



Participating in the Global Preservation Community

PANEL REPORT

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October 31, 2006

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It shall be the policy of the Federal Government, in cooperation with other nations and in partnerships with the States, local governments, Indian tribes, and private organizations and individuals to...provide leadership in the preservation of the prehistoric and historic resources of the United States and of the international community of nations...

National Historic Preservation Act, 16 USC 470-1, Section 2

In the realm of preservation, the United States has a mandate and a long history of looking beyond its borders to strengthen policy and practice at home, and to engage others around the world in shared leadership and learning. Collaboration in international preservation fosters shared values and mutual understanding, and supports an appreciation of differences within a diverse global society. It is a vital and dynamic element of visioning a collective future.

The thrust of this report is that America's public and private¹ sectors should expand their participation in the global preservation community and restore their leadership role, so as to:

- reap economic benefits through tourism development, job growth, and innovation;
- generate environmental benefits by stewarding resources and promoting integrated planning; and
- garner social benefits by demonstrating goodwill, advancing participatory forms of community-building, and strengthening American's reputation abroad.

This panel reviewed the evolution of the Federal Historic Preservation Program to consider the needs of today, and looked to emerging trends and issues in an international context to project the needs of tomorrow. From this discourse, four thematic areas became apparent: community-building, stewardship, leadership, and capacity-building.

Community-building addresses the role of international preservation in sustaining and strengthening communities within United States, as well as improving relations abroad.

Stewardship targets the ways in which engagement in the international arena serves to protect resources and advances efforts to make preservation a proactive and integral aspect of all new development.

Leadership speaks to the role of the United States Government fostering a shared global vision for cooperation with regard to heritage by building international partnerships.

Capacity-building addresses how participation in the international preservation community enhances practice and policymaking at home and overseas.

Each area is represented in this report by a general recommendation/idea for consideration, along with proposed actions for implementation. The actions themselves range in specificity, in part due to the brevity of the consultation process. However, equally, if not more, challenging was the dual nature of the task. Assessing current circumstances and making recommendations based on existing contexts generated more concrete and specific actions. Visioning the future and exploring where we will need to go produced proposed actions that require further development. A brief synopsis of the ideas for consideration and recommendations follows:

¹ In this report, "private sector" shall include for-profit businesses, as well as not-for-profit enterprises, nongovernmental organizations, professional associations, academic institutions, and the like.

1. Community-building

Promote mutual understanding across borders, and so empower US communities to make heritage preservation an integral aspect of sustainable development.

- Support a national effort to attract foreign tourism to cultural heritage destinations within the United States.
- Facilitate the participation of US cities, historic districts, and cultural/natural landscapes in the World Heritage program through amendments to existing legislation [Preservation Act Amendments of 1980, provision 16 USC 470a-1(c)].
- Allow replacement applications to the U.S. World Heritage Tentative List as sites are nominated and forwarded to UNESCO for World Heritage consideration.
- Increase funding for and facilitate the participation of foreign professionals, academics, and policymakers in American preservation discourse and practice, and conversely the participation of Americans in international discourse and practice.
- Promote public awareness of and enhance education about the significance of historic cultural sites, landscapes, and shared heritage in nations' histories and development.

2. Stewardship

Integrate local cultural heritage resources, practices, and values in international activities that affect the landscape and built environment.

- Require Federal agencies and government sponsored undertakings abroad (including foreign aid, disaster planning and recovery, government-issued contracts, trade agreements, etc.) to review and consider the heritage impacts of their international operations.
- Strengthen Department of Defense contingency planning and training to avoid, to the extent possible, destruction of cultural resources during periods of conflict and incorporate heritage concerns in post-conflict reconstruction.
- Raise awareness and promote the integration of heritage concerns within private sector international activities.
- Leverage and encourage international development organizations to embed heritage within their planning policies and frameworks.

3. Leadership

Reinvigorate US Government participation in international organizations, conventions, treaties, and programs related to cultural heritage preservation.

- Reestablish a US Government presence and/or bolster its role in intergovernmental organizations dealing with heritage.
- Increase funding and resources for Federal agencies and programs dealing with heritage issues abroad.
- Increase government support for American organizations addressing international heritage concerns.
- Ratify the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in Armed Conflict and its two Protocols.
- Strengthen the heritage preservation elements of US diplomacy.

4. Capacity-building

Create or enhance institutional mechanisms within the US to optimize learning and knowledge sharing about international preservation.

- Institute or enhance a forum or fora to foster international dialogue on best practices.
- Establish or enhance a network/clearinghouse (a) to share data, information, and analysis; (b) to identify and coordinate gaps in knowledge and research; (c) to facilitate cooperative efforts; and (d) to assess international preservation practice effectiveness.
- Expand opportunities and funding for international education, exchanges, and partnerships.

II. FINDINGS

The tradition of American participation in international preservation is longstanding, however the level of US governmental leadership and support has waned since the 1970s. When the infrastructure for preservation activities in this country was first under development, the need to look abroad was implicit. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 was derived from European precedents; our National Trust was modeled after the National Trust in Great Britain; and The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) was shaped by a Congressional delegation that first studied foreign preservation institutions and projects.

This dynamic engagement led to a significant era of United States leadership in global preservation. The U.S. spearheaded the development of the World Heritage Convention of 1972; we were the first nation to sign and ratify it; and Yellowstone was one of the first sites inscribed. The Convention has now been ratified by 182 nations, and has assisted in the preservation of 830 heritage resources in 138 countries and in associated economic development and jobs. Our National Park Service, other Federal agencies, and many of our non-profit/non-governmental organizations have been looked to for leadership, as well as for technical and management expertise in this area, and in several instances have been seminal in the creation of heritage systems and policies in other countries.

The diplomatic benefits derived from participation in the global preservation community are probably even more important in the current War on Terror than they were during the Cold War. Now, more than ever, we face the powerful repercussions of the failure to recognize and help protect the cultural achievements of others, to understand cultural differences, and to promote shared values and heritage. It is critical to reinvigorate our role in the global preservation community and reinvest in shared leadership.

As a nation of mixed ethnicities, our citizenry has a stake in the heritage of many, probably all, nations of the world; they are ancestral lands where many of our cultural roots lie. Participating in the global preservation community reinforces notions of a diverse, yet common, heritage. It can help Americans learn about foreign cultures and advance preservation practice, so as to optimize economic return, improve quality of life, advance citizen education and engagement, and foster social cohesion.

Such participation likewise provides opportunities to enhance and demonstrate what Americans do well *vis à vis* heritage – our capacity to engage in grassroots efforts, which provide for democratic participation and encourage an entrepreneurial spirit in heritage preservation and attendant economic development. American public-private partnerships, our robust non-profit sector, and our experience with market-based preservation strategies contribute to increased options for preservation and demonstrate internationally the importance of free association and free markets.

The fortieth anniversary of the NHPA, the recent return of the United States to UNESCO, and the representation of the US on the World Heritage Committee signify growing interest in reengagement; the United States Government must now cultivate these opportunities and provide increased support.

However, these initiatives alone are not enough. As noted in the NHPA:

...in the face of ever-increasing extensions of urban centers, highways, and residential, commercial, and industrial developments, the present governmental and nongovernmental historic preservation programs and activities are inadequate to insure future generations a genuine opportunity to appreciate and enjoy the rich heritage of our Nation...

National Historic Preservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 470, Section 1(b)(5)

Worldwide, we are losing cultural and natural landscapes at a rampant pace. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) estimates that, if existing building and construction trends are not curbed, by 2032 the built environment will destroy or disturb natural habitats on more than 70 percent of the Earth's land surface. Construction is already estimated to consume approximately 50 percent of all the resources humans take from nature. And construction and demolition waste accounts for 30-50 percent of all waste generated in higher income countries.²

Integrated planning -- across the public and private sectors -- is needed urgently to sustainably develop not only heritage resources and their environs, but communities and regions as a whole. While we have made some advances toward measuring many of the economic contributions of heritage, from job growth to tourism revenue, we have only just begun to qualify and quantify the environmental and cultural benefits of preservation as a social process. Heritage, in many ways, encompasses and exemplifies the inextricable linkage among the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural aspects of sustainability. Preservation has the potential to enhance pluralistic participation and innovative forms of community-building, particularly during times of conflict and rapid change. Thus, cultural heritage and its preservation have played and should play an even more positive and catalytic role in generating a collective vision for the landscape and society that incorporates and provides stewardship for these myriad values.

We, as Americans, are not alone in facing these challenges, nor can we effectively or creatively address them in isolation. More robust participation in the global preservation community is imperative to heritage and sustainability concerns within the United States, from policy-making to practice to public awareness.

² United Nations Environment Programme, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP-DTIE). 2003. "Sustainable Building and Construction – Facts and Figures." *UNEP Industry and Environment* 25 (2 – 3): 5 – 8.

III. IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Community-building**

Promote mutual understanding across borders, and so empower US communities to make heritage preservation an integral aspect of sustainable development.

Historic preservation in the United States fosters shared values and mutual understanding at the community level. It also supports the appreciation of differences within a culturally diverse society. Vigorous participation in the global preservation community makes us part of a shared, world-wide enterprise within and among nations. Sharing our practices and understanding with those from other nations, through tourism, professional cooperation or other means, and learning from those other societies, benefit everyone involved. They also provide substantial diplomatic benefits for our country, by demonstrating our commitment to protecting the heritage of others as well as our own.

Historic preservation likewise can deliver many economic benefits to communities and regions. It can generate tourism revenue and spur sustainable growth; when visiting American locales, foreign tourists are estimated to spend more per day on average than domestic counterparts. Preservation can also contribute to social capital and cohesion. Engagement in international preservation expands opportunities for project partnerships and knowledge sharing about heritage, its role in managing our physical environment, and its function in society. However, US participation in the international heritage arena is limited. For example, there are approximately 200 urban areas on the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Centre coordinates programs that allow professionals and policy makers to share experiences and assess practices. In addition, these communities work collaboratively to address common issues as members of the Organization of World Heritage Cities. Unfortunately, none of the 200 plus cities is in the United States. For those US communities that want to participate, nomination to the World Heritage List is virtually impossible to accomplish under existing legislation.

The American public is not as aware as it should be of the significance of historic sites and landscapes – in their communities and regions, across the nation, and in the world. Citizens often don't recognize that these sites and landscapes contribute to community and national identity and to sustainable economic development. Schools rarely include these sites and landscapes as a part of the curriculum, showing their relationships with political and social events and the shared heritage. Americans thus are often less likely than those in other countries to make preservation the priority it should be.

Specific actions:

- Support a national effort to attract foreign tourism to heritage destinations within the US.
- Facilitate the participation of US cities, historic districts, and cultural/natural landscapes in the World Heritage program through amendments to existing legislation [Preservation Act Amendments of 1980, provision 16 USC 470a-1(c)].
- Allow replacement applications to the U.S. World Heritage Tentative List as sites are nominated and forwarded to UNESCO for World Heritage consideration.
- Increase funding for and facilitate the participation of foreign professionals, academics, and policymakers in US preservation discourse and practice, and the participation of Americans in international discourse and practice, through NGO- or university-sponsored exchanges, government-sponsored tours and roundtables, etc.
- Promote public awareness of and enhance education about the significance of historic cultural sites, landscapes, and shared heritage in nations' histories and development by (a) engaging local school boards, and Federal and State education agencies, in making heritage education and awareness part of the curriculum; and (b) enhancing the World Heritage in Young Hands Program.

2. Stewardship

Integrate local cultural heritage resources, practices, and values in international activities that affect the built environment.

As a responsible member of the global community, the United States must encourage and set an example for heritage stewardship and the union of innovation with local knowledge and traditions. History has made evident many unintended consequences of the failure to recognize and respect heritage concerns in planning and development initiatives. Negative effects range from reconstruction efforts that are not culturally, technologically, or environmentally appropriate to disenfranchised communities that cannot effectively participate in the shaping of their lives and landscapes.

While there are some policies that seek to protect sites of significance in international undertakings, these rely on inventories of designated resources, which do not adequately represent the breadth of heritage within a region. Nor do they incorporate the less tangible traditions and values that are so integral to cultural and environmental continuity, such as vernacular building techniques and materials or local attitudes regarding design and land use. While new construction may not physically impact a specific historic site or structure, it can nonetheless have profound effects on a community's connection with its heritage and its capacity to envision a collective future, especially in post-disaster or –conflict conditions.

We are losing cultural and natural landscapes worldwide because planning and development initiatives fail to incorporate concerns of social, economic, and environmental sustainability collectively. While there are some initiatives abroad to address these concerns, such as through the European Landscape Convention, the United States is lagging in its efforts. The planning and training required to prevent adverse impacts in foreign nations are not systematic or operational for agencies or contractors. Cultural heritage and its preservation can serve a catalytic role in promoting such integrated planning.

Specific actions:

- Require Federal agencies and all government-sponsored undertakings abroad (including foreign aid, disaster planning and recovery, government-issued contracts, trade agreements, etc) to review and consider heritage concerns in their international operations. For example, establish a mechanism (forum, proposed legislation, etc.) to enhance the policies of USAID, the Department of State, and other Federal agencies to a) create conditions for local engagement, so as to incorporate relevant values and traditions, and b) assess the impact of their work on cultural landscapes, sites, and traditions.
- Strengthen Department of Defense contingency planning and training to a) avoid, to the extent possible, destruction of cultural resources during periods of conflict and, b) incorporate heritage concerns in post-conflict reconstruction.
- Raise awareness and promote the integration of heritage concerns as part of the private sector's international activities, including relief and assistance endeavors, technology and academic exchanges, and corporate investments abroad; and encourage American business to support preservation (and its interpretation) here and abroad. For example, require that portions of National Science Foundation grants for archaeological research overseas be used for conservation; encourage organizations involved in relief housing construction to incorporate traditional settlement patterns that rely on local building techniques and materials, etc.
- Leverage and encourage international development organizations (such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNDP, and others) to embed heritage within their planning and development policies and frameworks.

3. Leadership

Reinvigorate US Government participation in international organizations, conventions, treaties, and programs related to cultural heritage preservation.

The US must reinvigorate its role as a leader and partner in the global preservation arena in order to effectively engage its citizenry in preservation activities at home and abroad. Such leadership is mandated by the NHPA and has been an important element of US preservation history. Americans have traditionally been international leaders in conservation and historic preservation. The National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and American private organizations have long provided models abroad. The World Heritage Convention was a US initiative of great benefit to the world and American diplomacy.

Overall, US leadership in the global preservation community has declined significantly since the Seventies. Lack of funding often prevents US official representation at intergovernmental meetings in which we have a specific interest or role. The current level of support for international exchanges in preservation is relatively minor compared to the opportunities and academic demand.

In addition, the US helped to spearhead and is a signatory of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. However, the Convention and its First Protocol have never been ratified by Congress, and no action has been taken on its Second Protocol of 1999. The Convention has been ratified, or acceded to, by 115 countries (with 11 of those having given notice of succession).

Specific actions:

- Reestablish a US Government presence and bolster its role in inter-governmental organizations dealing with heritage. For example:
 - Provide US Government support for the participation of US representatives in the governing bodies of ICCROM (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) and ICOM (International Council of Museums); Cultural Heritage Steering Committee (CDPAT) of the Council of Europe
 - Provide government support for the appointment of US representatives to offices and advisory committees of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites);
 - Join the UN World Tourism Organization and provide leadership in promoting the tourism value of heritage preservation.
- Increase funding and resources for Federal agencies and programs dealing with heritage issues abroad, such as the State Department's Ambassador's Fund, the NPS Office of International Affairs, etc.
- Increase government support for American organizations addressing international heritage concerns, such as US/ICOMOS, AAM-ICOM, et al.
- Ratify the 1954 Hague Convention and its two Protocols.
- Strengthen the heritage preservation elements of US diplomacy, through the development of new initiatives and the enhancement of existing programs, such as the Ambassadors' Fund and the International Visitors programs.

4. Capacity-building

Create institutional mechanisms within the US to optimize learning and knowledge sharing.

Historic preservation continues to evolve in response to new challenges and opportunities. International discourse can continually foster innovation and collaboration, and keep American preservation connected to its broader professional community. This enables practitioners and policymakers alike to both steer and remain abreast of new directions, tools, and strategies.

The United State's private sector, through such organizations as The Getty Conservation Institute, the World Monuments Fund, US/ICOMOS and others, have worked to foster international exchange and dialogue in the international arena. The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and the U.S. Department of Interior, through the National Park Service's Office of International Affairs, are creating a cooperative interpretation and preservation project among three World Heritage sites in the United States, Mexico, and Belize. This project will engage local communities and demonstrate models of education and outreach and sustainable economic opportunity.

However, there is still a void within the United States. Currently, there is no primary conduit for communicating with the United States government and among Federal agencies about international preservation activities. Likewise, within the United States, there is no central place to share international preservation experience between the public and private sector; no network or clearinghouse to provide information on international practices and their effectiveness; and no current, coordinated effort to expand public and private funding for international preservation education, exchanges, and partnerships.

Specific actions:

- Institute or enhance a forum or fora for sharing experiences and fostering an international dialogue about best practices among US agencies, organizations, institutions, and companies (public and private) engaged in preservation practices abroad, and their overseas partners (The Cooperative Conservation Conference might serve as a model).
- Establish or enhance a network/clearinghouse (a) to gather and share data, information, and analysis; (b) to identify and coordinate gaps in knowledge and research; (c) to facilitate cooperative efforts; and (d) to assess international preservation practice effectiveness. (US/ICOMOS, the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training /NCPTT, and the Federal Preservation Institute might serve as conduits).
- Expand support for existing programs that opportunities for international education, exchanges, and partnerships among public agencies, not-for-profits and NGOs, and private entities, such as Fulbright Fellowships, the US/ICOMOS exchange programs, ICCROM Fellowships, International Visitors programs, Ambassadors Fund, NPS twinning projects, and US-Italy exchange with USFS and NPS, technical and volunteer exchanges (USFS - Italy Heritage Excursions program).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The Preserve America initiative has provided a vital opportunity to assess and plan for the future of preservation here in the United States, and internationally. While the United States has a great deal to share with other nations of the world, it also has a need to enrich our own experiences through participation in the global preservation arena. Our grassroots traditions, our entrepreneurial approaches to heritage, our Parks system -- these are all potential points of engagement and provide creative possibilities of mutual benefit through increased exchange of ideas, experiences and contacts.

Preservation is at the forefront of global concerns about the quality of life in communities of tomorrow. Culture and heritage are at the very heart of what most communities hold dear. They define our identity and our shared past, and are dynamic elements of how we envision our collective future. Demonstrating both our deep respect for the heritage of all cultures and our commitment to cooperation in its conservation is a powerful tool for the United States. It makes us partners in shared leadership; it exemplifies the core values of the American Nation; and it underscores our responsibility to make the world a better place for present and future generations. To the members of this panel, this is not an option; it is a necessity and an obligation. We must convince our government and our citizenry to be ambassadors of that idea so that it can become embedded in policy and practice at home and worldwide.

This Summit has initiated an important dialogue that should continue. The Panel is grateful for the opportunity to serve the United States and the cause of preservation worldwide, and is hopeful that it may contribute to the further development of the ideas and actions put forth.

V. PANEL AND METHODOLOGY

The “*Participation in the Global Community*” panel was co-chaired by Gustavo Araoz, Executive Director, US/ICOMOS, and Mark Rey, Undersecretary for Natural Resources & Environment (NRE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Under Secretary Rey was assisted by Melissa Simpson, Special Counsel to NRE and Michael Kaczor, USDA-Forest Service (FS). Donald Jones, Director of Programs for US/ICOMOS, assisted Mr. Araoz.

The Panel was composed of experts in the fields of historic preservation, economic development, and international work. Panel members included:

- Erica Avrami, Secretary, US/ICOMOS, and Rutgers University
- Lowell Baier, President, Baier Properties, Inc.; Executive V.P. , Boone and Crockett Club
- Bonnie Burnham, President, World Monuments Fund
- Marta de la Torre, Director of Museum Studies, Florida International University
- Frank Hodson, Principal, Hodson and Associates
- Susan Kane, Professor, Oberlin College and Vice President, Archaeological Institute of America
- Steve Kelley, Senior Consultant, Wiss Janney Elstner Associates, Inc., and Association for Preservation Technology
- Nora Mitchell, Director, Conservation Study Institute, National Park Service
- Jonathan Tourtelot, Director, Sustainable Destinations, National Geographic Society

The Panel initiated consultation through several conference calls and group emails. In addition, a special Chat Room [blog] set-up courtesy of Dr. Eric Kansa, Director Alexandria Archives Organization, was established to provide a vehicle for experts not on the panel to contribute to the dialogue. This blog may be accessed at:

http://www.alexandriaarchive.org/preserve_america/.

The Panel convened at US/ICOMOS, in the National Building Museum in Washington, DC, August 30-September 1, 2006, to discuss and formalize the ideas and recommendations generated over previous weeks. Susan Barnes, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) Co-Chair, and Tom McCulloch, ACHP staff, participated as observers. Sharon Smith, RHR staff, USDA-FS, provided specialized note taking and recordation efforts.

A draft report was prepared as a collaborative effort of Panel members pursuant to the DC meeting. The report was further developed via subsequent emails and teleconferences amongst the Panel; it was then submitted to the ACHP on September 22, 2006, in preparation for the Preserve America Summit in New Orleans, October 18-20, 2006. Pursuant to the Summit dialogue, final revisions were made by the panel, and this report was herewith submitted to the ACHP.