REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP HELD FROM 24 –26 OCTOBER IN KIMBERLEY, SOUTH AFRICA, PRIOR TO THE ZIMBABWE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: TOWARDS A DECLARATION ON INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND MONUMENTS AND SITES

INTRODUCTION

Organised by ICOMOS South Africa, in conjunction with the McGregor Museum and the Northern Cape Provincial Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, this event was open to all ICOMOS members, and aimed at preparing a first draft for a declaration on the management of sites with intangible values for discussion at the General Assembly and possible future use as a doctrinal text of the organisation, it also hoped to develop a work programme for ICOMOS in this field.

A grant from the Norwegian Government enabled the organisers to sponsor the participation of a certain number of participants through the International Secretariat.

21 participants from 15 countries attended the meeting that resulted in the drafting of the attached text.

The program was organised over a two-day period. After an introduction the first session opened with three short keynote addresses, followed by discussion and questions from the floor. The three papers were presented by Robyn Ridett (Australia), Simon Musonda (Zambia) and Dinu Bumbaru (Canada).The workshop was then divided into three groups, each of which looked at the three topics of the scientific symposium to be held in Zimbabwe in some detail.

Robyn Ridett's address dealt with the identification of values associated with intangible heritage. She identified the four primary values as being aesthetic, cultural (religious rituals for example), scientific (and in which she included crafts and traditional skills as well as technology) and spiritual (sites that represented an amalgam of values such as Uluru –Ayres Rock). Two other values, she suggested could be added to these, being environmental and legal.

Other issues that were investigated in the address were those of regionality and temporality or time. The question was posed that intangible heritage is not limited to the past but also relates to contemporary practices.

Finally she touched upon the methodology of identifying and protecting intangible heritage. Problems around the identification of the commemorative value of a place were debated and how one measures that value against the statement of significance for the site or place.

In his address Simon Musonda gave an illustrated presentation on a heritage site in Zambia where the local king and his entourage migrate down river during the rainy/flood season to higher land. Although the physical fabric of the royal compound has considerable heritage significance the primary value relates to the intangible heritage of the ritual of removing the royal entourage from the settlement to a higher point down the river. The ritual procession is the most important component of the cultural heritage.

In wrapping up the keynote addresses, Dinu Bumbaru described the process of the development and adoption of a charter by the World Heritage Committee and referred to a number of charters that had recently been adopted – the Charter on Underwater Heritage being one. He also made reference to the UNESCO meetings at which a charter on Intangible Heritage had been debated and adopted.

In order for the workshop to progress towards its goal of developing a draft statement on intangible heritage he suggested that, within the framework of the mandate of ICOMOS, there were five points of 'best-practice' for intangible heritage that should be interrogated. These were further refined down to:-

- identification
- protection
- interpretation

The workshop then divided into three groups who made the following reports on discussions relating to the identification of factors relating to intangible heritage.

Group 1

There are links between tangible and intangible heritage; they are not mutually exclusive concepts.

Key factors, which make up Intangible Heritage
- Values
- Symbolism
- Remembrance, memories
- Identity
- Cultural aspects
- Living traditions.

The notion of intangible heritage must not be fixed at a particular point in time – it is dynamic and evolves and it is the evolving intangible heritage which is important.
All of the above must be applied to places and sites.

Group 2

It is important to understand that multiple associative values exist with many sites and therefore we need to set out paradigms as an overlay so as to include the values enshrined and represented in intangible heritage, *viz.*

- Cultural practices around particular sites e.g. dance rituals, symbolic practices etc.
- Fabric associated with meaning on the site
- Environmental aspects: noise, smell, and spirits/ghosts etc..
- Evocative and experiential aspects: emotive, intellectual, physical and sensory.

Major problems for the conservation of intangible heritage include:

- Everyone wants to conserve the past but no-one wants to live in it: how do we conserve redundant practices.
- Who decides on various community's cultural values: experts must understand the values.
- A proliferation of heritage sites may water down the value of individual sites
- How do we identify and evaluate cultural values?

Strategies will be required; it is not just a matter of experts and lists, there must be involvement of communities, families and individuals as appropriate, the latter especially where few owners of the intangible values remain.

The process will open up a plethora of meaning and dealing with something which withdraws from definitions and which at the same time attempts to come to terms with and to grasp intangible heritage. Dynamic discussion will need to underlie the process.

Group 3

- Intangible heritage gives meanings, values and contexts to objects and places. The individual elements cannot be separated. The tangible and intangible are always connected.
- In terms of the International Convention (ICSICT) and the work of ICOMOS, intangible heritage provides the confirmation of the values of the place and its significance.
- Place is always part of the culture and is embedded in it.
- ICOMOS and the (ICSICT) have taken it for granted that intangible heritage is integral to tangible heritage.
- The different conventions try to reach the same goal by different processes from a different starting position.
- Indigenous heritage provides confirmation of heritage significance wherein the intangible is integral to the tangible heritage.

- Extent of the boundary between place and its meaning – some cultural practices are connected to particular places, or are regional or national with no obvious boundaries. Criteria will need to be developed to assess the value of different intangible heritages.
- Tradition: what is the meaning of tradition? Is it more connected with indigenous people rather than all people, as compared with the western concentration on meaning and monuments? All people have a tradition.

Responses from the Floor

There should be an attempt to locate the place with regional communities – different regional approaches – one could look at examples which don't fit the model eg Gay language embodied cross-cultural understanding. (*Note*: Gay culture is a non-ethnic culture).
There is a need to interrogate the notion of 'place'.
The notion of time is important in relation to the identification of the significance of place - "temporality".
Concern with the limits of a time-scale in relation to assessment of heritage e.g. must it be over 300 years ago?.
Intangible heritage is alive and in the present as well as the past. This concept has limited relevance for intangible heritage. Intangible heritage should not be limited to the past.
Concern with preservation of part of the tradition only.
Climate and seasonable change are part of/motivators for intangible heritage.
Consider the idea of transient and permanent intangible heritage: when the cultural community dies should the intangible heritage values die with it?
Do we/must we conserve the thing that can be seen or physically felt before it is gone?
Do we retrieve or interpret intangible values that have ceased to be meaningful? Is it meaningful to do so?
Different approaches: much of African heritage is intangible and related to indigenous values; compared with the Eastern tradition of traditional living treasures (Japan)
In conserving intangible values would one consider 'skeletons in the closet' as well the more positive aspects, or would one sanitize traditions?
Learning from mistakes: fabric is only part of the picture; technical excellence at conservation is not the whole story.
Conserving fact or fiction: example of Kromberg Castle and Hamlet (i.e. in reality Hamlet never was there, the legend is derived from Shakespeare).

Methodological problems

There is a need to include all points of view because they are very varied.
We do not need too many divergent interpretations.

Contemporary intangible heritage

Consideration of contemporary intangible heritage e.g., the role of music on Robben Island in association with the prisoners working in harsh conditions: music gave prisoners strength to continue for survival and freedom.

Practical conservation *vs.* memory and meaning e.g. the issue of the way to conserve the destroyed sea wall at Robben Island: how to reconstruct? Should it be reconstructed to conserve old values at the expense of new values which have emerged (new landscape, birds etc. have replaced the harsh quarry remembered by the prisoners)? What is the wall protecting?

We need to relate intangible values to the Statement of Significance for the place.

We need to find appropriate solutions regardless of funds available. The Statement of Significance must be clear on authenticity in order to guide appropriate solutions.

There is an issue of immediate practicality *vs.* wider heritage values.

Commemorative attitudes

Bureaucratic approaches.

Heritage often does not want to be a place that wants to be remembered.

Not allowed to touch "Intangible".

There is a need to compare terminologies.

Broad-based intangible heritage would move away from national aspects e.g. how would Gay language fit into a declaration internationally? Lists of intangible values and related sites are what nations can bring to the world community.

Consider space and nation as a definer of heritage.

Conflict

Community interpretation will open greater debate.

The Statement of Significance creates a hierarchy of opinion and suggests exclusive Statements of Significance for site management that elucidate the values that existed at a particular point in time.

Maybe the term universal heritage will change in meaning.

Identify factors pointing to intangible(ness) to make it acceptable and recognisable: do we challenge the guidelines?

We may need different definitions to mandate different levels of intangible heritage.

There is a need to manage all levels of significance.

Intangible Heritage as a key to a Site or Place.

Intangible heritage is being lost everywhere throughout the world.

How does it apply to monuments or sites: intangible heritage must be a characteristic that comes out of any analysis.

Conflicts

The significance of multiple layers of history.

Need to explore and explain layers in order to conserve fabric.

Identify what is significant in order to conserve it appropriately.

Risks

Could the Convention pose a risk to conservation and shift the focus of ICOMOS to fabric and leave intangible fabric to others.

It is possibly useful to interrogate the Convention.

Techniques

Can memory serve instead of fabric in retaining intangible values?

Combine them both in a comprehensive way.

Record and encourage the practising community to continue re-creation of past practices.

Living traditions are easier to deal with: must encourage them to continue.

DRAFT RECOMENDATIONS
(arising from the closing discussions on Friday afternoon)

Taking into account:-

- The need for specific protective legislation for all aspects of cultural heritage;
- The definitions of intangible heritage in the international convention;
- ICOMOS Charter of Cultural Tourism;
- ICOMOS human rights;
- ICOMOS Ethical Commitment Statement.

We need to;

- Identify, acknowledge rights and involve all potential communities in identification and decision-making;
- Respect all cultural associations to retain the interdependence of intangible heritage and tangible heritage;
- Develop an inventory;
- Evolve strategies;
- Monitor process and progress.

Compiled from notes taken by
Robyn Ridett and Laura Robinson

11 February 2004

DECLARATION OF THE KIMBERLEY WORKSHOP ON THE INTANGIBLE HERITAGE OF MONUMENTS AND SITES

On the occasion of the Kimberley Workshop to which all national committees were invited, the role of intangible heritage in relation to the work of ICOMOS and the World Heritage Convention was discussed. At the workshop it was agreed to submit a resolution to the 14th meeting of the ICOMOS General Assembly at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, for the development of a charter on Intangible Heritage.

PREAMBLE

ICOMOS recognises the indivisible nature of tangible and intangible heritage. Intangible Heritage gives meanings, values and context to objects and places. The individual elements cannot be separated, they are inextricably linked.

It is also important to understand that there is a multiplicity of values that exist within any one site and that these relate to emotive, intellectual, physical and sensory experiences of the site. These values include those of symbolism, identity, culture, living traditions, remembrance and memories, the environment and nature.

In terms of the World Heritage Committee and the work of ICOMOS, intangible heritage provides the confirmation of the values of the place, and its significance.

ICOMOS therefore welcomes the adoption of the UNESCO International Convention for the safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage by the 32nd Session of the General Conference in Paris in October 2003, and resolves to work to integrate the purposes of the Convention to improve the Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention by expanding them to include intangible heritage values. It was also resolved to integrate the principles of intangible heritage into general heritage conservation practices, for the identification, assessment, conservation and management of sites.

The resolution has been developed around the 3 sub-themes of the 2003 Zimbabwe General Assembly.

1   THE INTANGIBLE DIMENSIONS - CONCEPTS, IDENTIFICATION AND ASSEMBLY

The identification and assessment of a place/site must be done in collaboration with the communities concerned to fully explore all the intangible dimensions of its cultural heritage.

2   THE IMPACT OF CHANGE AND DIVERSE PERCEPTIONS

(This sub-theme considers the issue of use, the diversity of perceptions, skills and conservation traditions)

An analysis of the multiplicity of perceptions and meanings attached to a site shall assist in understanding:

- the significance of the relationship between the tangible and intangible heritage;
- the social rationale behind the practices and beliefs associated with a site;
- the traditional skills and craftsmanship that have maintained and conserved the site/place to date;
- the reason for, and impact of, change;
- the ways in which change can be incorporated into intangible heritage
- practices to maintain the integrity of the place.

3   CONSERVING AND MANAGING INTANGIBLE HERITAGE - METHODOLOGY

IDENTIFICATION

- Raise with the relevant communities the matter of identifying the intangible values of the heritage;
- Include fully the communities in the process of identification;
- Form a multi-disciplinary team capable of identifying the heritage values – both tangible and intangible;
- To document the intangible heritage and to ensure that the tangible record of the intangible heritage is conserved;
- To recognize and protect the intellectual property (rights?) relevant to the intangible heritage.

PROTECTION

- Heritage is to be managed as a whole with both its facets – tangible and intangible;
- Involve the relevant communities fully in the conservation of heritage;
- Celebrate and encourage the intangible aspects of heritage values;
- Encourage the maintenance of the living intangible heritage as a living traditions, whilst recognising its evolution and changes, by the technical means available – both traditional and modern;
- Include at the statutory/legislative level the intangible notion of heritage as well as the traditional protection by the relevant communities;
- Record and protect the intellectual property (rights) of the intangible heritage.

SHARING AND INTERPRETATION

- The sensitisation of the ethical and moral values of heritage in regards to communities and decision-makers;
- Assure the continuity of awareness of the intangible values of heritage by increased access by the young;

- Respect and accept cultural and ethnic diversity by using appropriate means of communication, preservation and conservation;
- Ensure that the intangible heritage is not damaged by excessive visitor numbers and inappropriate interpretation;
- Communicate the significance of the site/place in such a manner so as to ensure the authenticity of the intangible heritage.

PERSONS ATTENDING
THE KIMBERLEY WORKSHOP

Krystal Buckley	Australia
Marilyn Truscott	Australia
Robyn Ridett	Australia
Aime Gonsalves	Benin
Mohaman Haman	Cameroon
Dinu Bumbaru	Canada
Dossu Sindou	Cote D'Ivoire
Bako Rasorifetra	Madagascar
Teodato Luiz Nguirazi	Mozambique
Andreas Vogt	Namibia
Joseph Eboreime	Nigeria
Axel Mykleby	Norway
Berthilda Walter	Seychelles
Harriet Deacon	South Africa
Janette Deacon	South Africa
Andrew Hall	South Africa
Nomvula Mbangela	South Africa
Laura Robinson	South Africa
Faika Bejaoui	Tunisia
Ephrim Kumuhangire	Uganda
Simon Musonda	Zambia