The World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism (WH+ST) Programme

In 2015-2016, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, in partnership with the three pilot sites in Southeast Asia, namely, Melaka and George Town in Malaysia, the ‘Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras’ in the Philippines, and the ‘Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy’ in Indonesia, piloted innovative sustainable tourism strategies. The three WH+ST sites have worked together to develop an integrated tourism strategy for three pilot sites in the region. The WH+ST Programme introduces a toolkit that aims to help a World Heritage Site develop a sustainable tourism strategy in order to enhance broad stakeholder engagement in planning, developing, and managing sustainable tourism, and providing World Heritage stakeholders with the capacity and resources to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly, and sustainably based on the local community context and needs.

1. MALAYSIA

Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2008, Melaka and George Town bear witness to over 500 years of trading and cultural exchanges between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. The influence of Asia and Europe have endowed the towns with a specific multicultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible.

Vision statement for sustainable tourism: ‘Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca’ are sustainable World Heritage tourism destinations. All stakeholders understand, appreciate, conserve, and protect their unique and authentic heritage values and opportunities created and benefits shared, empowering local communities.

For more information: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1223

2. THE PHILIPPINES

Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras

The ‘Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras’, inscribed in 1995, is an outstanding example of an evolved, living cultural landscape that can be traced back as far back as two millennia ago in the pre-colonial Philippines. The historic rice terraces cover an extensive area, the inscribed property consists of five clusters of the most intact and impressive terraces, located in four municipalities. They are all the product of the Ifugao ethnic group, a minority community that has occupied these mountains for thousands of years.

Vision statement for sustainable tourism: ‘Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras’ is a living heritage, known for its rice terraces as a source of pride and identity that offers meaningful tourism experiences for the people of the Philippines and the world, where everyone shares responsibility to protect and conserve the World Heritage values, and where socio-economic benefits are equitably shared among stakeholders.

For more information: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1194

3. INDONESIA

Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2012, this site consists of five rice terraces and their water temples. These temples are the focus of a cooperative water management system of canals and weirs. Known as subak, it dates back to the 9th century. The subak reflects the philosophical concept of Tri Hita Karana, which brings together the realms of the spirit, the human world, and nature.

Vision statement for sustainable tourism: ‘Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy’ is a living heritage, known for its subak system that safeguards and protects the authenticity of the Cultural Landscape of Bali World Heritage site with its unique subak system based on the Tri Hita Karana philosophy and reflects a balanced conservation and sustainable tourism development with proactive participation of stakeholders, providing an authentic visitor experience, and benefiting local communities.

For more information: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1521

This leaflet presents UNESCO Office, Jakarta project entitled ‘The Power of Culture: Supporting Community-Based Management and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites in Southeast Asia’. This project is made possible by the support from the Government of Malaysia via the Malaysia Funds-in-Trust, and is part of UNESCO’s joint effort to conserve and safeguard World Heritage Sites for future generations.

Main Partners

MALAYSIA: George Town World Heritage Incorporation, Melaka World Heritage Office, Malaysian National Commission for UNESCO

PHILIPPINES: Philippine National Commission for UNESCO, Department of Tourism, Provincial Local Government Unit of Ifugao

INDONESIA: Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Tourism, Bali Provincial Government, Planning and Development Agency of Bali Province

UNESCO: Power of Culture: Supporting Community-Based Management and Sustainable Tourism at World Heritage Sites to introduce a new approach to sustainable tourism management at World Heritage Sites. Partnering with central and local government, and involving local communities and stakeholders, UNESCO assists in the development of Sustainable Tourism Strategy for the pilot sites and catalyzes positive change to protect and conserve the sites while enriching the lives of local communities, and at the same time enhancing the experience of visitors.

THE PROJECT

Potential to drive community development, especially around sustainable tourism and creative economies. Throughout the world, a number of community-based cultural tourism initiatives demonstrate that properly planned cultural tourism can be an effective tool for heritage conservation and rural development, improving local communities in tourism management and operations and raising substantial public sector revenue.

World Heritage has high potential to drive community development, especially around sustainable tourism and creative economies. Throughout the world, a number of community-based cultural tourism initiatives demonstrate that properly planned cultural tourism can be an effective tool for heritage conservation and rural development, improving local communities in tourism management and operations and raising substantial public sector revenue.