Buffer zone management as a tool for enhancing the protection and integrity of World Heritage properties
–In the living heritage sites–

Rieko Kubota
Ritsumeikan University,
For ITP report session on 11th of February, 2012
Today’s presentation

• Internship Overview
• What is a “buffer zone” to Cultural Heritage?
  • What is lost if the buffer zone is violated?
    • Issues with Buffer zone
• How can buffer zone system be improved?
  • Possible approach of buffer zone management
• Challenge to preserve the integrity of living heritage
  • Conclusion
ITP training overview

• Internship period: February – June 2011
  (4 months internship)
• Place: UNESCO World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS
• Objectives:
  1) To research on the buffer zone management practices for World Cultural Heritage sites
  2) To research the current discussion of “Integrity” of cultural landscape from recent literature

Especially focusing on the “living heritage”
What is a “buffer zone” to Cultural Heritage?

104. For the purposes of effective protection of the nominated property, a buffer zone is an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. The area constituting the buffer zone should be determined in each case through appropriate mechanisms. Details on the size, characteristics and authorized uses of a buffer zone, as well as a map indicating the precise boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, should be provided in the nomination.
What is lost if the buffer zone is violated?

Outstanding Universal Value

Authenticity

Integrity
Issues with Buffer zone
(from State of Conservation at the time of 31COM)

- Increase of urban development (40/73)
- Unclear zoning of buffer zone (25/73)
- Legal issues to the buffer zone (16/73)
- No buffer zone (12/73)
Other issues with Buffer zone

• Justify urban development outside the boundary of buffer zone and allow the construction that distract the landscape

• Strict regulation inside the buffer zone can isolate the heritage as “frozen heritage”
How can buffer zone system be improved?

- Recommended by expert group in 2008-

  • Clearer definition of buffer zone is necessary e.q.
  • Recognition as a “tool” to protect the “Outstanding Universal Value” of properties
  • Buffer zone is not mandatory, buffer zone itself does not have to have a “universal value”
  • Should be established based on the scale of influence to properties
Possible approach of buffer zone management

The risk map of Cultural Heritage (Italy)

- During the 1990s, the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities, or more specifically the *Instituto Centrale per il Restauro (ICR)* developed a risk-based approach for the identification and management of cultural heritage using a GIS-based tool.

- Seismic activity
- Landslides
- Flooding
- Coastal dynamics
- Avalanches
- Volcanic activity
- Human impact danger (population density, tourist flows, number of thefts)
- Environmental danger (erosion, blackening, physical stress)

With survey-based vulnerability index overlaid the GIS map:

- Generic damage
- Material decay
- Moisture
- Biological deterioration
- Surface deterioration
- Lacunae, missing fragments/pieces.
Challenge to preserve the integrity of living heritage (presented at ICOMOS expert meeting)

Balance in concern is changing
Challenge to preserve the integrity of living heritage (presented at ICOMOS expert meeting)

- Tensions exist between demands for preservation at a high degree of integrity and the needs of the people who inhabit these sites.
- Larger area like the buffer zone involves several stakeholders with their own goals and may not be compatible with preservation efforts.
Conclusion

• Importance reaffirmed as a “tool” to protect the Outstanding Universal Value of cultural heritage sites especially integrity of Cultural heritage

• Integral approach is necessary to protect the OUV not only visual aspect but also socio-economic aspect including the risk mitigation