World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism

Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, Philippines

Medina of Tunis, Tunisia

The Great Wall, China

Great Barrier Reef, Australia

UNESCO

World Heritage Site logos
World Heritage Sites create jobs, they promote local activity through arts and craft, they foster tourism, and they generate revenues.
Building a positive dynamic between sustaining conservation and supporting socio-economic development through well-managed tourism.
Dramatic current and projected growth of international and domestic travel represents both challenges and opportunities for World Heritage Sites and surrounding populations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the property</th>
<th>Visitors 2010</th>
<th>Visitors 2011</th>
<th>Visitors 2012</th>
<th>TOP Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPISCOPAL CITY OF ALBI</td>
<td>499 770</td>
<td>760 000</td>
<td>+30%</td>
<td>Europe, USA, Japan, China, Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>-The Cathedral</td>
<td>69 798</td>
<td>161 343</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-The Toulouse- Lautrec museum</td>
<td>161 343</td>
<td>268 629</td>
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<td>-Tourist Office</td>
<td>268 629</td>
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Quality visitor experiences that do not degrade or damage any of the property’s natural or cultural values and visitor attraction.
Increasing numbers of tourists at World Heritage Sites means that tourism development and visitor management require effective, cooperative commitment and coordination between all stakeholders in the heritage and tourism sectors.
Historic Town of Vigan, Philippines, since 1999

Challenges: Resistance from citizens against WHS nomination – fear of a slowdown of the economy as the *Preservation and Conservation Guidelines’* Ordinance was perceived to be too restrictive.

Solutions: Encourage the community to assume ownership of their heritage through renovation of houses into touristic products (B&B, restaurants, shops, etc.)

Benefits: Economic benefits have gone beyond tourism and have influenced the rise of other income-generating activities for the community.
Pre-Hispanic City of Chichen-Itza
Mexico, since 1988

**Challenges:** Even visitor distribution (1.2 mil annual tourists) supporting sustainable development around the site.

**Solutions:** Carrying capacity determined; some monuments closed for conservation; eco-tourism accommodation.

**Benefits:** Visitor safety and monument protection improved; rural communities involved in accommodating tourists.
Challenges: Conserving historical significance and authenticity; remoteness of islands.

Solutions: Striking a balance between restoration and spirit of place; remote interpretation through new Visitor Centre.

Benefits: Visitors can get informed prior to trip; website gives stakeholders a platform to voice opinions; Management Group ensures regular communication and delivery of objectives; Centre attracts visitors ensuring financial viability.
Intercultural dialogue is an essential bridge for reconciliation with a vital role in building peace through the recognition of cultural diversity, and promotion of understanding and respect. As a source of dignity and identity culture and heritage have a growing importance for the ‘soft power’ of countries – their influence and outreach.
The Silk Road as a vehicle for intercultural dialogue and education. Two serial nominations to establish heritage corridors:

1. From China through Kazakhstan into Kyrgyzstan
2. Crossing Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.
Under the framework of the UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme and UNWTO Silk Road Action Plan we are working on developing a common tourism strategy for the Silk Road Heritage Corridor in Central Asia and China. The goal: provide policy guidance and strategies for visitor management, site presentation, promotion and planning.
"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness."

-- Mark Twain
Thank you