

THAILAND

1.1 Introduction

Year of ratification 1987

Organization submitting the report

- Cultural Heritage Section I:
Fine Arts Department
Ministry of Education,
Bangkok 10200,
Thailand

1.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

The status of national inventories

- CH: From 1935 to 2001, the Fine Arts Dept. has registered 2,373 sites as ancient monuments by publishing them in the government Gazette.
- NH: From 1964-2001, 234 sites have been registered by the National Park, Wildlife & Plant Conservation Dept.

The preparation of a Tentative List

- 29 sites, revised in 1998, still under revision.

Nominations and the nomination process

- 1990 * 3 nominations (deferred)
(a) Khao Yai National Park
(b) Lore Lindu National Park
(c) Tarutao National Park
- 1991 3 nominations (inscribed)
(a) Historic Town of Sukhotai
(b) Historic Town of Ayutthaya
(c) Thung Yai – Huai Kha Khaeng
- 1992 Ban Chiang Archaeological Site (inscribed)

1.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

Integration of heritage and planning

- The 'Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art & National Museums' (1961) has been revised in 1992.
- The Bureau of Archaeology & National Museums (BANM) was set up following the 1995 Act on the Administration of the Fine Arts Dept. The Bureau has 12 offices in different regions of the country.
- The 'Plan on the Conservation and Development of Arts and Culture' has entered phase 9 (2002-2006). Provincial Conservation Fora (PCF) have been organised.

- The Ancient city of Ayutthaya, Sukhothai Historical Park, and Ban Chiang, are under the responsibility of the 3rd, 5th and 7th regional offices respectively.
- Permission of the Director General of the BANM is needed for all repairs or modifications to cultural heritage sites. The DG may register or cancel any property after 30 days notice to private owners.
- NH: A 'Western Forest Complex Ecosystem Management' (WEFCOM) programme has been initiated.

Participation of local communities

- The Fine Arts Dept. 'guidelines for cultural heritage protection' encourage the participation of local communities (para 3.3), and sharing of "responsibilities with volunteers, NGOs, and the private sector" (para 3.4).

Tourism Development

- No information supplied.

Financial measures and budget allowance

- The budget for each cultural WH site is obtained from the government relating to archaeology, conservation of ancient monuments, and art objects (including mural paintings & in-situ sculptures). No figures supplied.

Professional

- Field training of archaeology students is conducted jointly between the BANM and Silpakorn University.
- The Fine Arts Dept. has given scholarships to its staff for training in the following areas: (i) management; (ii) conservation; and (iii) follow-up activities.

New and improved services

- Section 289 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (1997) identifies local administrative agencies "to preserve local arts, customs, traditions, wisdom and culture".
- The current 2001-2010 government plan envisages various measures including: (i) seminars & workshops by local agencies; (ii) preparation of master plans; (iii) enhancement of personnel skills; (iv) grading the importance of archaeological sites according to community, local, national & international significance (a committee was formed in May 2001); and (v) experiments on decentralization and the participation of agencies.

Issues to be addressed

- A 'Local Museums Initiative' exists to provide information on museum creation and management to the private sector & other government agencies

1.4 International co-operation and fund raising

National and International Fund Raising

- International assistance projects include: Univ. of Pennsylvania (USA) & Sumimoto Bank (Japan) for Ban Chiang; and American Express for the cleaning of the 'Phra Ajana Buddha image' in Sukhothai, and the restoration of the monuments of Ayutthaya following flooding.
- The Fine Arts Dept. has collaborated with France, Austria, New Zealand and the OECF of Japan on a matching funds basis.
- * International Assistance from the WHF as follows:
1988 \$2,857 Training, Wood conservation
1989 \$10,000 Preparatory, Cultural sites
1990 \$5,000 Preparatory, Natural sites nomination
1995 \$30,000 Emergency, (Thung Yai Huai Kha Kheng)
1998 \$20,000 Technical, (Thung Yai Huai Kha Kheng)
- * Extra-budgetary funds mobilised by the UNESCO Division of Cultural Heritage include:
1979 \$163,524 Conservation, preservation: Historic town of Sukhothai & associated historic towns (Voluntary contributions from the International Safeguarding Campaign)

1.5 Education, information and awareness-building

Information and awareness measures

- The Constitution (1997) states that the government has the responsibility to provide education and training to Thai citizens, and to "heighten teacher status".
- 'Thai Heritage Conservation Day' is held annually in April to raise awareness on Thai arts and culture.
- The Fine Arts Dept. has produced an 'Operational Handbook' for cultural heritage volunteers.
- Training for monks and lay persons who support temple conservation is also provided.

1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

Conclusions and proposed actions

- The Bureau of Archaeology & National Museums proposes to increase the number of regional offices from 12 to 15.
- A project is proposed to extend 'Historical Parks' in the area outside the city walls of Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet and Si Satchanalai. The revised management plans will run for 10 years approximately.
- Ayutthaya Historical Park will be expanded to provide a buffer zone to balance the demands of the ancient and the modern Ayutthaya cities.

- NH: Future planning for natural WH sites should be based on a systematic monitoring system involving habitat mapping, key species abundance, and land use change detection by satellite.