



2014

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Tseden Cypress - Sacred Tree of Bhutan
Photo by Vita de Waal

THE CSVPA NEWSLETTER "CULTURE FOR NATURE"

From the Editor: When I joined CSVPA in 2008, following the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, I was immediately struck by the level and nature of debate in the group. Members did not and do not use the group only to exchange information, or network – but to brainstorm, to thrash out theoretical issues and develop their own thinking in interaction with other minds. I felt that this was extremely valuable, and that a listserv as the only platform for the expression of the thoughts of CSVPA's

members was insufficient – hence, this newsletter. The contributions to its inaugural edition have exceeded my expectations, which were already high. I hope they will not disappoint you. I have been asked where I think this newsletter is headed into future; I think the answer will be determined by its readers and contributors. I offer many thanks to all those who contributed to it and helped make it a reality in different ways, and I hope it makes for a good read, for all of you.



Cultural and Spiritual Values
of Protected Areas

www.csvpa.org
Specialist Group of IUCN WCPA

THE CSVPA NEWSLETTER

CULTURE for NATURE*Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas*

Photo Vita de Waal

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The inaugural edition of the CSVPA newsletter consists of an array of material, ranging from reportage of valuable work being done around the world in the field of culture and conservation, to theoretical essays attempting to find new ways of approaching the work we are all doing together.

We have contributions that reflect the personal experiences of indigenous peoples, and the intersection of issues of social justice, culture and nature conservation. And we have pieces that inform of new developments in the world's major religions which would impact wildlife and biodiversity preservation.

As such, the contributions reflect the multi-vocal character of CSVPA. As members, all of us are interested in the manner in which culture influences our interaction with nature – be it culture as art, spirituality, religion or tradition. I hope this newsletter will help all of you, on your search for how culture may become a powerful tool to help protect our planet.

It is important to keep searching, and it is important to be wary of conservatism, as those working on culture and tradition may find it easy to slip into. In my opinion, the best way to guard against it, is to keep up a tradition of powerful debate, always challenge the status quo and remember Gandhi's advice on recalling the face of the poorest man you know, and asking yourself if the action you contemplate would help him.

I hope this newsletter will serve as a platform for powerful debate, I hope it will challenge the status quo – and I hope it will also give voice to people who have much to say but few to hear them.



Traditional fishing boats in Ghar el Mel, Tunisia: Photo by Irini Lyratzaki

Culture in Wetlands

Thymio Papayannis and Dave Pritchard

Joint Coordinators, Ramsar Culture Network

Since its adoption in 1971, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands has continually broadened its relevance. Originally focusing mainly on water birds, its implementation has gradually given more attention to the whole of the water ecosystem, including human activities.

Taking into account that human activities create culture, in the late 1990s Ramsar began to investigate the relationships between culture and wetlands, especially in the Mediterranean, strengthened by the understanding that nature conservation and wise use depend critically upon the attitudes of human societies. Formal Resolutions on giving attention to cultural aspects in the management of wetlands were adopted by the Conference of Parties in 2002 (Resolution VIII.19) and 2005 (Resolution IX.21).

To implement these two Resolutions, a Ramsar Culture Working Group was established. In 2008 it produced the 'Ramsar Guidance on Culture and Wetlands', and promoted the concept of an integrated approach to natural and cultural wetland heritage. In particular, a special event was organised during Ramsar COP11 in 2012, demonstrating in an innovative manner the potential role of cultural practices in enhancing the appreciation, understanding and sustainable management of wetlands. This work was supported financially by the MAVA Foundation; while Med-INA, the Mediterranean Institute for Nature and Anthropos, provided technical and administrative services

In 2013, with the agreement of the Standing Committee of the Convention, the Culture Working Group was broadened into the Ramsar Culture Network, in cooperation with UNESCO, which already has more than 100 members from 50 countries.

For the period 2014-2016, activities planned for the Network cover the following five objectives:

- A: Strengthened international policy
- B: Better documented values
- C: More widely shared and applied good practices
- D: Enhanced partnerships
- E: Effective coordination.

Funding for this is not yet secured; but the prospects appear good.



Meeting of the traditional Chiefs of the Munda Community
Photo by Bineet Mundu

Our Land - Our People An Update on an Idea and a Campaign

Bineet Mundu

Coordinator – Indigenous Center for land Resource and Governance (Land Desk - B.I.R.S.A.)

If I look at myself, being an indigenous person from the Munda people, I try to find where we started from and where are we headed to. This is what I know and how I see it:

The indigenous peoples of India, who are not part of the Indian caste structure, generally known as Adivasis or tribal people, together we form more than 8 per cent of the country's population. As Adivasis or tribal people we live our culture, and kept our ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness, of course with many challenges.

Today we are found to be living in natural and mineral rich 'resource' areas. Extraction of nature, plundering rather, the establishment of big industries and erecting cities around them, has displaced many of us from our own home areas, making us sacrificial goats in so called 'development' programs. Even if compensated in monetary terms, for many of us this is not worth the value of what we have lost. Most of us have migrated in search of a living, many are trafficked, and most of us feel cheated by the model of development posed to us.



What is so special about our homeland, and what were the values our elders stood for against the colonizers who were at that time British? Our elders were not under any king's rule, they governed their land themselves. This makes our land special! Like the clan I am born into, Mundu, is one of the 22 clans of the Munda people. Likewise, amongst the Santhals there are chiefs for group of villages, as members of an apex council, who are the bodies that govern the affairs of the people. The legislation of the Indian state does not actually acknowledge these governance institutions, with the exception of the Ho Adivasis here.

<< Photo by Bubaneshwer Sawaiya of the Seminar organised by the Indigenous Center for Land Resource and Governance on the occasion of Land Rights Day

We, as a small team, are working towards the revitalization and the empowerment of these councils through different activities. I feel fully convinced about its future success, having been in Tromsø University in northern Norway doing an MPhil on Indigenous Studies, and seeing the Sami indigenous peoples reviving their Sida system in the Scandinavian countries. We invite international exchanges at our indigenous study and discussion groups, here in India, and have had exchanges with the Kabilos from Columbia and the Innuits from Alaska. I am also the president of the India level forum of the Munda people.

As Adivasis, we may be economically deprived, cheated, looked down upon, or hated for what we value and live with, but though we are in conflict with ourselves as we try to make our place in the 'modern' world, we have many things to learn and to share.

Sacred Natural Sites News from China

Pei Shengji

Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences



Xishuangbanban Dai's Holy Hill in Mengyuan community, Yunnan Province of China
Photo by Pei Shengji

An Inception and Method Training Workshop was held on Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) Studies in the Yunnan province of China in Kunming, 16-17, January 2014. The two year government Biodiversity Funds supported project aims at investigating SNSs in Yunnan and their application in biodiversity conservation.

Yunnan province located in Southwest China is well known for its rich biodiversity and cultural diversity, 26 cultural groups inhabit the mountainous province with a long history of conservation culture, of which Sacred Natural Sites constitute distinguished cultural landscapes.

The project will systematically investigate existing SNSs in different areas which are preserved by indigenous groups including the Dai, Zhuang, Tibetan, Hani, Wa, Yao and the Hans' Buddhist SNS cultures, and will investigate their possible application in modern protected area systems.

Previous ethno-botanical studies in the area have accumulated a useful knowledge base and good information for the project. The project is structured by:

- 1) SNS field site investigations to document site biodiversity; traditional knowledge and management practices; impact of economic development and change of traditional cultures in the context of SNS preservation;
- 2) Establishing SNS demonstration sites to identify adoptive management methods and community approaches for using SNSs to contribute to bio-cultural conservation;
- 3) Publishing a Chinese book on SNS culture and biodiversity conservation – reporting case studies from Yunnan and recommendations for policy action.

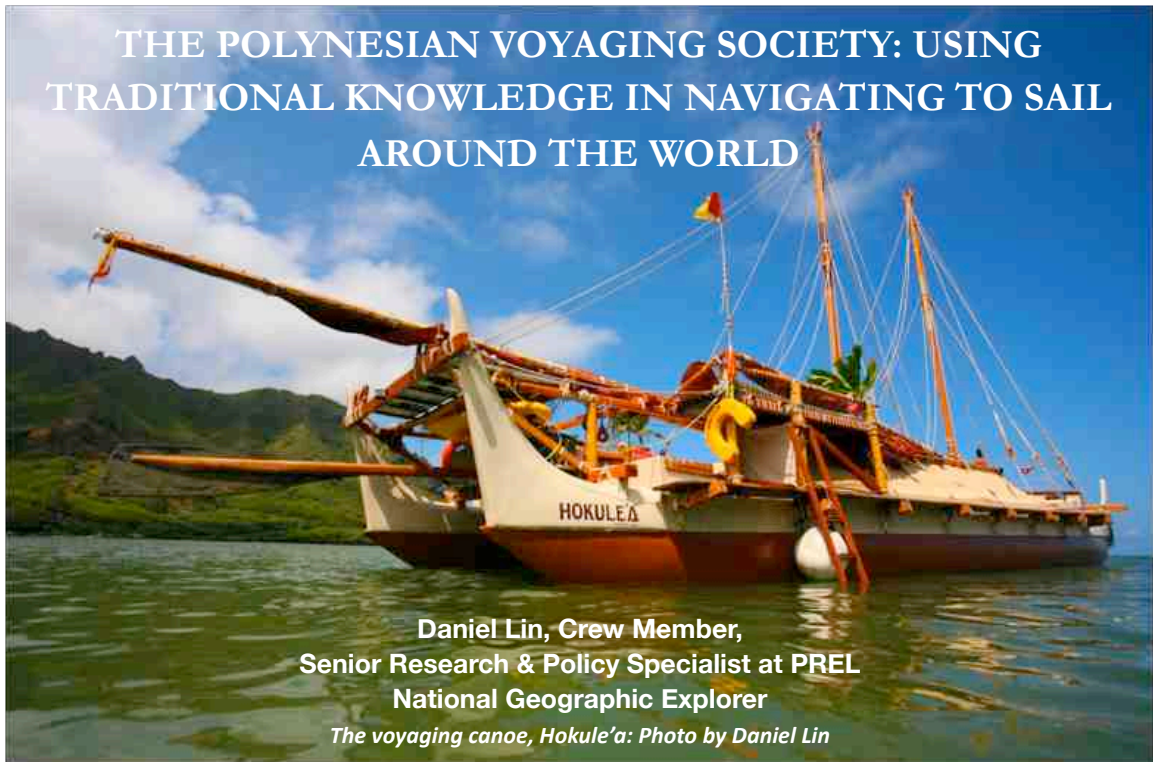
The implementation agency for the project is the Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The research team leaders are: Prof. Pei Shengji (email: peishengji@mail.kib.ac.cn),

Dr. Liu Aizhong (email: liuaizhong@mail.kib.ac.cn).

For more information on the project, please contact Mr. Yang Zhiwei (email: zhiwei@mail.kib.ac.cn)

THE POLYNESIAN VOYAGING SOCIETY: USING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN NAVIGATING TO SAIL AROUND THE WORLD



**Daniel Lin, Crew Member,
Senior Research & Policy Specialist at PREL
National Geographic Explorer**
The voyaging canoe, Hokule'a: Photo by Daniel Lin

In the Pacific Island region, one thing that bonds our islands is a history of strong voyaging cultures. Despite being separated by hundreds – sometimes thousands – of miles of water, the ancient peoples of Oceania successfully traversed the seas in the name of trade, diplomacy, war, marriage, etc. In his iconic anthropological study on the voyaging traditions of one particular island – *East Is a Big Bird* – Thomas Gladwin eloquently wrote:

“When a Puluwatan speaks of the ocean the words he uses refer not to an amorphous expanse of water but rather to the assemblage of seaways which lie between the various islands. Together these seaways constitute the ocean he knows and understands.”

What makes the past voyagers of Oceania truly unique was their ability to sail for days and make landfall without the use of any navigational instruments other than their natural surroundings. Though this may seem novel and unbelievable for any kind of voyager today, it was commonplace for Pacific Islanders to chart a celestial course from one island to another. In fact, in many ways, ancient Oceanic people were the astronauts of their time.

Sadly, today, knowledge of non-instrument navigation (or ‘wayfinding’) has dwindled to the point of near extinction. Only very few pockets of people (mostly living in Micronesia) still manage to integrate this knowledge into their everyday lives. In Polynesia, more and more island nations are forming their own voyaging societies, in which they are attempting to “reclaim” the knowledge and skills of their ancestors. This movement originated with one particular group: the Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS) based in Hawai‘i and the voyaging canoe, Hokule‘a.

Starting in May of 2014, PVS will embark on a three-year sail around the world, using wayfinding as the primary mode of navigation. At its core, this voyage is about linking traditional knowledge with western science, to prove that the marriage between these two realms is not only possible, but mutually beneficial. Another major pillar for this voyage is the idea of environmental stewardship. To this end, the canoes will sail to as many of the world’s Marine Protected Areas, Big Ocean Sites, and UNESCO Marine World Heritage Sites as possible. Currently there are 22 potential sites that are on the sail plan and our hope is to highlight the stories of conservation around each one – through photos, videos, and other forms of digital storytelling. With official partners such as National Geographic, UNESCO, and Google, this event now has the potential to reach audiences the likes of which Pacific Islanders have never done before.

Ultimately, this voyage encompasses so many aspects that the CSVPA stands for and works to preserve. While safely journeying across the globe is of the utmost importance, PVS leadership and crew all know that this is one of the unique opportunities in history where Oceanic culture, values, and knowledge will get its turn to be at the forefront of global discussions. One can only hope that this will encourage even more people around the world to look towards their ancestors for guidance and hybrid techniques to address the complex problems of today and tomorrow.

For more information, the following links connect to some personal contributions to PVS’s voyage, wayfinding, and Oceanic culture in general:

<http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2013/11/19/traditional-skills-to-confront-tomorrows-challenges/>

<http://newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2014/01/21/hokulea-getting-ready-for-the-voyage-of-a-lifetime/>

Indonesian Body of Ulama (top Muslim clerical body) has issued a fatwa against illegal wildlife trafficking

Rianne C. ten Veen

Head of Research - Osman Consulting Ltd.

Indonesia, the country with the world's largest Muslim population, now has a *fatwa* (a religious edict) declaring illegal hunting or illegal trading of endangered species to be *haram* (forbidden). While not legally binding in Indonesian secular law, the fatwa is firmly based on Islamic law and tradition and is binding within that context. Issued by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI), its top Muslim clerical body, it does carry significant cultural and religious weight, giving strong guidance to Indonesia's Muslim population on how wildlife protection fits in with their core beliefs and values.

Invoking passages from the Qu'ran, the fatwa requires Indonesia's 200 million Muslims to take an active role in protecting and conserving endangered species, including tigers, rhinos, elephants, and orang-utans. "This fatwa is issued to give an explanation, as well as guidance, to all Muslims in Indonesia on the Sharia law perspective on issues related to animal conservation," said Hayu Prabowo, chair of the MUI's environment and natural resources committee. "People can escape government regulation," Hayu said, "but they cannot escape the word of God."

It is not the first environmental fatwa. For example, in 1992, in response to the growing use of imported rhino horn for making ceremonial *jambiya* (daggers), the Grand Mufti of Yemen issued a fatwa against killing animals unless for meat or self-protection. In 2006 – 2007 the MUI issued a fatwa on illegal logging and illegal mining, via its regional council in Kalimantan region, Sumatra. This was followed in 2011 by an Indonesian national fatwa on environmentally friendly mining.

The *fatwa* was partly inspired in September 2013 by a field trip to Sumatra for Muslim leaders. During a community dialogue with village representatives to discuss conflicts between villagers and elephants and tigers, some of the villagers asked about the status of animals in Islam.

The Muslim leaders replied: "They are creations of God, as we are. It is *haram* to kill them, and keeping them alive is part of the worship of God." Verse 38 in Chapter 6 of the Qu'ran for example states: "And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except that they are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book (of Our decrees). Then unto their Lord they will be gathered."

Hayu Prawobo emphasizes that the fatwa applies not only to individuals but also to the government, noting that corruption can be an issue when wildlife, forests, and the interests of such industries as the oil palm business are involved. The fatwa specifically calls upon the government to review permits issued to companies that harm the environment and to take measures to conserve endangered species.

The fatwa comes at a time when transnational wildlife crime has reached unprecedented levels, with special burdens on countries including Indonesia that are still rich in rare or unusual wildlife and plants. It comes at a time, too, when governments are struggling to adopt laws and pay for enforcement to fight criminal wildlife trafficking syndicates that are increasingly sophisticated and violent. The MUI hopes its fatwa will help reduce wildlife trafficking. The MUI's action is a response to a concern for the country's ecosystems rather than any Islamic practices involving wildlife.

More info:

<http://www.arcworld.org/news.asp?pageID=689>

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/03/140304-fatwa-indonesia-wildlife-trafficking-koran-world>

Indonesian Council of Ulama (Indonesian) <http://mui.or.id>

More info on the 1992 Yemen fatwa: <http://www.almotamar.net/en/2163.htm>

More info on the 2011 environmentally friendly mining fatwa:

<http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/74166/mui-fatwa-on-environment-normative-reference>

A copy of the full text of the fatwa on endangered species is available from:

http://awsassets.wwf.or.id/downloads/fatwa_balance_ecosystem_eng_final.pdf

VIEWS

MAKING THE WORK OF THE CSVPA MORE CREDIBLE: ART AND TRADITION AS SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

Part I

Edwin Bernbaum
Co-Chair, CSVPA

Art and story, especially those of traditional cultures, do more than express values and evoke emotional responses to nature. They can change the way we see the world and reveal important aspects of reality that science misses, operating as science does primarily through objective observations, repeatable experiments, theoretical concepts, and simplified models. In particular, works of art and stories can give us a fuller, richer, and deeper experience of what is actually there in its concrete uniqueness and immediacy. This deeper, more immediate experience of reality provides the basis for knowledge of the natural world and lies at the heart of what connects people to nature, arouses emotions, creates and affirms values, and motivates conservation.

If the CSVPA gives the appearance of focusing on values to the neglect of meaning and knowledge, we run the risk of inadvertently undermining efforts to be taken seriously by scientists and protected area managers. An apparent focus primarily on values plays into tendencies to dismiss such approaches to environmental conservation as folkloristic icing on the cake, having to do primarily with how people feel about nature, rather than having anything to do with what is actually there. Many scientists and protected area managers place great value on knowledge that is objective and free of values. If traditional views of nature are only about values, then they are considered merely subjective and have little use as valid sources of knowledge about the world and what needs to be done to protect the environment. They can be easily relegated to entertaining stories, picturesque ceremonies, and edifying works of art that provide a colorful backdrop to the real work of environmental conservation.

Art and story can open us to direct knowledge and experience of nature from which science tends to keep us at a remove, with its emphasis on acquiring objective knowledge by separating the subject or observer from the object of observation. This difference in approach to knowledge is comparable to two kinds of knowing distinguished in the two verbs "to know" in Spanish – *saber* and *conocer*. The first kind of knowing, exemplified in *saber* and corresponding to scientific knowledge, is knowing about something or someone. The second kind, exemplified in *conocer* and corresponding to artistic and traditional knowledge, is knowing something or someone experientially. We can talk about knowing things about a person versus knowing that person personally: *yo sé que él es Norte Americano, pero no lo conozco* – I know that he is North American, but I don't know him personally. Each kind of knowing has its uses. For the fullest and richest possible knowledge of nature, we need both kinds of knowing – scientific on the one hand and traditional and artistic on the other, each one correcting and enhancing the other.

The second kind of knowledge, expressed in the verb *conocer*, is important for conservation since it establishes an intimate connection with nature that motivates people to care for and protect the environment. Works of art and traditional views of natural features help to overcome the subject-object dichotomy that separates us from nature and rationalizes environmental destruction and desecration in the today's predominantly economic world. This is not a matter of being merely subjective, but rather one of evoking subjective experiences of an objective reality that reveals aspects of what is actually there that are not accessible to a purely objective approach to knowledge.

BY THE CSVPA CO-CHAIRS

UPDATE ON CSVPA

Edwin Bernbaum and Bas Verschuuren

We are pleased to give you all a brief update about what CSVPA (https://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gpap_home/gpap_people/gpap_tilcepa/gpap_spiritual/) has been up to over the past year and where we are currently heading. We are Edwin Bernbaum from the USA and Senior Fellow with the Mountain Institute (<http://www.mountain.org/senior-fellows>) and Bas Verschuuren from The Netherlands and Coordinator for the Sacred Natural Sites Initiative (<http://sacrednaturalsites.org/items/bas-verschuuren/>). Ed has replaced Robert Wild from the UK, who is now working with the IUCN Secretariat in Nairobi but has committed to stay on as a member of our steering committee. The steering committee has seen two new members come on board: Radhika Borde from India, a PhD Candidate at Wageningen University (<http://www.wageningenur.nl/en/project/Sacred-Land-and-the-Politics-of-Voice.htm>) and editor of this newsletter and Will Tuladhar-Douglas, from Scotland and Nepal who is a Lecturer and Senior Scientist at Aberdeen University (<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/anthropology/staff/details.php?id=w.t.douglas>). Together with Josep-Maria Mallarach from Catalunya, Thymio Papayannis from Greece, and Vita de Waal from France, the aforementioned people make up the current CSVPA leadership and are looking forward to continue making waves of change.

It waves start out small, some grow bigger over time. Over the past few years CSVPA has been able to generate a lot of enthusiasm for the conservation of sacred natural sites. Following amongst other publications, the publication of the Best Practice Guidelines on Sacred Natural Sites, the work of the Delos Initiative (www.med-ina.org/delos) and the Sacred Natural Sites Initiative (www.sacrednaturalsites.org) have continued to develop and support much needed work in this area.

One of the publications that has contributed to further this area of work http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gpap_home/gpap_capacity2/gpap_bpg/710060/Sacred-Natural-Sites---Guidelines-for-Protected-Area-Managers

We are now developing ideas for focusing our work in two other key areas:

- The first is for CSVPA to make a contribution at the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia (www.worldparkscongress.org) in November this year. The previous Congress held in Durban, South Africa, in 2003 adopted many of the recommendations by our then newly born Specialist Group, which at the time was named the Task Force on Immaterial Values of Protected Areas. As an advisory body to the World Commission of Protected Areas, we have come a long way since then, with lasting impact on protected areas, and we aim to expand on that legacy with new ideas and projects.
- The second key area focuses on ways that allow us to expand our legacy into developing workshops for protected area managers and innovative training modules for online learning, along with developing a new volume of the WCPA Best Practice Guidelines that will look broadly at the role of the cultural and spiritual significance of nature in protected area management and governance.

Over the past year we have also worked with the IUCN World Heritage Programme on ways of using the special expertise of CSVPA members on the cultural and spiritual significance of nature and have submitted to the Programme a list of those of you who have expressed interest in doing evaluations and reviews of proposed and existing World Heritage sites. We hope this will lead to greater attention to the spiritual and cultural importance of natural features and landscapes in natural as well as cultural World Heritage sites

We take pride in operating as a network of volunteers and we value the contributions that each of you is willing and able to make, however large or small. This work has received recognition from our parent organisation, the World Commission on Protected Areas or IUCN (itself operating on a voluntary basis), where we are among the more active and productive Specialist Groups. We very much appreciate your initiative, enthusiasm, and energy in making this newsletter a reality, and we hope it will help you in your work and play an active role in sharing your experiences and ideas with other members of the CSVPA.

Human Rights and... the Environment

Vita de Waal

Director Foundation for GAIA, Chair WG on Cultural Heritage and Sacred Sites

The Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (HRC) are independent human rights experts with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. The system of Special Procedures is a central element of the United Nations human rights machinery and covers all human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political, and social. As of 1 January 2013 there are 36 thematic and 12 country mandates.



Many States now incorporate a right to a healthy environment in their constitutions. Many questions about the relationship of human rights (HR) and the environment remain unresolved, however, and require further examination.

As a result, in March 2012 the Human Rights Council decided to establish a mandate on human rights and the environment, which will (among other tasks) study the human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and promote best practices relating to the use of human rights in environmental policymaking.



Mr John Knox was appointed in August 2012 to a three-year term as the first Independent Expert (IE) on human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. In his first Report to the HRC he sets out the framework for his mandate in [A/HRC/22/43](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/189/72/PDF/G1218972.pdf?OpenElement) <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/189/72/PDF/G1218972.pdf?OpenElement> while in report [A/HRC/25/53](http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G12/189/72/PDF/G1218972.pdf?OpenElement) the IE maps human rights obligations relating to the environment, on the basis of an extensive review of global and regional sources. The IE describes procedural obligations of States to assess environmental impacts on human rights, to make environmental information public, to facilitate participation in environmental decision-making, and to provide access to

remedies for environmental harm. He describes States' substantive obligations to adopt legal and institutional frameworks that protect against environmental harm that interferes with the enjoyment of human rights, including harm caused by private actors. Finally, he outlines obligations relating to the protection of members of groups in vulnerable situations, including women, children and indigenous peoples.



The **Universal Periodic Review - UPR** is a unique process which involves a review of the human rights records of all UN Member States. The UPR is a Human Rights Council (HRC) driven process, which assesses the actions States have taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries and to fulfil their human rights obligations. The UPR is designed to ensure equal treatment for every country when their human rights situations are assessed. The ultimate aim of this mechanism is to improve the human rights situation in all countries and address human rights violations wherever they occur.



HRC Complaints Procedure The complaint procedure addresses communications submitted by individuals, groups, or NGOs that claim to be victims of human rights violations or that have direct, reliable knowledge of such violations.

Like the former 1503 procedure, it is confidential, with a view to enhance cooperation with the State concerned. The new complaint procedure has been improved, where necessary, to ensure that the procedure be impartial, objective, efficient, victims-oriented and conducted in a timely manner.

For more information, visit: <http://ngo-connect.org/complaints-procedures/> and <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/>

Next Issue: Cultural Rights

Upcoming Events

April 2014

The Forum Islamic Perspectives on Ecosystem Management, will be organised by Qur'anic Botanic Garden and IUCN's Commission on Ecosystem Management, from 22nd - 24th April, 2014 in Doha, Qatar.

The Forum will gather specialists in Islam and other faiths, ecologists, ecosystem managers, scholars, and other relevant disciplines to exchange ideas and experiences about future programs to serve the objectives of the Qur'anic Botanic Garden and the Commission on Ecosystem Management.

The CEM contribution to the Forum will explore broader relationships between faith, spirituality and the natural environment and how this relationship can provide a basis for healing and conservation. At least two members of our SG will participate: Gonzalo Oviedo, senior advisor staff of IUCN on cultural heritage, and Josep-Maria Mallarach, member of the Steering Committee, and joint-coordinator of The Delos Initiative.

June 2014

The International Society of Ethnobiology Congress, will be held in Bumthang (Central Bhutan) from 1-7 June 2014. More information at www.isecongress2014bhutan.org

September 2014

The 7th Conference of the Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP): "Local action for the common good", will be held in Costa Rica 8-12 September 2014.

In addition to the ESP working group sessions, the conference will present examples of Ecosystem Services practices in Community Based Ecosystem Management from several EU funded projects in the region.

The local organiser is Fundacion Neotropica in collaboration with CATIE, Universidad Nacional and IUCN-CEM Meso-America.

For information on the conference: <http://www.esconference.org> For information on ESP: www.es-partnership.org

FIRST PLAN TO INTEGRATE PILGRIMAGE ROUTES INTO PARK MANAGEMENT IN THE PYRENEES MOUNTAINS

Josep-Maria Mallarach

Silene Association Coordinator

During summer 2013, the Silene Association studied around 20 aplecs (a type of small pilgrimage with a significant identity value for local communities) held in L'Alt Pirineu Natural Park, the largest park on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees Mountains, and its socio-economic area of influence.

This work embraced the natural, social, cultural and spiritual dimensions of these popular events that take place in areas of outstanding natural beauty. The project, partially funded by the Department of Agriculture and Natural Environment of Catalonia, and co-financed by European Funds, aimed to analyze the intangible heritage of these popular events, and to improve the ability of key stakeholders to maintain and revitalise them.

A workshop held at the Centre d'Art i Natura of Farrera generated a participatory framework between the main stakeholders of the aplecs and members of the Silene team, which helped to draw the conclusions and recommendations presented to the Park managers last February.

You may get more information from:

<http://www.silene.es/noticiaAmpliada.asp?IdNoticia=77>

VARIOUS

Silene Documentation Centre contains resources and documents on the world's intangible spiritual and cultural heritage and its relevance on a local to international scale to the conservation of natural heritage.

Currently it has about 250 documents on management, planning, strategy, reflections on nature and spirituality, reflections on science and nature, information and awareness from all over the world. About one hundred documents can be downloaded directly from the Silene website, whereas some 90 external links allow for the downloading of the remaining documents through different web pages. Documents are very diverse, including books, papers, conferences, recommendations, conclusions, declarations, resolutions, motions, presentations, etc.

This service is provided in the three official languages of IUCN – English, Spanish, French, plus Catalan, and includes documents in their original languages, accompanied by translations whenever possible.

It is a resource of the Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas of the World Commission on Protected Areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). More info: www.silene.es

The annual **Conference of the European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO)** included an experts meeting about Sacred Sites and the role they play in fostering education for sustainable peace and dialogue. Venue: Ohrid, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 1-6 April 2014. More information: <http://www.euroclio.eu/new/index.php/2014-ohrid>

The KAICIID Dialogue Centre held an exploratory meeting of experts. This was a consultative step for its potential future work in the field of heritage sites of religious significance. The theme of the meeting was the preservation and protection of the sacred character of these sites, as well as their potential contribution to education, peace and dialogue. This convening of experts and educators offered a multi-faceted reflection on the question "How Can We Share our Cultural Heritage?" Participants were an international array of history, heritage and citizenship education professionals from the Balkans, Europe, the Middle East and beyond. Josep-Maria Mallarach and Vita de Waal, Steering Committee members of SG CSVPA, participated in the expert meeting.