

# MODULE TWO:

## MANAGEMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND GOVERNANCE IN MIXED CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE



Module 2 lasted for four days, where the participants visited four of the twenty-four components<sup>1</sup> composing the serial World Heritage property “Fujisan, sacred place and source of artistic inspiration,” located in the prefectures of Yamanashi and Shizuoka. During the four-days field visit, participants could learn about the different systems of protection of the property and the values considered at the national and international levels. The diverse components of the World Heritage property are protected under different categories and legal frameworks at a national level: Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, Places of Scenic Beauty, Historic sites containing National Treasures, Natural Monuments, and Important Cultural Properties. Participants also could then understand the complexity of the property and the challenges of the nomination process to the World Heritage List.

It was clarified that Mount Fuji is located within two very distinctive prefectures. Yamanashi prefecture to the north is a mountainous area with a landscape of lakes, which has maintained the rice culture and traditions of pilgrims climbing the mountain. Shizuoka prefecture, in the southern part of Mount Fuji slopes, connects the mountain to the sea and shows highly developed urban centers. In this area, it is possible to observe the influence of the ecosystem services provided by Mount Fuji, especially water provision, which supported the development of industries and economic development. The visits included research institutes, museums, temples, pilgrimage routes, and the Two World Heritage visitors’ centres. The visits illustrated how an area can have cultural and natural values, recognized at local and national levels, but that these do not necessarily meet the World Heritage criteria. Nevertheless, it was understood that all values need to be considered to manage and maintain the OUV of a World Heritage property. Themes that were discussed during the visits were the biodiversity and geological values, the beauty and aesthetic dimensions of nature, the historical significance, and the sacred values of the mountain, as well as its significance as artistic inspiration. Moreover, issues regarding tourism and visitors management, as well as interpretation, were debated. During the visits, participants were able to discuss with local managers, researchers, and tourist guides in the different places visited.

The first place visited was the Mount Fuji Research Institute in the prefecture of Yamanashi. Participants listened to a lecture from **Dr. Takashi Nakano**, Head of the Division of Ecological Education and Communication at the Mount Fuji Research Institute. Dr. Nakano explained the history of the formation of Mount Fuji volcanoes. He said that these are aligned from northwest to southeast due to the configuration of the tectonic plates. He also talked about the characteristics of Mount Fuji, starting with the distribution of plants and vegetation according to factors such as altitude, temperature, and humidity. He mentioned that since Mount Fuji is a young volcano (around 10,000 years), there are no endemic species registered in its ecosystems. The soil has few nutrients, and the alpine vegetation mostly migrated from other mountains. Moreover, he introduced the conservation challenges of Mount Fuji, which mainly refer to tourism, development pressures, the introduction of alien species, and climate change. He commented that tourism, which brings around 3 million visitors per year, is of particular concern due to the limits of carrying capacity and the need for intensive waste management.

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<sup>1</sup> The State Party of Japan nominated 25 components, however the World Heritage Committee, inscribed only 24 of the 25 components proposed.



*Dr. Takashi Nakano, Head of the Division of Ecological Education and Communication, Mount Fuji Research Institute, explaining the natural history of Mount Fuji.*

During the afternoon, the group visited the Biodiversity Center of the Ministry of the Environment, where Mr. Kazuo Somiya, Director of the Center, gave a lecture on the biodiversity of National Parks in Japan.



*Mr. Kazuo Somiya, Director of the Biodiversity Center, Ministry of the Environment of Japan, giving a lecture on the biodiversity of National Parks in Japan.*

Then, the group moved to the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre of Yamanashi Prefecture, where they

were guided by Mr. Naoki Takayama, Assistant Director, Fujisan World Heritage Division, Resident Affairs Department, Yamanashi prefecture.



*Mr. Naoki Takayama giving an introductory talk in the World Heritage Centre of Yamanashi Prefecture.*



*Group photo at the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre of Yamanashi Prefecture with Mount Fuji in the background.*

On the second day of the field trip, the group visited Umagaeshi, known as the place where pilgrims left their horses, located in Yoshidaguchi in the northeastern slope of Mount Fuji. They were received and guided by Mr. Makoto Horiuchi, researcher of the Prefectural Government of Yamanashi. Mr. Horiuchi explained about the history of the pilgrimage routes ascending to the summit of Mount Fuji and mentioned the different stages. He also commented on the reconstruction works conducted after archaeological excavations with the use of historical records. Participants were able to experience the ascent through the route surrounded by forests until the 1<sup>st</sup> station of 10.



*Mr. Makoto Horiuchi, a researcher of the Prefectural Government of Yamanashi, commenting on the buildings and routes identified in historical records.*

Then, the group traveled to Kitaguchi Hongu Fuji Sengen-jinja Shrine, the first place where pilgrims used to stop before starting the ascent. Mr. Horiuchi commented that pilgrims used to purify themselves in the Shrine waters, as well as pray, before their ascent to Mount Fuji.



*Mr. Makoto Horiuchi commenting on the purification rituals conducted by pilgrims in the Shrine.*



*Group photo at Kitaguchi Hongu Fuji Sengen-jinja Shrine.*

After this experience, the group visited one of the Oshi Houses, which were the places where pilgrims arrived from all over Japan and rested the night before starting the ascent.



*Mr. Makoto Horiuchi explains about the reception of pilgrims in an Oshi House.*

The last visit of the afternoon was to the Fujisan Museum, a local museum of Fujiyoshida city, where participants could learn through multimedia and interactive tools about the cultural and natural values associated with Mount Fuji. In the entrance area, participants could explore through touch screens the history of Mount Fuji from the ancient pilgrimage practices to the first climbing by foreign visitors since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The participants also could appreciate exhibitions of artifacts related to the spirituality of Mount Fuji's pilgrimage practices and some audiovisual resources of contemporary traditions

and celebrations. In the last section of the museum, there was a projection mapping on a 1/2000 scale model of Mount Fuji, where its geological history and ecological features were introduced.



*Participants experiencing the interpretation tools of Mount Fuji Museum.*

After returning to the accommodation, participants received a lecture by Mr. Kouichi Warashina, Assistant Director General, Resident Affairs Department Yamanashi Prefecture, and representative at the Mount Fuji World Heritage Management Board. Mr. Warashina explained the management of the World Heritage property. He talked about four stages of worship of Mount Fuji: first, the worship from far away, related to the continuous eruptions through time. Later, the second stage was when Mount Fuji was assigned historical importance for Japanese people becoming a symbol of unification and national worship, and it also inspired arts and poetry. After this, he mentioned a third stage related to the pilgrimage development by the ascetic followers of Shugendo. Finally, the fourth stage related to ordinary people starting to climb the mountain for recreation. He explained the 25 components of the serial nomination. He mentioned that three components are the most important: the main body of the mountain, the pilgrimage path, the shrines and temples, and the unique natural elements surrounding the site, such as the lava caves and lava trees. He described two views as the source of artistic inspiration: one from the Lake Motosu and the second from the seashore. He stressed that appropriate management is the most important and that all of the components are protected by the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties of 1950. Besides, the mountain is protected as a National Park by the National Park Law. He highlighted that one of the issues is the establishment of the buffer zones because these are not protected by the Agency for Cultural Affairs or by the Ministry of the Environment and that local governments are in charge through prefectural ordinances and land control plans. He added that the governors of the prefectures are the heads of the coordination. He mentioned the recommendations from the World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription, among them, the development of an appropriate tourism management strategy, to strengthen the monitoring system, to control development, and to establish risk preparedness plans. He said that one of the most challenging aspects of this site is to interpret the mountain connection with sacredness so visitors can grasp the significance of Mount Fuji. Another challenge he mentioned is to conserve the beauty of the landscape. Following the recommendations, he explained that they are doing studies on carrying capacity and evaluating how to reduce the impacts of visitors. Some of the strategies are to persuade visitors to ascend until the 8<sup>th</sup> station only and to request visitors to take a longer time for the ascent, and not do it in one go. Currently, he explained that specific processes are being undertaken, such as a Landscape Control and a Heritage Impact Assessment.



*Mr. Kouichi Warashina, Yamanashi Prefecture, giving a lecture about the management of Mount Fuji as World Heritage property at FujiCalm.*

On the third day, participants visited the 5<sup>th</sup> station of Mount Fuji, which is the usual starting point for climbing by tourists. They visited the Komitake area, which represents the summit of the old Fuji volcano. Participants received an introductory talk by Mr. Warashina on the history of the design of the area of the 5<sup>th</sup> station, where the prefecture divided the facilities for tourism and appreciation of sacredness. After that, the group walked the Ochudo pilgrimage route led by local tourist guides. This route surrounds the mountain at the tree line level, and participants learned about the ecosystem services provided by Mount Fuji to the whole area. They understood the dynamics of the forests, the different species, and other characteristics of the ecosystems at this level of Mount Fuji, where the volcano becomes barren land. At the end of the visit, participants watch a video in the 5<sup>th</sup> station Visitors' Center, where they learned about the essential features of Mount Fuji World Heritage.



*Group photo at the Komitake summit with Mount Fuji in the background.*



*Participants walking the Ochudo pilgrimage route with local guides.*

Back at FujiCalm, participants received a lecture by **Mr. Tim Badman**, Director of the Nature-Culture Initiative of IUCN, about the tools being developed in the framework of the World Heritage Leadership Programme led by ICCROM and IUCN. He mentioned that they are working on the World Heritage resource manuals, looking for a common approach. He added that they are working on the Guidance on Impact Assessments for World Heritage Places and on the Knowledge Framework, which consists of a shared vocabulary for what it is thought to be essential to know about a World Heritage property. He explained that they are working on a holistic structure, which includes a landscape and a people-centered approach and resilience. He said that they are preparing a glossary of concepts and terms used and directing it to resources on a web platform. Another aspect Mr. Badman talked about was the testing of toolkits, such as the ‘Enhancing our Heritage,’ which was initially prepared for protected areas, but that is being adapted to be used for both natural and cultural heritage sites. He added that the work is also focusing on the revision of the Operational Guidelines on Management (paragraph 112), in order to work on more accessible translation to local languages, while also creating a set of tools to support the implementation.

The last stop of the field visit, on the fourth day, was the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre of Shizuoka prefecture. There, participants received an introductory lecture by **Mr. Toru Ochiai**, Vice Director, Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre, Shizuoka Prefectural Government. Mr. Ochiai talked about the design and construction of the centre, inaugurated in 2013, when Mount Fuji was inscribed on the World Heritage List. The mission of the centre is the protection and transmission of the values of Mount Fuji as a World Heritage site, but also to do research and generate interaction with visitors through educational activities and interactive exhibitions. After the presentation, participants could visit the exhibitions of the Visitors Centre, where they learned about the influence of the mountain in the development of the seashore area.





*Mr. Tim Badman giving a lecture on the World Heritage Leadership Programme.*



*Mr. Toru Ochiai, Vice Director, Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre, Shizuoka Prefecture, introduces their mission.*



*Group photo at the entrance of the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre of Shizuoka Prefecture.*

