

WORLD HERITAGE

2023-2024



Over the centuries, humans have had to devise ways to collect and use one of the planet's most precious resources: water. Fascinating examples of how functionality can be combined with breathtaking aesthetics are the underground stepwells built in the Indian subcontinent since the third millennium B.C. Rani ki Vav (the Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat, dates back to the 11th century and is an architectural masterpiece with extraordinary geometries and enchanting decorations. Decorated with various sculptures as in a temple to emphasize the sanctity of water, this stepwell is divided into seven levels of stairs leading down, adorned with sculptural panels of high artistic and aesthetic quality. Depiction of sculptures of various dimensions combine religious and legendary imagery, enhancing the corridor's walls, the pavilions, and even the lower circumference of the well itself. Rani ki Vav represents an architectural monument of human creative genius, blending beauty, the wisdom of its designers, and ancient history.

The World Heritage emblem symbolizes the interdependence of the world's natural and cultural diversity. The central square represents the achievements of human skill and inspiration, and the circle celebrates the gifts of nature. The emblem is round, like the world, a symbol of global protection for the heritage of all humankind.

The Earthen Architecture Conservation Programme works toward conserving and revitalizing earthen architecture, which is threatened by natural disasters and industrialization. Currently, some one hundred properties on the World Heritage List are partially or totally built with earth.

World Heritage sites are inscribed on the List on the basis of their merits as forming a significant contribution to the cultural and natural heritage of the world. Their outstanding universal value is considered to be of importance for future generations.

Conserving the diversity of life on Earth is critical to global human welfare. With the support of the World Heritage Convention, the most important biodiversity sites receive international recognition as well as technical and financial assistance to deal with threats such as agricultural encroachment, alien species and poaching.

Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, at its General Conference, Paris, 16 November 1972.

EXTRACTS
... parts of the cultural or natural heritage are of outstanding interest and therefore need to be preserved as part of the world heritage of humankind as a whole.

... [with the magnitude and gravity of the new dangers threatening... (the world's heritage), it is incumbent on the international community as a whole to participate in the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value...]



Proud moai stand watch over the land at Ahu Tongariki in Rapa Nui National Park. These colossal statues bear the celestial status of Easter Island, one of the most remote inhabited islands on the planet, situated 3,700 km from the Chilean coast in the Pacific Ocean. They represent the ancestors of an ancient Polynesian people who settled there for centuries, developing a unique and distinctive architectural culture.



The Morne Trois Pitons National Park, the green heart of the island of Dominica in the Lesser Antilles, is a natural treasure trove of rain biodiversity and fascinating geology. Nestled in a blend of largely intact tropical montane vegetation and rainforest, it is adorned by the impressive volcanic mass of Mount La Soufriere, whose summit is actually shaped into three peaks, from which it gets its name.



Waves crashing against the cliffs of Surtsey, a young volcanic island off the southern coast of Iceland. Emerged from the Atlantic Ocean during a series of eruptions in 1963-1967, it is an uncontaminated natural laboratory of great scientific value. Protected since its formation, this tree-free human interference, Surtsey provides a unique and fascinating insight into how life colonizes new ecosystems.



The sparkling turquoise waters of the Atlantic meet the golden sand dunes of the Sahara in the Banc d'Arguin National Park, on the western coast of Mauritania. In this remote place between north-eastern Tripoli and neighbouring Benin, in the heart of West Africa, nature is renowned for the fluents and bellies of the Batimmaria people, strongly for their distinctively designed mud-brick houses taking their shape which reflect the cultural adaptation to the local environment.



Ancient traditions blend seamlessly with stunning natural scenery in Koutumaku, the Land of the Batimmaria. In this remote place between north-eastern Tripoli and neighbouring Benin, in the heart of West Africa, nature is renowned for the fluents and bellies of the Batimmaria people, strongly for their distinctively designed mud-brick houses taking their shape which reflect the cultural adaptation to the local environment.



For at least 10,000 years, wood has been used in Anatolian architecture, developing great expertise in construction and carving techniques. The Wooden Hypogeum of Medfendi Anatolia is a serial property of five mosques built between the late 13th and mid-15th centuries in Turkey. The interior of these buildings features wooden structural systems, with prayer halls adorned by flat ceilings supported by wooden beams and posts.



The Great Sphinx and the three main pyramids are the most iconic elements in the developing great expertise in construction and carving techniques. The Wooden Hypogeum of Medfendi Anatolia is a serial property of five mosques built between the late 13th and mid-15th centuries in Turkey. The interior of these buildings features wooden structural systems, with prayer halls adorned by flat ceilings supported by wooden beams and posts.



The Bale Mountains National Park in south-eastern Ethiopia features a variety of spectacular landscapes: volcanic peaks and ridges, glacial valleys, meadows and lakes, steep cliffs and rugged, tropical mountain forests, and stunning waterfalls. It is home to highly biodiverse ecosystems that include many species found nowhere else in the world, such as the Ethiopian wolf, considered particularly rare and worthy of protection.



The Cold Winter Deserts of Turan is a transnational site comprising 14 areas in the temperate zone of Central Asia, spanning Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Despite extreme climate conditions, characterised by cold winters with low precipitation, and by hot and very dry summers, these areas bear witness to the exceptional evolution of survival and adaptation strategies of a diverse range of flora and fauna.

From the vast plains of the Serengeti to historic cities such as Bergen, Lima and Kyoto; from the prehistoric rock art on the Iberian Peninsula to the Statue of Liberty; from the Kasbah of Algiers to the Imperial Palace in Beijing — all of these places, as varied as they are, have one thing in common. All are World Heritage sites of outstanding cultural or natural value to humanity and are worthy of protection for future generations to know and enjoy.

Key

- Cultural property
- Natural property
- Mixed property (cultural and natural)
- Transnational property
- Property currently inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

See country index on the back side of map for site listings.
Number indicates site order by year of inscription within each country.
Letters are assigned to transnational properties in the order of their inscription on the List.
Only States Parties to the World Heritage Convention are labelled on this map.
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The World Heritage Cities Programme seeks to protect living historic city centres and their cultural and architectural heritage from threats such as uncontrolled development or inappropriate construction.

The World Heritage Marine Programme helps countries nominate marine sites and manage them effectively to ensure that they will thrive for future generations. There are currently 50 marine sites on the World Heritage List.

Cultural heritage refers to monuments, buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value. Natural heritage refers to outstanding physical, biological or geological features and includes habitats of threatened species, as well as areas with scientific, environmental or aesthetic value. Mixed sites have both cultural and natural values.

The World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme helps visitors discover World Heritage sites while encouraging respect of the environment and local cultures and enhancing community livelihoods.

Robinson Projection
SCALE 1:38,000,000
The reduced scale of the maps and the cartographic projections have resulted in approximate locations of some properties.
Land cover data: Tom Patterson,
United States National Park Service
Image captions: Monica Tomatis
Design and production: Geo4Map

