

STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT ON WORLD HERITAGE SITES

14th seminar

UNESCO CHAIR “CULTURE, TOURISME DEVELOPPEMENT”,

Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University

Monday, December 18th 2023

UNESCO, Room VI



PRESENTATION

Strategic Visitor Management can help site and destination management authorities proactively manage visitation and tourism, for protection of heritage values while enhancing community sustainability and resilience ¹

The 14th UNESCO Chair seminar will be organized on the above two points:

- 1) How can strategic visitor management contribute to the protection of the WH property and its values?
- 2) How can strategic visitor management contribute to the enhancement of community's resilience, [defined as the capacity to adapt successfully and continue to function, in response to adversity (Southwick et al, 2014) face to climate change and other disruptions (pandemics, natural disasters, etc.).

The seminar will focus on the ways, approaches and tools used by World Heritage sites to respond to situations that can sometimes be problematic: visitor numbers estimated to be too high by managers or local communities; problematic visitor behaviour, visitor dissatisfaction due to poor knowledge of their expectations, lack of adequate interpretation and infrastructure, unsustainable practices on the site, overcrowding and provenance. It will also look at how strategic tourism management can help to strengthen local communities and give them the tools they need to cope with the various adversities, both man-made and natural, that can affect their lives in and around World Heritage sites.

¹ <https://www.vmast.net/>

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

9:30: OPENING REMARKS

Lazare ELOUNDOU, Director, UNESCO World Heritage Center

Michèle PRATS, ICOMOS France & ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC)

Chloé CAMPO, Association des Biens Français Patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO

10:00: WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Maria GRAVARI-BARBAS, Professor at IREST, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University & holder of the UNESCO Chair "Culture, Tourism, Development"

10h:30 - 12:30

PANEL 1:

STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT AS A MEANS FOR THE PROTECTION OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Moderator: Michele Prats, ICOMOS France & International Committee for Cultural Tourism, ICOMOS

Presenters:

Cecilie SMITH-CHRISTENSEN,

World Heritage Catalysis & Bureau Member ICOMOS ICTC: *World Heritage Tourism Futures - the UNESCO VMAST as a framework for strategic & transformative visitor management (online)*

The presentation will focus on how the VMAST can be useful, beyond an assessment and strategy development tool, as a framework for connecting practice, people, and knowledge in collaborative and adaptive management. It will also be discussed about progressive work combining VMAST and foresight as a futures literacy capacity to strategise and innovate in times of great uncertainty and upon calls for transformative change.

Karl ALBAIS,

World Heritage Sites Coordinator, National Commission for Culture and the Arts (Philippines): *Heritage-Based Tourism Industry and the Ifugao Rice Terraces (online)*

Having been introduced to the UNESCO Visitor Management, Assessment & Strategy Tool (VMAST) back in 2022, Karl Albais will share his insights and perspectives on the value of collaboration and convergence between distinct disciplines of cultural heritage and tourism in the utilization, conservation, and management of the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, a World Heritage site rich in natural and cultural resources that is found in the province of Ifugao. He will also share the challenges and opportunities in implementing strategic visitor management in the face of climate change as well as the impacts of tourism to the conservation of the property.

Louise HOFFMAN BORGÖ,

Hanseatic Town of Visby (Sweden): *Towards a Nordic model region for World Heritage and sustainable development through Visitor Management - the Visby journey*

The presentation focuses on experiences made during 2022-2023 when the Hanseatic Town of Visby participated in a National effort to rethink the traditional tourism centred approach to local sustainability and resilience. In the project "Resan mot hållbar Hansestad" financed by The National Agency for Economic Growth, Visby alongside other Swedish World Heritage sites collaborated in making use of UNESCO's resources (How To guides and VMAST) resulting in a methodology set out through "The Handbook for sustainable tourism development in World Heritage sites and other Cultural environments". By sharing our recent experience applying this method we hope to encourage broader collaboration around new challenges and opportunities related to travel and tourism in a changing climate and increasingly unpredictable world

Juliana STROGAN,

Rjukan-Notodden Industrial Heritage Site (Norway): A journey towards integrated sustainable tourism in the 10 first years of a newly inscribed WH site

Long before a formal recognition by UNESCO, the OUV of a site can serve already as a magnet for visitors. Patterns of visitation emerge organically through a site's life, more or less managed, depending on the influence visitors' flows have over one concrete geographical area and its communities. Positive, negative or desirable consequences can co-exist in a site, or even in parts of a site. Expectations of the political bodies and local communities in newly inscribed sites often go on the direction of tourism-based development and increase in revenue. These expectations also need to be managed, almost as much as the visitors themselves. Using the case of Rjukan-Notodden Industrial Heritage Site, inscribed in the WH List in 2015, and its three different geographical areas, we will follow the journey of a WH site towards an integrated sustainable tourism approach to its visitor management strategy.

Soline ARCHAMBAULT,

Grands Sites de France : Comment gérer durablement la fréquentation dans les paysages patrimoniaux ? L'expérience des Grands Sites de France

Paysages emblématiques connaissant une forte fréquentation touristique et protégés par la loi, les Grands Sites de France ont pour objectif de trouver un équilibre entre préservation de la valeur patrimoniale, vie locale et accueil du public. Les Grands Sites de France ont toujours été extrêmement attractifs, représentatifs de l'image de la France à l'international et faisant partie de l'imaginaire collectif pour les Français. Pour gérer cette fréquentation et protéger durablement les sites en préservant la qualité de vie des habitants, les Grands Sites de France portent des projets de territoire sur le long terme, en concertation avec les habitants et les acteurs socio-professionnels.

La gestion de la fréquentation intègre ainsi une stratégie globale comprenant les questions de gouvernance, de gestion d'usages et d'aménagements, de sensibilisation des professionnels, habitants et visiteurs, de communication en amont et sur site, d'offres de tourisme durable et de promotion de modes de découvertes alternatifs notamment en écomobilité. Il s'agit ainsi de minimiser voire faire disparaître l'impact négatif que peut avoir la fréquentation sur les sites (érosion due au piétinement, perte de biodiversité, stationnement anarchique, mono économie touristique...). Au cœur de cette stratégie également, la nécessité de favoriser l'acceptabilité sociale du tourisme et d'éviter l'éviction des habitants qui se sentent parfois dépossédés du site auquel ils sont attachés. Connaître la fréquentation pour mieux l'appréhender, étendre la fréquentation dans le temps et dans l'espace, diversifier l'offre, diminuer la pression des voitures... Les Grands Sites de France mettent en œuvre de nombreux outils pour fluidifier les flux touristiques et en limiter l'impact sur le site naturel, la qualité de visite et le cadre de vie des habitants.

12:00 – 12:30 : discussion

12:30 – 14:00 : Free Lunch

14:00 – 16:00

PANEL 2: STRATEGIC VISITOR MANAGEMENT AS A MEANS TO ENHANCE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Moderator: Fergus T. MACLAREN, President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (ICTC)

**Katarzyna PIOTROWSKA, deputy director of department of culture and national heritage in Kraków (Poland):
Kraków is where I want to live... (online)**

Krakow, Poland's second largest city, is one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations. In recent years, in view of the ever-growing tension between the protection of heritage and the pursuit of modernity, residents and visitors to the city, a number of measures have been taken to find a way of maintaining Krakow's attractiveness both as a place to live and as a place for cultural tourism. This problem is addressed by, among others, the "Kraków Development Strategy. This is where I want to live. Krakow 2030" and the "Sustainable Tourism Policy of Krakow for 2021-2028", as well as the directional document prepared this year entitled "Guidelines for the management of the Krakow historic centre World Heritage property". The last document, based on the assumption that knowledge is in the municipal system, binds the activities of all departments and municipal

organisational units in three strategic areas: tangible and intangible heritage, residents of Krakow and visitors to the city. The presentation brings a number of points and questions from the ongoing discussion accompanying the process of preparation and implementation of the document aimed at seeking solutions to build a friendly city that offers space to realise the inhabitants right to the city and the others right to the culture.

Emmanuel LANDAS,

Cultural project leader, Syndicat Mixte Espace de Restitution de la Grotte Chauvet (France): *De la Grotte Chauvet à la Grotte Chauvet 2*

La Grotte Chauvet Pont d'Arc, chef d'œuvre de l'art aurignacien, doit son exceptionnel état de conservation à l'effondrement de la falaise et l'obstruction de son entrée naturelle il y a près de 21 500 ans. Elle est restée scellée jusqu'à sa redécouverte le 18 décembre 1994 par les inventeurs, Jean Marie Chauvet, Eliette Brunel et Christian Hillaire.

Dès 1995, sur les recommandations de Jean Clottes notamment, il a été décidé que la grotte serait fermée au public pour éviter les déconvenues d'autres grotte ornées en Europe. L'Etat français est devenu propriétaire de la cavité et a réuni les moyens pour l'étudier et mettre en œuvre les mesures conservatoires appropriées.

Très vite, sous l'impulsion des collectivités territoriales, à commencer par le département de l'Ardèche, en relation étroite avec la région Rhône-Alpes et l'Etat, des réflexions et des études ont été menées pour permettre au plus grand nombre d'accéder à la connaissance de la grotte.

Au bout de 17 années de travail, la restitution de la grotte Chauvet, Grotte Chauvet 2 - Ardèche, a ouvert ses portes aux publics après avoir été inauguré par le président de la République, en avril 2015, peu après l'inscription de la grotte Chauvet au patrimoine mondial de l'humanité en 2014.

L'intervention portera essentiellement sur les réflexions qui ont mené à la création de Grotte Chauvet 2 tout en évoquant les actions de médiation qui ont permis et permettent plus largement de faire connaître la grotte Chauvet ainsi que les actions de préservation qui assurent la protection de la grotte Chauvet, mais également la préservation de son écrin, site classé faisant l'objet d'une Opération Grand Site, le Pont d'Arc et la Combe d'Arc.

Silvia AULET,

University of Girona (Spain): *Participatory governance of intangible heritage to develop sustainable rural tourism: the timber-raftsmen of La Pobla de Segur*

Rural areas face the challenge of managing intangible heritage in ways that avoid problems such as the loss of authenticity linked to over-tourism, or living heritage becoming disconnected from the local community due to overprotection. This study explores an innovative method for promoting a participatory governance process for intangible heritage currently managed on a non-participatory basis, in that the local community establishes a consensual model of sustainable tourism development that promotes both the rural renaissance of the area and the preservation of its Intangible Cultural Heritage. This research explores the case of the 'raiers' (timber-raftmen) of La Pobla de Segur, an ancient trade of transporting timber by river, recently awarded Intangible World Heritage status by UNESCO. Methods include participant observation, interviews, and discussion groups. The local community felt empowered to find a consensus on how to manage this Intangible Cultural Heritage by focusing on sustainable tourism development that preserves heritage while contributing to the rural renaissance of the area. The local community eagerly engaged by putting forward proposals, indicating the importance of agreements and new initiatives.

Lorenzo CANTONI,

Università della Svizzera Italiana (Switzerland): *Combining eLearning and ticketing, a strategy to promote sustainable and responsible tourism*

Covid19 has clearly shown that when people do not move, tourism destinations and their communities do not receive enough resources. However, it has also demonstrated that people can learn online in highly flexible and quite effective and efficient ways. Leveraging on those lessons learned might contribute to relaunch tourism in a more sustainable and responsible way. The presented concept entails launching simple self-learning courses aimed at people interested in visiting a (highly desired) WHS. Such courses require the payment of a fee and offer a simple test at the end of them. People passing the test earn at the same time the entrance ticket (economically covered by the course fee). The concept, its advantages and limits will be presented and discussed.

Pamela PALMI & Irene PRETE,

Department of Economics Sciences, University of Salento, Italy: *Cultural thematic routes and strategic visitor management. A case in Apulia Region (Italy).*

In order to reduce the negative externalities due to the mass tourism and its uneconomic concentration in some centers or in some periods of the year, it would be appropriate to diversify the heritage cultural offer. A decisive role can be assumed by the cultural thematic routes (CTR), which promote new itineraries through the rich cultural heritage of peripheral and landscape areas, supporting it with a system of information services aiming to communicate the value of these historical places. The presentation analyzes opportunities for the cultural and artistic sector from ICT approaches such as Business Process Management (BPM) and Product Lifecycle Management (PLM). These models, already existing in many industrial contexts, could be strategic extended to the tourism sectors. The aim is to extrapolate a meta-model capable of managing organizational variables and emerging critical issues in the evolution of cultural routes. The model will provide the guidelines to operators in the sector and to policy maker. This aspect is critical to the success of replicable events as it provides an information management system that supports future planning with historical data. The investigated management model was applied to a specific case study: The "Francigena route" in Apulia Region, Italy.

16 :00 – 16 :30 : Discussion

16 :30 –16 :45 : Conclusions, **Peter Debrine, WH center**

Participation is free, but registration is compulsory, on google forms:
<https://forms.gle/vPjvwuXAgkd8XY7RA>

The ZOOM link will be sent to registered participants by December 11th
For any additional information, please send a mail: **Chaire-UNESCO-TOURISME@univ-paris1.fr**

PRESENTERS

Lazare Eloundou Assomo is the Director of the World heritage. Originally from Cameroon, Mr Eloundou Assomo is a graduate in architecture (Grenoble School of Architecture, France) and in urban planning (DEA Grenoble 1). He began his career as an associate researcher at the Centre for Earthen Construction of the Grenoble School of Architecture in 1996. He was then in charge of implementing housing projects in Africa, and then of the pedagogical coordination of the Africa 2009 conservation programme set up by UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and ICCROM. In 2013, he joined the UNESCO office in Bamako and became UNESCO's head representative in Mali in 2014. While the country was hit by a violent armed conflict, he was in charge of the protection of Mali's cultural heritage. He successfully led the reconstruction of the Timbuktu mausoleums and the safeguarding of ancient manuscripts. He returned to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in 2016, initially as Deputy Director of the Heritage Division and of the World Heritage Centre. In 2018, he became Director of the Culture and Emergencies entity, coordinating emergency conservation responses to heritage affected by conflicts and disasters and the restitution of cultural property under the 1970 Convention. He was appointed Director of World Heritage in December 2021.

Chloé Campo - de Montauzon holds post-graduate degrees in politics and urban planning and a master's degree in business administration. Chloé's interest in World Heritage issues began when she joined the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's Asia-Pacific Region Unit in 1998, first as an intern and then as a temporary staff member. She then joined the town planning agency in Chinon, a small historic town in the Loire Valley, to work on the implementation of the management plan for Luang Prabang in Laos. She joined the Loire Valley management structure in 2002, when it was set up following the listing of this cultural landscape, initially as a technical advisor and then as General Secretary (2012-2016). Since 2010, she has been Director of the Association des biens français du patrimoine mondial (Association of French World Heritage Sites), a network which brings together the managers of the 52 French properties included on the World Heritage List, and which has been working since 2007 alongside the Ministries of Culture and Ecology to ensure that these sites achieve a fragile and delicate balance between preservation and development.

Maria Gravari-Barbas is professor at Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University. She has a degree in Architecture and Urban Design (University of Athens) and a PhD in Geography and Planning (Paris IV – Sorbonne). She is the Director of the EIREST, a multidisciplinary research team dedicated to tourism studies, with main focus on cultural heritage, development, and urban-tourism evolutions. Since 2009 she is the director of the UNESCO Chair of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University and the coordinator of the UNITWIN network 'Tourism, Culture, Development'. She is the Chair of the Self Steering Committee of Cultural Heritage of Una Europa and of the Joint Doctoral Committee of the PhD on Cultural Heritage of Una Europa.

Cecilie Smith-Christensen is the founder of World Heritage Catalysis and lead developer of the UNESCO Visitor Management Assessment & Strategy Tool (VMAST). Cecilie will share how the VMAST can be useful, beyond an assessment and strategy development tool, as a framework for connecting practice, people, and knowledge in collaborative and adaptive management. She will also share about progressive work combining VMAST and foresight as a futures literacy capacity to strategise and innovate in times of great uncertainty and upon calls for transformative change.

Louise Hoffman Borgö is a Cultural heritage expert with a 25 years experiences of World Heritage related issues. She has been the World Heritage Coordinator for World Heritage Hansesatic Town of Visby for two years, and previously worked at the Swedish Heritage Board as Focal Point for the World Heritage sites of Sweden. Before that she worked at the Gotland museum and Gotland Administrative Board with the medieval heritage of Gotland. Exploring tourism related to cultural environments has always been a particular interest.

Juliana Strogan, World Heritage Coordinator for Rjukan-Notodden Industrial Heritage Site in Norway, holds a Licentiate in Conservation and Restoration from the Polytechnic of Tomar and a master's in World Heritage and Cultural Projects for Development from the University of Torino. She brings over 10 years of experience as a conservator, having also worked in the fields of interpretation and tourism at reference sites like Venice, Barcelona and Geiranger before turning into management in full. She serves on the scientific council of ICOMOS Norway, leads its NC for Industrial Heritage, and collaborates with the NC for Cultural Tourism. As a member of the OWH Initiative, she played a pivotal role in organizing the 2021 UN High-Level Political Forum side-event on resilient recovery through culture, heritage, and art.

Katarzyna Piotrowska has a doctoral degree in architecture and urban planning in the field of landscape architecture. She started her professional career in 1999 at the Centre for the Protection of Historic Landscapes in Warsaw, which she continued at the National Institute of Cultural Heritage. She was responsible for the implementation of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, heading the national Centre for World Heritage in

the years 2015-2020 and representing Poland in the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee. As head of the Heritage Policy Department, she also supervised the implementation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Institute. Currently, at the Kraków Municipality, she holds the position of Culture and National Heritage Department's deputy director.

Lorenzo Cantoni graduated in Philosophy and holds a PhD in Education and Linguistics. He is full professor at USI – Università della Svizzera italiana (Lugano, Switzerland), Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society, where he is director of the Institute of Digital Technologies for Communication. He is chair-holder of the UNESCO chair in ICT to develop and promote sustainable tourism in World Heritage Sites, established at USI in 2013, and board member of WHES – World Heritage Experience Switzerland. He is director of the [Master in International Tourism](#) and director of the [Master in Digital Fashion Communication](#), done in collaboration with the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. L. Cantoni is USI's Pro-rector for Education and Students' experience, he has also been Dean of the Faculty (2010-2014), Deputy Rector (May 2022-June 2023) and President of IFITT – International Federation for IT in Travel and Tourism (2014-January 2018).

DeBrine is a Programme Specialist at UNESCO. DeBrine, who leads the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Programme has extensive experience of working through the structures of UNESCO, with working with ODA WH communities in capacity building and, of building cross-sectoral private-public partnerships. Mr. DeBrine joined the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in 2011 as a Programme Specialist where he is spearheading the development of a new World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme. Previously he was the Director of the World Heritage Alliance at the United Nations Foundation-a global community of travelers, members of the travel industry, government groups, non-governmental organizations, and the United Nations working together to preserve and protect World Heritage sites while supporting local communities.