

MALDIVES

I.1 Introduction

Year of ratification 1986

Organisation submitting the report

- National Council for Linguistic and Historical Research

I.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

The status of national inventories

- 90 sites have been inventoried by the National Council for Linguistic and Historical Research and the Environment Section of the Ministry of Home Affairs, but there is no up-to-date national inventory,

The preparation of a Tentative List

- 12 sites have been included on the Maldives Tentative List, revised in 2003.

Nominations and the nomination process

- 1987 5 nominations (deferred)
 - (a) Utheemu Gan'duvaru (home of the Maldivian Sultan Mohamed Bodu Thakurufaanu)
 - (b) Eid Miskiyy (mosque)
 - (c) Fenfushi Hukuru Miskiyy (Friday mosque)
 - (d) Vaadoo Hukuru Miskiyy (mosque)
 - (e) Male Hukuru Miskiyy with minaret & other monumental tombs (mosque)

I.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

Integration of heritage and planning

- The Maldives Government co-ordinates excavations of foreign experts and archaeologists due to a lack of expertise and financial constraints.
- National Heritage is protected under the 1979 Law on Sites and Property of Antique, Archaeological and Historical Value.

Participation of local communities

- A Government policy has been implemented to involve people in conservation and management of the heritage found on their islands.
- Certain cultural and natural sites are defined as protected areas and tended by local communities.

Tourism Development

- * No information received.

Financial measures and budget allowance

- No regular government budget for heritage conservation and management.
- * No figures supplied.

Professional

- National conservators and archaeologists are lacking, as well as qualified heritage management staff. Until now, only one person in the Maldives has been undergoing higher studies in heritage management.
- Foreign conservation missions to Maldives allow local staff to get temporary "on-site training".
- Recently, some Maldivians attended a short training course on heritage conservation held at the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka.

New and improved services

- Special TV programmes were created to raise awareness among the public on days that are of historical and cultural significance in the Maldivian calendar.

Issues to be addressed

- Maldives faces several severe problems in heritage conservation, related to its geographical condition as an archipelago: the islands are scattered and some are difficult to access other than by sea; no permanent heritage conservation structures can be set up in such remote places.
- There is a general lack of skilled expertise, of conservation and management facilities, and of funding.

I.4 International co-operation and fund raising

National and International Fund Raising

- India and Norway have been organizing archaeological excavations on national heritage sites and providing on-site training to local staff.
- * Cooperation & assistance from "friendly countries" and other SAARC nations has been requested by the authorities in 1997.
- * International Assistance from the WHF as follows: 1989 \$5,245 Preparatory, Cultural nominations

I.5 Education, information and awareness-building

- Information and awareness measures
- Local History students are encouraged to create clubs to help increase public awareness of heritage issues.
- TV and radio broadcast several programmes related to Maldivian heritage.
- The National Council for Linguistic and Historical Research, which is supervising these programmes,

lacks space, expertise, funding and facilities to further enhance heritage awareness among the Maldivian public.

1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions

Conclusions and proposed actions

- “The identification, protection, conservation, presentation of cultural and natural heritage is tremendously important to the Maldives.”
- Securing funds and raising awareness will need time before heritage conservation and management is implemented successfully in the Maldives.