



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fourth Capacity Building Workshop on Nature-Culture Linkages in Heritage Conservation in Asia and the Pacific (CBWNCL 2019) took place in Tsukuba, Japan, September 24 to October 4, 2019. The workshop was organized by the UNESCO Chair on Nature-Culture Linkages in Heritage Conservation at the University of Tsukuba, in collaboration with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

This Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage themed workshop was the fourth, and last, in a series programmed for 2016-2019. The series of workshops aimed to contribute to the World Heritage Capacity Building Programme through developing the skills of young and mid-career heritage practitioners in the Asia and the Pacific region to deal with the interlinkages between natural and cultural values in heritage sites. Ten participants from Asia and the Pacific, one from Africa and one from Europe, attended the fourth workshop with eight graduate students from the University of Tsukuba.

The workshop was divided into four modules:

- **Module 1:** Understanding Nature-Culture Linkages in the Context of Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage
- **Module 2:** Management, Implementation, and Governance – Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage
- **Module 3:** Reflection on Theory and Practice
- **Module 4:** International Symposium

Module 1 consisted of four days of intensive lectures, group discussions, and participant case studies' presentations. The first day was organized as a roundtable. The organizers presented the CBWNCL project and schedule for the CBNWCL 2019, followed by the resource people's interventions highlighting the main issues within the category of Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage in the context of the World Heritage Convention. Cases from Nordic countries (Norway and Sweden), Japan, Australia, the United States, and Sri Lanka were presented and discussed. After this first round, participants introduced the main issues being faced in the conservation and sustainability of their heritage places. Next, a lecture focused on the World Heritage Convention and its implementation processes was given. The second day started with a talk that discussed the evolution of the conservation practice, from a nature-culture divide, towards a more integrated perspective, which considers the nature-culture linkages and people-centered approaches to conservation and a landscape approach to heritage. This lecture continued with focusing on management systems, pointing at the role that traditional management systems play in heritage sites. The focus of the third day was on governance and management, especially presenting IUCN concepts and tools. There was a presentation of the emblematic case of Pimachiowin Aki's inscription on the World Heritage List. This process influenced the development of nature-culture approaches to heritage conservation in the context of World Heritage. On the fourth day, lectures focused on the Japanese experience of Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage, as well as an introduction to the field visit to Mount Fuji, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List as a cultural property in 2013.

During the four afternoon sessions, twelve case studies were presented. These case studies included five World Heritage sites, three on the Tentative List of their respective countries, and four landscapes protected at the national level. Case studies reflected a diversity of understandings of "mixed sites" and interlinkages between natural and cultural values. It was clarified that the concept of Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage, in the context of World Heritage, was reinforcing the divide; however, opportunities lie in this category for further inter-sectoral collaboration and exploration of the links between natural and cultural values in

heritage places. Case studies showed that overlapping legal systems and designations from both natural and cultural heritage protection laws could cooperate further for the integral conservation of landscapes. Some examples of best practices in involving local communities and cultural values in the protection of natural heritage were shared, and the importance of the conservation of ecosystems for communities' sustainability was highlighted. It was recognized that nature-culture linkages are present in all landscapes and need to be acknowledged for effective and holistic conservation.

Module 2 was a four-day event, where the participants visited components of "Fujisan, sacred place and source of artistic inspiration." This World Heritage serial property includes parts of the Mount Fuji volcano, protected as the Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park, and historical sites, places of scenic beauty, and natural monuments that are protected as cultural properties located on its slopes and surroundings. In Yamanashi prefecture, where the northern part of the property is located, participants learned about the natural and biodiversity values of Mount Fuji and its ecosystem at the Mount Fuji Research Institute and the Biodiversity Research Center. Moreover, at the Yamanashi prefecture World Heritage Visitors Center, participants learned about the spiritual values of Mount Fuji and the history of its pilgrimage routes. On the second day, participants had the opportunity to follow an ancient pilgrimage route from Umagaeshi – the point where climbers traditionally left their horses during a pilgrimage – to the first station. They also experienced the spiritual traditions and historical architecture in the shrine and temple complex of Kitaguchi-Hongu-Fuji-Sengen Taisha, the first stop for pilgrims before starting their ascent from Fujiyoshida town. In Fujiyoshida town, participants visited an Oshi House, where pilgrims from all over Japan used to rest before beginning their ascent of Mount Fuji.

Participants visited the fifth station on the third day, where the majority of tourists start their ascent to Mount Fuji. There, they learned about the tourism management strategies in place, which look at protecting the natural values of Mount Fuji by controlling the periods of ascent (usually recommended during two summer months) and installing a strict waste management system. However, how to safeguard Mount Fuji's spiritual values remains an open question. Participants then had the chance to walk one section of another pilgrimage route at 2,500 m.a.s.l., where they learned about the fauna and flora in the area where the Mount Fuji tree line is located, as well as the ecosystem services it provides to the region. Later, participants visited the Mount Fuji Museum, where they learned about the Fire Festival related to the closure of the pilgrimage season and about the traditional way of life of the surrounding agricultural communities. This knowledge was further clarified at the Shizuoka Prefecture World Heritage Visitors Centre (located in the southern part of the volcano), where participants came to understand how the water and soils of Mount Fuji allowed the development of a productive region, connected as well to the sea. By looking at the different sides of Mount Fuji, it was possible to understand the complexity of its ecosystem and its considerable influence on the economic, social, environmental, and cultural development of the surrounding communities and beyond. Through this field trip experience, participants could also discuss with researchers, managers, tourist guides, and locals about the values of Mount Fuji and the challenges for their protection and conservation.

Module 3 was comprised of one and a half days of reflection on the theory and practice gained during the workshop. Participants started working in groups during the field visit, which continued back in Tsukuba. They were tasked with mapping the values and interrelations between nature and culture in the sites visited, and to assess the management of the sites, by identifying the lessons learned and elaborating recommendations. Moreover, participants were asked to reflect on their case studies and present one lesson learned that they could take and apply in their home country. Participants prepared group presentations, and exciting discussions arose regarding their different understandings over the same heritage place. Participants were impressed by the coordinated efforts for the conservation of both the natural and cultural significance of Mount Fuji. They highlighted the importance of the diversity of interpretation centers in the different prefectures and localities that would present different perspectives towards World Heritage and the conservation of both natural and cultural values. They agreed that the Japanese case, especially in the symbolic Mount Fuji, brought about clearly the nature-culture linkages expressed in the pilgrimage, the art, and the way of life of surrounding communities. Participants also valued the experience of working in interdisciplinary groups and learning from the diverse backgrounds and case studies of their colleagues, students, and resource persons.

Module 4 marked the closure of the workshop and the four-year CBNCL programme with the 4th

International Symposium on Nature-Culture Linkages in Heritage Conservation. The symposium was held on October 4th at the Tsukuba International Congress Center within the framework of the 2019 Tsukuba Conference. The University of Tsukuba organized it under the theme 'How do science, technology, and innovation contribute to achieving Society 5.0 and SDGs?' In this thematic context, the symposium contributed with presentations and discussions focused on the importance of collaborating between different sectors of the conservation practice to preserve the world's natural and cultural heritage, which is Target 4 of the SDG 11.

The symposium gathered international experts and representatives of partner organizations: Dr. Mechtild Rössler (Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre), Dr. Webber Nodoro (Director General of ICCROM), Mr. Tim Badman (Director of the IUCN Nature-Culture Initiative), Ms. Kristal Buckley (ICOMOS World Heritage Advisor), and Mr. Gamini Wijesuriya (Special Advisor to the Director-General of ICCROM and WHITRAP). Representatives of the Japanese Government, Mr. Takahiro Okano (Ministry of the Environment) and Ms. Kumiko Shimotsuma (Agency for Cultural Affairs), talked about the situation in Japan in both nature and culture sectors, respectively. The twelve participants of the CBWNCL 2019, heritage practitioners from the culture and nature sectors coming from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Albania, and Tanzania, attended the meeting and took part in the discussion. Eight graduate students from the University of Tsukuba, from five different countries (Brazil, China, Ghana, Japan, and Thailand), took part in the whole process as observers.

After the opening speeches from Professor Kyosuke Nagata, the President of the University of Tsukuba, and the UNESCO Chairholder, Professor Masahito Yoshida, Dr. Mechtild Rössler gave a keynote speech on the challenges of inscribing Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage properties on the World Heritage List and pointed out the existing divide between the management of natural and cultural values. She asserted that continuous intersectional collaboration at all levels of management is further needed, as well as strengthening the nature-culture linkages through community involvement. Dr. Webber Nodoro explained cases of World Heritage in Africa and how the nature-culture ties are embedded in local views but have been divided at the institutional and management levels, to the detriment of the holistic conservation of heritage. He stated that more work on connecting nature and culture sectors is needed, and especially, capacity building needs to be further implemented. Mr. Takahiro Okano, from the Ministry of the Environment, then explained the work being done in the natural and national parks of Japan to integrate culture. Next, Ms. Kumiko Shimotsuma, from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, talked about cultural landscapes and the strategies to incorporate local communities into the management of Japanese heritage sites. Closing the morning session, Professor Yoshida, the UNESCO Chairholder, pointed out how the divide between nature and culture is less significant at the national level, where for example, Mount Fuji is recognized both as cultural and natural heritage. However, the divide increases at the international level, where it could not be inscribed as a Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage property.

In the afternoon session, Dr. Maya Ishizawa, coordinator of the CBWNCL programme, presented the work done during the 4-year capacity building programme pointing at the achievements, the lessons learned, and the potential future steps. She explained that after four workshops with four distinctive themes - Agricultural Landscapes, Sacred Landscapes, Disasters and Resilience, and Mixed Cultural and Natural Heritage - the network of the Nature/Culture community of practice has expanded beyond the region. The Nature/Culture approach to conservation needs to respect Indigenous and local knowledge, be founded on a landscape approach, foster people-centered approaches, and intersectoral collaboration. Moreover, after four years, it was clarified that heritage practitioners need to further foster facilitation and interdisciplinary skills to promote nature-culture linkages in heritage conservation. Hence, the next step identified by the UNESCO Chair is to produce an instrument that collects lessons learned on facilitating nature-culture linkages. Dr. Gamini Wijesuriya, Ms. Kristal Buckley, and Mr. Tim Badman, who were collaborators throughout the 4-years project, represented the UNESCO Chair partner organizations and provided comments on the outcomes of the capacity building exercises as well as presented their organization's future goals. ICCROM will further develop a capacity building with an emphasis on the African region. ICOMOS will be continuing their collaboration with IUCN in the Connecting Practice project. The IUCN and ICCROM will continue their joint development of the World Heritage Leadership Programme, expanding cooperation with other Conventions, especially the Convention on Biological Diversity.

During the roundtable discussion, it was further asserted that more efforts on capacity building need to be undertaken in connecting nature and culture sectors and examining heritage more holistically. The CBWNCL project and its achievements were commended, and further work along the same line was encouraged. It was highlighted that there is a need for educating future trainers, which would allow the continuity of programs like the CBWNCL. It was pointed out the need to develop capacity building at multiple levels, and to emphasize the local capacity building, both of heritage professionals, site managers, and local communities.

