The Silk Roads
Managing cultural routes: local management planning and trans-national coordination – finding a beneficial balance
Red: 35,000 km major routes
Orange: 16,000 km substantial routes
Area: 16,000,000 km²

ICOMOS thematic study
Statement of OUV

• The Silk Roads are routes of integration, exchange and dialogue between East and West that have contributed greatly to the common prosperity and development of humankind for almost two millennia.

• The whole of the route is more than the sum of its constituent parts.
Tentative lists
The types of monuments, sites and cultural landscapes found along the Silk Roads have been categorized under:

1. **Infrastructure** (facilitating trade and transportation);
2. **Production** (of trading goods); and
3. **Outcomes** (the results of contact and exchange)
Protecting a representative selection of smaller sites – not just the most beautiful
Geographic & environmental context

- Environmental exploitation: major impact on corridors and settlement

The Karakoram Highway
1. identifying major **nodes** (large cities) along the Silk Roads;

2. identifying **segments** of routes between these;

3. and then broadening these out to represent the **corridors** of ‘movement and impact’ that took place between the nodes
Approach

• Compartmentalising the Silk Roads into a number of World Heritage properties, linked by an overall framework concept
• More manageable serial nominations
• Progress at differing paces
• **BUT**, still maintaining the concept of trans-national cooperation that lies at the core of this endeavour
TOURISM & HERITAGE MANAGEMENT
Key issues

• Need to proactively plan carrying capacities for sustainable management

• Inevitable that large, accessible and 'display quality' sites offer more of a destination (USP)

• But by definition Silk Roads tourism lends itself to attracting travellers – along integrated routes/corridors
Niche tourism

• Potential for niche tourism
  • remote locations, more adventuress travellers, more 'authentic’ or distinctive experiences, etc.
Heritage management

• Always has a local dimension
  • Specific places
  • Local partnerships & stakeholders
• Management planning needs to deliver holistic planning, with well integrated stakeholder participation and long-term sustainability
Trans-national strengths: sharing skills, expertise & knowledge

• Share common understanding of management approaches:
  • to conservation, to education, to interpretation, to research development, to sustainable tourism

• Develop appropriate standards and protocols to face key key issues:
  • boundaries and buffer zones; site selection; buried archaeological deposits; etc.
Trans-national strengths: sharing skills, expertise & knowledge

- Save resources - avoid wasteful reinvention: e.g. earthen architecture conservation
- Develop capacities
- Ensure properties share management ethos
- Draw together community committed to, and engaged with, the sustainable management of archaeological resources
Important steps

- Some already taken though the IICC-X in Xi’an

ICOMOS INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION CENTER
Monitoring

- Rigid and prescriptive procedures waste resources and deter engagement.
- Aim of monitoring must be to protect significance & values, understand change, the rate of change, the causes of change, the impacts of actions, and changes to the values of the site.
- Providing tools & information to better manage and sustain the resource.
Monitoring

- **Local monitoring**: Site/landscape specific needs, with appropriate indicators. Local, national & international significance.

- **National monitoring**: The specific States needs, with appropriate indicators. National & international significance.

- **Serial monitoring**: The specific WH serial OUV, with appropriate indicators. International significance.
Ways forward

• How can we protect such a diverse range of cultural heritage?
  • Avoiding duplication
  • Building on strengths
  • Implementing coordinated management frameworks

• Building capacity

• & (re-)building communication