

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN NEPAL

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WORKSHOP ON THE CONSERVATION OF HERITAGE
OF NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE
18 - 23 AUGUST 1991, KATHMANDU, NEPAL



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CONSERVATION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME
COMMISSION, HMG NEPAL, IN COLLABORATION WITH
SOCIETY AND IUCN - THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION

**NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME**

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Nepal's National Conservation Strategy is being implemented under the National Planning Commission/ IUCN NCS Implementation Programme, through a series of programmes in the key areas of environmental planning and assessment, national heritage conservation, education and public information. Coordinated by the National Planning Commission, the implementation programme involves representatives of all the major ministries and government departments concerned with environmental issues, as well as an increasing number of local non-governmental organisations.

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INTRODUCTION

Conservation, as defined in the context of the National Conservation Strategy for Nepal, includes conservation of the natural environment and preservation of cultural expression in literature and the performing arts, as well as cultural treasures such as historical buildings, monuments and sculpture.

The cultural heritage of Nepal has a long history dating back to approximately the first century BC. A recent survey shows that the Brahmanical cult, including the worship of the Mother Goddess and Solar Divinity, was prevalent in the valley of Kathmandu 2,000 Years ago.

The long and complex cultural history of the country encompasses an extraordinary natural heritage. Most sites or areas of special heritage importance for Nepal are a blending of both natural and cultural values. Heritage sites may be of immediate obvious aesthetic, architectural, historical or social significance, but the cultural inspiration grows from the natural site and its historical development.

This mingling of natural and cultural values is a continuing process. Heritage is a living evolving entity and its successful conservation needs to be part of the development process, rather than a static achievement. Any national heritage site should be seen as part of a social, political and economic system. A site viewed in isolation cannot be conserved. The whole picture must be appreciated and its various elements harnessed to protect and enhance heritage values.

Over time, the links with and inspiration for many monuments and heritage sites have been lost or overtaken by cultural development. Traditional management processes have been lost with social and religious change and government control. Forgotten links and responsibilities need to be restored. Local power lost to the modern development process needs to be re-established. Despite considerable effort on the part of many people to conserve the heritage of Nepal, it is apparent that over the past two decades, many places of significance have deteriorated. It would seem that much of the effort has been misdirected and unrelated to a national strategy.

Much work is and has already been done in Nepal in compiling inventories of cultural and natural heritage and in conserving individual sites. Considerable expertise is available professionally and in the skills required in this work. Often, however, a coordinated and systematic approach and the means to establish clear priorities for action is lacking. Of crucial importance is the need to set criteria for assessing the importance or significance of a heritage site. A clear

understanding of the value of heritage items is the precursor to setting priorities, to analysing the forces working both for and against the conservation of any individual item and then to making management decisions.

The development in Nepal of comprehensive criteria of significance is a first step in the establishment of a register of natural and cultural sites of national significance. A National Heritage Register can be used as a management tool for monitoring the status of the most important sites and for identifying priorities for action.

Aim of the National Heritage Conservation Programme

The aim of this National Heritage Conservation Programme, which is part of the National Planning Commission's National Conservation Strategy (NCS) Implementation Programme, is to develop a register of natural and cultural heritage of national importance and appropriate approaches to managing these properties through community involvement and intersectoral cooperation.

This programme is based upon the belief that effective heritage conservation needs to occur within a realistic economic, political and social framework. Heritage conservation will not succeed unless a process is developed that provides economic, social and quality of life benefits to the affected communities.

Consequently the objectives of this programme are to :

- Develop national criteria for assessing the significance of natural and cultural heritage sites.
- Identify natural and cultural heritage sites of national significance.
- Describe the current status of national heritage sites in terms of conservation.
- Develop a register of cultural and natural heritage sites of national significance.
- Develop a model conservation management plan for a demonstration site which combines natural and cultural heritage qualities of national significance.
- Demonstrate a conservation process based upon community effort and intersectoral cooperation.

The conservation of cultural and natural heritage sites as a community activity must be a long-term commitment. This National Heritage Conservation Programme is overseen by a multi-disciplinary Coordinating Committee and includes a number of stages which aim to facilitate this process and to set up a policy framework for the conservation of heritage of greatest significance to Nepal. The first two stages involved reviewing past heritage conservation

activities and formulating a proposed set of criteria and a registration process. Different approaches to conservation management being taken in various fields of natural and cultural resources were considered.

During the third stage of the programme a workshop was held on heritage conservation from 19 to 23 August 1991 in Kathmandu and Panauti. The goal of the workshop was to discuss the idea of a National Heritage Register for Nepal, the associated registration processes and the criteria to use for selecting heritage sites. A three day field trip gave participants the chance to understand the concept of heritage as a living system and to consider the need for a multi-disciplinary outlook and community involvement in preparing and implementing management plans for national heritage sites.

This report summarises the proceedings of the heritage conservation workshop which involved members of the government's Environment Core Group established by the National Planning Commission to develop environment policy.

NATIONAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION PROCESS

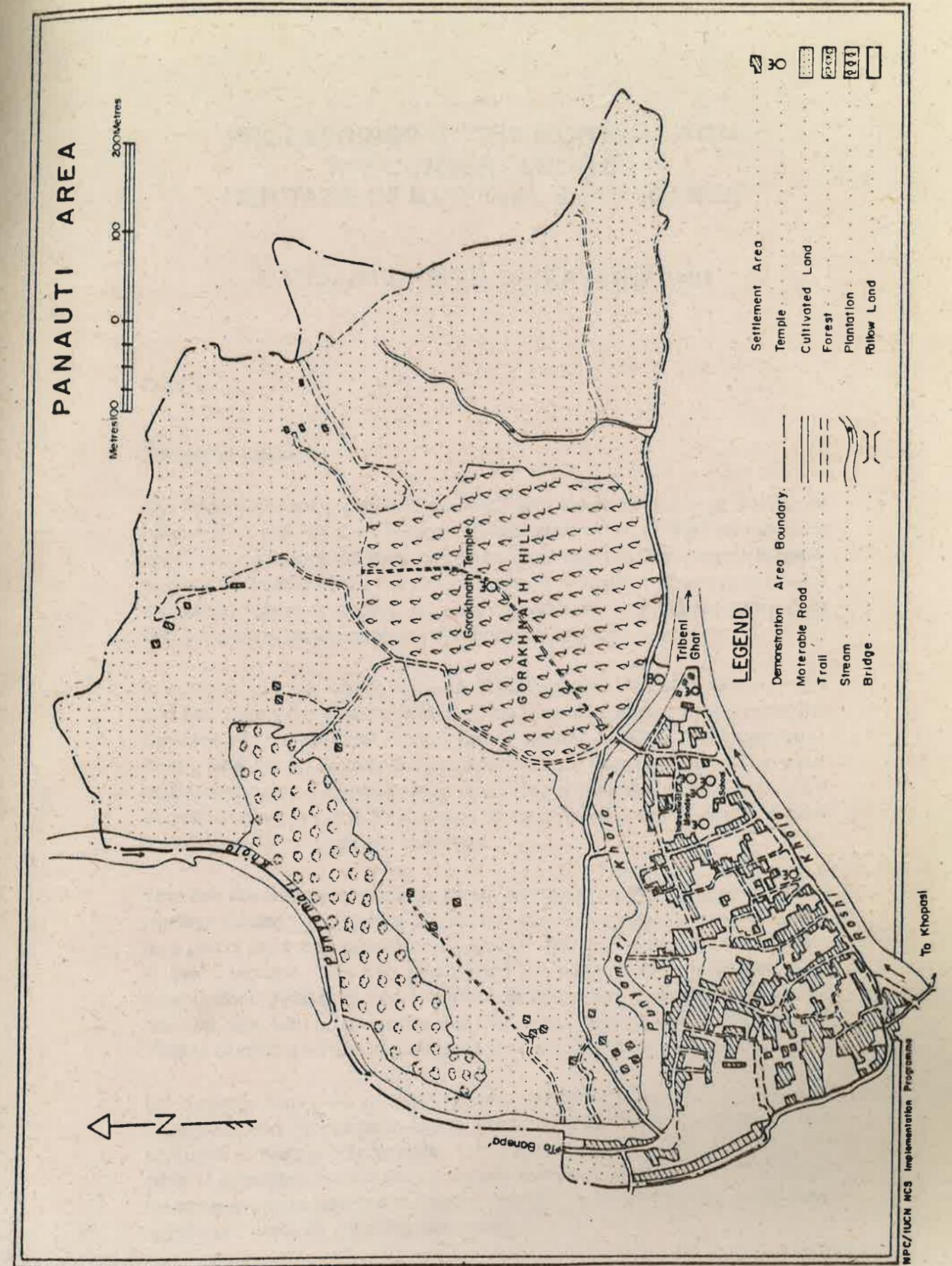
The Environment Core Group participants of the workshop were set the task of critically reviewing, testing and refining the national heritage conservation process and methods developed during earlier stages of the Heritage Conservation Programme by the Programme team with guidance from the Coordination Committee.

The proposed process seeks to identify, describe, list, rank and manage the most significant Nepalese heritage for its long-term conservation. Each stage of the process is outlined below.

1. The heritage of concern is that which best expresses the natural and human made features of Nepalese culture. The areas of heritage of national significance are living systems that represent the entire spectrum of Nepalese life from every region of the country.
2. Any heritage system may be nominated for inclusion on the National Heritage Register. Any person, community, local development committee, non-governmental organisation or governmental agency may make nominations. Each nomination must fulfill standardised requirements and present a statement of heritage significance as well as information related to conservation management of the area concerned.
3. These nominations are lodged with a central authority for assessment based upon established criteria of national significance. As an interim measure, the central authority will be the Heritage Conservation Programme Coordinating Committee directly responsible to the National Planning Commission (NPC) and serviced by the Heritage Conservation Team of the NPC's NCS Implementation Programme.
4. The expert team of heritage advisors will rigorously apply criteria of heritage significance to each nomination. Where the information is inadequate, the nominations may be returned to the nominators for augmentation, or the team may independently gather information on the nomination. The proposed criteria of significance cover Historical, Socio-cultural, Scientific, Aesthetic, Rare, Associative and Representative values. Only those items which are proved to have significance according to one or more of the criteria will be recommended to the Committee for entry on the National Register by the team.

5. The National Heritage Register will be a listing of the heritage of Nepal that is considered to be of national significance to its citizens. It will be maintained by the central authority, updated regularly, for example on a yearly basis, published and made available to any citizen. The Register will form a focus of a heritage conservation publicity and education programme.
6. The heritage systems which are entered in the Register will be ranked by the Programme Coordinating Committee according to the urgency for conservation management action. Some form of ranking or identification of highest priority heritage areas is necessary in a situation of scarce resources. Rather than separately apply the criteria of significance to each Register entry, the Committee would compare the entries for their relative rarity, representativeness, historic or other more explicit 'urgency for action' criteria such as the degree of degradation of cultural heritage or the degree of human pressure on natural systems. The local availability of resources for conservation action for a national heritage area may also influence its rank. It may be sufficient to identify only a small number of outstanding entries which require immediate attention. The objective of the ranking process is to assist the government in the difficult task of setting priorities for the allocation of scarce resources.
7. Those heritage systems on the Register which are given high priority for action will form the focus of the government's National Heritage Management Programme. Each of these systems will be the subject of a participatory heritage appraisal (PHA) process which will encourage community awareness and develop a comprehensive information base for the areas concerned.
8. The PHA process will involve local communities of interest with an expert heritage assessment team in preparing a heritage profile including descriptions of 'user' groups and community structures, natural, socio-economic and cultural heritage elements and the various forces affecting their conservation status. A profile will investigate in considerable detail the history, cultural resources, geography, natural resources, social conditions, socio-economics, local skills and technology, physical infrastructure, government services and environmental problems in the area concerned. The profile will form the basis of management proposals.
9. Arising from the profile and the participatory heritage appraisal process will be a series of potential conservation management options specific to the heritage resources identified. The most appropriate boundary for the entire heritage system would probably be defined at this stage.
10. The heritage conservation plan will be implemented according to the specific needs of the heritage system identified. The key conservation actions may be accomplished in a short period of time, but plan implementation will be an ongoing process.

11. The entire management process will be constantly monitored and the information fed back into the management process.
12. The implementation programme will be evaluated according to established criteria at regular intervals leading to formal revision of the management plan.



APPROACHES TO HERITAGE AND ITS CONSERVATION

Paper 1 Cultural Heritage of Nepal An Attempt Towards Preservation in the Kathmandu Valley

Dr. Saphalya Amatya, Acting Director General
Department of Archaeology

The Kathmandu Valley is a living heritage of mankind, where a remarkable civilisation has been growing since the beginning of the Christian era. Recent archaeological discoveries at Hadigaon and Bhandarkhal in Kathmandu have proved beyond doubt that the valley was inhabited by a rich culture from the advent of the Christian era. History tells us that the Lichhavis were one of the earlier settlers of the Valley, who, from the beginning of the 5th century A.D., ruled the valley and enriched its cultural wealth. The period after the fall of the Lichhavis till the beginning of the Malla period (from 750 A.D. to 1482 A.D.) can be called a transitional period which had gained popularity in the field of art and culture. Nepalese artisans, under the leadership of A-ni-ko (1245-1306), went to Tibet and China and had a deep influence on art in the Tibetan monasteries and temples as well as in the Chinese iconography.

Kathmandu Valley once again gained importance and became the center of arts and culture during the Malla period (1482 A.D.-1768 A.D.). During the Malla period, all the three cities of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur developed simultaneously. The Malla Kings of these three cities competed in the development of arts and culture in their respective kingdoms. What we see today in and around the Kathmandu Valley in terms of cultural heritage and artistic creations are the contributions of this period.

Remarkably, the Mallas gave a new lease of life to both Hindu and Buddhist art and culture at a time when they were rapidly disappearing from the Indian sub-continent after the advent of the Mugals in the sixteenth century A.D. The Mallas not only enriched these two major religions of Asia but also welcomed and provided facilities to those who wished to make similar contributions in Nepal. As a result, within two hundred years, thousands of temples, monasteries and other edifices came into existence in the Kathmandu Valley.

In Nepal the building of a monument is invariably accompanied by a management framework for its preservation. Our ancestors not only built monuments, but also left behind a long tradition of maintaining them through the system of *guthis* which perform socio-religious, socio-cultural and socio-educational activities. To operate this system of *guthi* in perpetuity, the

founders made donations either in cash or in kind for the regular upkeep of the monuments and for performing other necessary functions. In essence, the *guthi* underpins all cultural continuity in Nepal.

In 1950, political change took place in Nepal. As with every traditional society, these events brought changes in social values. The Nepalese were exposed to the modern world. As a result, they gradually began to compromise their old traditional values. This led to the decline of traditional institutions like the *guthi*. The Land Reform Act formulated after 1962 delivered a death blow to the *guthi*. The farmers were encouraged under the new legislation not to make the payment on the land upon which they worked, and established that the tillers were entitled to a major share of the production. As a result, almost all the private and semi-private *guthis* found it impossible to function; and in due course of time, they began to disappear from the scene, resulting in disappearance of the monuments under their purview.

Although the Department of Archaeology was established in 1952 and the Ancient Monument Preservation Act was promulgated in 1956, it did not begin to undertake restoration and repair activities on monuments and archaeological sites till the beginning of 1961. Around 1964, the Department of Archaeology and the *Guthi* Undertaking jointly formed a *Guthi* Restoration and Construction Committee. Hundreds of monuments all over the country, particularly in the Kathmandu Valley, were repaired and restored by this Committee within five years of its being established. After this Committee ceased to function in 1970 the entire responsibility for monument conservation fell under the jurisdiction of the Department of Archaeology (DOA). During the Fifth Five Year Plan period DOA established a Central Conservation Laboratory in Patan. A major milestone in the conservation endeavour was made by the preparation and adoption of the Master Plan for the Conservation of Cultural Heritage in the Kathmandu Valley with the help of UNDP/UNESCO. An inventory of monuments and sites prepared by HMG Nepal in collaboration with the United Nations and UNESCO in 1975 categorised 29 historical settlements, 34 monument zones in rural areas and 13 monument zones in the urban area. Roughly 888 individual monuments and cultural sites of immense importance have been identified. In signing the World Heritage Convention in 1978, Nepal became party to the Convention. In 1979, Nepal listed seven cultural sites of universal importance in the World Heritage List.

Among The World Heritage list sites, Hanuman Dhokha is the most extensive not only in size but also in the scale of its open spaces and structure. With the help of UNDP/UNESCO, the Hanuman Dhokha Conservation Project was set up in 1972. In stage two, the leaning Lalitpur tower was straightened and the repair of the octagonal Bhaktapur tower was completed. The section of the palace known as the Bilas Mandir, between these two towers on the eastern side of the complex, was also repaired. In stage three, which broadly falls within the Seventh Plan period, repair and rehabilitation of the building surrounding the Lohan Chown including the Bilas Mandir wing was completed.

For the overall improvement of Swayambhu Hill some unnecessary buildings and structures were demolished; and the old rest houses together with a water spout were repaired in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Seventh Five Year Plan Period (1985-90) can be regarded as the most important and dynamic period in the history of archaeological conservation in Nepal. HMG Nepal provided necessary funds for repair, restoration, maintenance and development of archaeological sites and historical monuments. On the occasion of the Third SAARC Summit in 1987 held at Kathmandu, many important monuments were repaired and rehabilitated. With the financial and technical help of the German Technical Cooperation, the Swayambhu Nath Conservation Master Plan was prepared in 1989 and prior to that, it was included in the priority programme of HMG in 1984/85.

The Patan Durbar Conservation Project was started from the year 1983 during the Sixth Plan period. The Government of Austria is helping HMG Nepal in this project with the provision of technical and financial assistance. The renovation of the Keshav Narayan Chowk in Patan Durbar is still continuing under this project. In the final phase of the project, the restored building will be adapted to and equipped with necessary facilities in order to make it a museum for better display of the existing collection of Nepalese bronze art.

Changu Narayan is another important and very ancient historical and religious site in Kathmandu Valley. A UNESCO initiative resulted in a team of architects and graphic designers from the Sydney School of TAFE and Randwick School of TAFE from Australia conducting architectural research and survey of this site in 1985. They prepared detailed documentation on this site with drawings, photographs and video tapes. At the national level, HMG Nepal has prepared a Master Plan for the conservation and development of Changu Narayan in 1986-87. Since then HMG Nepal has been initiating small scale conservation and development activities in this complex under its development programme.

The Bhaktapur Development Project was signed between HMG Nepal and the then Federal Republic of Germany in 1974. Hundreds of small and large monuments of cultural and religious importance were repaired and restored. This project has added a new and rewarding dimension to the preservation endeavour of the whole medieval township of Bhaktapur. Many private houses of historical and architectural importance were also repaired, all of which contribute to making an immense impact on tourism. The living condition of the local people was improved to some extent. Similarly a large number of artisans and craftsmen were given on-the-job training, which has helped to significantly enhance future conservation programmes in the Kathmandu Valley.

Pashupati is the most venerated shrine of the Hindus; and is the principal deity of the Kingdom of Nepal. Pashupati temple complex is protected by separate legislation through the Pashupati Area Development Trust Act, 1987. DOA is assisting the Trust in its repair and conservation activities.

It would not be out of context here to mention the restoration of I-Baha-Bahi, one of the most ancient Buddhist monasteries of Patan, situated inside the Protected Monument Zone. HMG Nepal, with financial and technical cooperation from Nippon Institute of Technology, Japan and Agency for Cultural Affairs (Bunkacho), is undertaking this project from this year under the KVMP.

The initiatives of the Seventh Five Year Plan period will be remembered in the history of archaeological conservation in Nepal for many years to come. The Eighth Five Year Plan has not yet started. We hope that the new democratic government will certainly give much emphasis and attention to the conservation of cultural heritage of the country.

The cultural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley is facing challenges from different aspects of today's pseudo-modern life. This beautiful heritage is threatened simultaneously by nature, time and people. The fragility and vulnerability of Kathmandu's cultural heritage is so pronounced that every year many important monuments are either collapsing or being defaced or encroached upon by local residents. Above all, it is most essential today that our society, our people and ourselves should recognise that this cultural heritage, handed down to us by our ancestors, is our most precious asset. We are known to the outside world because of the values and worth of this heritage. If we cannot preserve and protect it we will lose our identity as well as our validity, and we should therefore protect, preserve and share our cultural heritage with the entire world. It is aptly said: "what is even more important is the realisation that there can not be a cultural heritage for mankind unless it exists in the mind of man." In fact, the cultural heritage of the Kathmandu Valley is a universal heritage that goes beyond frontiers. As we all know, we, the present generation, are responsible for prolonging the life of our heritage, our monuments, protecting the built environment of historic cities so that our future generations can enjoy them profitably. We are here as the custodians of our children's heritage. If we can successfully preserve it we will be remembered in future by our children; otherwise we will be forgotten by them and relegated to the pages of history.

Paper 2 Natural Heritage of Nepal

Mr. B.N. Upreti, Director General
Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation

Ranges of snowcapped mountains, verdant landscapes, deep valleys and high hills, cascading streams and tranquil rivers, and diverse flora and fauna are the natural heritage of Nepal. Natural heritage is the pride of Nepal.

We have a clear concept of what natural heritage is, but we lack the criteria to define it. The World Heritage Convention provides a comprehensive definition for the purpose of including heritage sites in the World Heritage List. According to this definition the area should be of an outstanding universal value and precisely delineated in this context. In short, it should be representing major stages of the earth's evolutionary history; and representing a significant ongoing geological process, biological evolution and man's interaction with his natural environment. It should contain unique, rare or superlative natural phenomena, formations or features or areas of exceptional natural beauty and contain the most important and significant natural habitats where threatened species of animals and plants still survive.

Criteria for Selection

For our purpose, we should have our own criteria to identify and protect significant natural heritage. In the national parks and protected area systems there are certain broad outlines to consider areas to include in the system. The main theme of such areas is the conservation of living resources and maintenance of biological diversity. Thus an area with species diversity and high genetic variation, endangered plants and animals will have high priority for selection. A pristine ecosystem, wilderness areas and significant wetlands are also equally important areas for protection. Outstanding landmarks, unique landscapes and special natural features are also significant criteria for inclusion in the protected area systems. Areas of aesthetic, religious, cultural and scientific values are included in the national parks. The overall policy of the National Parks and Protected Areas is to ensure the permanent conservation of Nepal's natural heritage including flora and fauna.

Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation

The mandate of the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) is to ensure that representative examples of Nepal's natural ecosystems, areas of special scientific, scenic and recreational values and culturally significant sites are protected within the system of national parks and protected areas and managed so as to ensure the continued survival of the qualities and values for which they are protected while allowing for a sustainable level of traditional use.

Our effort will be to maximise the representativeness of the ecosystems or natural areas in the networks of parks and protected areas.

Categories of Protected Areas

The protected areas are classified in different categories based on their aims and objectives as well as the level of resource use and degree of protection.

According to the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029, there are five categories of protected areas :

- a. National Parks
- b. Strict Nature Reserve
- c. Wildlife Reserve
- d. Hunting Reserve
- e. Conservation Area

Nepal has seven national parks, four wildlife reserves and one hunting reserve covering approximately 11,000 sq km, or 7.4 percent of the total land area of Nepal.

The United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas published by IUCN - The World Conservation Union has recognised all the above categories of national parks and wildlife reserves of Nepal. There are ten categories of protected areas under the UN list, and three of them are represented in Nepal. Moreover, World Heritage Sites and Ramsar (Wetland) Areas from Nepal are also listed. Strict Nature Reserve is the highest ranking category, and this has not yet been established in Nepal.

Representation of Biogeographical Provinces

From a global perspective, terrestrial ecotypes have been divided into eight biogeographical realms and fourteen biomes by Udvardy (Udvardy, Miklos D.F., 1984. "A Biogeographical Classification System for Terrestrial Environment",

National Parks Conservation and Development. The Role of Protected Areas in Sustaining Society, edited by Jeffery A. McNeely and Kentan R. Miller. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN). These biomes are further divided in several biogeographical provinces. Nepal is a meeting point of the Palearctic and Indo-Malayan realms. Shey-Phoksundo, Langtang and Sagarmatha National Parks fall in the Palearctic Realm and Himalayan Highland Province. Royal Chitwan National Park, Royal Bardia National Park, Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Parsa Wildlife Reserve are under the Indo-Malayan Realm of the Indo-Ganges monsoon forest. Rara and Khaptad National Parks, though in the mountains, are also included under this category. Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve is under the Bengalian rain forest.

These criteria are very broad for judging the representativeness of the ecosystem. We therefore need our own system of classifying ecosystems.

Physiographic Zones of Nepal

We can take physiographic zones of Nepal as one criterion for classifying ecosystems. The Master Plan for the Forestry Sector refers to the following zones: High Himalayas, High Mountains, Middle Mountains, Siwaliks and Terai.

According to these physiographic zones, Shey-Phoksundo, Langtang and Sagarmatha National Parks are located in the High Himalayas.

Khaptad and Rara National Parks and Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve lie in the High Mountains. Sivapuri Wildlife Reserve is the only protected area representing the middle mountain region. Royal Bardia National Park, Royal Chitwan National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve are situated partly in the Siwaliks and partly in the terai. Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve in the west and Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve in the east fully represent the terai.

From the ecological point of view these categories can be further classified as Trans-Himalayas, High Himalayas, Middle Mountains, River Valleys, Mahabharat Range, Siwaliks, Inner Terai and Terai. The Kali Gandaki River further divides Nepal into an Eastern and Western biological region, thus giving rise to several distinct ecosystems. Now with these simple classifications, we can assess whether all the ecosystems are represented in the protected area systems. From the above descriptions not all the physiographic zones are covered by our national parks and protected area systems.

Significant Features of Nepal's National Parks and Protected Areas as Natural Heritage

Sagarmatha National Park contains the highest peak of the world, Mount Everest. It thus represents geological formations of outstanding universal value. It is said that the height of Mount Everest is still increasing because of ongoing geological processes, an upthrust due to colliding land mass pressure. It is considered a geologically young mountain. There are over seven peaks of a

height above 7,000 metres. Khumbu, where Sagarmatha is located, is the homeland of the famous Sherpas of Nepal and the Thyangboche Monastery is their cultural centre. This national park has been included in the World Heritage List.

Langtang National Park contains both tropical forest and alpine meadows. Some of the endemic species of larch, *Larix himalaica* or the pure forest of juniper are notable vegetation of this national park. Threatened faunal species such as red panda, musk deer, serow and leopard cat are found here. Gosain Kund, a religious site and several Tamang Monasteries give significant cultural values to this area.

Shey-Phoksundo National Park lies partly in the trans-himalayan region and represents a cool desert-like landscape in the north. The highest waterfall and second largest and deepest lake of Nepal is also located here. It is the habitat of the snow leopard, an endangered species. Musk deer, blue sheep and many other Tibetan wildlife species are found here. The Bonpo religion and Shey Monastery are significant features of this area.

Rara National Park has the largest lake in Nepal with an area of 10.2 sq km and a depth of 167 metres. Its landscape contains pure stands of coniferous forest. The park has threatened wildlife species such as the Himalayan black bear, common otter, red panda and musk deer.

Royal Chitwan National Park, Royal Bardia National Park and Parsa Wildlife Reserve cover the terai, inner terai and Siwalik range. They are the habitat of threatened species such as rhinoceros, elephants, tigers and leopards. Balmiki Ashram, located on the southern border of Royal Chitwan National Park, is a site of great religious significance to Hindus. This National Park has been included in the World Heritage List. Koshi Tappu is the only home of the water buffalo (Arna) in Nepal and Royal Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve is the habitat of threatened species of swamp deer, elephant, tiger and hispid hare.

The Annapurna Conservation Area Project includes Annapurna *Deothali*, the most impressive cirques in the world, surrounded by seven Himalayan peaks each over 7,000 metres in height. Snow leopards and red pandas have been reported in this area. Five out of six species of pheasants of Nepal are found here. The Maggar and Gurung society and their cultures are an important component of heritage to be preserved here.

The proposed Makalu-Barun Conservation Area is very unusual in its natural beauty and biological diversity. It includes the world's fifth tallest mountain, Mount Makalu, and the unique Barun River Valley. It also includes Khembalung Cave, which is of both cultural and natural significance.

Rare birds like the Himalayan honey kite and rare mammals such as the Himalayan striped squirrel are special natural features of the area. A vesselless angiosperm, *Tetracentron sinense*, is found here. A closely related ancestor of this plant has been found in Japan in fossil form, which helps to explain the

theory of Japan and Mainland Asia as a single land mass in the past. This area also contains a large concentration of about 25 species of rhododendron out of the 30 species found in Nepal.

Besides natural heritage, these national parks and protected areas also contain significant cultural heritage.

Constraints in Conservation of Heritage

There are certain constraints in the conservation for parks and protected areas in Nepal. The growing human need for natural resources and their limited supply is a source of conflict between local communities and park management. It is basically a resource use conflict. This conflict is creating a negative attitude among local people towards national parks and protected areas.

In the Himalayan national parks, marginal lands near villages are encroached for cultivation. Declining populations of mammals and birds are persistently hunted. Existing forests and grassland are overused and uncontrolled tourism is impacting on the environment. These problems are matters of great concern for park management. In effect, overgrazing, deforestation, escalated use of fuelwood for the tourist industry and poaching pressure are the main problems facing conservation. Other concerns of conservation are environmental impacts of development works such as dams, barrages, roads, and electric transmission lines. The pollution of rivers by factories discharging wastes into the national parks also causes a decline in the quality of environment inside the parks.

Creating conservation awareness, providing guidelines in environment impact assessment, coordinating governmental and non-governmental organisations, involving people in conservation and strictly enforcing conservation laws may produce successful results in natural heritage conservation.

While establishing criteria for selecting heritage sites for inclusion on a Register, one should not be too ambitious by including too many things. The heritage included in the Register must receive strict protection, otherwise the effort will be of no consequence.

Paper 3 The Concept and Process of Heritage Conservation

**Mr. Rodney Hayes
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I would like to begin by talking about what heritage is. It is an expression of our culture. We have just heard Mr. Upreti talking about our heritage from the point of view of nature — national parks, natural places of high quality. We have also heard Dr. Amatya talking about heritage as the great things that humans have achieved over the last two thousand years or more.

They are both right, and they represent a view which is widely held around the world.

However, for the preservation of our total heritage, it is perhaps easier to see heritage as two separate parts of the one thing.

These things have value to us because of what they represent to the people of Nepal. Over a very long time the Nepali people have developed societies which have grown out of the land. They have built and lived and developed their religions in the mountains, near the rivers, in this valley we are in today. So heritage is really a continuum that extends from the most natural remote wild place all the way to the things that the Nepali people have developed in the places they live. These things blend us together in a very complex web of social, religious, economic and political activities, and it is only by recognising the web in which the heritage exists, that we can conserve it.

But we face a most difficult problem.

The problem emerges, because on the one hand we have such a marvellously rich and diverse heritage that represents all of the periods of your history, but on the other hand we now have a society which is becoming a part of the modern world.

But this society today is under great strain and cannot afford to maintain or conserve everything of the past which represents that total heritage.

It is now obvious that much of the fabric of our heritage, be it Chitwan National Park or Changu Narayan is in decline. They are all under pressure and probably all our heritage, even places that are managed like Swayambhu or Pashupati, are not as well looked after as they should be. As these things have declined we have become accustomed to their condition and have focused on the development of our modern lives.

So we face a difficult dilemma/problem.

How to be a modern society which folds into itself those things of the past that you value most highly, but which conserves them for the future.

The Heritage Conservation Programme is really a search. It is a search for a living heritage.

Nepal is not a museum. Things collected in museums lose their life, their relevance. The heritage that is most highly valued is that which remains a central focus of daily life. It is not static. It changes and grows. Swayambhu, Pashupati, Boudhanath, even Patan Durbar, Chitwan National Park are the places that are high on people's lists but they alone cannot sustain the heritage of Nepal. The things that are central to everyone's sense of being Nepali, that are used everyday, the local temple, the town square, the festivals and songs, the forests, the terraced hills are all elements of life that have grown with time and represent your heritage.

But you all know that these things are under strain.

Your heritage, the great heritage and the everyday heritage will not be conserved nor maintained just by wishing good thoughts. It won't be conserved just by making a list or a Register. Even the world's most important list, the World Heritage List, has only made a slight difference to the conservation of the places that are on it. Heritage won't be protected by small groups of interested people or by bags of money from overseas.

Heritage conservation cannot be imposed on people, particularly if they cannot afford it. It must come from within, from a deep wish and need to keep things of the past alive and useful and in good condition. Some things can be conserved by people taking responsibility for themselves, usually small things which are central to their lives. But the big things need a larger commitment so that many people can act together. Community participation is the key to heritage conservation. Without it heritage dies. If the community does not participate in maintenance, in daily use, in practising the songs, the dances, the festivals, the religious life, in caring for forests and for the land, in protecting wildlife, then these things disappear.

And that is precisely what has happened and is happening and will happen if action is not taken immediately.

A society under stress, from within and from outside seeks to survive. It eats first and worries about the other things later. After a while the other things are not there. There is just survival.

So, conservation will not happen without a strong, determined, well argued, realistic programme. It must be seen as part of the development of Nepal. It cannot be separate.

This Heritage Conservation Programme is a good start. Not that initiatives have not happened before. They have, but they have floundered on their lack of community involvement. This programme is a fresh approach. It is similar in concept to the other programmes of the National Conservation Strategy Implementation Programme. It puts the major emphasis on the community with strong institutional support. It is different because it recognises that heritage is part of life. You can't protect one part and ignore the rest. Heritage must be seen as a **whole system**.

Bhaktapur is a useful example. I know there were many problems with the Bhaktapur Development Project but I believe that project pointed the way. The project started by focusing on buildings but it soon became apparent that social and community development were more important. The project realised that people's daily life must develop, their economic, social, cultural and political life must develop to support the conservation of important places of heritage significance.

So making a cleaner and more efficient village market place may make it possible for the community to organise the conservation of the local built environment, of temples, of resting places.

It is also important to realise that when heritage is seen as a system of total community development, then the responsibility for conservation is not in the hands of one authority. I believe it is clear that centralising conservation within Archaeology or *Guthi Sansthan* or Royal Nepal Academy has not worked. And it is not just because they lack the money. It is more because those organisations have not integrated themselves into the fabric, the web, of community life. They have stayed separate and heritage has paid the price.

So this Heritage Conservation Programme is based upon three important ideas.

Firstly that heritage is an expression of your culture that may be found within nature and within the things created by men. There is no line, no dividing point just, a pattern of beliefs and human activity that are found within your country.

The second idea is that heritage should be seen as a living process that grows and changes with time and must be folded into life in order to survive.

The third idea is that heritage conservation is a system which involves many players be they government, non-government, foreign donors or the people of Nepal. It suggests that all these forces must be joined by realistic management

approaches which will vary from place to place depending on what you are trying to conserve and why you think it is important.

So this workshop is a very important event for this Heritage Programme.

You have all participated in these events before, and I am very pleased as a team member to be working with you for the next five days.

In the light of heritage conservation as a community process, our collective vision should be able to ensure that we discover pathways for community conservation that work.

With that in mind we will look at some of the actions that have been taken in various sectors of the community in the area of heritage conservation. We will ask why they work and why they fail. This type of thinking will be vital to develop management practices for the future that have potential to be successful.

We will also search for the things in Nepal that we think represent important or significant heritage and why they are important, what makes one thing more important than another, and therefore what criteria to use to assess its importance.

Arriving out of that we will spend some time developing a Heritage Register, what should be on it and how it should work.

And lastly we will work together in Panauti, working out a community profile that identifies those things that we, together with the people of Panauti, think are important, and we will search for ways the local community can best conserve those things.

STEPS TAKEN TO CONDUCT PARTICIPATORY HERITAGE APPRAISAL (PHA) IN PANAUTI

1. The Heritage Team first assessed several places as potential sites for a field exercise with the Environment Core Group members.
2. Members of the team visited Panauti to explore the possibility of running the workshop there and sought the advice and views of local people.
3. The team met Dr. Saphalya Amatya, the Acting Director General of the Department Of Archaeology, to discuss the workshop and the field exercise. Three places were considered: Panauti, Changu Narayan and Kirtipur. Following further site visits with senior officers of the Department of Archaeology and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Panauti was selected as the appropriate focus for the workshop PHA exercise.
4. Several meetings of the Programme Coordinating Committee were held to discuss and oversee arrangements for the workshop.
5. The team made regular excursions to Panauti to make final arrangements for running the workshop including boarding and lodging for the Core Group and to ensure effective participation of local district officers at Dhulikhel and the local community.
6. The team developed a list of local volunteers from each ward of the Panauti Village Development Area and ward no. 7 of the Sunthan Village Development Area.
7. A team of local club members and social workers was formed and given responsibility for arranging accommodation, meals and workshop logistics in Panauti. Six houses were selected for lodging. Food catering was arranged by local groups inside a tent near the high school on an elevated field overlooking Panauti. The tent was also the venue of most of the field exercise plenary meetings.
8. In the early morning of the third day of the workshop, all Core Group members left for Panauti by bus and car.
9. The Core Group attended the formal welcome session organised by the local people of Panauti.