



Workshop on Management of Heritage Places and Artefacts

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Practical Steps and Recommendations for Preparing a Heritage Management Plan

Based on the presentations, discussions and application exercises of the workshop, this document presents a list of practical steps and recommendations for cultural heritage professionals engaged in the preparation of an integrated Heritage Management Plan (HMP).

One basic principle underlying the preparation, formulation and implementation of a HMP is that heritage planning is as much about listening to and managing people as it is about dealing with the technical issues of conserving heritage resources. Planning is not an end in itself but a means of conserving heritage places or artefacts and strengthening community and should be seen as a process.

Another basic principle is that each place needs to be considered in its broad environment. The HMP needs to address the scope of the actions required to promote better protection of the place, but also its integration within its social, economic and natural/built environment. A well preserved and managed place/artefact in a decaying neighbourhood or landscape is unlikely to command respect from local residents and visitors, and to attract more of the latter.

There is no “one fits all” template to transfer theoretical approaches and strategies into an action plan. The following should therefore be taken as guidelines that need to be adapted to a variety of situations:

1. The type, scale and conservation status of the heritage place or artefact concerned with the HMP;
2. The type of organisation preparing an HMP (public, private, for profit, not-for-profit, partnership between different types of organisations);
3. The governance structure of the heritage place or artefact that will determine in large part the implementation mechanisms of the HMP;
4. The goals concerned stakeholders seek to attain by means of an HMP;
5. Local and national contexts, particularly as regards the ownership status of the heritage place or artefact, the legal environment for heritage conservation, the current and future use of the heritage place or artefact (for ex. Tourism), the existence of established fora that can form the basis for community participation;
6. And the availability of human and financial resources for the preparation and implementation of the HPM.



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STEP 1 - WHAT ARE THE NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HERITAGE PLACE OR ARTEFACT?

Different types of sites/artefacts require different management approaches and strategies to address heritage conservation needs. A **survey** is most often the best place to begin. Gathering this baseline will help heritage professionals better understand what types of heritage resources they are dealing with, what location and context they are in, and what the scope of a HMP should be. A survey will also be useful to advocate for conservation, set goals and priorities for management, and will be included as an annexe in the HMP. Under the supervision of heritage professionals, a survey provides an excellent opportunity to start engaging with local stakeholders, for example by involving community volunteers in the surveying process.

A survey conducted with a view to preparing a HMP should collect a larger range of information than a classical heritage survey. At least, it should cover the following aspects of the site/artefact:

- Scale and spatial extend of the place (stand alone site; a neighbourhood in an urban centre; heritage places scattered in rural areas or along a trail; a whole region with sites/artefacts of variegated nature -buildings, landscape, handicraft-, etc.);
- Type of place/site: buildings, structures, landscapes etc. but also archaeological site or living heritage places;
- Intangible components: values attached to the place/artefact; traditional knowledge and cultural practices/expressions, etc;
- Ownership status (public, private, single or multiple owners, mixed);
- Governance structure (legislation and jurisdiction of public bodies, existing management structure of the heritage place);
- Current conservation status and potential threats.

Ideally, the best second step towards the formulation of a HMP for larger sites should be the creation of a heritage **inventory** in which the significance and integrity of surveyed places are evaluated more thoroughly. Inventories enhance the understanding of heritage sites, and preparedness to legally protect them. However, an inventory can also be included as one of the objectives of the HMP, a step that might be more realistic in view of the human and financial needs required.

STEP 2 - SET PRELIMINARY WORKING GOALS

Although participatory by nature, the process of heritage management planning is generally initiated by an organisation that takes the lead and needs to formulate preliminary working goals. These goals include an identification of the site/artefact to be managed, and basic objectives in terms of protection and conservation. Such goals will form the basis for engagement with stakeholders and should be broad enough to be redefined collectively.



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STEP 3 - WHAT TYPE OF ORGANISATION IS TAKING THE LEAD AND WHAT CAN IT ACHIEVE? WHO ELSE NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED AND HOW?

Ideally, a HMP should be prepared as a partnership between public and non governmental organisations under the guidance of a steering group comprising of members of local and national organisations and representatives from local communities. An organisation, or group of organisations, taking the lead in formulating a HMP needs to assess its own capacities and limitations.

A public body will have more access to other decision-making bodies but may lack experience in engaging in consultations with the non governmental sector, private businesses and local residents. Appropriate mechanisms should be developed at this early stage to ensure that the initial goals of the public body will not dominate throughout the process, making participation a purely formal exercise. Community participation is one of the most challenging aspects to achieve. Yet without an plan inclusive of all stakeholders, including those traditionally marginalised, there will be no appropriation of the plan, and little grass-support for conservation.

Conversely, a non-governmental organisation taking the lead needs to be objective about its capacity to engage with public decision-making bodies at various levels since HMP should interact with and relate to other local or regional level plans and policies. Furthermore, it is likely that several aspects of an HMP entail changes or improvements in legislation beyond the capacities of organisations that manage projects. Approaching local, regional and national administrations, convincing decision-makers of the benefits of developing a HMP and ensuring official support and participation can be a time-consuming process. Yet it is an absolute prerequisite if a HMP is to stand any chance of being operational.

Whichever the type of organisation taking the lead, a broad range of stakeholders have to be part of the planning process and the steering group:

- Heritage professionals at the regional and national level (including academic institutions);
- Concerned public institutions at the local, regional and national level;
- Local communities and their various sub-groups who live on or near the site, use it, and endow it with tangible and intangible values. Such communities may or may not have already existing fora, such as residents or other types of associations;
- Local and national non governmental organisations with an interest in conservation;
- The private sector who has a stake in deriving economic benefits from the site/artefact;
- International expertise may be sought from heritage professionals and the private sector, especially in cases where the site has an international tourism value.

STEP 4 – DEVELOPING A COLLECTIVE VISION AND GOALS

Overall vision and goals of HMP are the first outcomes of the participatory process in which the stakeholders are involved.



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A vision statement is a brief expression of where a the community of stakeholders would like the project to go within five to ten years and an idea of the types of outcomes they seek through a HMP.

It is a shared notion of a “preferred future” that ideally is consistent with the basic values of other community plans, such as those for economic development and environmental sustainability. The process of developing a vision statement builds consensus on the role of heritage and promotes a sense of shared responsibility and cooperation vital to implementing a HMP.

Goals of the HMP are also developed following a broad consultation process. They articulate what the organisation leading the process wants to achieve in the short-term and long-term. The goals of heritage management for archaeological sites might be different from those aiming at conserving or revitalizing living heritage sites (neighbourhoods, public baths) or cultural complexes that include tangible and intangible elements (artefacts, landscapes, traditional knowledge and know-how, etc). Goals will also vary between minimizing current use of heritage site for conservation aims, and increasing sustainable use by local residents and tourists.

Protection and conservation goals should form the core of the HMP and should be clearly distinguished:

- “Protection” refers to a variety of regulatory or legal methods that are intended to prevent actions that could damage or destroy the character-defining elements and heritage value of significant places or artefacts.
- “Conservation” refers to a range of strategies or interventions meant to extend the physical life of heritage places, artefacts and related intangible elements. The long-term physical survival of heritage places and artefacts gives purpose and meaning to interpretation, public education and many other aspects of a HMP.

Goals are not intended to be fully attainable but instead provide important guiding principles that are directly related to strengths and opportunities.

STEP 5 – IDENTIFYING RESOURCES FOR CONSERVATION

Before moving to defining precise objectives derived from general goals, the organisation leading the process should undertake a realistic assessment of the human and financial resources available for heritage conservation.

Public funding for conservation is more limited in certain national contexts than in others. Which other bodies or sectors (international organisations, the private sector) might support the organisation leading the process? Is the lead organisation able to receive and manage these funds? If not, organisational arrangement will have to be revised.

Human resources might be available in the community (local heritage experts, volunteers, academic institutions etc.). However a HMP typically comprises of a broad set of activities: technical conservation aspects, awareness-raising activities, site development, presentation and



management, etc. Which of these tasks fall within the competencies of the organisation and the local community? If the organisation envisions the need for expertise not available locally, it might be useful to engage early on in the consultation process relevant professionals or organisations that will play a role in defining objectives and means to achieve them and that may become partners in implementation.

STEP 6 – WHAT ARE THE ISSUES? THE USE OF SWOT ANALYSIS

An analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) that might affect a heritage programme is undertaken based on survey material, an assessment of available resources, consultations and a range of other sources (statistics, reports, etc.).

The SWOT analysis is applied to the main goals set during step 4 (for ex.: preserve the site against natural and human threats; research, record, document and present the archaeological wealth present on the site; enhance visitor experience; balance the use and protection of the site etc.).

Derived from this analysis, a number of management issues are identified (for ex. the need for protection work; improvement of the legal environment; effective consultation with stakeholders; capacity building and training etc.).

STEP 7 – DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES AND A PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Following the SWOT analysis, realistic **objectives** responding to the main identified issues can now be worked out in consultation with stakeholders. Objectives are detailed tasks or activities that can be accomplished in a certain period of time within the limits of available resources. They relate to goals but are defined by clearly specified targets and time frames. Even when starting with different conservation goals (for ex. limiting or increasing the number of visitors), objectives may converge: raising awareness of the heritage value of the place/artefact among local populations and visitors; promoting appropriation by local communities; ensuring conservation or improvement of the physical status of the site/artefact; creating or enhancing heritage legislations etc.

Typically, a programme of actions includes:

- Awareness-raising and educational activities for local residents, public authorities, sectoral groups like the youth, for visitors (through interpretation)
- Community/stakeholder participation mechanisms
- Documentation (including inventory) and research
- Technical and engineering aspects of conservation and rehabilitation
- Improvement of the legal/regulatory environment
- Economic aspects of heritage management (for ex. tourism, handicraft development, etc.)
- Capacity building activities (rehabilitation, conservation, economic development, handicraft, tourism management, general management) for local artisans and builders,



- owners of properties, government employees etc.
- Monitoring mechanisms
 - Resource plan

A HMP is more likely to succeed if it focuses on a few initial priorities and then develop in phases. The notion is to plan as comprehensively as possible, but to implement plans incrementally while adapting to changing needs and circumstances. With this in mind, objectives and related actions should be given a **timescale** as a guideline for when they should be carried out between short and long-term. It is however important to look beyond the time frame of a project to consider the longevity/sustainability of a heritage place or artefact.

STEP 8 – DOES YOUR PLAN MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA?

Responsiveness: HMP are most effective and strongly supported when they respond to broad community issues and to other related planning processes.

Accountability: Does the content of the plan reflect community consensus? Was it developed through public participation?

Usability: Are the heritage plans available to the community through municipal offices and websites? Are the plans succinct, clearly written and free of jargon so that they are accessible to a diverse audience?

Flexibility: Heritage planning is an open-ended, cyclical process. The results of monitoring and evaluation activities may indicate a need for resource managers to change the plans to respond to new circumstances and changing priorities.

STEP 9 – SHARING EXPERIENCE

The networks of exchange developed through the Euromed Heritage 4 programme can be used by organisations and individuals planning for or involved in formulating and implementing a HMP to share their experiences, discuss the challenges they are facing and ways to overcome them. Through these networks, templates or guidelines for HMPs relevant to specific types of heritage places and artefacts in various Mediterranean contexts could also be developed.