



## GET THE FACTS - HERITAGE INFORMATION SERIES

### 19. CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Cultural landscapes represent the combined works of nature and man. They are illustrative of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.

They are selected on the basis of their outstanding universal value and of their representativeness in terms of a clearly defined geo-cultural region and also for

their capacity to illustrate the essential and distinct cultural elements of such regions. Uluru and Kakadu, both already World Heritage Sites, are inscribed as cultural landscapes. However, there is a danger that these landscapes have become a form of badge of identity as well as a shop-window or postcard addressed to the international market.

If until a short time ago, these places were perceived as areas abandoned to their fate, run down and dangerous, today they

are presented as controlled, clean and ordered spaces. In an effort to return to the public, the places which have been either privatized by informal commerce or have gone unrecognized, they have today become victim to the onslaught of urban speculation or tourism.