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42. WHAT ARE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES?

Cultural landscape and World Heritage are concepts and phrases which have become familiar over the last two decades. Each has given the other status and definition in an interestingly and perhaps increasingly symbiotic relationship.

The World Heritage Convention defines cultural landscapes as the 'combined works of nature and of man', demonstrating the evolution of human society in conjunction with environmental constraints and opportunities, and illustrating successive

social, economic, and cultural forces.

Three main categories of cultural landscapes are identified; landscapes designed and created intentionally by man; organically evolved landscapes; associative cultural landscapes. Cultural landscapes are illustrative of human society and settlement over time. Under the influence of physical constraints and/or opportunities, they are presented in their natural environments which include 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.

Ref: WHC Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO, World Heritage Centre, Paris, 1999 (WHC± 99/2, revised March 1999)