United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization

the new Courier

April 2004

Small islands Big issues

Talking to biologist Chris Thomas

Bam: the future of the Iranian citadel

Endangered: the world's Great Apes

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7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France
Tel: 33 1 45 68 46 85
Fax: 33 1 45 68 56 52
Email: unesco.courier@unesco.org
Internet: http://www.unesco.org/courier

Editor in Chief: Sue Williams
Assistant Editor-in-Chief: Monique Perrot-Lanaud
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Editions produced away from headquarters:
Michiko Tanaka
Artistic direction: Jean-Francis Cheriez
Production: Gérard Prosper, Eric Frogé
Photoengraving: Annick Coueffé
Distribution: Michel Ravassard
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Vincent Defourny, Fiona Ryan-Jacqueron

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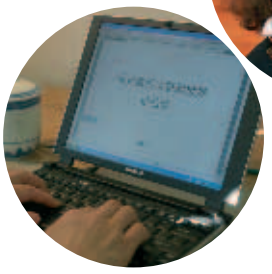
Next September, experts, civil society and government representatives will meet in Mauritius to assess the health of the world's small island developing states. The meeting follows up a conference held in Barbados in 1994, which listed 15 areas where these islands are exceptionally vulnerable and where national, regional and international action was felt to be urgent. Has the situation improved in the ten years that have lapsed? Journalist Peter Coles travelled out to the Pacific for *the new UNESCO Courier* to see how island populations in that part of the world are coping with the changes being brought about by climate change and rising sea levels, for example, or increasing urbanization with its impact on traditional lifestyles and cultures, AIDS and mass tourism. The resulting dossier, presented in this issue, indicates that while paradise is perhaps not lost, the challenges facing island inhabitants are still daunting than ever.

Daunting also the scenario presented in the interview with Chris Thomas, the lead author of the most comprehensive study ever done on the effect that climate change is likely to have on biodiversity; a study that foresees mass extinctions, perhaps on par with the event that wiped out the dinosaurs. Among the species under immediate threat – this time from habitat destruction, civil war, hunting and poaching – are humanity's closest relatives, the Great Apes, which are the subject of the photo reportage in this issue's Zoom. An international effort, to which UNESCO has lent its weight, is underway to save the world's gorillas, chimpanzees, orangutangs and bonobos. If it fails, say the experts, the Great Apes could disappear within 50 years.

If these articles sound alarms and signal the need for action, other stories in this issue provide proof of the human brilliance and ingenuity that will be needed to solve the problems facing our societies. The work of Christine Petit, one of the five laureates of this year's L'Oréal-UNESCO "For Women in Science" Awards, is a source of hope for millions of deaf people around the world. Inspiring also, is the way that the international community has pulled together to help the beleaguered population of historic Bam in Iran, following the devastating earthquake that destroyed much of this remarkable site last December. UNESCO is working with the Iranian authorities and many other partners on the ancient city's possible reconstruction. Similarly encouraging is UNESCO's Initiative BABEL which is working to develop the use of all languages and scripts in modern communication technology, including the internet, both breaking down communications barriers, celebrating our extraordinary cultural diversity… and showing what can be done when there there is the will to make change happen.

Sue Williams

UNESCO in action



CHRIS THOMAS

NOWHERE TO RUN

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Left: Under threat, The *King Protea*, South Africa's national flowers.

Right: For Professor Chris Thomas, species rarely evolue quickly enough to adapt to climate change.

More than one million species could disappear as a result of climate change expected to take place by 2050. UNESCO speaks with Chris Thomas, lead author of the most comprehensive study on this looming crisis

The new Courier: What sets this study apart from the rest?

Chris Thomas: For a number of years, scientists have been chatting about whether species might be driven to extinction by climate warming. But for the first time, we have asked how many species on Earth are going to be or might be lost to global warming. Perhaps the most important thing we've done is to put together a framework to analyze the problem and even to suggest that it is possible to analyze it.

Did you encounter any political resistance, perhaps when applying for funding?

There wasn't any resistance because there wasn't any funding for the collaboration. We just did it. About two years ago, the IUCN (World Conservation Union) sponsored a couple of workshops to discuss the impact of climate change on conservation. A group of us got talking and before long we had a network of teams around the world that were already building databases on species patterns in their own countries. There was funding in the sense that our salaries were paid. But there was no money to collect or analyze the data.

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You describe the report's findings as "terrifying". Yet aren't these figures underestimates because the study didn't include habitation loss due to deforestation, for example?

We thought about trying to include that but we soon ran into problems over both the quality and comparability of data for land use in different parts of the world. There was nothing wrong with any of the studies but they were done in slightly different ways. We didn't have the time or the resources to spend the many months required to get all of the data in the same format.

It would be extremely desirable now to put together some international funding to project the combined effect of changes from climate and land use.

Are we talking about the next wave of massive extinctions comparable to that caused in the past by volcanoes or asteroids?

There are the so-called Big Five extinctions, the best known being the event that wiped out the dinosaurs. Even for these mass extinctions, we don't know how many of the extinctions occurred by the initial triggering event - be it the impact of meteorites or volcanic explosions - and how many were caused by climatic fluctuations that immediately followed.

There were also quite a lot of smaller extinction events. What we are doing with greenhouse gases, in combination with habitat destruction, will certainly put us at par with one of those events. The question is whether it will rank alongside the Big Five. It doesn't have to happen, but it could.

Why didn't we see this looming crisis sooner?

One has to take an international perspective, and it is not that easy to put together international-scale studies. For example, you can have an excellent detailed study on how species might disappear or spread in Britain. But you need the international perspective to see that some species won't have anywhere to run.

Our report is about as dry as we could make it. Yet many people said, 'Oh! You're being very alarmist.' In fact, they are alarmed by the numbers reported. So am I.

How do you respond to the naysayers of climate change?

The naysayers are having a disproportionately loud voice. Like so many issues in the media, you get reports that have one person defending an argument and another tearing it down for the sake of supposed balance, despite the fact

that more than 99% of experts believe one view and only a small fraction of a percent believe the second view. We have simply built on what the vast majority of climatologists are saying. That does not mean that there are no great uncertainties, which the climatologists acknowledge.

We are not in a state of fiction, imagining the possible future. In this study, we are fast-forwarding the phenomena already observed to be underway. The rising temperatures of the past 30 to 40 years clearly indicate the signature of anthropogenic climate warming. We know this has affected the distribution of plants and animals across the world.

Some people criticize your report by arguing that animals and plants will adapt to climate change.

Of course they can. But very rarely can species evolve far and fast enough, especially with rapid climate change. The absolute overwhelming evidence shows that as the climate changes – be it in the past 30 years or far back in geological time – species do not to stay put and adapt. They move.

If you are an animal or plant and the climate starts to change, you may start to adapt. But your population will still decline if you don't have enough genetic variation to evolve and keep up with the rate of environmental change. In the meantime, let's say a competing species arrives, which is better adapted to the new environment. You lose.

In recent years, there has been considerable debate as to whether conservation agencies should focus on protecting biodiversity hotspots, or areas exceptionally rich in unique plant and animal species. You go beyond this and take conservation into the arena of greenhouse gas emissions.

It must be said, without a hint of criticism in my voice, that the conservation agencies have put more effort on treating the symptoms of what is happening to biodiversity rather than removing the causes, because the ultimate causes are so difficult to deal with. The only viable conservation strategy, in the face of climate change, is for everyone concerned to start putting immense pressure on politicians so that we end up with one of the least damaging climate scenarios, rather than one of the worst.

The golden toad in Monteverde in Costa Rica is the perfect example. Here was a species living on top of a mountain in an entirely protected area. Every last one of these frogs disappeared after the recent drought and the lifting of cloud levels.

I personally think that these biodiversity hotspots might be in particular risk of extinction for two reasons. First, they contain lots of species in a relatively small area. And if they are asked to move, it is less likely the future distribution will resemble the current one.

Second, remember that for the last 10,000 years, we have been in the warm phase of an ice age. In fact, we are experiencing one of the warmest moments in the last million years. Now we see a lot of species living in these so-called hotspots. Not all of my colleagues would agree but I think many of these species and environments are likely to have been more widespread when the climate was cooler. The plants and animals have managed to hang on, to survive, by concentrating in very small and unique environments.

What happens if we drive up the temperature during one of the warmest moments in the last million years? Imagine a small tropical mountain like Monteverde, with some species found only right near the top. 15,000 years ago, they would have lived further down. If the climate becomes substantially warmer, they might get pushed off the top. There's nowhere left to go.

Greenhouse ghosts

According to a new study led by Chris Thomas, professor of conservation biology at Leeds University, climate change is expected to drive a quarter of land animals and plants into extinction. More than one million species could disappear.

Thomas and his team, reportedly the largest global collaboration of experts to study this problem, focused on six biodiversity-rich regions around the world representing 20% of the planet's land area. They began by considering how three different scenarios from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change would change the habitats of 1103 plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, frogs, butterflies and other invertebrates. They then evaluated the ability of each species to either adapt or move to a more suitable area. In the mid-range forecast, 15 to 37% of species studied would be extinct. At the high end, as many as 58% could disappear. In the best of the three scenarios, we would lose at least 9% of species.

© Fogden Wildlife Photographs

Above: Gone forever, the golden toad of Monteverde (Costa Rica), became extinct after a prolonged drought

Right: From tropical Queensland (Australia), the Boyd lezard-dragon is equipped with an internal thermostat and is particularly vulnerable to climate change

© Stephen E. Williams

You predict that entire biological communities will disappear. Have we seen this before?

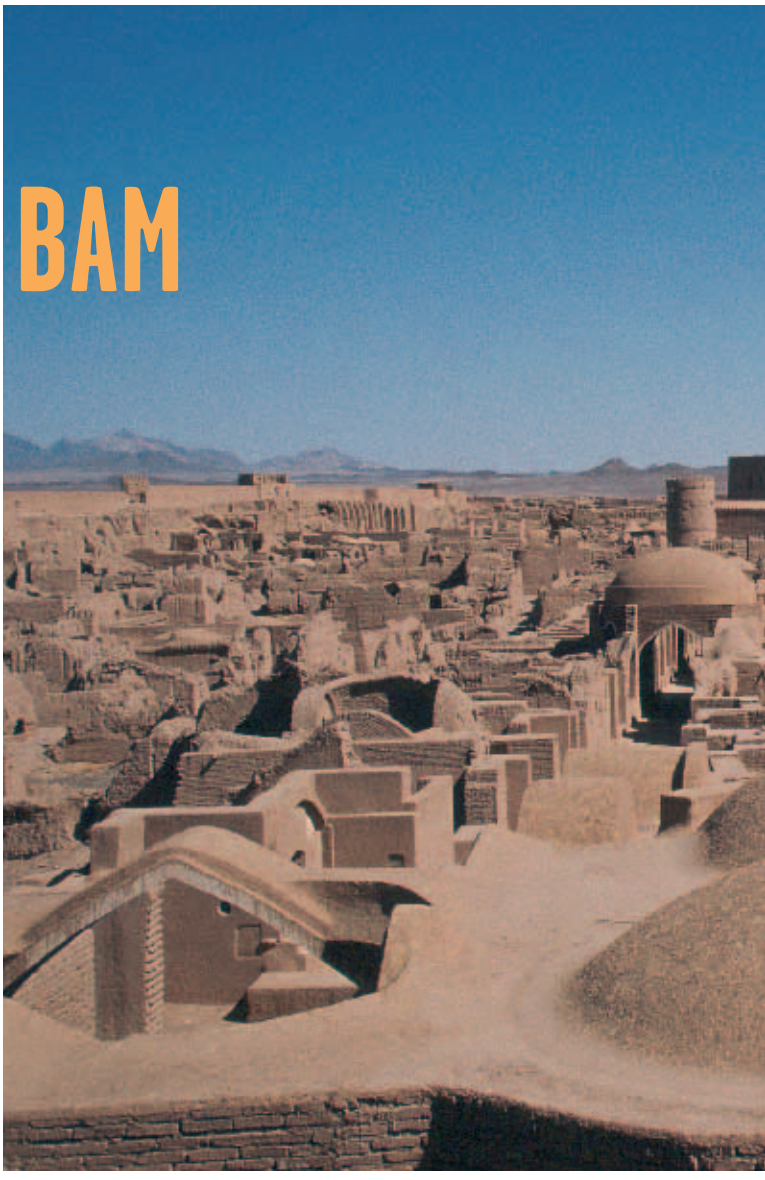
Not on a global scale in recent history. We are causing a major extinction event. Does it matter? From a scientific perspective, we know that in the past it has taken millions of years before biodiversity recovered from mass extinctions. Anyone concerned about the environment is likely to be worried by this.

But we should not think that climate change will only affect biodiversity. Last summer in France, it was estimated that more than 15,000 people died because of the heat wave. In the second half of this century, we could be talking about hundreds of millions of people displaced by flooding in delta areas around the world.

What is good for biodiversity, is likely also to be good for people – at least in the long run. The normal argument that some economists put up is, 'Well, we cannot afford to change all of our technologies and hinder the growth of our carbon-based economies." Well, Britain signed the Kyoto Protocal, even though that is a very minor first step, and has been one of the better international players on this issue. Quoting from Sir David King, UK's Chief Science Advisor, between 1990 and 2000, UK greenhouse gas emissions fell by 12% while the economy grew by 30% and employment rose by just under 5%. Remember that the UK has been competing with other economies with fewer controls in place. There is no other route, at least in the long run.

GLIMMERS OF HOPE IN BAM

In the wake of the destruction, despair and nearly 30,000 deaths caused by the recent earthquake, the ancient Iranian city of Bam is starting to look forward to a possible reconstruction



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At five in the morning on December 26, 2003, the earth shook with tremendous violence for 12 seconds in south-eastern Iran, some 1,200 kilometres from Tehran. The earthquake, which registered 6.3 on the Richter scale, claimed the lives of over 40,000 people and left a further 75,000 homeless; the citadel of Bam (Arg-e-Bam), the largest adobe fortress in the world and the quake's epicentre, is now little more than dust and debris.

Those who were in Bam in the days following the catastrophe speak of "destruction on a scale that is hard to describe," of a city that "looked like Ground Zero." Yet even as the most pressing needs of survivors were being met, the possibility of repairing this jewel of Iran's heritage began to take shape.

The citadel that used to stand within the Old City of Bam, which adjoins a new city by the same name, is 300 metres long and 200 metres wide. Built almost 2,000 years ago, it is a remarkable example of ancient Iranian urban construction, and along with Persepolis the most precious relic of pre-Islamic Persian architecture.

Most of this magnificent site, which last year alone received 100,000 visitors, was destroyed in a matter of seconds. Alongside the illustrious history of Arg-e-Bam (see inset), a vital source of income for the city's inhabitants also vanished: until the earthquake, the citadel had been a major tourist magnet, generating considerable revenues for the entire region.

Even so, despair has not overwhelmed the city completely. There are excellent records detailing many features of the citadel. In addition there is ample technical expertise to hand, since Iran has many well-trained professionals – over the past 30 years Iran's National Council of Monuments

The Bam citadel, largest adobe fortress in the world, in 2001

carried out restoration work on the citadel which it included on its list of protected historical monuments.

"As always in such cases, caution is the only possible strategy," says the architect and UNESCO consultant Hubert Guillaud, a specialist in mud and adobe buildings, "but it is still true that we have very precise records covering the 32 years of work that preceded the destruction of the site. Amongst these documents there is a body of very solid, interesting and highly valuable material that could be used for a possible reconstruction."

Moreover, of the 24 historical monuments that stood outside the citadel of Bam, half can be restored as they have suffered only minor damage.

These factors underpin a restoration plan prepared by UNESCO and the Iranian authorities in the wake of a first expert mission to Bam last February. The first phase will involve reinforcing

A stop on the way

Bam also has a long history as a stopover on the fabled Silk Road. The prosperous trading along the Silk Road and Bam's strategic position close to the Pakistan border made the city extremely rich, as is evident in the opulence of its extraordinary buildings. Most of the Old City , as it stood before the earthquake, dated from the most recent period of reconstruction, carried out by the Safavids between 1502 and 1722. Three protective walls ringed the citadel, which housed mosques, mansions, a bazaar, a caravanserai (merchants' inn) and a residential neighbourhood where most of the city's population lived. A garrison was located in the highest parts of the fortification, along with the Four Seasons Palace (*Chahar Fasl*) and the governor's residence. The citadel was abandoned by its inhabitants for the first time in 1722 following the Afghan invasion, and again in 1810, when it was sacked by guerrilla forces from Shiraz.

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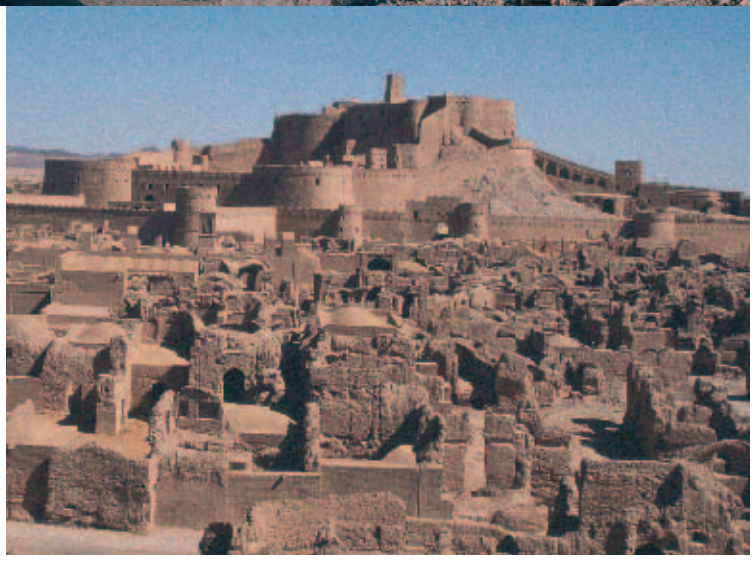

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Above and middle:
Damages caused by the December 2003 earthquake.
Below:
Bam before the earthquake

the structures that are still standing to prevent them from collapsing. Then data will have to be collected and all available information about Arg-e-Bam studied to lay the ground for the reconstruction, which will begin soon after.

The simultaneous inclusion of Bam's citadel on the World Heritage List and the World Heritage in Danger List – in a process similar to that involving the minaret and archaeological remains of Jam, in Afghanistan, in 2002 – would give a much-needed impetus to these plans. "Given that the Iranian government had intended to propose Bam's inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List, we will help in the preparation of the candidacy, which will be presented before the next meeting of the World Heritage Committee in June," declared UNESCO's Director-General, Koïchuro Matsuura.

It is certain that the "restoration of the monuments that suffered the worst devastation will take several years, and will need considerable support and solidarity from the international community," added Matsuura.

Lucía Iglesias Kuntz

SCIENTIST OF THE SENSES

Christine Petit in her office at the Institut Pasteur (France).

Christine Petit, 2004 Laureate of the L'ORÉAL/UNESCO Awards For Women in Science, discusses the impact of her research on the deaf community and the slippery slope of eugenics

The new Courier: How has your perception of deafness changed after your discovery of the genes responsible for this condition?

Christine Petit: I no longer think of deafness in the singular but rather as "deafnesses" comprising different conditions with different consequences. A child born deaf will certainly encounter many difficulties. But with proper support, he or she will lead a happy and rich life. Yet for an adult whose life is built around oral communication, the suffering and anxiety from hearing loss is so severe that it leads to isolation.

■ The Institut Pasteur just signed an agreement allowing a company to use your research to screen newborns for hereditary deafness. A similar test could be developed before birth or prenatally. Are we heading down the slippery slope of eugenics?

When I began this research in 1992, I thought we were sheltered from this problem. There appeared to be about 100 genes linked to deafness and so the chances were slim of quickly developing a

diagnostic test. So I will never forget the shock when we realized in 1997 that a single gene was responsible for almost half the cases of childhood deafness. On top of that, 70 percent of problems linked to this gene were caused by a single mutation. This is a small gene and therefore easy to test for. Technically, it is possible to test prenatally. So I immediately asked for the opinion of the French National Committee for Ethics, which found that deafness alone does not threaten human dignity and therefore doesn't justify terminating a pregnancy.

■ But what do you think about screening embryos for deafness? In July 2003, it was reported that a couple who carry a gene that causes deafness had their in vitro fertilized embryos screened at a fertility clinic in Australia. Apparently, this was the first time any clinic in the world screened embryos for a non-threatening condition.

We have been working with a genetic counselor to help families with hearing loss deal with the diagnostic tools that we might develop. This counselor, a pediatrician, actually grew up in close contact with people with hearing problems and doesn't view deafness simply as a handicap. At this point, only four families have requested prenatal screening but they were also at risk of transmitting serious illnesses. The real problem lies in screening embryos created by in vitro fertilization because this means we would be heading towards embryo selection [and the notion of "designer babies"].

■ How has the deaf community responded to your research?

In the beginning, I was warned that the community would block our work out of fear that our research would lead to eugenic practices and the "eradication of deafness", which some people consider a culture. We never encountered this resistance maybe because we explained our methods and objectives. On the contrary, I think people faced with progressive deafness are following our work with great hope.

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Anything but a petite contribution

Famous for her research on the senses, Christine Petit (of France) identified the one gene responsible for more than half of all cases of congenital deafness. She has also identified the gene responsible for Kallman syndrome, the only hereditary disease causing a total loss of the sense of smell. Professor Petit is the Head of the Genetics of Sensory Deficiencies Unit at Institut Pasteur. In 2002, she became a member of the French Academy of Sciences and the fifth woman to be named Professor at the Collège de France.

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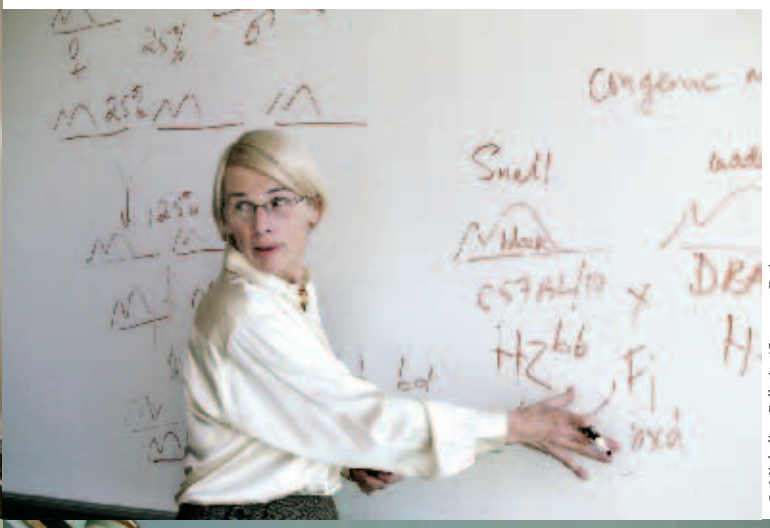

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Awards "for women in science"

Christine Petit is one of the five laureates of the 2004 L'ORÉAL-UNESCO "For Women in Science" Awards. Selected by a jury of 15 eminent members of the scientific community, each of the laureates, from a different region, will receive $100,000 for their outstanding research contributions and their determination to champion the cause of women in science. Professor Petit is joined by: Jennifer Thomson (South Africa), for her development of transgenic plants resistant to viral infections, drought and other risks; Nancy Ip (China), for her discoveries on the molecular control of growth, differentiation and synapse formation in the nervous system; Lucia Mendonça Previato (Brazil), for her achievements in the understanding, treatment and prevention of Chagas disease; Philippa Marrack (U.S.), for her characterization of the functions of T lymphocytes in immunity and the discovery of superantigens. The L'ORÉAL-UNESCO Women in Science Program is a unique public-private partnership designed to recognize the achievements of women scientists and raise the profile of women in science globally. In addition to the awards, about 15 young female researchers are given fellowships each year to continue their work abroad. Created in 1998, the program has awarded 31 prizes and 60 fellowships to women pursuing both the life and physical sciences in 45 countries.

■ For some, deafness is more a culture than a handicap. What do you think?

Young people born deaf often form real communities, structured around a shared language, which is sign language. In the name of this language, some want recognition of a distinct culture. I think this claim stems in large part from the history of the deaf and the abuses by those who can hear. Remember that not so long ago sign language was forbidden and there were the forced sterilizations during the Second World War. Then there was the false hope raised by hearing aids, as deaf people were told, "Your problems are solved!" But in the beginning, these devices were very rudimentary and didn't provide the promised improvements.

■ Do you feel any responsibilities towards this community?

Yes, to inform people about our discoveries and to do everything possible to bridge the gap between testing for deafness and treating it. To do this, we need basic research into the molecular mechanisms of the inner ear's functions.

■ Some people don't like the idea of specifically recognizing women scientists like the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO prize. What do you think?

If women's science awards were to spring up everywhere, like in sports, this prize would simply recognize the differences in scientific performance between men and women. Obviously, this is not my understanding of the L'ORÉAL-UNESCO prize. On the contrary, I think it is a wonderful idea, mainly because it is attributed to a woman from each continent. The prize bears a universal message concerning the advancement of women – progress ▶

Topleft: Jennifer Thomson (South Africa).
Bottomleft: Nancy Ip (Hong-Kong).
Topright: Philippa Marrack (USA).
Bottomright: Lucia Mendonça Previato (Brazil).

Vital statistics

UNESCO's Institute of Statistics has released new research on women pursuing university degrees in science and technology (S&T) in 70 countries. In Ghana, women make up 21 percent of S&T students seeking a bachelor's degree and 14 percent of postgraduates. In Japan, 18 percent of postgraduates are women and the figures fall to 15 percent in New Zealand compared to 38 percent in Turkey. A very different picture emerges in El Salvador, where 50 percent of S&T bachelors students are women and 60 percent of postgraduates. Similar findings are found in Argentina, where women make up 59 percent of S&T postgraduates. To see the data, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001181/118131e.pdf

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Jennifer Thomson in the field: inspecting seed corn with farmers in South Africa

▶ gained not just through the access to knowledge but also through the act of creating knowledge at the highest level. This message gains continuity through the fellowships awarded the young women researchers.

■ What do you think of affirmative action, like quota systems, to try to remove the barriers facing women in science?

By recognizing how institutional structures and rules affect women, we wouldn't need affirmative action. For example, to pursue a high-level scientific career in France, you are supposed to direct a group of researchers by the age of 40. Yet this is when most women have young children. With a bit of flexibility in the system, we wouldn't reject women trying to balance their professional and family lives. We need to pay this same kind of attention when handing out promotions in order to detect the disparities between men and women and to analyze the reasons behind them.

■ What kind of barriers have you encountered?

Years ago, when I told my research director that I was pregnant, I got a violent response. No one would dare respond like that today. Yet we must remain vigilant. We still have a long way to go. Men and women are only starting to share the highest level of responsibilities and decision-making. We have made progress but it is not irreversible. Who knows if we won't slip backwards in the future. At the same time, I think that every woman feels the injuries and humiliations suffered by women in some countries.

■ Some people suggest that research priorities might change with more women in science. What do you think?

Who knows? Would military research be such a priority? Is there such a thing as masculine or feminine research? Clearly, the brain is sexed, like any other organ, but not "scientific truth". It is likely that differences in physiology and cultural perceptions of the world lead men and women to different scientific questions and methods.

In any case, I dream of a world shaped by masculine and feminine creativity, where these differences are not only respected but considered complementary and mutually beneficial.

STANDARDIZATION AT THE SERVICE OF DIVERSITY

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UNESCO is working to increase the presence of different languages on computers and on the internet as part of its effort to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and to support equitable access to information

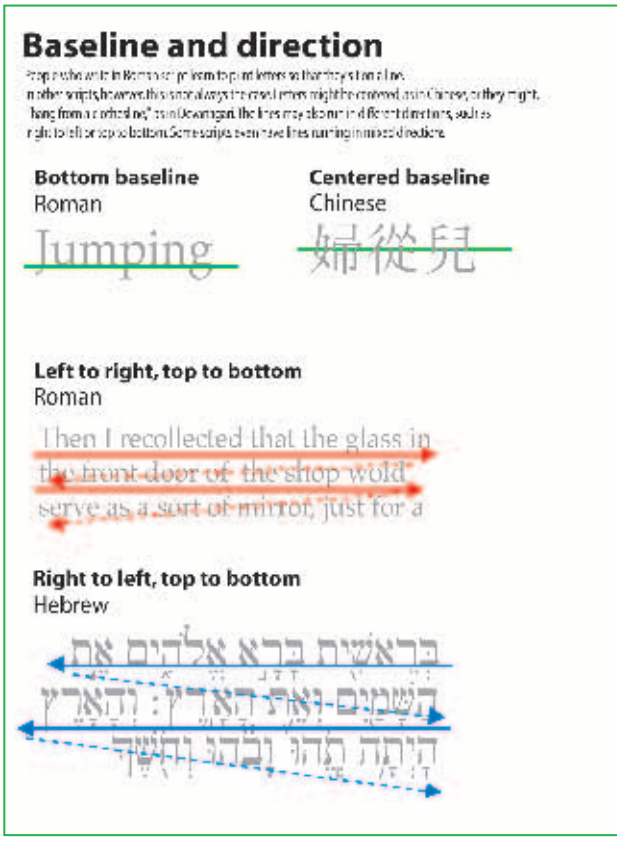
Computers have become indispensable for people wishing to generate, access and share information, communicate and trade. But digital technology was designed primarily by people using Latin scripts, which only serve a fraction of the world's population with its 6,000 recorded languages and 50 odd writing systems.

Software has had to be developed to process, display, send and print not only scripts that go from left to right (as is the case with the European languages), but those that go from right to left (as with Semitic languages and with Mongolian which is, moreover, written vertically). Customized programming has been developed to deal with the specific features of different scripts and languages including, the Latin, Cyrillic, Arabic or Hebrew alphabets, for example, and symbols such as the accents that are common in French and Spanish. Furthermore, in many

A Chinese translator at work. The many thousands of Chinese ideograms are a challenge for computer and software developers.

Diversity in cyberspace

UNESCO's Recommendation on the Promotion and Use of Multilingualism and Universal Access to Cyberspace, a standard setting instrument designed to promote the use of the world's different languages on the internet, was adopted by Member States in late 2003 and presented to the World Summit on the Information Society in December 2003.
Initiative Babel has been working in the field to facilitate the implementation of the principles adopted in the recommendation. For example it sponsored a study on "The Development and Dissemination of Ethiopic Standards and Software Localization for Ethiopia" ahead of the implementation of a multi-million-government computerization project sponsored by the World Bank for Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2003. The UNESCO study examines ways to enable computers to use the millennial Ethiopic script used in Amharic - the official language of the Federal Government of Ethiopia and Tigrigna, the official language of Eritrea – as well as languages in northern Ethiopia, and most of the Semitic languages and some of the Cushitic languages of the region. The study covered the issues of character encoding, keyboard layout, and transliteration of Amharic to the Latin alphabet. (For more see the Babel Website.)



languages letters change shape according to their placement in a word – as is the case in Arabic and Hebrew - or in a sentence (to become capitals) as is the case in Latin and Cyrillic writing.

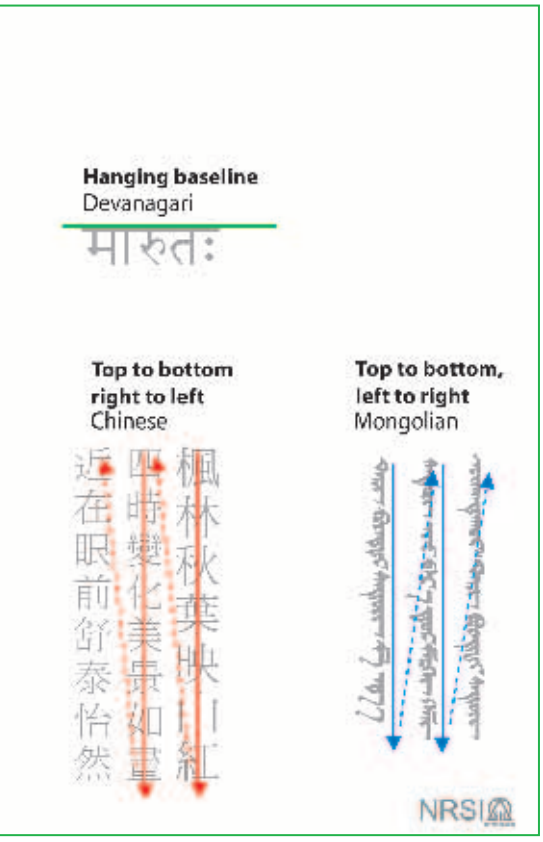
STANDARDIZE TO SAFEGUARD DIVERSITY

Chinese with its thousands of ideograms, or symbols for words, is radically different from alphabet-based scripts. The ideograms pose a challenge in terms of keyboard layout, on screen rendering, printing and searching. In some cases, and in some languages, several systems of writing must be used simultaneously compounding the challenge. This is the case with Japanese, which uses three different writing systems consisting of ideograms, syllabaries, and an alphabet. But Japanese, like many non-European languages, occasionally uses Latin script, which must therefore also be supported by software alongside the script of the language for which it has been developed.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the UNICODE Consortium have developed an ever-growing table, and matching computer codes, for all the letters, signs and symbols used in recognized scripts, addressing the issue of character and symbol recognition and use. UNESCO has been contributing to this standardization work through the Vienna-based International Information Centre for Terminology, Infoterm, which it founded in 1971.

The internet poses its own set of challenges in the quest for respecting diversity through the use of different languages and scripts in digitally-based communication. The growth of the internet has also increased the need for standardization, to ensure that the solutions adopted by various operating systems are compatible and that texts sent from one computer to another are legible. Moreover, standardization is indispensable so that browsers and search engines such as Google recognize queries in different scripts. To facilitate recognition, standardized language tags have been agreed upon and embedded in webpages, to tell the browser which set of characters of signs is to be used. Such tags are, however, not available for all languages.

As far as scripts go, the ISO/UNICODE system currently covers the characters and symbols of some 50 scripts that support at least 244 languages. At present it provides over 100,000 unique codes for characters and symbols. Such standardization is essential for the sharing of



Above: The chart illustrates writing's different directions – from right to left or left to right, horizontally or vertically (Source: www.sil.org)

Guidelines for Writing System Support

In late 2003, UNESCO published "Guidelines for Writing System Support" intended to help in the planning and management of projects that seek to solve the problem of using non-Latin scripts to communicate in the digital environment. The guidelines provide a framework for the development of computer software components that support the diverse languages of the world. It was written primarily for policy makers and professionals, but it also includes introductory technical material. (see the Babel Website).

© Unesco

Right. Technology is allowing certain unwritten languages to enter cyberspace. It is too late for the language of the Zapara people (Ecuador and Peru) whose culture has been proclaimed a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

information between computers, notably on the internet.

UNICODE is supported by "most operating systems, like Microsoft Windows, Apple OS and Linux, which provide the possibility of using the major non-Latin scripts but may not cater for all the symbols in those writing systems and their local variants," explains Paul Hector of UNESCO's Initiative Babel, which seeks to preserve threatened languages and promote multilingualism.

FLEXIBILITY OF THE SOFTWARE

UNESCO has also developed an information and retrieval software application, CDS/ISIS, which can handle different languages and writing systems and is available free of charge. UNESCO promotes the use of "open-source software" and "free software" such as Linux. It has contributed to the development of capabilities for Burmese and several African languages for the internet browser Mozilla, a free-software which is available free-of-charge.

Open source software and operating systems can be more easily adapted for a range of scripts and languages. "Commercial systems on the other hand are generally developed where there is a commercial incentive," explains Davide Storti, of Babel. "Thus there are more software programmes and webpages in Icelandic, a language only spoken by a quarter million people than for the 18 million Hausa speakers of Nigeria."

It will take time to overcome all the barriers that have been preventing some languages from entering the digital age, but the commitment of governments and growing awareness among commercial and non-commercial software developers is encouraging, according to Paul Hector. He further points out that about 20 percent of the world's languages have no written form, but that the multimedia capabilities of today's computers offer new opportunities for their entry into cyberspace and efforts are underway to create standardised writing systems for many of these traditionally oral languages.

Roni Amelan

For more information about UNESCO's Babel Initiative, visit www.unesco.org/webworld/

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SMALL COASTAL CITIES: HISTORICAL AND PIONEERING

Everyone is in favour of sustainable development. But how does it fit into urban planning? Five small historical coastal cities around the Mediterranean served as case studies. First evaluation

On Morocco's Atlantic coast, Essaouira, city in the wind, is a port town with magical charm. For decades, the exceptional site and its intense cultural life have attracted artists and tourists, both Moroccan and foreign. But a slew of problems threatens to destroy the wonderful attributes of the old Mogador: coastal erosion, salt water seeping into the aquifers, depletion of natural resources, overpopulation, rapid socio-economic transformations, dilapidation of buildings – including the famous ramparts filmed by Orson Welles for his "Othello".

Today, the collective will of the municipal and provincial authorities, local associations and a number of foreign partners is in the process of reversing the trend. They were able to combine their efforts when Essaouira in 1997 became the first "case study" city of the Small Historical Coastal Cities Network, launched by UNESCO. Within that framework, ramparts and monuments have been restored, public spaces laid out, and a renovation of the sanitation and rubbish disposal systems is underway. A waste-water treatment plant and a supervised dump are planned.

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© Dominique Harger

Essaouira (Morocco). Left, northern bastion of ramparts. Middle. Ruined houses behind the northern Mellah rampart in the medina

Much remains to be done, as the project evaluator, Algerian geographer Rachid Sidi Boumedine, has noted. He mentions "mixed results" in Essaouira. Tourism has picked up, for example, notably through an increase in real estate transactions, but this economic boost has had perverse side effects, such as driving out the poorest residents to the city limits. Furthermore, the Mellah district, close to the wall, "is still in a state of advanced dilapidation when Essaouira's Medina is included (since 2001) on the World Heritage List."

Nonetheless, a method of operation that associates all concerned actors has been put in place and has created momentum. This inclusive approach is the distinguishing characteristic of the "Urban Development and Freshwater Resources: Small Historical Coastal Cities" project, launched by UNESCO in 1996, aimed primarily at helping these cities to adopt urban planning policies that integrate the four pillars of sustainable development: environmental, economic (based in this case on tourism and highlighting heritage), social and participatory.

The project is currently underway in four other case study cities in the Mediterranean with the same problems as Essaouira: Mahdia (Tunisia), Omišalj (Croatia), Saïda (Lebanon,) and Jableh (Syria). All those involved in the project – architects, urban planners, geologists, hydrogeologists, mayors and UNESCO experts – participated in the project's first evaluation in December 2003, in Essaouira.

What makes these five port cities special is their long, rich history, which goes back to prehistory in the case of Saïda and Mahdia, also former royal capitals, while Omišalj was once a major spiritual centre. They developed on sites that offered plentiful water, a sheltered spot for fishing and then trade, and surrounding fertile land.

Though each has a well-defined identity, all five now face the same challenges: how to restore a historical centre and balance the needs of modern urban development with respect for cultural heritage? Promote tourism as well as protect the environment? Without driving out the inhabitants, but on the contrary enlisting their participation in the process? And take advantage of the opportunity to train local artisans and architecture students? In short, how to create sustainable development on a small city scale?

MULTIPLE PARTNERSHIPS

Because these cities were looking for solutions, they chose to join UNESCO's Small Historical Coastal Cities Network – which gave them a much broader choice of partners. Omišalj, for instance, a small city perched above the Adriatic on the Croatian island of Krk, signed a sustainable development cooperation accord with Taglio di Po (Italy) in 1997. Joining the network in 1998, it became the focus of a study on water resources, nature preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, a joint effort of the Institute of architecture and urban planning of Venice, the Gembloux Agronomy Faculty, and the Zagreb Architecture Faculty in Croatia.

The study also made suggestions that made it possible to act quickly, with the participation of numerous specialists and students from Croatia and other European countries. Since 2000, Omišalj

Left page: Northern facade of the Mahdia (Tunisia) peninsula

Lab-Houses

Destined for destruction, a house in Mahdia, Tunisia, was not only saved, but transformed in 1999 into a 'lab-house' as part of the Small Historical Coastal Cities project, thanks to the commitment of teaching staff at the Nantes School of Architecture in France and the Tunis School of Architecture and Urban Planning, with the support of the Institute of Tunisian Heritage and the Mahdia city authorities.

A 'lab-house' is as much about architectural and technical experimentation as educational and social experimentation and everyone learns there, whether it be architecture students and their teachers, or craftsmen, building site workers and residents. These come to see how the 'experts' plan to solve problems they encounter in their homes.

Like the ever-present dampness, which is solved by «covering the brickwork with waterproof coverings (such as cement or tiles),» the architects from Nantes* explain, «when in fact it is the capillarity which makes the houses constantly damp». The solution actually exacerbates the problem. The traditional Arab lime allows walls to breathe, but why should Tunisian builders want to prepare lime when cement and concrete are readily available to use instead? The solution has come from 'organic architecture' and involves a mix of lime and hemp, providing an innovative answer without breaking with tradition.

A sort of building site school has formed around the first building, where students are surveying houses and investigating the materials and methods used in their construction, as well as collecting the comments of people who have made their lives there**.

In Saida, Lebanon, a building site school was opened in a listed former Ottoman palace in 2003 with a group of students from Beirut and Aix-en-Provence in France, under the leadership of Léon Telvisian, the head of the urban planning department at the Fine Arts Institute at the Lebanese university. «Because it goes from the bottom to the top, this project allows us to ask questions about coordination and participation,» Telvisian said. He is going to repeat the exercise in 2004, and hopes to involve the residents.

*http://www.unesco.org/most/csimahd_01.htm

** *Une médina en transformation: travaux d'étudiants à Mahdia*, Éd. Unesco, 2003, 238 pages. Fax +33 (0) 1 45 68 57 28, b.colin@unesco.org

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has undertaken archeological excavation of the Roman site Fulfinium, restoration work on the paleochristian Mirine Basilica and an inventory of urban heritage, at the same time starting an operation that involves the public.

Commenting on Omišalj, Philippe Pypaert, specialist in UNESCO's Venice office, explains that "beyond responding to a call for technical help, UNESCO has fulfilled its role of catalyst – which is to be effective but also respectful of local culture, and to succeed in promoting development based on local capacities. It did so by enlarging the debate and urging the municipality to take the longer, more demanding road, which was to elaborate a complex, well-defined action plan."

The project's strong point is its great flexibility. The idea is not to apply the same formula everywhere but to allow local actors to come up with their own solutions. In Tunisia, Mahdia's distinguishing feature is a medina built on a peninsula. Since joining the network in 1999, the

Omišalj (Croatia)

© J. Sepcic, Omisalj

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Left: A hammam in Saïda (Lebanon)

city has decided to build its new marina closer to the *sebkha* (coastal saltwater lagoon) instead of on the Punic port, and it has begun to draw up a plan to safeguard and revitalize the Medina. The line of dunes along the coast on the north beach, destabilized by a block of hotels, is now secured with new fencing, making it possible to expand the beach and use the boulevard again. Other projects include a waste-water treatment plant, the creation of wetlands, and the relocation of polluting industries. And Madhia's Demonstration House is one of the project's most original creations (see box).

On the coast of Lebanon, Saïda – the old Sidon – joined the Network in 2001. The first students, French and Lebanese, arrived at its Demonstration House in 2003 (see box) and its seafront boulevard is now a pedestrian promenade, as in Jableh, Syria. The latter, which became a case study city in 2002, plans to set up a training workshop in urban management and regional

A Precursor of Intersectorial Projects

Launched in 1996, the project "Urban development and freshwater resources: small historical coastal cities network" is based on the principles of the Istanbul Declaration (Habitat II, 1996) and the ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites) Charter on Historical Cities. It was initiated thanks to several UNESCO programmes: MOST (Management of Social Transformations), with its network of urban planning experts, and the "Coastal Regions and Small Islands" Unit (CSI), with the participation of the PHI (Programme Hydrologique International) and the World Heritage Centre. It brings together the Science, Social and Human Sciences and Culture sectors. UNESCO's regional offices in Beirut, Rabat and Venice now direct the project's regional implementation.

For more information:
www.xxxx
Contact: b.colin@unesco.org (SHS);
a.suzyumov@unesco.org (CSI)

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Saïda (Lebanon)
Above: Neglected old houses are sub-let to the poorest inhabitants, who live in them in increasingly insalubrious conditions

© Fondation Hariri

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Above lefft: The sea castle, view from the old city
Middle: Passageway to one of the souks

development, while Syrian universities and institutions have begun the first housing surveys.

The project has developed its methodology and capitalized its assets in the course of action, as noted by its evaluator. At the beginning, he says, "European universities did mostly surveys (architectural surveys in Essaouira) and analysed and experimented on a limited scale (Demonstration House in Mahdia)." Then, "they produced an interpretation and made sense of what was going on, as well as formulating action plans (Omišalj). Since then, in Saïda and Jableh, universities are supporting the project by providing training for local participants and by drawing up plans for intervention."

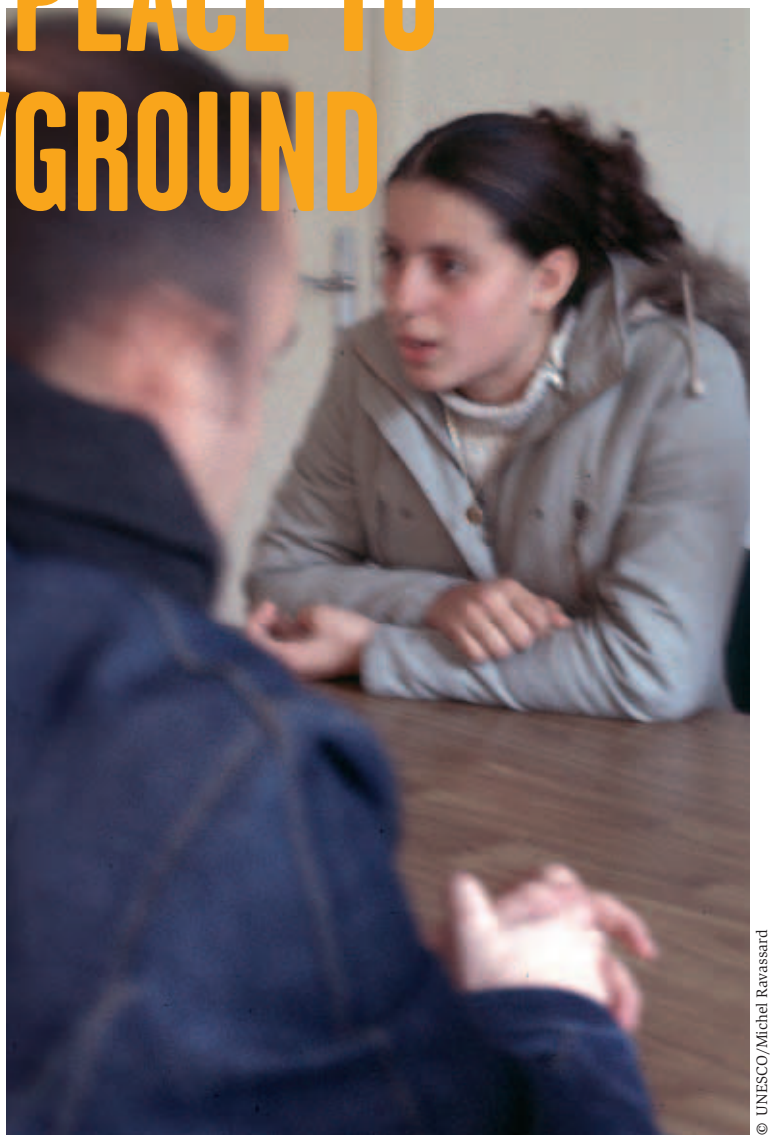
In terms of raising awareness of sustainable development, the impact is obvious, and not just on local authorities. In Croatia, Pypaert is pleased to note "the enormous echo we have encountered in the region." In 2001, for instance, seven administrative units in Krk signed a plan to manage water resources on the island; Rijeka, the capital of the province, is considering creating a sustainable development school and Agenda 21 committees have multiplied along the Croatian coast. In Essaouira, a protest movement formed in October 2003 to oppose a plan to build a hotel complex along the wall.

Six years after its launch, the Small Historical Coastal Cities Network continues to expand. Besides the case study cities, it has two partner cities, Kotor (Serbia-Montenegro) and La Rochelle (France). North and south of the Mediterranean, cities, universities and associations have signed a number of bilateral conventions. At the December evaluation meeting in December 2003, participants were unanimous: "Let's go on!"

Monique Perrot-Lanaud

BRINGING PEACE TO THE PLAYGROUND

Violence in schools has become a global problem. Teaching young people how to resolve their conflicts before they erupt should be part of every school curriculum



© UNESCO/Michel Ravassard

The series of photos was taken in a classroom of 14-year-olds at the Claude Monet school in Argenteuil (Paris suburbs)

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed," states the preamble of UNESCO's Constitution. And what better place to start building these "defences" than at school, in the minds of youth? Such is the thinking underpinning UNESCO's work in the area of peace and non-violence education programmes. Yet how to pass the message when schools themselves can no longer be considered a safe haven from the violence that affects many societies, but rather a foyer for it?

Violence in schools regularly makes headline news in many countries. It has its roots in the many ills of our societies today: poverty, emigration, civil strife or any of the many forms of social injustice. There are no simple recipes for solving it, says Antonella Verdiani, in charge of non-violence education programmes at UNESCO and for whom the adage "prevention is better than cure" still holds true. "Because once a conflict has erupted, it is often too late."

That is why it is so important, she says, to give teachers, school workers and pupils themselves, the pedagogical tools to prevent and transform the violence with which they are confronted on a daily basis at work (see following article).

"UNESCO's aim is to publicize – through conferences or publications – the practices of non-violence so that they can be of use to primary and secondary schools, inspire teachers and give rise to solutions to curb the rise of violence among young people. Confronted with this problem, which is almost global, creativity, a big capacity for humour and above all love can help the various players to transform a conflict into a meeting."

“During this millennium,” writes UNESCO Assistant Director-General John Daniel in the preface to “Best Practices of Non-Violent Conflict Resolution in and out-of-school”*, “we must look beyond what the founding fathers, despite their visionary approach, intended by the expression ‘defences of peace’. In the current situation of the world, it is not a question of effective defences but rather to effect a more radical change: to change our vision of the world, our way of educating, communicating and living together.”

Cristina l’Homme

*Available online at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001266/126679e.pdf

Photos: © UNESCO/Michel Ravassard

MEDIATION IN SCHOOL:

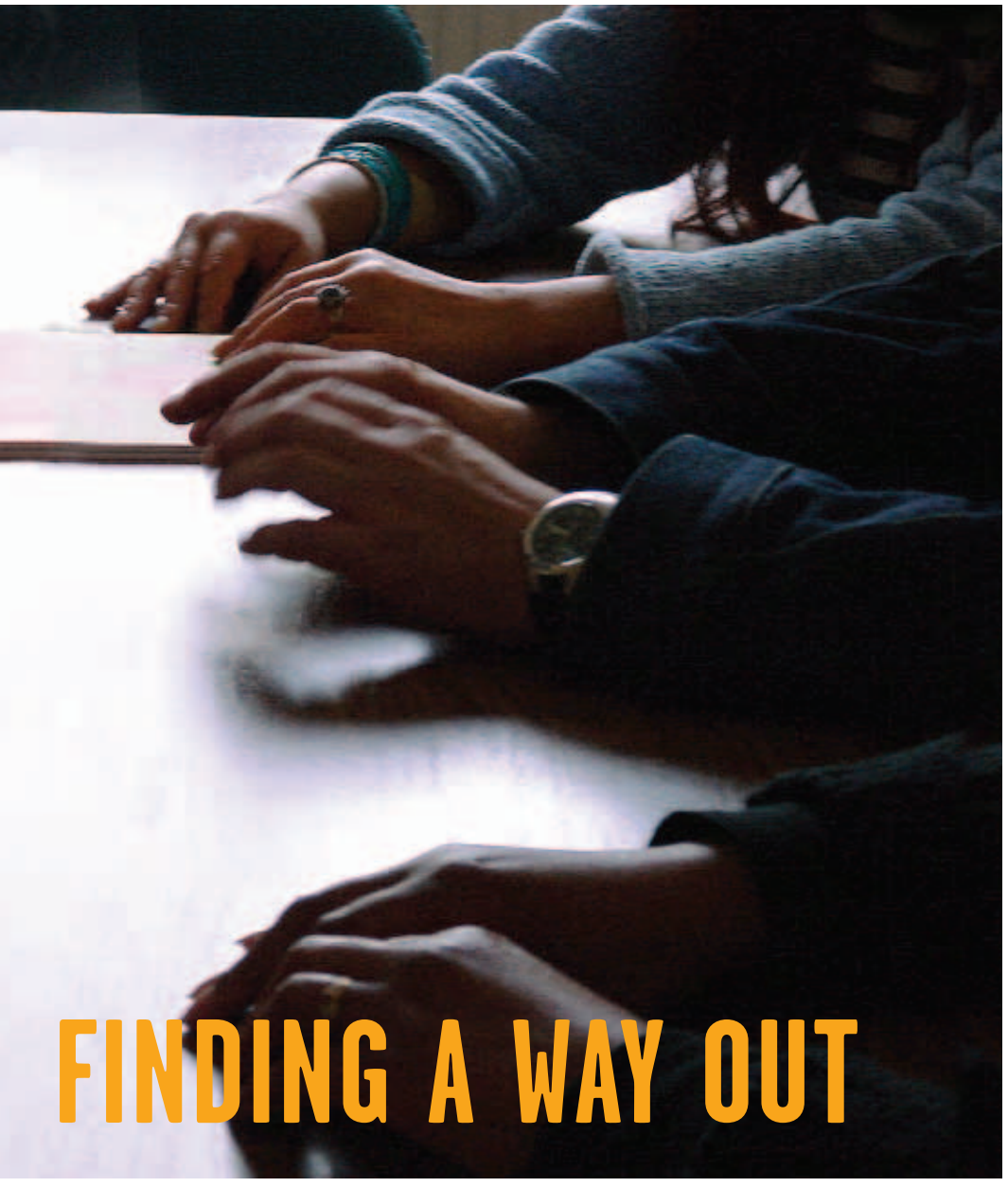
Pupils and teachers from a school in suburban Paris are learning to resolve their conflicts without coming to blows

“They don’t pay attention to me!” the teacher complains.

“She persecutes us!” the two students shoot back.

The exchange rapidly becomes more heated. The teacher tries imposing her authority, while the students ask her to explain herself. The atmosphere at the Claude Monet High School in Argenteuil, near Paris, is explosive. Aggressive even. And it all happened much too fast.

This school, designated a “priority teaching zone” because of the many problems of its area – widespread poverty, social and cultural deprivation, a predominantly immigrant population, a black-market economy, frequent violence – is not an isolated case, and its situation could have rapidly worsened. Yet it managed to



FINDING A WAY OUT

At the hearing-out-place of a high school in the Paris suburbs, conflicts are defused by talking to each other

defuse the dangerous tensions. How? By creating the structure and spirit of mediation.

The school's principal, Christian Comes, has a clear appraisal of the problem: schools are increasingly multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. And school life has become too caught up in the difficulties of communication and the violence they generate.

A French association dedicated to mediation and training mediators, the Centre de Médiation et de Formation à la Médiation (CMFM), teamed up with UNESCO in 1997 to start a project which allows schools and principals to learn about mediation. This partnership gave Christian Comes the means to see through his idea. He offered pupils a tool, a sort of 12-point rating card, to take the "temperature" of their relationship with teachers, and organized weekly get-togethers to talk over the results. More importantly, he set up a space for mediating conflicts that he calls a "hearing-out place" where two people having a problem can talk in front of a mediator. "A place where frustrations, verbal violence, can be expressed," explains Caroline Anville, a modern literature teacher. "Where one can be listened to without being judged. Because if violence is not expressed through language, it ends up being expressed through actions."

The mediation process is simple: initially, each party states his or her case separately. "Then the mediator brings them together and asks questions in a way to get them to air their feelings," one of the trainers, Colette, says. "Listening and empathy can allow a conflict to be resolved because an agreement -- if one is reached -- will be respected by both sides. But keep in mind that mediation is not a miracle solution: the success rate is only 35 per cent."

To put the structure into place, the principal offered mediation training to various adults in the

© Frank Crustaux/Gamma

Police may be called in when the situation gets out of hand (here in 2002 in Valenciennes, in northern France)

school, then to students. They learned techniques of asking questions that spur a dialogue, and used role-playing to further their skills.

Mediation has given Laurence, a teacher's aide, "a different reading of human relations, one that is more distanced, more respectful. I came to understand that, if a pupil is being aggressive, it's because he's suffering."

"The arguments are often small to begin with – 'what are you looking at?' – but the physical or verbal violence that follows can be extreme," Florence, a sports and physical education teacher, adds.

The training has proven a hit with the students; within two years around 60 of the 650 pupils at the school have gone through the course. "The students are really happy to be able to talk, to be heard. The room is always open," Charlen, one young mediator, says.

"At the start, they accused us of wanting to cut classes by doing the training," Saba, another student in Charlen's class who is also a mediator, recalls. But then an episode happened where some pens were stolen, and a game organized in the "hearing-out place" unraveled what had happened and the objects were returned.

Saba feels pride, she says, "Even if there are more failures than solutions, because we're the ones who find them."

The teacher and her two students in the "hearing-out room" are face-to-face. They have spoken as equals and said what they were thinking without the threat of punishment hanging over their heads.

"I showed disrespect, I know that," one of the pupils admits.

"I had the impression she hated me," the teacher replies.

Cristina L'Homme

To learn more about preventing and resolving disputes: http://www.unesco.org/education/nved

© Layla Aerts/Photo News/Gamma, Paris

"An AIDS-free generation in less than a generation"

This is the name, and the aim, of a new global initiative, proposed by UNESCO and adopted by UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, last March in Livingstone (Zambia).
The new project, "will consist of a concerted effort to help countries to develop an urgent, scaled-up response to prevention education," said UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura said. "This will include the development of curricula, teacher-training modules, workplace policies for educational institutions, improved financing mechanisms, renewed non-formal educational opportunities, safe schools and surroundings, broader community contact with schools and enhanced national capacity." A "tool kit", adaptable to the needs of different countries, cultures and social milieux, will be designed and tested in a few of the countries worst affected by HIV/AIDS, mainly sub-Saharan Africa.

The Second Protocol

The Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in Event of Armed Conflict entered into force on March 9. The Protocol, adopted at The Hague in March 1999, strengthens the 1954 Hague Convention and its First Protocol. It reaffirms the "immunity" of cultural property in times of war or occupation and establishes the "individual criminal responsibility" of perpetrators of crimes against culture. It also insists on the need to take preparatory measures in peacetime to protect such property in times of war, and partially limits the notion of "imperative military necessity", which authorizes waivers regarding cultural property. An intergovernmental committee comprising 12 States Parties will monitor the implementation of the Convention and its two Protocols and will be able to grant certain cultural property "of the greatest importance for humanity", "enhanced protection".

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46 million children out-of-school in South and East Asia

Despite significant increases in enrolments over the past decade, there are still some 46 million children out-of-school in the 22 countries of South and East Asia, according to the South and East Asia Regional Report, published by UNESCO's Institute for Statistics.
The Report also reveals that only half of the children who enter primary school India, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar, will reach grade five. Nepal, Cambodia and Bangladesh follow closely behind, with between 35 and 38 percent of children dropping out before the end of the primary cycle.
www.uis.unesco.org

Strengthening Earth science research

On February 10 at Headquarters, UNESCO's Director-General signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the United States Geological Survey and the German Geo Forschungs Zentrum to strengthen cooperation in the field of earth sciences.
This will mark the first MOU between UNESCO and the United States, since its return to the Organization. The MOU with Germany is a renewal of that signed five years ago. Both are intended to prevent and mitigate natural disasters, notably through the exchange of scientific and technical knowledge and the enhancement of scientific and technical capacities in several fields, including global earth observation and continental drilling.

© UNESCO/Niamh Burke

The high cost of repeating

© UNESCO/Eduardo Barrios

Student repetition in Latin America costs the region over $11 billion annually, according to research in 15 countries by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Over $8 billion of this is attributed to Brazil, where one in every four primary students repeat a year. However, repetition rates are also high in Guatemala (14 percent) and Peru (11 percent).

Contact:
Albert Motivans, UIS
E-mail:
a.motivans@unesco.org

A deadly year for journalists

UNESCO Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura in January deplored the increase in the number of reporters killed in 2003. "It is a source of grave concern that the number was higher than in any year since 1995", he said, commenting on reports by professional organizations which set the 2003 figure at between 36 and 42. In 2002, 19 to 25 journalists were killed, compared to 49 in 1995, when 22 journalists were killed in the conflict in Algeria. Fourteen to 19 of those killed in 2003 died in Iraq, five in the Philippines and three in Colombia. The Director-General noted that "the vast majority of the killings remain un-investigated and unpunished, despite the pledge UNESCO's Member States made in a resolution they adopted at the Organization's General Conference in 1997 to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice."

Underway

The Bureaux of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) and the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee (IGBC) met with the chairpersons of the 24 national bioethics committees of the European Union in Rome last December 19 for the first round of consultations in the preparation of a future declaration on universal norms in bioethics. Towards the same end, a written consultation was launched with UNESCO's Member States in January focused mainly on the scope and structure of the declaration.

www.unesco.org/shs/bioethics

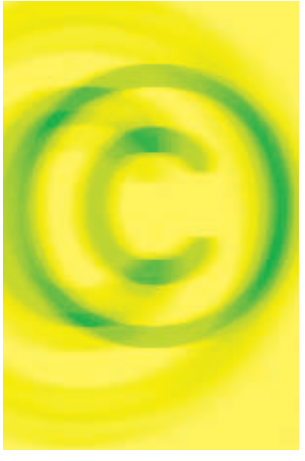
Sustainable development labs

© UNESCO/Bousquet

Meeting at UNESCO on January 26th, West Africa's environment ministers called on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to use biosphere reserves "as laboratories for sustainable development". They also launched a new project to improve the monitoring and protection of the region's six biosphere reserves. While compiling an inventory of the reserves' plants and animals, the project will develop scientific and institutional structures to monitor and manage the environmental impact of human activities. With a budget of more than $6 million, this will be the first UNESCO project to receive support from the Global Environmental Fund.

Copyright on line

About 100 legal texts dealing with copyright and connected rights are now accessible online. The list includes the national legislation of UNESCO's Member States, and is regularly updated by the Organization's Cultural Enterprise and Copyright Section. Most have been translated into at least one of UNESCO's six official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).
Internet : http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en
For more information:
copyright.law@unesco.org



Human Rights: highlighting research and training

The World Directory of Human Rights Research and Training published by UNESCO is the most complete reference available on the subject. Produced by UNESCO's Social and Human Sciences Documentation Centre with the participation of the Human Rights Division, it contains 20,000 listings, with10,000 of them available on line in a data bank, allowing cross-referencing (http://databases.unesco.org/dare/dareintro.shtml). First published in 1987, the directory has just been reprinted in its sixth paper edition in anticipation of the first World Forum for Human Rights being held from May 16 to 19 2004, organized by UNESCO in partnership with the city of Nantes (France).

For more information on the Forum: www.unesco.org/shs/humanrightsforum

Art alert

A "Red List of Latin American Cultural Objects at Risk", covering pre-Colombian and Colonial cultural heritage, has been published by the International Council of Museums (ICOM), an NGO that works closely with UNESCO in the struggle against the traffic of cultural objects.

The List includes Cuzco and Quito Paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries and Nayarit ceramic figures from México, dating from 300 B.C to 500 A.D. Similar to the Lists published for Africa and Iraq, the Red List for Latin America is an appeal to museums, auction houses, art dealers and collectors not to acquire these objects.

http://icom.museum/redlist

© Victor Gonzalez Fernandez, ICANH Colombie

© Museo Nacional de Costa Rica

Two new social science Chairs

At the beginning of this year, the Ayrton Senna Institute in Brazil welcomed a new Chair for Education and Human Development, bringing to 25 the number of UNESCO Chairs dealing with sustainable development. This Chair aims to develop research, training, information and documentation in this domain, in collaboration with other higher education establishments. And in Canada, the University of Montreal, a leader in research and teaching of landscape architecture, announced in February the creation of a UNESCO Chair in Landscape and Environmental Design. One of the Chair's central projects is the creation of an "International Landscape Observatory" in cooperation with UNESCO's Management of Social Transformation programme (MOST) and World Heritage Centre.

www.unesco.org/education/unitwin/chairs/sustain-dev

www.iforum.umontreal.ca/Communiques/3211.htm

E-9 recommits

© UNESCO/Brendan O'Malley

Education ministers from nine high population countries - Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan - reaffirmed their commitment to Education for All and agreed to strengthen their cooperation towards this end when they met in Cairo (Egypt) last December. These countries, known as the E-9 group, are home to over 50 percent of the world's population and account for 70 percent of illiterate adults and more than 40 percent of the world's out-of-school children.

In a declaration after the Cairo meeting, the ministers pointed to increased enrolments, improved literacy rates (especially for women), and greater access to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), but acknowledged that they "still face a number of challenges."

SMALL ISLANDS BIG ISSUES

Far from the Bali Hai paradise portrayed by Hollywood, small island states can be highly vulnerable places that face multiple development challenges, such as small population, lack of resources, remoteness, and susceptibility to natural disasters. Their economies are usually small-scale, often dependent on tourism, yet with high transportation and communication costs, and costly public administration and infrastructure.

Poignant proof of their vulnerability is not hard to find. In late February, freak tides submerged large parts of Tuvalu, a small island state in the Pacific. If sea level continues to rise with global warming, Tuvalu, will, effectively, disappear. A month before, the island of Niue, also in the Pacific, was flattened by cyclone Heta, most of its inhabitants seeking refuge in New Zealand. Yet their will to return and rebuild their nation is evidence that islanders' resilience is often more than a match for the challenges they face.

This special feature takes a series of snapshots of what life on a small island means today, in the run-up to an international meeting in Mauritius in August 2004 on sustainable development in small island developing states.

North Male Atoll (Maldives)
Top right: The Galapagos Islands are famous for species not found anywhere else, like this iguana

THE UNIVERSAL ISLAND AND THE ISLAND UNIVERSE

Louis Brigand, professor of geography at the University of Brest (France) and curator of the Iroise Nature Reserve explains why much of what is essential about a small island is the same in Brittany, where he lives and works, as it is in the South Pacific

What is the definition of an island?

There are almost as many definitions as there are islands. The most basic definition is "land surrounded by water on all sides". But international organisations don't always use the same criteria. For one it might be the area, for another how far it is from the continent, whether or not it is inhabited, the number of inhabitants. For the European Community if there is a capital city on an island it is no longer considered an island.

And from a biologist's point of view, the summit of a mountain, a cow-pat or a clearing in a forest are also islands. Some geographers even go so far as to say that Earth is an island in the universe.

Is isolation an important part of the definition?

It's essential. All the definitions mention it, whether the isolation is geographical, economic, political, or cultural, etc. Filmmakers, artists, the military, and religions are all interested in islands. They are places to find oneself. And it's ▶

This feature was compiled and edited by Peter Coles
Special thanks to David Becker, Dominik Bretteville, Tim Curtis, Ralph Regenvanu and Itaka Schlubach for their help and advice

From Barbados to Mauritius and Beyond

Two terms that are very often used when referring to the 41 small island developing states (SIDS) (see www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/sidslist.htm) are "vulnerability" and "resilience". Resilient, because, despite obstacles due to their small size, isolation, and exposure to natural disasters, for example, traditional island societies have managed, for millennia, to maintain a healthy equilibrium with their environment and its resources. Meanwhile they have often used the sea as a means of, rather than as a barrier to communication and trade. Yet industrialisation locally and in far-off countries across the globe is changing the balance against these small island states.

Climate change, for example, is likely to increase the frequency and severity of the natural disasters to which SIDS are already vulnerable. And a further sea-level rise of even a few centimetres could threaten the sustainable development, livelihood and very existence of islands like Tuvalu and the Maldives. Meanwhile, most SIDS do not have the resources to diversify their economic base to participate actively in a global economy. The strength of many SIDS lies in the sustainability of their subsistence economies, often steeped in tradition and indigenous knowledge. These are often disregarded in the push towards forms of western-style development, which may not be sustainable in many SIDS.

So, two years after the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the international community gathered in Bridgetown, Barbados at the Global Conference on the Development of Small Island States (25 April – 6 May 1994). The main output was the Barbados Programme of Action, with a list of 15 areas where SIDS are exceptionally vulnerable, and where national, regional and international action was felt to be urgent. These areas were principally environmental, such as climate change and sea-level rise, freshwater resources, natural disasters and biodiversity.

Ten years later, from 30 August to 3 September 2004, Mauritius will be hosting an international meeting to review the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action. Topics relating to environment and natural resources – such as sea-level rise, freshwater resources and energy – will continue to figure prominently in those discussions, as they did in Barbados. But many other burning issues will also be on the table – ranging from trade and security to cultural diversity and knowledge management for decision making.

UNESCO is participating actively in the Barbados+10 process. Its special contribution is building bridges and networks of various kinds, in promoting effective collaboration between societal and organizational sectors, between regions and between generations. An additional role is highlighting the importance of culture, education and youth, in working towards a new vision and commitment for small islands.

For the Barbados Programme of Action, see www.sidsnet.org/docshare/other/BPOA.pdf

For a look at how UNESCO is working with SIDS, see http://portal.unesco.org/islandsBplus10 and www.smallislandsvoice.org

For information on the Barbados+10 meeting in Mauritius, see www.sidsnet.org/

© UNESCO/Dominique Roger

It can be a long walk to get fresh water on Cape Verde. But on some islands there's none to be had at all

© UNESCO/ Claire Servoz

The Sally Lightfoot crab is specially adapted to resist the rough conditions of the Galapagos Islands

there that hermitages have been built – as well as prisons. These are the classical functions of islands, linked to isolation.

Is insularity the same everywhere in the world?

Even on the little islands of Brittany we can find everything that characterises insularity elsewhere. There are the same problems, whatever the latitude. There's a problem of freshwater on the Isle of Molène – even if it rains a lot there.

Small island states have often progressively acquired their status by separating from a continental state. Sometimes, in certain archipelagos, each island has tried to become independent. And all the little islands in Brittany have joined together in an association that has been running for 25 years (the isles of Ponant) with a fairly substantial budget. It's also one way to have a voice with respect to the State and to the continent.

Are there different types of island?

From a geographical point of view there are two main categories. There is the volcanic island, that appears relatively suddenly, and the pre-continental island, which is due to a rise or fall in the level of the water, or because of fragmentation. These are parts of the continent that have become isolated at a point in geological history. The great volcanic islands are found along the Atlantic and Pacific ridges. It's interesting that on volcanic islands there is a different way of organising space. There is the cone and the steep slopes. Often the roads go around the island and not so much up and down. And these islands are often part of an archipelago.

Is an island still an island if there is a bridge?

For me it's a break with one of the most significant components of what makes an island. On all the little islands near to the continent, even those that are a few dozen metres away, the fact that there is a barrier of water changes everything.

And there are other kinds of bridge that we don't often think about. There is electricity, for example, where the underwater cable forms a bridge. Then there is drinking water. A pipeline to an island from the mainland will completely change the way people think about using water, and its scarcity, compared to when they have to find ways to get it. There is an impluvium on Molène and almost every house has a rainwater tank.

Arriving on an island by bridge is frustrating, too. The time to get from the continent to the island, whether by plane or by boat, makes all the difference. We're always trying to find quicker ways to get to an island, but I'm not convinced that's what people really want. They're not particularly interested in gaining 15 minutes on the crossing – they even usually enjoy it.

Islands are important to mariners aren't they?

When I look at old maps, one of the things that always strikes me is to see that the islands are always represented and that their size is often exaggerated. This is a sign of their importance for the mariner.

For the mariner an island is the first land he sees before striking the continent and, when leaving, it is the last. An island is both a source of danger and safety, a haven in which to rest, to find provisions, perhaps even a woman.

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For more than 25 years Louis Brigand has been researching, teaching and writing about small islands – a love affair that began when, as a teenager, he'd go looking for rabbits on the uninhabited island of Beniguet, in the Iroise sea (France)

Why do scientists find islands interesting?

There are hundreds of things to study on all small islands, even the tiniest islets. For example, biologists may look at endemic species, or those that have been isolated and thus don't have the same characteristics as those on the continent. Sociologists might look at populations, because they, too, will have traits that have been preserved because of isolation. And botanists will look at the ways plants adapt to certain specific climatic conditions.

On the islands off Brittany, for example, there are a great many things of interest to archaeologists, because the ground may not have been worked intensively, or there may have been no dense habitation. Even on the little islets, we see that almost all scientific disciplines can be applied.

And also, as an island is surrounded by water, the smaller it is, the more it is subjected to the forces of erosion and currents. And so the coastline can change much more significantly than on the continent. So they become very interesting places to study phenomena that are affecting the planet as a whole.

It's no accident that many islands are protected by conservation laws, like nature reserves and biosphere reserves.

Do you have a favourite island?

I try not to put them on a scale. And after all, the most beautiful islands are imaginary, aren't they?

CLIMATE CHANGE

DISAPPEARING TUVALU

The coral islands of Tuvalu in the Pacific Ocean, like the Maldives in the Indian Ocean, are set to disappear as sea level rises with global warming

Panapase Nelisoni has an unusual responsibility. Not many government secretaries are charged with planning for the end of their nations. Yet Tuvalu faces an unusual threat, possibly unprecedented in human history – the geographical disappearance of the entire island nation as a result of sea level rise.

"We couldn't just sit back and do nothing," Panapase told me, as we sat in a small office in the one-storey white-painted building which houses most of Tuvalu's national government. "So far we have received approval from New Zealand to allow seventy-five people a year to go there." This is not an 'evacuation', he insisted, but more of a 'migration plan'. Either way, Tuvalu's 11,300 inhabitants are about to start leaving their homes.

"We don't know what will happen in the future," he said. "We may lose our culture, and our identity as Tuvaluans. It will take time for our people to accept that, once we're in another country."

For six months of the year some Tuvaluans now have wet feet at high tide

FLOODING FROM BELOW

The following day, just as the evening shadows were lengthening from the coconut and pandanus trees that line Funafuti atoll's shore, puddles began to appear around the airstrip. Water had begun welling up through small holes in the ground, as the high tide forced seawater up through the centre of the island. This is why building sea walls around atolls like Tuvalu is pointless – coral rock is porous, so the islands

© Patrick Aventurier/Gamma, Paris

In 50 years the Pacific Ocean could look very different, as islands disappear

flood from the inside out. By the time the tide started to ebb away again, the water had reached a foot deep across wide areas.

Hilia Vavae, Tuvalu's senior meteorologist, was splashing through the waters that had surrounded her office. "The floods have increased tremendously," she said. "Last year we were flooding during the high tides of November, December, January, February and March. When I first started work in the Met Office in 1981, you would normally see it in February only."

There are other signs of rising sea levels, too. Pit plantations of *pulaka*, a root vegetable like taro, have been suffering from saltwater intrusion. In some places three-quarters of the plants have died, leaving people reliant on imported foodstuffs. Meanwhile, Tepuka Savilivili, a small island on the rim of Funafuti atoll, was washed over by waves a few years ago and its vegetation destroyed. Tuvaluans consider it a harbinger of what is to come for the rest of their homeland.

COASTAL AREAS AT RISK

Even so, some sceptics accuse the Tuvaluans of being the architects of their own fate, suggesting that overpopulation, groundwater extraction or the mining of offshore sand from the seabed could be to blame for the problems of flooding and erosion, rather than sea-level rise. But the islanders point out that some of the worst erosion is taking place on uninhabited areas of the atolls, far from any human disturbance.

Indeed, the impact of sea level rise is now visible in low-lying areas around the world. And coral atolls, which average as little as half a metre above sea level, are particularly vulnerable. According to Professor Patrick Nunn, an expert in ocean geoscience at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, current sea level rise is between 1 and 2mm a year. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts further rises of between 9 and 88cm over the next century.

"Many low-lying coastal areas are going to disappear," predicted Professor Nunn. "In fifty years' time the geography of the Pacific region will be quite different to the way it is today."

Mark Lynas

© UNESCO/Peter Coles

CULTURE

PEACE AND RESPECT

Vanuatu (in Melanesia) is probably the most culturally diverse country anywhere. A unique network of fieldworkers is helping keep traditional customs alive and well.

Bosen Napu leads us in single file through the rainforest, and down the steep, winding path of a canyon, leaving the coast far behind us. It is best to walk barefoot, he says, for a better grip on the black, volcanic earth. When we finally get to the bottom, we immediately start the near-vertical climb up the other side, until we reach a wide clearing shaded by giant banyan trees. Men and boys are sitting around, wearing only their tradiional *nambas* or penis sheaths. This is a *nakamal*, a sacred meeting and dancing space where ancient paths cross, up in the cool mountains of Tanna, in the south of Vanuatu.

Unknown to me, every step we take is not only following a physical path between *nakamals*. It is also retracing and re-affirming a multitude of other relationships – bonds of kinship, social ties and personal genealogies, going back to the 'sacred stones' from which these people say they originally came. Almost every tree, stone, animal and place we pass is invested with layers of meaning.

Bosen is a cultural fieldworker, one of 60 men and 40 women volunteers in a programme started by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in the late 1970's to document, preserve and promote the country's oral history, and especially what is known as *kastom*. This is loosely translated as 'tradition', but in fact, is much more. Indeed, when Vanuatu (formerly the New Hebrides) won independence from the British and French condominium in 1980, *kastom* was the rallying call that united the 13 main islands and 70 islets in this Melanesian archipelago, with their 100 or so languages and almost as many cultural variations.

KEEPING KASTOM

The ceremonial expression of *kastom* is still very much alive, and varies from the islands in the north, like Santo, Ambae, Pentecost and Malakula, to the southern islands of Efate, Erromango, and Tanna. In the north, as men (and in some islands, women) gain wealth, they can elect to rise in status through 'grade-taking' ceremonies, using pigs' tusks, woven mats, yams and kava (a root used to make a sacred drink at the heart of male society throughout much of Vanuatu), as payment. In the south, while pigs, mats, kava and yams are also favoured forms of exchange, society is not so obviously hierarchical – and the pig is more important than its tusks.

(Top) How long will these children of Yenaoloul on the island of Tanna be safe from westernisation?

But, as Bosen explains, *kastom* is much more than the flamboyant ceremonies, which can involve hundreds of people and years of preparation. "In the end, it comes down to peace and respect," he says. And traditional practices are, in one way or another, a means to preserve harmony, whether between generations, families, or simply to maintain human life in balance with the rest of nature.

Kastom has come under various assaults since white men first came to stay, in the mid-19th century. The islands had been visited briefly by the Portuguese navigator, de Quiros in 1606, then the Frenchman Bougainville in 1766 and Englishman James Cook in 1774, who charted the islands. But it was Catholic, Presbyterian and Anglican missionaries from the 1860s onward, who, after meeting fierce resistance, persuaded converts to turn away from *kastom*. Later, British and French colonial rule also discouraged traditional practices. Today, a great threat to *kastom* is school (see page 40).

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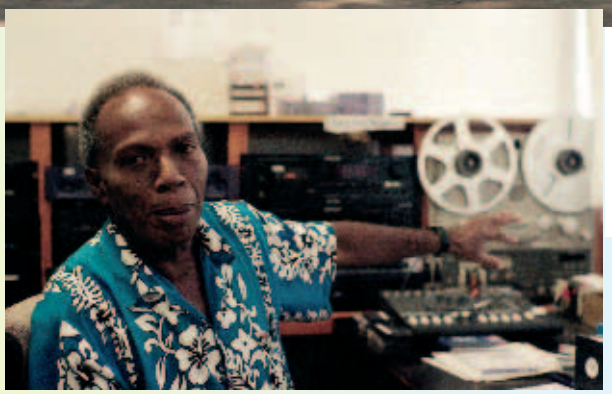

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(Top) Only men are usually allowed in the *nakamal* meeting places

(Bottom) Ambong Thompson has over 1000 audio tapes of oral history to archive on CD

FIELDWORKER PROGRAMME

Even in remote Yenaoloul, where Bosen has taken me, not so long ago the people were also wearing white men's clothes, but returned to their traditions. And as a young man, he, himself, left Tanna to work in an abattoir in the nation's capital, Port Vila, on Efate island. But, he says "I just worked and sweated and ate bad food." He decided to return home.

In 1990, one of the island's chiefs asked Bosen to represent his part of Tanna as fieldworker for the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. The Centre gave him a tape-recorder, batteries and cassettes, and basic training in maintenance, as well as in ethnographic fieldwork, like drawing kinship diagrams, family trees, and writing word lists.

"I walk from *nakamal* to *nakamal*," says Bosen. "I just ask people if they are leading a *kastom* way of life. If they are, I talk to them and record their stories. I don't criticise. We have a story about a man who goes fishing for turtles and climbs on a rock to get a better view. It is only when it moves that he realises he has been standing on a turtle all the time. So I remind people, 'everything you need is at your feet.'"

Every year, Bosen goes to Port Vila for a two-week training and exchange workshop with all the fieldworkers from other islands. Running since 1982, each workshop focuses on a different topic using materials gathered during the year, and presented by the fieldworkers. This year the topic is language. Last year it was 'traditional ways of bringing up children'. The women fieldworkers hold their own workshop two weeks before the men.

A BANK FOR CULTURE

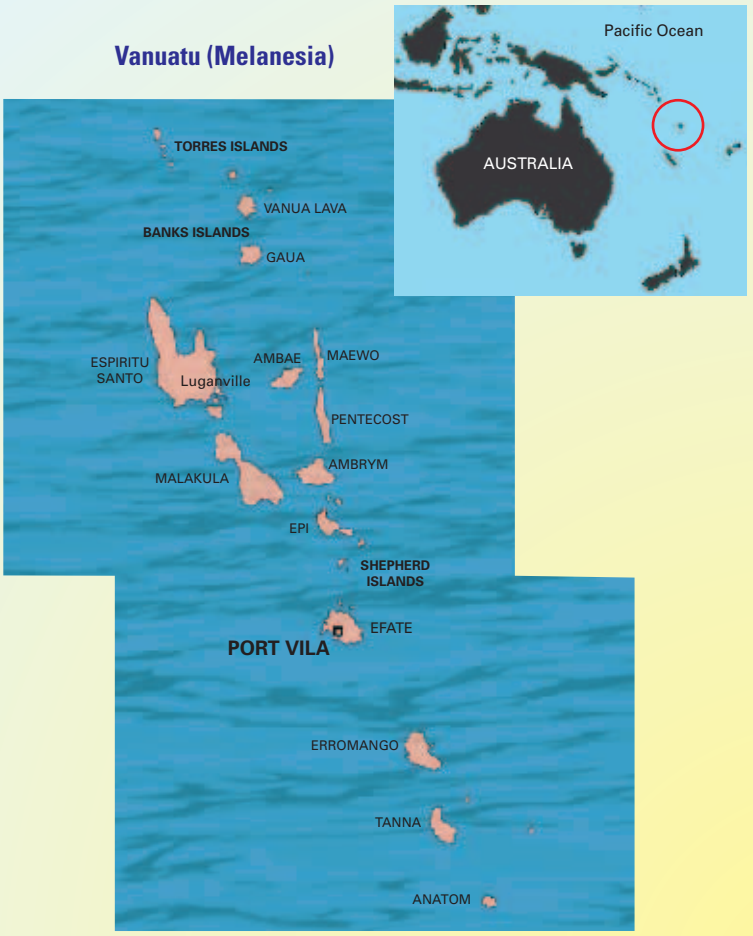
Back in Port Vila, Ambong Thompson, originally from Malakula, is in charge of audio archives at the Cultural Centre. "After completing their recordings, the fieldworkers send their cassettes back here," he explains. He labels each cassette and catalogues it in a computer database, before storing it in the air-conditioned 'tabu room', so-called because some of the cassettes contain secret knowledge, only for certain members of a family, or clan, for example. "The tabu room is like a bank to us, where we store all our cultural knowledge," he says.

The cultural centre has also been building up its video archives in recent years. "Now," says Ralph Regenvanu, director of the Cultural Centre, "we have far more requests to film events than we can meet, as we don't have the resources to cover the transport costs to get there." But the solution, says Regenvanu, is not always extra funding. "It's more an issue of training fieldworkers to use the equipment, so that when an event happens, we just pack a camera in a box and send it to them, so they do the filming." ▶

Four years ago, grants from UNESCO were used to purchase professional digital video cameras and an editing suite, so that the Centre can make broadcast-quality documentaries. "All the emphasis has been on the archives," says Regenvanu. "We have now reached a stage in the development of our country where we need to start pushing the material back out to the people, to raise awareness about culture."

Twice a month the Cultural Centre has a slot on national television. And, with over 20 years of radio broadcasting experience behind him, Ambong also makes a weekly programme for national radio, using recordings from the archives and phone calls from fieldworkers and other islanders about their culture.

"People are moving away from *kastom*," says Jacob Kerere, head of the Centre's audio-visual archives and chief cameraman. "But the programmes we make help bring them back. I'd say the future is bright."



URBANIZATION

PORT VILA'S DILEMMA

Urban life in Vanuatu pitches traditions against western-style 'progress'

Port Vila, Vanuatu's capital, may look like a sleepy town, but all is not well. Crime is increasing, in pace with youth unemployment; sexually transmitted diseases are widespread, and, when women are victims of violence, they have little hope of justice. Vila, as it is known, is increasingly a pole of attraction for those from the outer islands of Vanuatu searching for work – often to pay for school fees (see page 40). But some end up paying an even higher price - the loss of their traditional culture.

"When people come to Vila from the other islands they try to stay together, like in the village," explains Jacob Kerere, head of the audio-visual unit at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre in Vila, who also works as a kind of peacemaker for people from his own island, Tanna, who are living in Vila. "But Vila just changes their life. Good people become aggressive."

There is a palpable ambivalence in Vila, where traditional ways, or *kastom* (see page 36) are pitched against the bright lights of a globalizing, urban life. Frank, aged 25, who works in a drop-in centre for HIV/AIDS in Vila, set up by the Wan Smolbag community theatre group, is a product of this ambivalence. "Young people don't want to follow the old ideas. They don't want to listen to the chiefs. It's better to have schooling and get a job," he says. And yet he also believes that "life is better in the islands. You're free to go anywhere, and there's always food. Here if you want a coconut you have to buy it." And, in Vila, the work, and therefore the money, is not always there.

The ambivalence is also seen in a hybrid culture growing up in Vila. The sacrosanct traditional *nakamal* where men gather at dusk in the islands to drink kava, has been transformed in Vila into a kind of pub, where both men and women unwind after a hard day's work, going through empty versions of the traditional rituals.

© UNESCO/Peter Coles

To relieve its massive energy bill for imported diesel, Vanuatu is turning to its abundant coconut oil resource as an alternative

© UNESCO/Peter Coles

But *kastom* is surviving in Vila. Traditional methods of justice are being used to solve essentially urban disputes, like adultery and theft. So-called '*kastom* courts' exist, where each party in a dispute pays the other a settlement, such as a pig and some mats, and shakes hands. "Then we drink kava the same day and chat," says Jacob. "It's like there's never been a problem. But if you didn't straighten it out with *kastom*, you will stay enemies for ever."

WHERE POLICE CANNOT GO

According to a survey carried out by the Cultural Centre's Youth Project, young people prefer to be tried by the *kastom* court, not least because the police have a reputation for brutality. And, says Jacob, when the disputes are between communities from different islands – often over women or land – "it can involve big groups. The police cannot stop this kind of fighting. Only chiefs can stop this."

In some cases, the *kastom* court decides to send a young offender back to his or her native island. But returning isn't always easy. "They lose their *kastom* and forget their place here," says Bosen Napu, who lives a traditional life on Tanna (see page 36). "It's like they're dead for us. They go away and come back and don't know how to do the ceremonies. They have no pigs or yams. People laugh and say you've lived in Vila for many years, but if you buy a pig all your money is gone, then what have you got?"

Peter Coles

Sibley Nyass teaches in English but is strongly attached to his culture and family, returning home at weekends. Wearing dreadlocks is a sign of maturity for a young male

© UNESCO/Peter Coles

EDUCATION OR ALIENATION?

EDUCATION

© UNESCO/Peter Coles

In the remote hills of Tanna, children still grow up in the traditional way, though change is already coming

Vanuatu's education system takes children away from their native language and culture. A new project aims to reverse this and use school to reinforce both

Ralph Regenvanu, Director of Vanuatu's Cultural Centre does not mince words when it comes to the nation's education system. "School is one of the major factors that is breaking the transmission of culture," he says. "We want education to be relevant to the community's needs and to the needs of children, so that they feel empowered within their own community and not alienated." Which is why the Cultural Centre and some non-governmental organizations are helping the Ministry of Education make radical changes to the curriculum. "It's ambitious," he says, "but at the moment it's completely the other way round."

At present, explains Regenvanu, children in Vanuatu receive primary education locally, but are taught in either English or French, with subject matter largely divorced from their daily lives. The 20 percent or so who pass an entrance exam can go on to secondary school, which, more often than not, can be on another island, hundreds of kilometres from home.

The *coup de grace* for traditional life looms when the parents also move to a town, like Port Vila, on the island of Efate, or Luganville, on Santo, in search of work to pay for the school fees (over 45,000 Vatu or US$400 a year). But, even then, says Regenvanu, while a university education may help a young person find a good job, "less that 2 percent go to university, so the majority get pushed out of the system." The informal settlements that have sprung up around Vila house many families who gave up everything to pay for their children's education, and can no longer afford to return home.

The key to the new curriculum, already government policy for the first year of primary school in rural areas, is to teach in the vernacular language. "The best vehicle to gain literacy is through your own language," says Regenvanu. And, while the Cultural Centre has been pushing for this since the 80s, he adds, the idea took off only when it got World Bank backing, following a national survey.

"Vanuatu boasts the highest concentration of languages per capita anywhere – around 106 for a population of about 200,000," he explains. Over 80 languages are still very much alive, while

Vanuatu's sand-drawing is a sophisticated means of communication, now inscribed on UNESCO's list of Intangible Heritage

© Vanuatu National Cultural Council

© Vanuatu National Cultural Council

about 17 are endangered and eight are extinct. Malakula alone has 34 languages for a population of 18,000. Many people speak three, even seven vernacular languages.

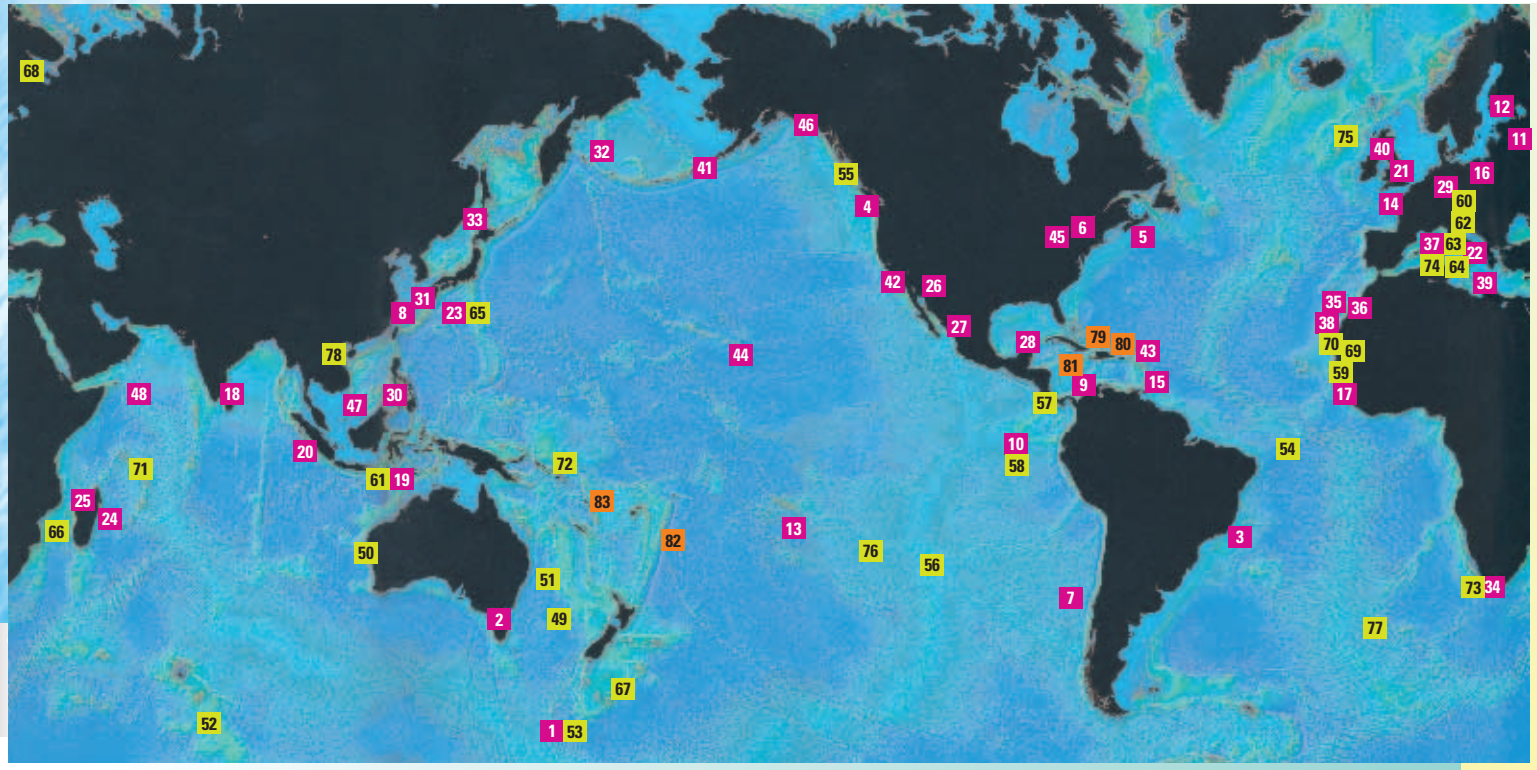
Before teaching materials can be developed, these vernacular languages have to be written down, and a standard spelling drawn up. So far, says Regenvanu, this has been done for 16 languages. "We have developed really basic materials – three books for each of the 16 languages: one on the alphabet, one on birds and one on fish."

He hopes that materials in at least 40 languages will eventually be available. "Some languages are dying." he says, "It's inevitable. Then the emphasis is just on recording the language for posterity."

"The syllabus will be based on the seasonal calendar, which is how traditional life is organized. It's the yam cycle – or taro cycle in some islands – with different times of the year for planting crops, spawning times for fish, biological and environmental markers for different times of the year."

"Each year, five new schools are selected to begin the first-year vernacular programme," adds Regenvanu. "About 20-30 are already using it. The Ministry of Education policy is to have it fully implemented in a few years time." The goal will then be to extend it to the first two, and then three years of primary school.

Now, in collaboration with UNESCO's LINKS (Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems) programme, the Cultural Centre is helping to develop an indigenous science curriculum for high schools, that will use concrete examples of traditional knowledge, like the taro plant irrigation system, the preservation of plant varieties, weather prediction, or a special fishing net that can stun the fish. "We've done a lot of research," says Regenvanu. "Now we think we can turn it into policy."



Natural and cultural heritage of islands

Since the 1970s, UNESCO has included islands, or some of their sites, on the cultural and natural World Heritage List, and more recently, some of their customs and cultural ensembles as Intangible Heritage. A number of islands, meanwhile, because of their great biodiversity, are locations for the MAB Programme's Biosphere Reserves.

Biosphere Reserves

Australia
1. Macquarie Island
2. Morning Peninsula and Western Port

Brazil
3. Mata Atlântica (including Sao Paulo Green Belt

Canada
4. Clayoquot Sound
5. Southwest Nova
6. Thousand Islands-Frontenac Arch

Chile
7. Juan Fernández

China
8. Nanji Islands

Colombia
9. Seaflower

Ecuador
10. Archipiélago de Colon (Galápagos)

Estonia
11. West Estonian Archipelago

Finland
12. Archipelago Sea Area

France
13. Tuomotu (Atoll de Taiaro)
14. Iroise
15. Archipel de la Guadeloupe

Germany
16. Rügen

Guinea-Bissau
17. Boloma-Bijagós

India
18. Gulf of Mannar

Indonesia
19. Komodo
20. Siberut

Ireland
21. North Bull Island

Italy
22. Tuscan Islands

Japan
23. Yakushima Island

Madagascar
24. Mananara Nord
25. Sahamalaza-Iles Radama

Mexico
26. Alto Golfo de California
27. Islas del Golfo de California
28. Banco Chinchorro

Netherlands
29. Waddensea Area

Philippines
30. Palawan

Republic of Korea
31. Jeju Island

Russian Federation
32. Commander Islands
33. Far East Marine

South Africa
34. Cape West Coast

Spain
35. La Palma
36. Lanzarote
37. Menorca
38. Isla de El Hierro

Tunisia
39. Iles Zembra et Zembreta

United Kingdom
40. Loch Druidibeg

United States of America
41. Aleutian Islands
42. Channel Islands
43. Virgin Islands
44. Hawaiian Islands
45. Isle Royale
46. Glacier Bay-Admiralty Island

Viet Nam
47. Can Gio Mangrove

Yemen
48. Socotra Archipelago

World Heritage Sites

Australia:
49. Lord Howe Island Group
50. Shark Bay, Western Australia
51. Fraser Island
52. Heard and McDonald Islands
53. Macquarie Island

Brazil:
54. Brazilian Atlantic Islands: Fernando de Noronha and Atol das Rocas Reserves

Canada:
55. SGaang Gwaii (Anthony Island)

Chile:
56. Rapa Nui National Park

Costa Rica
57. Cocos Island National Park

Ecuador:
58. Galápagos Islands

Gambia
59. James Island and Related Sites

Germany:
60. Monastic Island of Reichenau

Indonesia:
61. Komodo National Park

Italy:
62. Venice and its Lagoon
63. Pontovenere, Cinque Terre and the Islands (Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto)
64. Isole Eolie (Aeolian Islands)

Japan:
65. Yakushima

Mozambique:
66. Island of Mozambique

New Zealand:
67. New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands

Russian Federation:
68. Cultural and Historic Ensemble of the Solovetsky Islands

Senegal:
69. Island of Gorée
70. Island of Saint-Louis

Seychelles:
71. Aldabra Atoll

Solomon Islands:
72. East Rennell

South Africa:
73. Robben Island

Spain:
74. Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture

United Kingdom:
75. St Kilda
76. Henderson Island
77. Gough Island Wildlife Reserve

Viet Nam:
78. Ha Long Bay

Masterpieces of Intangible Heritage

Cuba
79. La Tumba Francesa, Music of the Oriente Brotherhood

Dominican Republic
80. The Cultural Space of the Brotherhood of the Holy Spirit of the Congos of Villa Mella

Jamaica
81. The Maroon Heritage of Moore Town

Tonga
82. Lakalaka, Dances and Sung Speeches from Tonga

Vanuatu
83. Vanuatu Sand Drawings

For more information
World Network of Biosphere Reserves:
www.unesco.org/mab/wnbr.htm
Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity:
www.unesco.org/culture
World Heritage List:
whc.unesco.org

Research: José Banaag

CORAL, CEMENT AND SEAWEED

© Jessica Haapkilä, Paris

A boatload of coral rock sells for US$5. But it leaves fish homeless

It's not always easy to reconcile conservation with the needs of poor communities that depend on reef resources

Sixty-year-old Landau pulls himself across the terrace of his house on his stomach, using his muscular arms. He lost both his legs in an accident 12 years ago. So it's hard to believe that, to survive, he mines coral from Langira reef off the Indonesian island of Kaledupa, where he lives. When he sets out every day, his wife, Pende, has to help him into his canoe. But for the past few weeks it has been out of the water with a hole in its side, so they've had to live off shellfish gathered from the shallow waters near their village. Once they've fed themselves, there is little left over to sell. And their children left a long time ago to work on fishing vessels in Malaysia, where salaries are much higher.

"I normally mine two or three times a week," says Landau, "and bring home a whole canoe full of coral." Most is used on the island itself, as building material. "I started to mine when I needed a foundation for my house," explains Landau. "Nowadays I also sell some in the next village." The average price straight from the canoe is around 40,000 rupiahs per cubic metre (about US$5).

© Jessica Haapkilä, Paris

On Kaledupa Island, houses are often built on coral rock

Most houses in his village, Sampela, are built over the water, on coral or wooden piles three metres high. With about 1000 inhabitants living in 300 houses that means a lot of coral. And the population is growing. "I'd like to start using cement," says Landau, "but I don't know how to make it. And anyway, coral doesn't cost anything."

When Kaledupa became part of the Wakatobi Marine Park, in 1995, some local people were appointed as rangers, to stop coral mining and to teach islanders how to use cement or rock quarried from the centre of the island. "Our message is: don't mine live coral, it's home for the fish!" explains Djuffri, one of these rangers, as he sits down on a couch full of holes, lights a cigarette and blows out the smoke. "We prefer to educate people instead of punishing them," he explains. Djuffri and his colleague, Udi, are part of a team of twenty Wakatobi park rangers, patrolling the reefs with speedboats once a day. "We see coral miners every day," says Udi.

The message is slowly sinking in. "I used to mine live coral," says Landau, "but now I know it weakens the reef and takes away the holes the fish use as their home. I stick to mining only dead coral and coral stone nowadays." But few islanders know that mining dead coral is also prohibited in the Marine Park. And, says ranger Udi, "we concentrate more on the ban on mining live coral. We often turn a blind eye to people mining dead coral." And the punishments for offenders are not very severe - often just a warning, whereas illegal fishing carries a prison sentence.

Even when it comes to live coral mining, ancient animistic beliefs can sometimes be as influential as the rangers. "The reef has its own spirit," says Landau. Once, he says, a man collapsed on the ground in agony and died when ▶

© Yann Arthus-Bertrand « La terre vue du Ciel » / Altitude, Paris

Swimming pools become oases, when every square metre is used to accommodate tourists

▶ he returned form coral mining. "The spirit of the reef took revenge on him because he had been mining coral" he says. "But this hasn't stopped us going back to the same reef."

SEAWEED SALVATION

Meanwhile, some islanders are abandoning coral mining to cultivate seaweed. But, at least for Harudu, a coral miner from neighbouring Ambeua village, the motivation seems to be economic rather than ecological, or fear of the rangers. "I started coral mining 10 years ago," he explains. "In the busiest times I mined one cubic meter a trip. Neither the rangers, nor the marine park scientists scared me. Sometimes I mined just outside the marine research station. But these days I cultivate seaweed full-time and mine coral only now and then, mainly for my own use." Indeed, a strong smell of seaweed greets the visitor in front of Harudu's house, as a huge pile dries on a wooden table.

Over the past five years seaweed cultivation has increased in the Wakatobi Marine Park, with harvests every two months or so. During the rainy season (December to March), they can harvest 1000 kg of algae, compared to around 300 kg in the dry season, selling it for about 3100 rupiahs (about US$0.30) a kilo. Even if the price of coral has doubled over the past two years, explains Harudu, it still pays less than he can earn from seaweed – and it's a lot harder work. But the cost of setting up a seaweed farm – US$100 or more – is beyond the means of most islanders. The Indonesian Fisheries Ministry has started a loan system, but so far has only helped set up a few seaweed farms.

Despite these changes, islanders cannot build their houses on seaweed. Most do not know how to use cement, and there are no trucks to transport rock quarried on the island. Which, for the time being, leaves little alternative to coral.

Jessica Haapkylä

Tourism: problem or solution?

For some small island developing states, income from tourism accounts for over half of GDP. But at what price?

International tourism in small island developing states (2002)

	Number of tourists (thousands)	International tourism receipts (US$ million)	GDP (US$ million)
Singapore	6,996	4,932	86,969
Dominican Republic	2,811	2,736	22,039
Bahrain*	2,789	630	7,933
Cyprus	2,418	2,083	10,125
Cuba	1,656	1,633	…
Bahamas*	1,538	1,636	4,917
Jamaica	1,266	1,209	7,701
Malta	1,134	636	3,870
Mauritius	682	612	4,563
Aruba	643	898	…
United States Virgin Islands	553	1,240	…
Barbados*	507	687	2,456
Maldives	485	318	639
Fiji	398	267	1,828
Trinidad and Tobago*	383	201	9,146
St Lucia	253	256	660
Antigua and Barbuda**	237	290	665
Netherlands Antilles (Curaçao)	218	273	…
Haiti*	142	54	3,693
Seychelles	132	130	698
Grenada	132	84	414
Cape Verde	126	…	618
Samoa	89	45	265
St Vincent and the Grenadines	78	81	361
Cook Islands	73	46	…
St Kitts and Nevis	68	57	356
Dominica	67	36	254
Palau	59	59	130
Papua New Guinea*	54	101	2,919
Vanuatu*	53	46	219
Tonga	37	9	136
Comoros**	24	15	204
Solomon Islands***	21	…	336
Federated States of Micronesia*	15	13	230
Sao Tome and Principe*	8	8	48
Marshall Islands	6	4	108
Kiribati*	5	3	47
Niue	2	…	…
Tuvalu	1	…	…

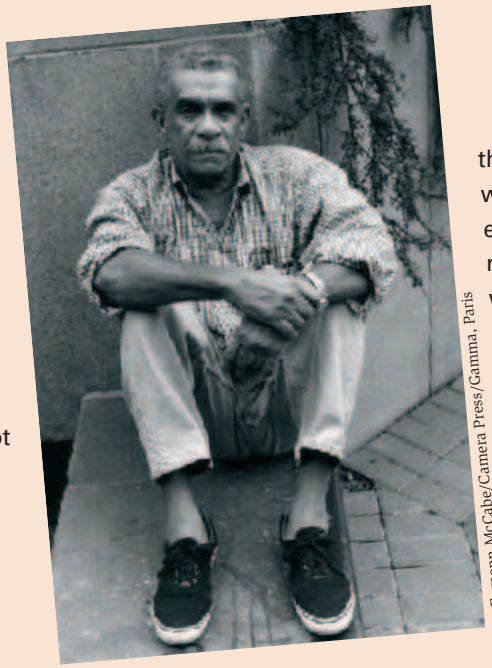
… : no data available * : 2001 data ** : 2000 data *** : 1999 data

Sources: World Tourism Organization, www.world-tourism.org; International Monetary Fund, www.imf.org; World Bank, www.worldbank.org.

For lack of available data, the following SIDS are not included: Nauru and Tokelau.

The Antilles: fragments of epic memory

In this extract from his Nobel Prize Lecture, on December 7, 1992, the St. Lucian poet, Derek Walcott, pays homage to the uniqueness of his native Antilles, and shows how the casual tourist may miss all that is essential



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(History) is there in Antillean geography, in the vegetation itself. The sea sighs with the drowned from the Middle Passage, the butchery of its aborigines, Carib and Aruac and Taino, bleeds in the scarlet of the immortelle, and even the actions of surf on sand cannot erase the African memory, or the lances of cane as a green prison where indentured Asians, the ancestors of Felicity, are still serving time.

That is what I have read around me from boyhood, from the beginnings of poetry, the grace of effort. In the hard mahogany of woodcutters: faces, resinous men, charcoal burners; in a man with a cutlass cradled across his forearm, who stands on the verge with the usual anonymous khaki dog; in the extra clothes he put on this morning, when it was cold when he rose in the thinning dark to go and make his garden in the heights – the heights, the garden, being miles away from his house, but that is where he has his land – not to mention the fishermen, the footmen on trucks, groaning up mornes, all fragments of Africa originally but shaped and hardened and rooted now in the island's life, illiterate in the way leaves are illiterate; they do not read, they are there to be read, and if they are properly read, they create their own literature.

But in our tourist brochures the Caribbean is a blue pool into which the republic dangles the extended foot of Florida as inflated rubber islands bob and drinks with umbrellas float towards her on a raft. This is how the islands from the shame of necessity sell themselves; this is the seasonal erosion of their identity, that high-pitched repetition of the same images of service that cannot distinguish one island from the other, with a future of polluted marinas, land deals negotiated by ministers, and all of this conducted to the music of Happy Hour and the rictus of a smile. What is the earthly paradise for our visitors? Two weeks without rain and a mahogany tan, and, at sunset, local troubadours in straw hats and floral shirts beating "Yellow Bird" and "Banana Boat Song" to death. There is a territory wider than this – wider than the limits made by the map of an island – which is the illimitable sea and what it remembers.

All of the Antilles, every island, is an effort of memory; every mind, every racial biography culminating in amnesia and fog. Pieces of sunlight through the fog and sudden rainbows, arcs-en-ciel. That is the effort, the labor of the Antillean imagination, rebuilding its gods from bamboo frames, phrase by phrase.

Derek Walcott

© UNESCO/Ariane Bailey

HEALTH/CULTURE

TROUBLE IN PARADISE: HIV/AIDS IN THE CARIBBEAN

White sand beaches, luxurious flora and fauna, picturesque volcanic landscapes, warm, laid-back, fun-loving people. This is the Caribbean – the epitome of Paradise. But all is not well in Paradise.

Today, it is raining in Portland (Jamaica). Inside a dilapidated two-room house in Hope Bay, Elizabeth is cringing in a corner trying to avoid the water falling through the roof. No one will be able to sleep tonight in the cramped bedroom. Diagnosed with HIV in 2001, Elizabeth has been having a hard time coping with the disease. Shortly after diagnosis, one of her family told the neighbours. Before long, everybody knew.

"Since then I have been subjected to rejection, discrimination and lack of respect from the community. I became a burden to my children, as they were teased at school," sobs Elizabeth. "My sole income was based on sewing. But since my illness, my customers gradually left. My landlord gave me notice. He disconnected my water in June 2003 and my electricity in July. I was given some land to live on, but because I have AIDS, some of the neighbours don't want me there."

Elizabeth is one of the estimated 22,000 persons living with HIV in Jamaica with a population of 2.6 million, and an estimated 590,000 in the Caribbean (population 38.7 million), which has the second highest prevalence rate after sub-Saharan Africa. And, even though rates of awareness of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted illnesses are over 70 percent in some islands, discrimination and intolerance are still major obstacles to prevention.

In the last two decades, HIV/AIDS has been moving steadily throughout the Caribbean. In 2003, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) estimated that up to 80,000 persons were newly infected. As many as 50,000 are estimated to have died from AIDS-related illnesses.

UNSAFE SEX

Data show that Caribbean children begin to have sex as early as 8, 9 and 10 years old, but adults are still afraid to talk to them about safer sex, feeling it will make them promiscuous. Meanwhile, girls are at greater risk of HIV infection than boys. Meanwhile, more than 50 percent of persons infected in the region are aged 20 - 39 years old, which means that many were infected between the ages of 14 and 19. And, for 32 percent of boys and 48 percent of girls, sexual initiation was forced.

Social pressures on men put women and girls at risk

In Trinidad and Tobago, a 1999 Ministry of Health report showed a female-to-male ratio in HIV cases among the 10 to 19 age group of 7:1. The picture is similar in Jamaica, where girls in the same age group are two-and-a-half times more likely than boys to be HIV infected (Ministry of Health, Jamaica 2003).

"Many young girls are caught in a trap of sexual vulnerability," says Robert Carr, Executive Director of the non-governmental organization, Jamaica AIDS Support. "They live in a culture that celebrates materialism but has high levels of poverty and unemployment. They live in a culture that says they must go to school. But they are not provided with the means to do so. They live in a culture that celebrates womanhood and motherhood, but does not always provide the information and the experience to do so safely."

"Each of these paths leads young girls into early sexual initiation in a context in which they often do not have the tools they need to manage their sexual and reproductive health" he adds.

And, "where women know their partners or husbands are unfaithful," says Carr, "they do not feel empowered to change how, where and when they and their partners have sex. To insist on condom use could bring violence, with death or homelessness as a real danger."

© Ministry of Health Jamaica


© The Gleaner Company Limited, Kingston

These teenagers might be embarrassed by HIV/AIDS education, but it could save their lives, as they are particularly vulnerable in the Caribbean

The HIV epidemic is also driven by cultural practices, where both men and women can have multiple sexual relationships. In Jamaica, 54 percent of men and 17 percent of women in the 15 – 49 year age group have had more than one sex partner in the past 14 years. Many of these are serial monogamous relationships, where a person has only one sexual partner at a time, even if the relationship may only last a week or so. Condoms are rarely used.

Commercial sex work is also believed to play a large role in the epidemic, especially in the Dominican Republic and Guyana. But the root is still poverty, which forces men, women and children to leave home for urban centres to sell sexual favours. And poverty affects women disproportionately. They are often economically dependent on men and unable to negotiate safer sex.

WIDESPREAD HOMOPHOBIA

Widespread and often violent homophobia in the region is also forcing male homosexuals to marry, or have relationships with women, to avoid aggression. And yet studies show that homosexuals who are emotionally involved with regular partners perceive unprotected penetrative sex as not risky, although most do not know the HIV status of their partner. Since both men and women in this case are considered regular partners, the risk of HIV infection is particularly high.

Already, many Caribbean countries have AIDS prevention programmes. In some, laws make HIV/AIDS a notifiable disease (such as Jamaica, St. Lucia, Belize and Guyana). In the Dominican Republic, the law specifies the rights of people infected with HIV while, in the Bahamas, legislation obliges rapists and sex offenders to be tested for HIV. Meanwhile, in Jamaica, Bahamas, Bermuda and Barbados, programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission are doing well. Condom distribution has increased from 2.5 million in 1985 to 10.8 million in 1999, while condom use with non-regular partners has moved from 37 percent in 1992 to 67 percent in 2000 among women.

For Robert Carr, Caribbeans still need to have a serious look at their behaviour. “Discrimination in its many forms is killing us. Many of our habits are self-defeating – for example, when we encourage young boys to be aggressively heterosexual, or our violent verbal and physical repression of men who have sex with men. We have to take responsibility for how our norms contribute to the harsh and violent society in which we live, and their role in contributing to the spread of the epidemic in the region.”

Patricia Watson

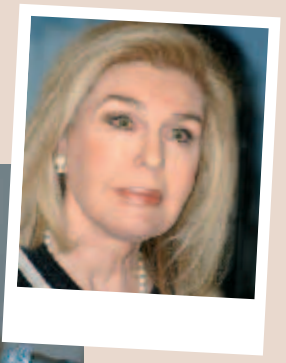
The UNESCO Office for the Caribbean is playing a leadership role in the region in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It has focused on achieving consensus among Governments and other stakeholders, establishing partnerships for action, and building expertise in member states.

www.unescocaribbean.org/home.htm

Goodwill Ambassadors

SPONSORING MASTERPIECES OF THE ORAL AND INTANGIBLE HERITAGE





The Woodcrafting Knowledge of the Zafimaniry (Madagascar) now has a champion in French astronaut Patrick Baudry, while Malian scientist Cheick Modibo Diarra has chosen to promote the Cultural Space of Sosso-Bala in Nyagassola (Guinea). Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, the former President of Iceland will defend the Kihnu Cultural Space (Estonia) and Princess Firyal of Jordan, both the Songs of Sanaa (Yemen) and the Iraqi Maqam music (Iraq)…

These leading personalities are among UNESCO's Goodwill Ambassadors – who place their talent and international renown at the service of the Organization's ideals. Last February 26, at their annual meeting, the Goodwill Ambassadors decided to sponsor some of the 47 Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity, in a bid to raise public awareness of the value of this heritage and encourage governments to take legal and administrative steps for its safeguarding.

Their action is expected to raise funds to finance safeguarding projects for the masterpieces and help incite governments to ratify the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted by UNESCO's General Conference in October 2003.

For his part, Spanish navigator and scientist Kitín Muñoz has chosen the Cultural Space of Jemaa el-Fna Square, (Morocco), and Italian architect Renzo Piano, the Vanuatu Sand Drawings (Vanuatu). Italian actress Claudia Cardinale will promote the Sicilian puppet theatre Opera dei Pupi; and Greek patron of the arts Marianna V. Vardinoyannis will focus on Azerbaijani Mugham music (Azerbaijan). Goodwill Ambassador Sheikh Ghassan I. Shaker will contribute to actions in favour of the Cultural Space of the Boysun District (Uzbekistan) and the Al-Sirah al-Hilaliyya Epic (Egypt). To this end, he gave the Director-General a contribution of US$100,000.

The sponsorship programme will be expanded as new ambassadors join in and as new Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage are proclaimed.

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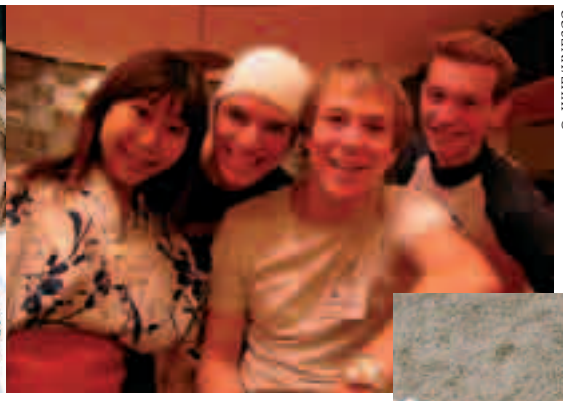

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Learning Centres for Peace:

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS WORKING FOR A BETTER WORLD

In the second half of 2003, 11 young volunteers were selected from over 1,000 applicants to spend three months in a designated youth hostel organizing and providing different activities in the fields of conflict resolution, peace education and environmental protection.

The young volunteers from Canada, Chile, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Korea, Japan, Portugal, Thailand, and the US were welcomed at youth hostels in Australia, Brazil, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Northern Ireland, Tunisia and the US, specifically chosen for their commitment to the UN Decade for Peace and Non-Violence for Children of the World.

Their stay was the first step in the Peace and International Understanding programme, which UNESCO and the International Youth Hostel Federation (IYHF), the umbrella organization for over 4,500 youth hostels and 10 million members worldwide, agreed to support in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the two parties in Autumn 2003.

The young volunteers were particularly enthusiastic about their stay, saying: «This has been a truly life-changing experience for me and I hope that I have managed to contribute a fraction of what I have received from this opportunity" said Dalila Capao from Portugal. For Danai Wongsa from Thailand: «To be in New York on 11 September 2003 was something I will remember for the rest of my life. To be able to make a small contribution to the rebuilding of world peace and understanding was an immense honour». A short film of the volunteers' experience will be available to download from the IYHF website from 1 July 2004.

With this first stage currently under evaluation, UNESCO and the IYHF are considering the ways in which the Peace and International Understanding programme, and in particular the Learning Centres for Peace project, can be expanded and developed over the next few years.

For more information about the Peace and International Understanding programme or the Learning Centres for Peace, please contact Maria Helena Henriques Mueller, Chief of the UNESCO Section for Youth: mh.henriques.mueller@unesco.org .

For more about the youth volunteers' experiences, go to www.hihostels.com/peace

Hewlett Packard

FROM BRAIN DRAIN TO BRAIN GAIN

Stemming South East Europe's "brain-drain" is the aim of a joint UNESCO-Hewlett Packard project which moved into a new phase last February with the delivery of the latest GRID computing equipment to universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro.

The equipment, donated by Hewlett Packard, will allow these universities to set up networks with fellow nationals living abroad, tapping into the expertise and knowledge of the scientific diaspora from these countries.

An estimated 500,000 people have left Serbia and Montenegro since 1990. Another 200,000 left Bosnia and Herzegovina after the signing of the peace agreement in 1995. Most of these people are between 25 and 40 years old and have university degrees in highly sought fields of expertise.

The project is the first in a series planned by UNESCO and Hewlett Packard and is being implemented by UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Science in Europe (ROSTE), based in Venice (Italy).

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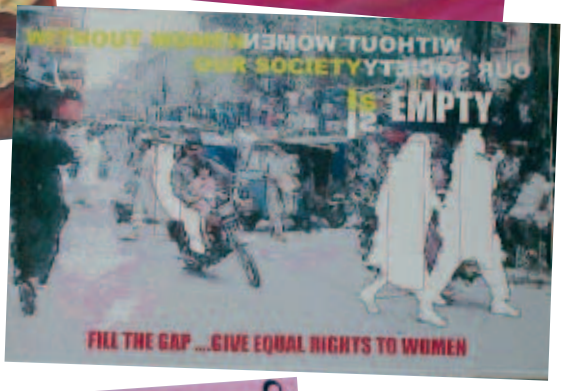
Professor Z. Djurovic from the University of Belgrade (left) receiving equipment, with Iulia Nechifor and Howard Moore (director) from UNESCO's Venice Office

Rozan

YOUNG PAKISTANIS QUESTIONING PATRIARCHY



Posters created by Fine Arts students, as part of the UNESCO/Rozan project in Pakistan

Students reflecting on the social construction of masculine and feminine roles and the way in which men are also victims of stereotypes: such a scene no longer raises eyebrows in many countries, but it represents a revolution in Pakistan, where the pilot phase of a project entitled "Men's Involvement in the Quest for Gender Equality", launched last year by UNESCO's Islamabad Office and the NGO Rozan, has just been completed.

This first phase included sensitizaton workshops and a creative arts and writing project. The workshops were held last October in four universities in Pakistan (Peshawar, Karachi, Punjab and Balochistan) on the themes of self-esteem, power, patriarchy, gender-based violence and the involvement of boys and men in the quest for equality. Participants learned about the role of socialization in shaping gender roles and looked at the way the patriarchal system could be found in every layer of society, in education, law, economics, politics; media and state administration. The women participants were surprised to learn that in certain situations men felt powerless or confused. Some of the young men, their confidence boosted by the climate of dialogue established at the workshop, spoke of the burden of having to look after the financial needs of not only their own nuclear family, but at times their parents and unmarried sisters, along with the obligation to "protect" the women in their family, or even carry out acts of vengeance.

The creative arts and writing parts of the project were carried out with students from schools of fine arts and mass communication. They prepared posters and paintings on the theme "male participation in creating gender equity", along with articles, novels and poems. Many of the artists explored such topics as access to educaton, women's segregation, seclusion and dress code, unequal treatment of male and female children or violence against women. The authors wrote on discrimination, or looked at how a dearth of religious knowledge and deviation from islamic codes and principles fed prejudice against women.

Their works were presented to Neelofer Bakhtiar, the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Women, in Islamabad last December 3 and exhibited at the UN Commission on Women in March this year.

Created in 1998, Rozan works particularly on violence against women and children. "All of our activities are undertaken with men," explains Maria Rashid, Rozan's director. "Our experience has shown that it is crucial to allow men to express their feelings and their fears and to deconstruct their social conditioning."

For more informations:

- * "Breaking the Mould, Men's Involvement in the Quest for Gender Equality", available on request from islamabad@unesco.org or fax. 92-51 2800056
- www.rozan.org and rozan@comsats.net.pl
- *Male roles, masculinities and violence* (UNESCO 2000) : http://upo.unesco.org/bookdetails.asp?id=3268

Mediterranean Chamber of Fine Arts

ARTISANS OF DEVELOPMENT

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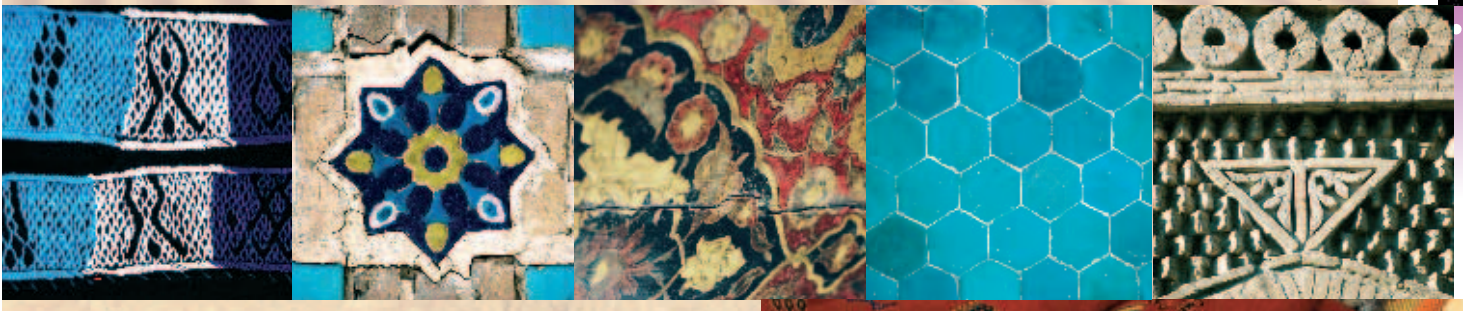

Hadda Bediaf is not the kind of woman who brags about herself or makes big speeches. And yet this weaver from El Golea (the Algerian Sahara) is a pioneer. Nearly 15 years ago, alone, she started making carpets for sale. Today, many women in the oasis belong to the cooperative she set up, which is part of the FEDA (Femmes et Développement en Algérie) network, and a training centre guarantees young women a professional future.

In March, carpets from El Golea were at UNESCO Headquarters as part of the travelling exhibition Impressions and Colours of the Mediterranean, which presented traditional crafts and contemporary art from the region: dresses and bags embroidered in Lebanese camps by Palestinian women who pass the art of cross-stitching down from one generation to the next, jams, honey and chutney from Lebanon and Greece, tunics with calligraphy by a Lebanese designer, French glassware, Moroccan leather, jewellery, painted wood, wrought iron and, of course, carpets. Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and Tunisia are also on display.

The driving force behind this shimmering explosion of colour is an energetic Greek artist named Lila Skaveli, who in 1992 founded the Mediterranean Chamber of Fine Arts (CBAM)* with the motto, «To be sustainable, development must be based on local cultural expressions and meet the needs of the peoples concerned.»

CBAM offers craftswomen management and marketing courses and is conducting an unprecedented study of the history and meaning of traditional designs (woven, embroidered, painted and engraved) in the Mediterranean basin.

In the framework of PRODECOM, a European crafts and cultural memory project, in 1994 CBAM launched the idea of a «cultural development product « label, which UNESCO has backed since 2002. The Organization's Arts, Crafts and Design Section campaigns for the implementation of adequate legal protection geared towards craft products in the Mediterranean and other regions of the world. In that connection, UNESCO supports the «Seal of Excellence» and «Hecho a mano» experiments in Asia and Latin America.

* Phone/fax:
+ 33 (0)1 45 67 12 52.
www.chbeauxarts-prodecom.org
e-mail:
ch.beaux.arts@wanadoo.fr

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The Chamber of Fine Arts of the Mediterranean is researching the traditional motifs used in Mediterranean crafts

Carpets from the southern coast of the Mediterranean

ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION

OUR VANISHING COUSINS

© UNESCO/Ian Redmond

Great apes – gorillas, chimpanzees, orangutans and bonobos – share more than 96 percent of their DNA with humans. So close is our relationship that a taxonomist from another planet would probably classify humans as another African ape species. Given this, great apes form a unique bridge linking humans to the natural world. By losing just one great ape species, we destroy part of the bridge to our own origins, and with it a part of our own humanity.

Yet today, every great ape species faces a high risk of extinction, either in the immediate future or at best within 50 years. We, humans, are the main culprits. Civil war, poaching for meat, the live animal trade, and, above all, the destruction of forests are increasingly taking their toll. The western chimpanzee has already disappeared from three countries – Benin, the Gambia, Togo – and Senegal could be next. To prevent another wave of extinctions, UNESCO and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) have brought together every country with a great ape population, donors and conservation groups to develop a survival plan for these creatures. How long before the plan leads to action? The fate of our closest living relatives hangs in the balance.

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© UNESCO/Ian Redmond

Left

Jenny, her new baby gorilla and her older son Ubwigeuge in Dem. Rep. of Congo (DRC).

Top

Taking a break in Lefini Reserve (Rep. of Congo).

Bottom

Alfred, a ranger at Cameroon's Melou National Park, with Bobo.

To learn more:
www.unesco.org/mab/grasp.htm

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Left
A young lowland gorilla riding piggyback in Lefini Reserve (Rep. of Congo).

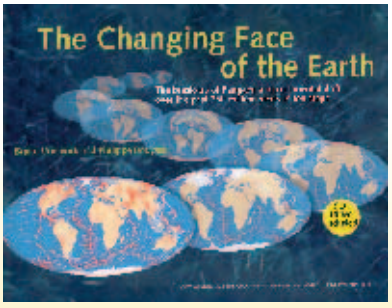
Bottom left
Bangla has a drink with a Lefini ranger.

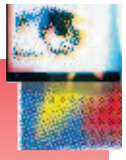
Top right
Patrolling Rwanda's Volcano Park, a unique home for mountain gorillas.

Middle right
Young mountain gorillas rest and play in front of tourists at Volcano Park.

Bottom
A young lowland gorilla hangs out in Lefini.

THE IMPERCEPTIBLE BALLET OF THE CONTINENTS





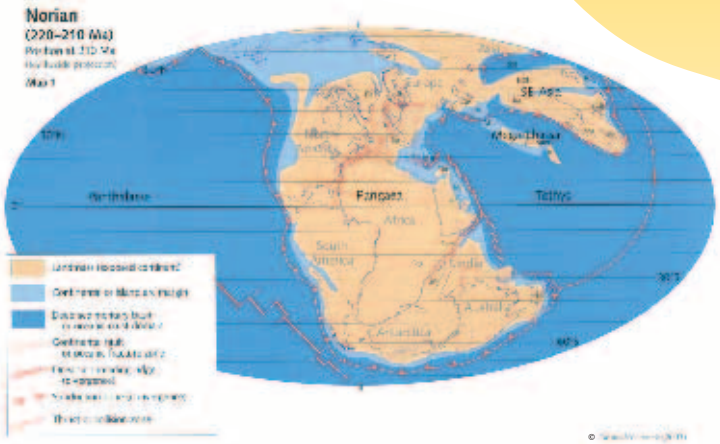
The Changing face of the Earth

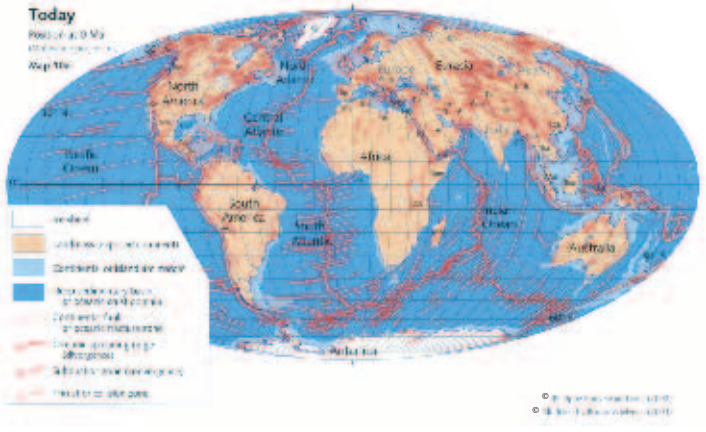
The break-up of Pangaea and continental drift over the past 250 million years in ten steps.

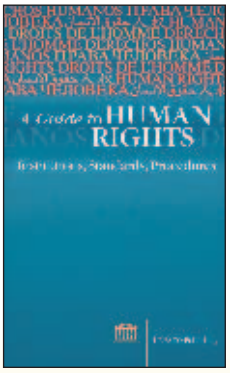
By Bruno Vrielynck and Philippe Bouysse.
32 pp., 21 x 27 cm
16 €
UNESCO Publishing/
Commission de la carte géologique du monde

This album, based on scientific research which was initially intended only for expert eyes, gives an accessible guide to the evolution of our planet over the last 250 million years and will appeal to all those who, in our rushed modern world, want to read a story that deals in millions of years.
It takes as its starting point the break-up of the Pangaea (the original single continent) which led to the continental masses we have today. There and then began a cycle of the newly emerged plates breaking apart or moving closer together to join up once again. (This happened 1.5 billion years ago and then 750 million years ago.)

The introduction gives a clear explanation of this perpetual mobility and stresses that the Earth, unlike Mars or Venus, is a living planet that evacuates part of its internal energy to the surface. This energy causes the movements known as convection, which affect the earth's mantle. These constant movements cause the lithosphere, or the earth's crust, to divide up into plates, which in turn move. This process, known as plate tectonics, is one of the main causes of earthquakes and volcanic activity.
This epic adventure is split into ten sequences. Each is illustrated with a paleogeographic map, which shows the Earth at a certain time and allows the reader to easily situate the illustrations chronologically. The accompanying commentary retraces the principal geological events of the period and gives all the explanations a reader could need.
The eleventh and final map shows the geology of the Earth today and the ages of rock formations. This package is completed by an extremely useful glossary and an easy-to-load CD-ROM which features all the material in the book and includes a Powerpoint animation.







A GUIDE TO HUMAN RIGHTS

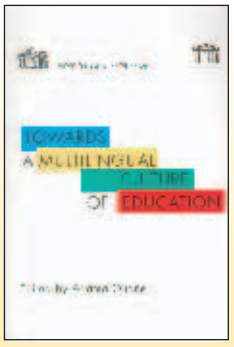
Institutions, Standards, Procedures

This publication provides brief information on major instruments, procedures and mechanisms to protect human rights, principal events (international conferences, decades, years, days, etc.), and institutions dealing with human rights issues. It contains 600 entries and is designed for all those who are concerned about, and interested in, human rights, primarily educators, students, human rights activists and mass media professionals. Its purpose is to better orient them in the international system of promotion and protection of human rights, based on international human rights law.

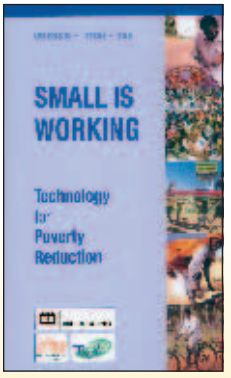
Edited by Janusz Symonides and Vladimir Volodin
Preface by Koïchiro Matsuura
628 pp., 21 x 13 cm,
14,80 €
UNESCO Publishing,
2003

TOWARDS A MULTICULTURAL CULTURE OF EDUCATION

Based on research carried out in thirty African, Asian and Latin American countries, this book advocates the use of local languages and the mother tongue in formal and non-formal education. It shows the often striking failure of linguistic policies inherited from colonial times and highlights the numerous advantages of multilingual teaching. This study addresses not only linguists and decision-makers but also field workers and teachers who are confronted daily with the consequences of the "single language" dogma.



Edited by Adama Ouane
490 pp., 21 x 14,7 cm
12,00 €
UNESCO Publishing/UIE, 2003



SMALL IS WORKING: TECHNOLOGY FOR POVERTY REDUCTION

The use of low-cost, small-scale technologies in developing countries was promoted in the 1960s by E. F. Schumacher, who published *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* in 1973. The current booklet and video bring together research and case studies to demonstrate how human-scale and sustainable technologies can play an important part in processes of poverty eradication, especially in Least Developed Countries.

90-minute video (PAL) and
60-page booklet
14,80 €
UNESCO Publishing/ITDG/TVE

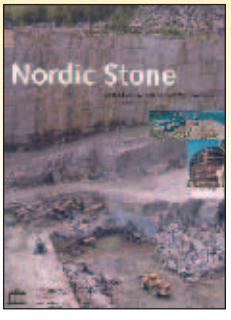
HUMAN RIGHTS: INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, MONITORING, ENFORCEMENT

This is the third and last volume of UNESCO's series for teaching human rights at the higher education level. It takes an institutional approach to the international protection of human rights, first examining the United Nations system, which may be seen as universal, and then analysing regional systems of protection. An indispensable source of information on the protection of human rights, the volume can also be employed as a practical guide to the use of existing procedures in the defence of human rights.

Edited by Janusz Symonides
422 pp., 23,5 x 15,5 cm
33,80 €
UNESCO Publishing/Ashgate,
2003

NORDIC STONE

An invaluable resource on natural stones found in the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden and Finland), providing descriptions of all the main stone types, with information on their geology and technology.
It also includes chapters that examine the history and heritage of stone in these countries, describes the methods for exploration, extraction and processing, and takes a close look at environmental issues in stone production.



Illustrated with many photographs, it includes a map of natural stone deposits, as well as indexes of locations and commercial names of the various stones.

Edited by Olavi Selonen
and Veli Suominen
64 pp., 27 x 19,5 cm
16,00 €
UNESCO Publishing/IAEG

TERRA

The aim of this card game is to collectively solve ecological, socio-economic and military and diplomatic crises in order to keep the peace and maintain conditions which allow for lasting development.
The players must work together and put aside their personal interests. If these crises accumulate, no one in the world will benefits.

Rules of the game in French, English,
Spanish, German and Catalan.
19.95 €,
Editions UNESCO/Days of Wonder,
2003

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

7, place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

Tel. +33 1 45 68 10 00
Internet:
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E-mail: ucj@unesco.org

UNESCO Offices

Afghanistan
UNESCO Kabul
P.O. Box 5, Kabul
☎ +93-70-283.008
Fax: +873-763 468 836,
E-mail: martin.hadlow@undp.org

Bangladesh
Idb Bhaban (16th floor)
E/8-A Rokeya Sharan
Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka 1207
☎ (880-2) 912 34 69/6522
Fax: (880-2) 912 34 68
E-mail: dhaka@unesco.org

Brazil
SAS Quadra 5 Bloco H Lote 6
Edificio CNPQ/IBICT/UNESCO
9° andar, 70070-914 Brasilia D.F.
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Fax: (55-61) 322 42 61
E-mail: brasilia@unesco.org

Burundi
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Bujumbura
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Yaoundé
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China
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Jianguomenwai Compound,
Beijing 100600
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E-mail: beijing@unesco.org

Congo
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Brazzaville
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Costa Rica
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casa esquinera, 2810 San José
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Fax: (506) 258 74 58, 258 76 41
E-mail: san-jose@unesco.org

Cuba
UNESCO Regional bureau
for Culture
Calzada 551 – Esq. a D
Vedado, Havana
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(57-3) 33 34 38
Fax: (53-7) 33 31 44
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Democratic Republic of the Congo
Immeuble Losonia,
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Quito
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Fax: (251-1) 51 14 14
E-mail: mlconde@hotmail.com

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E-mail: unesclbv@inet.ga

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Uruguay
UNESCO Office Montevideo
Regional Bureau for Science in Latin and the Caribbean
Edificio del Mercosur (ex Parque Hotel), Calle Dr. Luis Piera, 1992
Montevideo
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Viet Nam
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Jordan
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Fax: (962-6) 553 21 83
E-mail: registry@unesco.org

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Walking Man

1949

Alberto Giacometti
(1901-1966)

1.83 m tall
added to the UNESCO
collection in 1965

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