional quality. The terraced structures retain their agricultural functional use, and the construction of steles keep alive a cultural heritage. In particular, it maintains the passage of power between the generations, over 18-year periods, in accordance with the rhythm of life of individuals and communities. The upkeep of this landscape is a part of the daily life of the Konso and has proved, over time, its sustainability. This site figures on the tentative list of Ethiopia.

### **Joseph Eboime (Nigeria): Sukur Cultural Landscape**

Situated in the Mandara Mountains, the site of Sukur is next to the frontier of Cameroon. It comprises a plateau dominating the hills which are characteristic of the Nigeriano-Camerooni area. Sukur was inhabited in ancient times and specialized in the production and dissemination of tools and firearms, in a continued manner, right up to 1960. At Sukur, craftsmen in iron work, rainmakers, and other inhabitants are associated in a pyramidal institution located in the granite palace of Hindi, the symbolic and collective woman of the Sukur community. The construction of the Hindi Palace is attributed to giants assisted by shaman seers. Other than the palace, the site comprises conical stone enclosures for cattle, (to be fattened up for certain ceremonies), ovens for the production of iron, agricultural terraces forming a spectacular landscape including a number of spiritual elements (sacred trees, doors, tombs, etc.). The site unites a complex of elements of spiritual value such as the funeral monuments organized by caste (princes, blacksmiths, members of the 25 clans of Sukur) and dedicated to the periodic celebration of cycles of life and death, or the ceramic altars and chapels dedicated to the cult of guardian divinities of Sukur. The site of Sukur contains all the diversity and complexity of African cultural landscapes. This landscape unites associative, technological and agricultural characteristics which constitute the story of past and present day life of an entire community, over several centuries. The interest and the quality of this ensemble are the basis for the proposal for inscription to the World Heritage List by Nigeria and which will be examined by the World Heritage Committee in December 1999.

### **Ephraïm Kamuhangire (Uganda): The Salt Gardens of Kibiro**

The region of Kibiro presents a particular landscape linked with an original technology of salt production. Situated on the borders of the western Rift, eight areas of salt production are associated with hot springs. The production of salt is carried out in marked areas, the gardens. This production brings into play a series of operations aiming at the isolation, concentration and purification of salt. Crystallization is achieved through the boiling of an over-saturated brine. The production of salt is a toilsome operation. All the activities are carried out exclusively by women, including its commercialisation in the neighbouring markets. These salt gardens constitute the heritage that is transmitted exclusively by women: mother to daughter or daughter-in-law. The living technological landscape of Kibiro translates therefore a deep originality on the cultural and sociological level. Its conservation is directly linked to the perpetration of the know-how and the competition of the market economy. This site figures on the tentative list of Uganda.

### **Ali Bida (Niger): The Salt Route of Niger**

After having recalled the important role that commercial exchanges played in the trans-Saharan itineraries which, since prehistory, have relayed Africa to the Mediterranean world, the author described the different aspects of the Salt Road of Niger. With the competition of the coastal saltworks and road transport, the activity on this route has dwindled. The Salt Road of Niger is organised around two major crossroads, Agadez and the Oasis of Kaouar. Agadez was the main destination of the caravans and the marketing of salt for the Haussa Sultanates of Zinder and Kano, but also for Gao, Dosso, Say. The Oasis of Kaouar is both the centre for salt production (saltworks of Fachi and Bilma) and the point of exchange of this product for millet, cotton products and other southern produce. The route is as short as possible between the exchange points obligatorily taking into account the wells and the availability of grazing land. This road is just a component in the vast exchange system linking the Saharan zone to sub-Saharan Africa, and extends from the ancient towns of Mauritania to the banks of Lake Chad. It is therefore of real regional importance in Africa. This site figures on the tentative list of Niger.

### **Jules Bocco (Benin): The Slave Route of Benin**

The slave trade on the African continent used numerous routes, each with their peculiarities. For many centuries, the phenomenon of slavery was integrated into the fundamental socio-economic way of life of many African states as, for example, the Kingdom of Abomey. The Slave Route of Abomey, which Benin will submit for inscription on the World Heritage List, dispatched the captives of the capital of Abomey to the embarkment port of Ouidah. This 117 km road, busy in the season of the trade winds, was recognized and codified in 1727 by King Agadja. This new route contributed towards the structuring of economic exchanges within the kingdom. It was marked by numerous rituals and landmarks of representative sites and monuments. Amongst these, mention may be made of the markets, the rest places, the sorting or storage places situated in the different forts and warehouses along the Abomey Road to the sea. This road, which has a value of universal and exceptional memory, totally integrates the historic memory of the slave trade in Benin. Its conservation is necessary for the safeguarding of the collective memory of humanity.

## **Theoretical and methodological aspects discussed during the meeting**

The analysis of living landscapes focused on the problems that the African States Parties encounter during the process of inscription of a site on the World Heritage List, using the standard form, and which, with regard to numerous items, presents specific difficulties to Africa. The representatives of IUCN (L. Melamari) and ICOMOS (B.-M. Hammarskiöld) were highly appreciated. Particular problems arise when the landscapes are an integral part of the living traditions and cultures.

### **Ownership**

With regard to management, the problem of ownership and the question of granting of land is primordial due to its very diversified character in Africa. The African notion of land ownership must be explained and developed beyond the narrow confines of the law, in order that the concepts of land owned by communities, elders, divinities, spirits and other entities evoked in the use or in the granting of land or properties, be recognized.

It is important to clarify the role played by the State and to define its interaction with traditional rights. The problems caused by the justification for inscription and by the management of the site have been examined. The debate was abundantly illustrated by the case study of the Kaya Forests and also by other examples such as the World Heritage sites of Laponian Area (Sweden). These case studies have facilitated the examination of problems posed by the legal systems, in particular, the feeling of injustice and threat, because of a long alienation of cultures and lands by the guardian authorities. These problems affect the notions of the significance, authenticity and integrity of heritages.

In general, in Africa where the land belongs to the ancestors, it would be beneficial if the State associated all the communities concerned in the process of inscription. Full attention could be given to protection measures and to their means of implementation, necessarily taking into account respect of the environment and perspectives for sustainable development.

### **Site boundaries**

The problem of boundaries also concerns a certain number of African sites. The definition of the site and its specificities (boundaries, functions) is often complex because an African site is often fragmented into different components linked by their functionality: for example, a technological site will comprise a production site, a processing site, a site for the production of energy (wood), one or several sites for dissemination and marketing. All these elements are a basis for the integrity of the property and must be identified. However, depending upon the types of cultural properties, the notion of a buffer zone may become useless or hardly applicable, for example, in the case of cultural itineraries and exchange routes. In the case of the Kaya Forests, it is not right to consider the borders of the forest as the limit of the sacred area because these limits may be situated beyond the present edge of the forests, as is the case of Kayafungo.

### **Community involvement**

Discussions covered the principal concepts concerning the investment and integration of local populations in the inscription process. Local communities should be involved at all stages of

the preparation of the nomination, from start to finish. Their interests should be taken into account in all of the implementation, safeguarding, education and monitoring programmes. It became evident that the local population should understand the important role it plays in the inscription process. Therefore priority must be given to information and education actions directed at the local populations.

### **Development and conservation**

Protection measures and the means of applying them should be envisaged in a sustainable development perspective, respecting the natural environment and its resources. Community initiatives may be a decisive factor in the conservation of a site: the conservation of the Royal Palaces of Abomey (Benin) was successful through the involvement of the families concerned with the management of the site. A wise balance should be maintained between conservation of the sites and sustainable development, with the goal of reducing poverty and precarity. Environmental threats and pressures could be greatly reduced through sustainable development, conservation and education programmes focused on communities.

The critical item of the nomination form is the management plan of the site. This should define the objectives and the means of attaining them, and name the responsible officials, the stages and the resources (human, financial, material) as well as the criteria and indicators to allow an evaluation of the implementation. The management plan should mention the concrete inputs from the community, the conservation and promotional activities of the site and their evaluation.

### **The nature-culture relationship in Africa**

African cultural heritage presents the originality of preserving very important natural aspects. Present-day African societies did not arise from a distinction between products of human genius and works of nature. On the contrary, they are based on a synergy in which their culture and their spirituality are deeply buried and feed upon traditional interpretation of phenomena and natural environment resources. This intrinsic relationship between nature and culture is the basis for the originality of African cultural heritage which has more in common with the spirit than the subject matter. Recognition of this cultural heritage will diversify and enrich the World Heritage List. The progressive range of African cultural landscapes also demonstrates the artificial character of the split of heritage into two distinct and opposite categories and calls for a holistic approach of a global heritage of humanity, representative of the diversity of cultures.

### **The notions of authenticity and integrity**

The notions of authenticity and integrity have been discussed in the light of African case studies. The close link between the natural, spiritual and cultural elements, the mix of the tangible and intangible require a particular definition of the concepts already discussed during expert meetings (Nara 1994, La Vanoise 1996, Amsterdam 1998). It is important to define how these conditions should be applied in the African context and be taken into account during the examination of proposals for inscription on the World Heritage List: is it their material structure, the associated knowledge or the function of these sites that should be taken into account? In the case of African heritage, where the natural and cultural aspects overlap, the simultaneous consideration of authenticity and integrity appears necessary.

In adopting Recommendation 2, the group of experts having underlined the importance of the conditions of authenticity and integrity in the inscription process of cultural landscapes to the World Heritage List, wished to clarify these concepts and their applicability in the African context; it once again remarked upon the close links between the tangible and intangible elements and between the natural and cultural aspects, and underlined the symbolic and functional character of this heritage. It requested the World Heritage Centre to organize an African expert meeting in March 2000, in cooperation with the advisory bodies, to respond to the recommendations of the Nara Document. It would be highly desirable to elaborate, drawing upon examples, an African Charter to this effect.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of World Heritage Sites**

The modalities of monitoring the state of conservation should be defined in the inscription process and taken into account in the management plan. This plan should indicate the necessary actions required to periodically evaluate the state of the property concerned, in order to prepare a 5-yearly report to the World Heritage Centre. In the case of technological sites, for which no methodology exists for their monitoring, the group of experts felt that guidelines should be established.

In the exercise of the evaluation of cultural landscapes, the group of experts wished that the role of each advisory body be defined when it pertained to sites where the elements of appreciation go beyond the classic situations, as for example protected areas. Account must also be taken of local communities. It is important that the experts responsible for these dossiers have received a specific training in African problems.

### **Specific problems related to technological landscapes**

The importance of the systems and knowledge of technological traditions has been recognized, as much for the production and marketing of salt (production process at Kibiro, Uganda; trade and exchange routes, Agadez, Niger and Timbuktu, Mali) as for the iron and bronze industries (region of Benin in Nigeria). The structures of communal solidarity of most African societies have been identified as diverse heritage and resources of exceptional universal value for humanity. With regard to expertise and training, it is important to use and to promote local knowledge whenever possible, and to define the traditional methods of transmission of knowledge and essential know-how for the perpetuity of the qualities and values of the site.

### **Specific problems related to itineraries**

The principle of the inscription of itineraries and routes on the World Heritage List stems from a complex process due to the often difficult nature of their identification. In order to understand fully the role and importance of these routes and itineraries, the most characteristic elements to be taken into account are not necessarily their dimension but the fixed points and landmarks, essential for their comprehension, as well as the role played by the itineraries in the spiritual, cultural, economic and social development of the populations concerned.

The complexity of a route or an itinerary depends also upon its legal status which remains an element to determine, either at national or regional level. In the particular case of the Salt

Route, one might consider the Old Town of Adagez, centre for the storage and marketing of salt, the points of departure of caravans, the oasis and the water points indispensable to provide water for people and animals. For the Slave Road in Benin, the itinerary would include the Town of Abomey, capital of the slave kingdom, all the towns and villages traversed by the slaves with the halting places, as well as the town of Ouidah on the coast.

In all cases, even when the original activity of the road or the itinerary no longer exists, or becomes greatly reduced, the *raison d'être* to justify the inscription will be the memory of the past, present and future role from the point of view of the collective memory, and the values to transmit to future generations.

### **Field visits**

Several field visits provided the opportunity to develop most of the points which had been discussed during the presentations and debates of the thematic meeting and gave a more concrete approach.

*Visit to the Kaya Forests (Kwale District):* Under the direction of Quentin Luke and Anthony Githitho, the participants visited several sacred woods in the Tiwi region (Waa, Diani, Kinondo). These areas constitute fragmented vestiges of the forest ecosystem which in the past, stretched across the coastal plains and hills to the north and south of Mombasa. The residual fragments of the forest presently preserved (from 10 to 200 hectares) are considered sacred to the members of the nine Mijikenda ethnic groups. About forty of these fragments have been registered as National Monuments by the National Museums of Kenya. These visits gave the experts an opportunity to discuss with the committees of elders who manage the Kaya in a traditional and collective manner. The visits also made it possible to become acquainted with the regional organization of the committees of elders of the entire Kaya Forests. Discussion between the experts and the elders brought about a better understanding of the spiritual character of these areas and the customs and ceremonies which are organized there. The visit to Kaya Kinondo allowed an approach to the most sacred zones of the forest. The interest of these residual sites, with regard to the subject of biodiversity conservation, was underlined, as numerous African species are only found in these protected areas. Discussions touched upon the pressure exercised on the Kaya and which threaten its existence: extension of the agricultural perimeters and especially the broadening of the tourist perimeters due to the concentration of hotels in the coastal zone. The Elders' Committee of Kaya Kinondo expressed its concern with regard to the conservation of the sacred character of these forests and requested that the international community take action in this respect. The conservation of the integrity of these forest fragments and their inherent characteristics can only be ensured through the establishment of a management plan and sustainable development in concertation with all the local communities involved in the dynamic of this area.

*Visit to protected areas in the Shimba Hills:* This field visit enabled the discovery of the natural heritage of the region and its diversity. The Shimba Hills Reserve also includes ancient Kaya which are identifiable in the landscape by a thicker forest cover. It provided the possibility to compare a classic style of government management (Shimba Hills National Reserve) with a management style where the local communities are directly involved (Mwalugandje Community Elephant Sanctuary). This latter site constitutes an interesting experience in sustainable development of common natural heritage by the original



communities. This kind of management completely corresponds to tenant exploitation of natural heritage income, recommended by Agenda 21.

*Visit to the Old Town of Mombasa<sup>2</sup>* : this visit permitted the discovery of the rich urban Swahili heritage of coastal eastern Africa. The fortified island of Mombasa contains examples of the continued occupancy of a site by human populations over several millennia (Phoenicians, Arabs, Portuguese, etc.).

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The Tiwi Expert Meeting was the first one concerning cultural landscapes of outstanding universal value in Africa. It was the first attempt to implement the concept of the cultural landscape in the framework of the Global Strategy for a more representative World Heritage List for the African region. The debates which followed the presentations and case studies encouraged the development and expansion of the definition of African cultural landscapes, whilst emphasizing their universality and representativity, as well as their particularities with regard to integrity and authenticity, or synergy between natural and cultural, tangible or intangible elements. The importance of the establishment of sustainable management plans to ensure the future and the conservation of African cultural landscapes in a perspective of sustainable human development, at the dawn of the 21st century, was also underlined. The strong points of the Tiwi meeting have been summarised in three series of recommendations which were adopted by unanimity.

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<sup>2</sup> Included in the Tentative List of Kenya

### Recommendations to States Parties

- A. Considering the recent adoption of the cultural landscape concept for inscription on the World Heritage List;  
Considering also the specificity of African heritage, which associates directly tangible and intangible, natural, spiritual and cultural elements, the expert group recommended to States Parties, that the African natural sites currently inscribed on the World Heritage List be reconsidered, whenever appropriate, taking into account cultural landscape categories or other cultural values. In such a case they may become sites of combined natural and cultural values.
- B. In their discussion on the issues of ownership and status of cultural landscapes in municipal\* law and legal systems, the expert group noted that the concept of “property” as it is currently understood is unduly restrictive in so far as it does not give due recognition to communal ownership of cultural landscapes.

The expert group therefore recommended that:

1. States Parties amend their laws to give proper recognition to the rights of local communities over cultural landscapes; To this end, the relationship between national law and customary laws should be explicitly spelt out with due recognition given to the role of customary laws in landscape protection.
2. The concept of communal ownership be understood as including ownership in trust by the current generations of community members for the present, as well as the past and future generations of their communities.

- C. The expert group also noted that it was important that local communities participate effectively in decision-making processes related to cultural landscapes under their ownership and/or control.

The expert group therefore recommended that:

1. States Parties establish the necessary mechanisms for effective participation of communities in management and development activities related to cultural landscapes under the ownership and/or control of local communities ;
2. the participatory mechanism established should seek to promote the sustainable management of cultural landscapes.

- D. Considering the importance of living cultural landscapes, the expert group recommended:
1. to undertake in collaboration with local communities sustainable development programmes, which respect the integrity of the cultural and natural resources;

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\* “municipal” in this context refers to the laws of nation states as opposed to international law.

2. to develop conservation and education programmes which are community centred;
3. that in preparing nominations for the World Heritage List, local communities should be involved at all stages. Their interests should be accommodated within the overall programme of implementation, monitoring, education and follow-up.

## **Recommendation II**

### **A. Recommendations to the World Heritage Centre**

- (a) The expert group, having underlined the importance of the conditions of authenticity and integrity in the process of inscribing cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List, wished to clarify the concepts and their applicability in the African context; once again pointed out the close links between tangible and intangible elements, natural and cultural aspects, and underlined the symbolic and functional character of this heritage. It requested the World Heritage Centre, in cooperation with the advisory bodies to organize a meeting of African experts in March 2000 to follow-up the recommendations of the Nara Document and to formulate, on the basis of examples, ideally an African Charter.
- (b) Considering the monitoring requirements outlined in the nomination form and taking into account living cultural landscapes as dynamic systems, the participants stressed the need for the inclusion of social and cultural indicators in monitoring processes.
- (c) Noting the importance of traditional protection and management mechanisms in living cultural landscapes, it was suggested that Management Guidelines for cultural landscapes be prepared as soon as possible, on the basis of case studies, which take into account customary laws and practices, as well as traditional management mechanisms.

### **B. Recommendations to the advisory bodies**

Taking into account that cultural landscapes represent the “combined works of nature and man” based on the natural environment and successive (internal and external) social, economic and cultural factors, the expert group recommended,

- (a) that the evaluation undertaken by the advisory bodies be carried out on the basis of a direct collaboration, which is interdisciplinary, as opposed to multidisciplinary, in a way that takes into account the originality and specificity of these sites;
- (b) that the experts assigned to the evaluation missions for nominations should have adequate expertise in technical matters as well as the African cultural context;
- (c) that a network of qualified African experts be established and that the Advisory Bodies organize training sessions in collaboration with the Africa 2009 programme in

order to provide African specialists with the necessary expertise to prepare and evaluate nomination files for the World Heritage List;

- (d) on the basis of discussions of case studies of the Salt Gardens of Kibiro (Uganda), the salt routes (Niger), the production of iron (Sukur, Nigeria; Krüger, South Africa) and bronze in the Benin region (Nigeria), that ICOMOS carries out comparative studies of different production methods. It is evident that the technological heritage of Africa constitutes a category not yet represented on the World Heritage List.

### **Recommendation III**

#### **Recommendations from the field trip**

1. Following the visit to the sacred Kaya forests (Waa, Diani, Kinondo) the expert group noted that the traditional management of these sites put in place by the local communities under the leadership of the committee of elders has demonstrated the capacity to protect and conserve the cultural, spiritual and natural values of this environment.
2. The expert group recommended:
  - that the legislative protection be reinforced in a way that the sites continue to maintain their cultural, spiritual and natural functions;
  - that the Government of Kenya, through the National Museums of Kenya and in collaboration with local communities, take appropriate measures for the protection and conservation of these sites;
  - that considering the threats and potential impacts of intensive tourism development, measures be taken to protect the Kaya communities from exploitation and that ways be explored to improve the economic opportunities through non-consumptive, sustainable use of these forest monuments;
  - to envisage as soon as possible a spatial extension of these fragmented forests utilizing the genetic resources preserved in these sites;
  - that the Government of Kenya considers placing the Kaya forests on Kenya's tentative list with a view to preparing a nomination dossier for the World Heritage List.

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