

## 4 Defining, assessing and improving heritage management systems

### PLANNING IN GENERAL

#### Approaches and challenges vary extensively

Planning in the heritage sector, as in other sectors, is characterized by multiple approaches, including those whose decision-making processes are not formalized at all.

Planning is required at both national and property levels. At national levels, primary planning activities might consist of identifying and gaining consensus for cultural heritage as part of the process of creating inventories (including Tentative Lists) and measures for legal protection, and developing appropriate conservation and long-term management measures. For some kinds of heritage, some of the planning process will already be expressed in legislative provisions such as outline strategies of land use and development plans involving private owners.

Several overlapping plans may coexist as a result of there being diverse partners (planning authorities, communities, the international community, etc.), contrasting pressures from the context (the buffer zone and the wider area of influence), and the need to plan both routine and one-off actions.

With regard to planning for specific properties, management systems will mix some active planning (anticipating problems and opportunities) with reactive planning (responding to problems as they arise) for properties; ideally, the former will predominate.

Integrated approaches to planning at a property level have become common but the levels of genuine participation vary greatly. Indeed, some systems deliver plans but fail to implement and revise them, because of insufficient resources or insufficient consensus.

Other systems embrace management tools to improve their approaches to planning whilst others stay loyal to established practice despite its shortcomings. In many countries, strategic planning (see management planning, Appendix A) might be the primary approach at national level and the values-led approach (see Part 2.5) might only be truly embraced at site level.

#### What planning involves

The planning process entails identifying desired outcomes for the property and its stakeholders (in other words setting the objectives of the management system); and determining the specific outputs to be delivered that will come together to achieve these outcomes. As preparatory steps planning defines the heritage processes and required outputs in terms of scope, quality, cost and timeframe, in such a way as to facilitate communication with others and to review progress at every stage.

Planning itself is a cycle that should include the following stages that often overlap: participation, consultation, drafting, review and updating. For cultural heritage these can be defined in more detail, for example (again, steps often overlapping): identifying the stakeholders and collecting information, identifying and characterizing the heritage and analysing the current situation; setting visions, objectives and actions; drafting the plan(s); implementing; review and updating.

If planning is done badly, the cost of taking remedial measures once implementation has begun increases. It is the planning stage that offers the potential to improve actions of the management system with minimum cost, as the following diagram<sup>67</sup> shows.

67. Burke, R. 2003. *Project Management Planning and Control Techniques*. John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, UK, p.24.