



From Local Archives to the World Heritage List: Making Inventories of Cultural and Natural Wealth and the Case of Turkey

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Abstract

Systems for identifying and assessing the cultural and natural heritage have been developed in virtually all countries around the world, constituting a vast body of information on the wealth that is found on Earth, divided amongst the territories of various states. The value appropriation to cultural and natural assets ranges in 'level of significance' from the local (neighborhood/ municipal) to the regional, national and international, creating a hierarchy of values that can be the topic of much debate for stakeholders. Inventorying and designation also have implications in terms of protection, land use, zoning, identity politics and the potential for economic development – particularly through tourism – based on the heritage industry revolving around labeled 'heritage sites'. With advancing technology, digital and online inventories and archives enable more public accessibility, visibility and opportunities to influence the way their content can be used for various agendas. This paper focuses on the concept of the 'inventory' in the broad sense, to discuss its relationship with heritage identification and designation with a focus on the Turkish system. An evaluation is made in particular of the nomination process for sites leading to the UNESCO World Heritage List, through the channel of national Tentative Lists (TL), with a case study of the Turkish TL. Thus, potential approaches are explored for building on local and national inventories, to contribute to improved systems of appropriating value to cultural and natural resources, benefiting their protection, appreciation and sustainable use by local and global communities.

Keywords: *Inventories, UNESCO World Heritage, Tentative List, Turkey, cultural and natural heritage*



Yerel Arşivlerden Dünya Miras Listesi'ne: Kültürel ve Doğal Zenginliğin Envanterlenmesi ve Türkiye Örneği

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Öz

Kültürel ve doğal mirasın tespit edilmesi ve değerlendirilmesine yönelik sistemler, dünyanın hemen her ülkesinde geliştirilmiş, yeryüzünde bulunan ve çeşitli ülkelerin toprakları arasında dağılmış olan zenginliğe ilişkin geniş bir bilgi hazinesi oluşmuştur. Kültürel ve doğal varlıklara atfedilen değerlerin 'önem düzeyi' yerelden (mahalle/ belediye) bölgele, ulusala ve uluslararasıma kadar değişkenlik göstermekte, konu ile ilgili paydaşlar arasında tartışmalara yol açabilen bir değerler hiyerarşisi yaratmaktadır. Envanterleme ve tescillenmenin ayrıca koruma, arazi kullanımı, yapılaşma koşulları, kimlik siyaseti ve 'miras alanı' olarak etiketlenen yerler etrafında dönen miras endüstrisine dayalı (özellikle turizm yoluyla) ekonomik kalkınma açısından birçok yan etkisi bulunmaktadır. Gelişen teknoloji ile, dijital ve çevrimiçi envanterler ve arşivler, bu bilgiye daha fazla kamusal erişim, görünürlük ve bilgi içeriğinin çeşitli amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanımını yönlendirmek için fırsatlar getirmektedir. Bu makale, geniş anlamda 'envanter' kavramını ele alarak mirasın tespit edilmesi ve tescillenmesi ile olan ilişkisini Türkiye örneğine odaklanarak tartışmaktadır. Özellikle ulusal Geçici Listeler üzerinden ilerleyen UNESCO Dünya Miras Listesi'ne giden adaylık süreci Türkiye özelinde değerlendirilmektedir. Bu şekilde, yerel ve ulusal envanterleri temel alarak, kültürel ve doğal kaynakların yerel ve küresel topluluklarca korunması, yaşatılması ve sürdürülebilir şekilde faydalanulmasına yönelik daha etkili ve adil değer atfetme yaklaşımlarına ilişkin düşünceler geliştirilmektedir.

Anahtar kavramlar: Envanter, UNESCO Dünya Mirası, Geçici Liste, Türkiye, Kültürel ve doğal miras

Introduction

Systems for identifying and assessing the cultural and natural heritage have been developed in virtually all countries around the world, constituting a vast body of information on the wealth that is found on Earth, divided amongst the territories of various states. Inventorying and designation also have implications in terms of protection and economic development, as they provide the basis from which value appropriation is made on the heritage assets in question. This value appropriation ranges in 'level of significance', creating a hierarchy of values that can be the topic of much debate for stakeholders. The platform where this debate takes place perhaps most intensely is that of the World Heritage (WH) Convention of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the prestige and visibility of which motivates communities and their leaders to strive for this accolade with enthusiasm.

This paper explores the concept of the 'inventory' in the broad sense, first discussing its relationship with heritage identification and designation, with a focus on the Turkish system. Then it evaluates the nomination process for sites leading to the UNESCO WH List, through the channel of national Tentative Lists (TL), with a case study of the Turkish list. By exploring the interplay between levels of identification and designation, from local and national inventories up to World Heritage, potential approaches are sought for building on these dynamics to contribute to more effective and fair systems of attributing value to cultural and natural resources.

The process of inventory-making

Identification and 'listing'

Documentation is the first major phase in the long process of safeguarding and management of the cultural and natural heritage, and the first step that launches the official procedures is identification. Once the heritage is identified, it is assessed for its characteristics and significance so as to confirm and recognize the need for its protection. This recognition finds official status through the decision of the public bodies mandated to handle heritage affairs by each country's laws, to form official

lists, i.e. for registration, listing or designation onto national or local registers of properties to be protected.

In the Turkish legislation for the protection of cultural and natural properties¹, these two steps have been defined clearly as distinct official procedures, i.e. 'identification' (*'tespit'*) and 'registration' (*'tescil'*), undertaken on the scale of the single monument/ structure (*'kültür varlığı'*) or natural feature (*'tabiat varlığı'*) or the environmental scale of the conservation area (*'sit alanı'*), of urban/ archaeological/ historical/ natural types or their combinations. The lists of registered properties are kept in the subsidiary organs of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MoCT), i.e. the 'Regional Councils for the Protection of Cultural Property' (also of 'Natural Property' until 2011, when the Ministry of the Environment and Urbanization (MoEU) was established and the responsibilities for natural heritage were transferred to 'Commissions for the Protection of Natural Property' under this ministry²), and accessible through the website of the MoCT and the country's 81 Province Directorates for Culture and Tourism (PDCT) (MoCT-GDMM, 2016). Types of registered natural heritage status include, beside the natural properties and natural conservation areas formerly administered by the MoCT, Special Environmental Protection Areas (*'Özel Çevre Koruma Bölgesi'*) (MoEU-GDPNH, 2016), nature protection areas (*'korunan alan'*) with five sub-categories, wetlands (*'sulak alan'*) and Ramsar Sites, the latter two administered by the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (MoFWA) (MoFWA-GDNCNP, 2016) (also see Table 1).

Beside the officially registered properties, there may be unofficial lists kept by non-governmental actors, i.e. community groups working on heritage at the local, national and international scale. These groups may be advocating the official recognition of heritage sites that have not yet gained it, aiming to draw attention to certain endangered sites, or creating specific accreditation systems for sites to qualify for technical and financial support. Some well-known examples are the World Monuments Watch of the World Monuments Fund and the 7 Most Endangered List of Europa Nostra. Official bodies may also be compiling selections of places of interest, usually for the tourism sector, as observed in the lists

¹ Law no. 2863 on the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Property.

² Decree 648 Decree no. 648 on Amendments to the Decree on the Establishment and Duties of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization and to Some Laws and Decrees.

of 'places to visit' in the websites of province directorates for culture and tourism, province or district governorships and municipalities.

All these official and unofficial channels of listing and inventorying, while presenting a great diversity and varying degrees of systematization and consistency, serve the common purpose of creating recognition of places to be protected, which in turn facilitates action for their protection.

Implications and benefits of inventorying

The linguistic meaning of 'inventory', as given by Merriam-Webster (2016), is "a complete list of the things that are in a place" and "the act or process of making such a list", as well as some specific definitions including "a catalog of the property of an individual or estate" and "a survey of natural resources", with roots in the 15th century derived from the Latin for "thing found". Keeping in mind this essential function, one can appreciate how inventorying facilitates analyses of listed items on a collective scale, and make policy decisions for heritage based on these analyses (e.g. institutional and regional resource allocation, statistical and comparative analyses revealing overall attributes, trends, with biases to rectify and gaps to fill if necessary). As the proverb "knowledge is power" reminds, these systematic, detailed and interpreted pools of information provide a powerful enabling tool for protecting and managing the heritage assets at hand.

The fundamental role of inventorying as a systematized method of documentation is that of information. When compiled and interpreted in an organized fashion by archaeological, city and other types of thematic archives and museums, its transformation into a knowledge base reinforces collective identity and urban memory, as long as community awareness, pride and sense of ownership for these heritage assets is in place.

Inventorying, when integrated into a system of legal status designation, becomes a protection tool that can affect land use and zoning decisions in urban and regional development, depending on how much scope the national legislation of countries allow for it. In the Turkish case, designation has a strong effect of restricting development rights, bringing the suspension of all zoning rules in effect until a conservation plan and associated building regulations are prepared and approved by the conservation councils of the MoCT (and recently the MoEU). One

should note, however, that the inadequacy of financial aid provided to owners of historic buildings and of the socio-economic mechanisms supporting local authorities in caring for conservation areas, has left the heritage designation tool in a weak position, giving it a negative image of burdening the community with unreasonable obligations, and thus paving the way for pressures to challenge this status. It is thus somehow paradoxical that communities can take pride in the 'special' cultural and natural beauties with which they are associated, while objecting to legal restrictions that accompany their recognition.

The basic role of documentation and inventorying as the initial step in heritage conservation often translates into the first 'line of defense' in hostile socio-economic contexts, such as those implied above, and the only realistic measure to take in the face of natural disasters, armed conflicts and other crises and risks. When the steps that should follow designation, such as planning, project preparation and physical conservation works, are not possible for a variety of reasons – policy priorities, availability of financial and human resources, security concerns, etc. – the minimal measure of documentation is much better than no measure at all, as the information saved in the public (or potentially accessible) record will ensure that the memories, values and meanings the heritage conveys are not entirely lost for the relevant communities.

A similar function of documentation and inventorying, which could be said to have increasing importance, is a more philosophical one within conservation discourse. The scientific community of conservation and related fields seems to be arriving at a stage of thought where "we cannot protect everything", at least not physically, and maybe "we are not meant to". In the face of dilemmas related to sustainable development and the conservation-use balance, alternative ways for conserving memories, values and meanings, again, may lie in advanced and creative ways of documentation and knowledge of the full stock of heritage assets 'found' through inventorying. Here, new information technologies emerge as a key player.

In our age of the information revolution ushering in new technologies and a new form of 'digital democracy' through accessibility of information, the heritage field is a great beneficiary of these emerging opportunities. Some major areas where new technologies are being used include virtual tours, virtual reconstructions – a famous case being the 'laser resur-

rection' of the Bamiyan Buddhas (Russon, 2015), mobile applications and QR ('Quick Response') codes granting visitors instant access to information on the heritage sites, and social media campaigns for awareness-raising and organizing—such as UNESCO's #unite4heritage and the UN's #GlobalGoals. Equally exciting are the possibilities afforded by Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data handling capabilities, and the social reach of digital and online inventories and archives, set up by public, private and community organizations – some well-known examples including the Getty Archival Images, the New York Metropolitan Museum's Open Access for Scholarly Content (OASC) initiative and the Europeana portal – enabling more public accessibility and visibility to heritage assets, their content being used by researchers, professionals and the interested public.

One critical aspect related to the information function of documentation, beside awareness building, is about accuracy and thus 'authenticity', particularly in the context of reconstructions- both physical and virtual. A fundamental tenet of restoration is that it should stop where conjecture begins (Venice Charter, art. 9); the more thorough and accurate documentation done, the more scope for qualified restoration interventions and more evidence to support claims against unqualified ones.

Another important outcome of heritage recognition has been in economic terms, with the development of the heritage industry revolving around labeled 'heritage sites'. The potential presented by heritage assets for economic development – particularly through tourism – has been recognized early on, creating an enormous economic sector around the world, and often the most important sector in many developing countries. Ranging in levels of sustainability, from resort towns and theme parks with corporate institutions behind them, to cultural and ecotourism trends spontaneously appearing among the public through fashions and informal networks, the tourism sector is largely driven by 'branding' and 'buzz' created around cultural and natural beauties. Beside tourism, the perceived attractiveness of real estate located close to or within recognized cultural and natural heritage assets influences prices and the behavior of income groups.

Lastly, the recognition of heritage and its formal placement in official inventories has a dimension of identity politics. There may be multiple, competing definitions for different groups associated with the same her-

itage site – a typical case being between indigenous populations and groups who settled later, often as colonizers – leading to contested views of the right use and interventions to it. Another case, particularly in countries with multi-cultural/ -ethnic/ - religious histories and demographics, may be that heritage representing these different identities and cultures is prioritized differently in representing a country's 'national heritage'. Turkey presents an interesting case in this respect in the last years, as some of the country's minorities' heritage has been endorsed by the state (the MoCT) in the WH process; Diyarbakır Fortress and Hevsel Gardens Cultural Landscape, in a city closely associated with Turkey's Kurdish population, has been nominated and inscribed on the WH List, and the Tentative List features two sites of Armenian heritage and six sites of high importance for today's Christian community. Some of these nominations drew substantial public and media attention, and gave promising signs to the national and international community of experts, of a maturing cultural policy in this country at the time.

Levels of significance and hierarchies of recognition

The process of inventorying comprises two distinct steps, i.e. identification and designation, which are connected through an understanding of 'meaning', which leads to significance assessment. The establishment – and perhaps a reiterative process of updating – of "why we protect in the first place" is a constant reference and 'compass' for all activities forming the heritage conservation and management process. Significance assessment builds upon the understanding of a site and seeks what is important about it in various contexts, through comparison with other similar cultural or natural assets, considering questions such as whether they are common, unusual, rare, unique or the sole survivor, or whether they are typical, representative or atypical. Significance assessment is based on a wide variety of values, which in turn inform criteria of selection. The basic types of value are mentioned in various sources as 'age', 'aesthetic value', and 'historic value', but the range of values relevant for heritage has grown tremendously, toward a more inclusive and comprehensive understanding of social life and society's preferences, which are not discussed in detail in this paper.

The value appropriation to cultural and natural assets ranges in 'level of significance', usually expressed in geographic scale. While a range of

significance from 'none' to 'low', 'medium', 'high', 'exceptional' and 'unique' is often used; a measure from 'none' to 'local' (neighborhood/municipal), 'regional', 'national' and 'international' reflects statutory designations and corresponds to the hierarchy of local government and administration (district, region, country, etc.), which is more convenient in terms of official status designation. This hierarchy of values created can be the topic of debate for stakeholders, who often seek recognition at the highest level possible for the sites with which they are associated – either through belonging and identity, or through responsibility for management. To some degree there will always be an element of discussion about which category a site falls into, but experience of context, of the category being assessed, of the current level of understanding (whether it be archaeological, ecological or other) and other factors will greatly inform the assessment. These levels of significance might be actual – in that the significance is already revealed – or it might be potential, in that work may be needed to assure the level or to reveal it at future times. With further research in any relevant topic, the levels of significance of any site may change in the light of emerging knowledge (Donald Insall Associates, 2010, p. 71).

The 'ultimate inventory': UNESCO World Heritage

Overview of the World Heritage nomination process

The importance and relevance of designation and recognition of heritage sites is sustained and reproduced in the heritage field with the great and ever-growing popularity of the UNESCO World Heritage List. With 191 States Parties, the World Heritage Convention is UNESCO's most widely ratified convention, and one of the most widely ratified environmental agreements in the world today (Viikari, 2010, p. 171). The prestige and visibility of the WH List motivates communities and their leaders to strive for nomination and inscription of their heritage sites on the WH List with enthusiasm, causing intense debates around the significance, meaningful size and composition of such lists and the effectiveness of the nomination process.

To provide a brief summary of the WH process, the 'Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage' was adopted by UNESCO in 1972, to encourage the identification, protection

and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. To be included on the WH List, sites must be of outstanding universal value and meet at least one out of ten (six cultural and four natural) selection criteria (UNESCO WHC, 2016a). The World Heritage Committee, composed of 21 States Parties to the WH Convention serving on the committee on a rotating basis, meets annually to decide on the inscription of new sites nominated for the WH List, based on the Advisory Body reports of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) for cultural criteria and the International Union for Conservation (IUCN) for natural criteria, as well as other topics such as monitoring the State of Conservation of WH Sites and general strategies and policies of the WH Centre. As of 2015, there are 1031 properties on the WH List, located in 163 countries.

The nomination process for a site begins through the channel of the national Tentative Lists (TL), which States Parties are responsible for preparing. A TL is an inventory of those properties that each State Party intends to consider for nomination (UNESCO WHC, 2016a). The list provides a forecast of properties that a state party may decide to submit for WH inscription in the next ten years. Although a position on a country's TL does not automatically tender that site with WH status, the list provides a tool for planning and advocacy of a nation's outstanding natural and cultural heritage, and assists the WH Committee to assess the context from which a country's particular nominations are made (New Zealand Department of Conservation, 2016).

After the first 20 years of the Convention, certain imbalances in the WH List became noticeable, and in 1994, the WH Committee launched the 'Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List' to ensure that the List reflects the world's cultural and natural diversity (UNESCO WHC, 2016a). Efforts to make this strategy successful have been continuing over the years through new initiatives at the WH Centre, coupled with efforts to deal with the challenge of a list that has become almost 'un-manageably long'. This is an interesting conundrum, as achieving a balanced and representative list is through the addition of many sites of underrepresented types (or 'traditional' sites in under-represented countries), but the pressures of States Parties to have speedy inscriptions to add these underrepresented sites – increasingly at the expense of ignoring Advisory Bodies' recommendations – are also

putting the credibility of the WH List at risk. Some important measures the WH Centre has been taking to address these issues include restrictions on the number of sites that can be nominated each year by State Parties, and the highly commendable 'Upstream Processes', for closer collaboration of States Parties with the Advisory Bodies as early in the nomination process as possible.

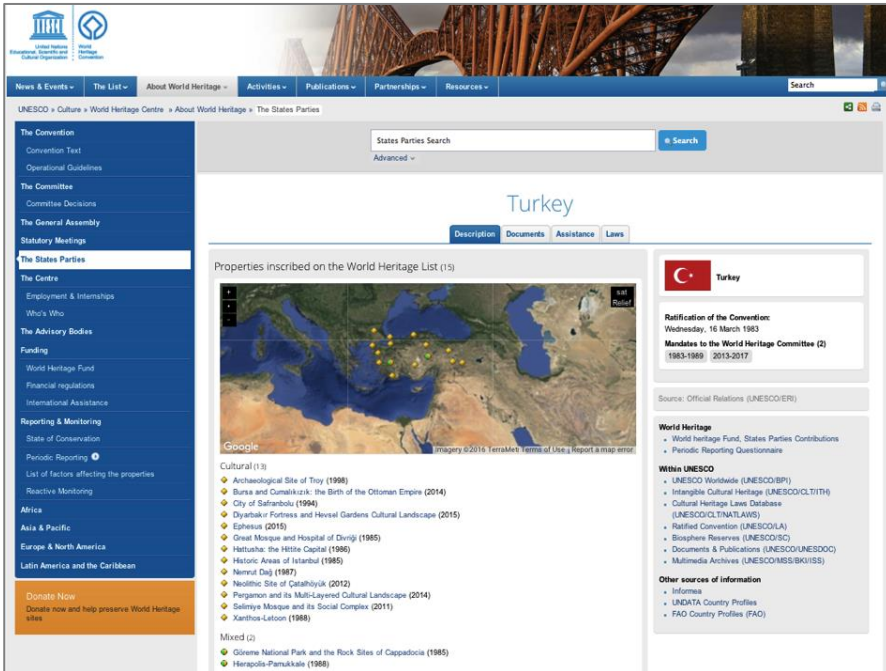


Figure 1: Page for Turkey in the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website (UNESCO WHC, 2016b)

Parenti & De Simone (2015) argue that there are sociopolitical and institutional variables that influence the choice of states in forming their Tentative Lists, representing the cultural relevance of a country and its role inside UNESCO, and that the possible reasons behind WH List imbalance date back to the submissions of TLs, the first act of national initiative. Indeed, TL formation is observed to be highly susceptible to political will and connections at the local level and alignment with the political climate at the national level.

With this context in mind, the national Tentative Lists emerge as a topic worth exploring in detail in the present and the near future, as the success of WH strategies seems dependent to a great degree on how States Parties approach their TL formation process. Other ideas related to inventories may also come forth from TL discussions, which might contribute to the larger picture and ultimate goal of adequate recognition and sustainability of the world's cultural and natural resources.

The Turkish Tentative List

With 60 sites, Turkey is the State Party to the WH Convention with the largest Tentative List (UNESCO WHC, 2016b). With 15 sites inscribed on the WH List, it ranks in the lower half of the approximately 30 most active States Parties in terms of inscribed WH Sites and nominations between 2000-15 (UNESCO WHC, 2015b). The first 9 WH Sites were inscribed between 1985-98, and after a hiatus of about a decade, work resumed in 2009 by the MoCT to revise its TL. The fruits of these efforts were soon evident, with an intense period of new inscriptions – most of them already world-famous sites such as Ephesus, Pergamon and Çatalhöyük – beginning in 2011. Turkey is included in the most over-represented region, i.e. Europe and North America, but its outstandingly rich cultural and natural geography – related to its well-documented geo-strategic position straddling Europe, Asia and the Middle East – is as yet not fully reflected in the WH List. Thus, its long TL should be understandable, but the momentum with which the Turkish state has focused on this topic necessitates a scientific analysis and policy recommendations of matching vigor, to ensure the TL evolves in a balanced and representative way in line with the Global Strategy objectives.

Presently, the TL is dominated by cultural sites (93.3%), with cultural landscapes making up 6.8% of the overall list. In terms of typologies, archaeological sites (40.7%) and architectural monuments 37.3(%) are predominant, while historic towns (11.8%) are not overrepresented the way they are globally. In terms of themes encouraged by the Global Strategy, WH candidates are found under the Silk Road, intangible heritage, Islam, serial nominations, water heritage, shared heritage of different religious and cultural groups, bridges and pre-history, which covers a good part of the preferred themes. Industrial, modern, and natural (including coastal and marine) heritage present some noticeable gaps.

The TL is influenced by factors other than the typological and thematic aspects of heritage, such as political and scientific ownership and endorsement, local conservation and management capacity, understanding of the WH system by responsible parties, regional differences in socio-economic development and prevalent perceptions and priorities among key stakeholders in the country about the type of heritage that should be given importance to. These stakeholders could be listed as:

- the MoCT, which is the public body directly authorized for WH affairs and employing a fair number of experts who are trained in WH matters;
- the incumbent government, which would influence decisions related to sites deemed politically sensitive;
- the MoEU, which has not as yet been active for natural heritage nominations, and whose very inertia is a relevant factor;
- leaders of provincial and municipal governments, particularly in high-income cities and regions with high-visitation tourist sites, especially those figures with personal political leverage;
- scientific research teams, particularly those with good international connections who can competently navigate the WH system on a technical level; and
- the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose appointed ambassadors/delegations to UNESCO can actively engage with the WH Committee debates.

If one is to assume that the main priority for the Turkish TL, as mentioned above, should be to ensure that it is balanced and representative as per Global Strategy objectives, a sound policy for revising the TL needs to be crafted for the coming few years. The UNESCO WHC (2016a) encourages the preparation of TLs with the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, NGOs and other interested parties and partners, also stating that the lists should not be considered exhaustive and that States Parties should re-examine and re-submit their TLs at least every ten years. Since the demand from local governments appears to remain high, the Turkish TL can be expected to keep growing every coming year, thus actively fulfilling the latter recommendation of the WHC. This prospect for growth, one hopes, is also an opportunity for the list to

indeed be re-examined, as thematically overlapping and redundant sites can be merged into serial nominations, sites that are sorely missing from the TL are added following due research and advocacy, and a certain order of priority is agreed upon, so that sites with deserving significance can be prepared for a WH future, in terms of protection, management and capacity building activities.

National and regional inventory projects for heritage in Turkey

To implement such a policy as described above, the pool of candidates that feeds the Turkish Tentative List, i.e. the national inventory of registered cultural and natural properties, needs to be actively harnessed. In other words, an ‘inventory strategy’ for the WH TL is recommended, fully using the benefits and possibilities that inventories provide, such as those mentioned earlier in this paper. The Turkish national inventory needs to be systematically scanned in light of the WH selection criteria, whereby registered properties are assessed for potential inclusion on the TL.

Table 1. Turkey’s cultural and natural properties registered on national and international scale, with regional divisions of their administration.

International	
World Heritage Sites (end of 2015)	15
World Heritage Tentative List Sites (end of 2015)	60
Ramsar Sites (July 2015)	14
National	
Registered Cultural Properties (end of 2015): 65,513 civil architecture works, 9,403 religious buildings, 11,093 cultural buildings, 2,753 administrative buildings, 1,077 military buildings, 3,748 industrial and commercial buildings, 4,176 cemeteries, 264 martyr memorials, 344 memorial monuments, 2,317 ruins, 61 protected streets	100,749
Registered Natural Properties (monumental trees and caves) (end of 2015, estimated)	4,500 ³

³ As no source could be found providing the current number of natural properties, a calculation was made based on the difference between the number of cultural + natural properties in 2011, i.e. 98228 (before the Decree 648 of 2011 separated cultural and natural heritage jurisdictions) and the number of cultural properties in 2012, i.e. 94,290, calibrated from 2011 to 2015 based on average percentage increase between 2007 and 2015, rounded down to the nearest 500. This calculation assumes there were new natural properties continuing to be registered after 2011. If there were none, then the estimate of 2011, not calibrated to 2015, should be taken, which would be approximately 3,900.

Registered Conservation Areas (Cultural/ Mixed) (end of 2015)	14,840
Registered Conservation Areas (Natural) (September 2014)	2,134
Nature protection areas: 40 National Parks, 203 Nature Parks, 112 Nature Monuments, and 81 Wildlife Improvement Areas (July 2015); 239 Gene Conservation Forest Area and 373 Seed Stand Area (end of 2014); 178 Seed Orchards (end of 2014)	1,226
Wetlands (July 2015)	20
Special Environmental Protection Areas (April 2016)	16
Total of Registered Cultural and Natural Properties on Single Monument Scale	105,249
Total of Registered Cultural and Natural Properties on Environmental Scale	18,236
Total of Registered Cultural Properties on Single Monument and Environmental Scale	115,589
Total of Registered Natural Properties on Single Monument and Environmental Scale	7,896
Total of All Registered Properties	123,485
Regional Administrative Divisions	
Geographical Regions	7
Development Agency Divisions (as per EU Accession)	26
Regional Councils for the Conservation of Cultural Property	34
Regional Commissions for the Conservation of Natural Property	29
Province Directorates for Culture and Tourism, PDs for Environment and Urbanisation	81

Sources: MoCT-GDMM, 2016a; MoCT-GDMM, 2016b; MoEU, 2016b; MoFWA, 2016; MoFWA-GDNCNP, n.d.; TUEE, 2014.

At the same time, other existing relevant policies, such as the Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023 (TST 2023), need to be coordinated with this effort. In particular, various thematic regions, routes and corridors that have been identified in the TST (see Fig. 2) should be examined for possible serial nomination groupings, based on the Anatolian civilizations and historical periods.

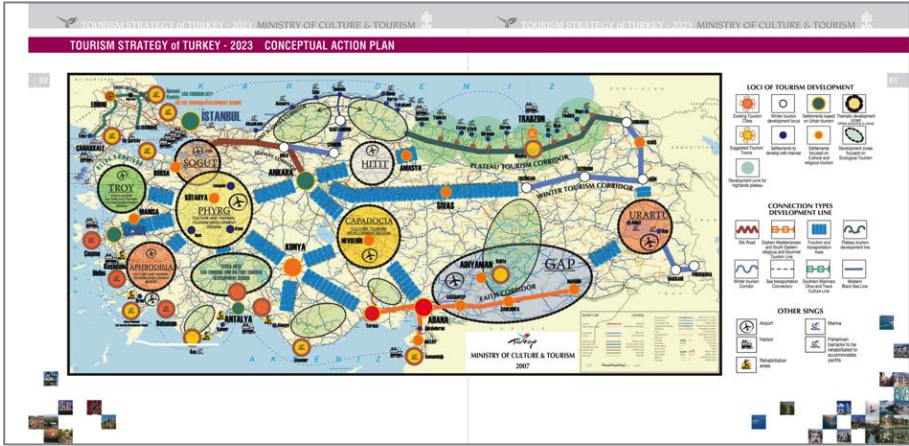


Figure 2. Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023, Conceptual Action Plan (MoCT 2007: 71-72).

A working group can be set up to undertake this work in an effective manner, with the leadership of the MoCT and support of the MoEU, as well as the coordination of the regional councils for the conservation of cultural property and regional commissions for the protection of natural property, province directorates for culture and tourism (PDCTs) and province directorates for the environment and urbanisation (PDEUs). Universities and experts conducting research on the local heritage, heritage-related NGOs and community groups representing certain localities can contribute to the process through regular consultative meetings and communications.

As one can follow from Table 1, the vast figures for registered properties, in the tens of thousands, are of a very different scale than that of a TL. This is expected in any country of the geographic size, population and cultural history that Turkey is, and even in smaller countries. The pertinent point of working with numbers of national scale would be to make sure the representativeness has been checked for the entire set of possibilities, and no potentially important site has been missed. In transferring the knowledge from the 'lower tiers' to 'higher' ones, the intermediary scales of sub-national 'regional inventories' offer a solution. Here, the regional administrative bodies mentioned in Table 1 (particularly the regional conservation councils/ commissions and the PDs) seem to be the appropriate operational units, though the relatively new com-

missions for natural heritage would need to follow the lead and guidance of the councils for cultural heritage, which also handled natural sites until 2011.

A major step taken in this direction has been the creation of the National Inventory System for Registered Immovables ('Tescilli Taşınmaz Ulusal Envanter Sistemi') or TUES, which was initiated by the MoCT in 2014, in collaboration with the company Netcad and targeting the MoCT's regional conservation councils (Netcad, 2014a; Netcad, 2014b). In the last two years, many conservation council decisions have been approving new cultural property designations with mapped coordinates compatible with the TUES system (Turkish Official Gazette, 2015; Ayıışı Medya, 2015).

Other inventory projects are also found to be in process in Turkey beside TUES, which have relevance to heritage sites. These include:

- Province cultural inventories, that have begun to be published in the past ten years – mainly in hard copy and book format – in many provinces by their governors with the support of PDCTs;

- the Istanbul Culture Inventory, prepared in 2009-11 as part of the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture project, with the partnership of the MoCT and the Turkish Academy of Sciences (TÜBA) and the support of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and the French Institute for Anatolian Studies at Istanbul (IFEA), and the Istanbul PDCT as beneficiary, continued in 2011-12 with the support of Istanbul Development Agency. The project was set to evolve into a national inventory, and so far, four provinces (Ankara, Sinop and Yalova beside Istanbul) have had their registered properties uploaded to the dedicated website (www.envanter.gov.tr) along with various other archival and collections material, but the expected evolution has not yet been realized.

- the National Inventory System for Museums ('Müzeler Ulusal Envanter Sistemi MUES') or MUES, targeting the MoCT's network of museum directorates (www.kulturvarliklari.gov.tr/TR,98489/muzeler-ulusal-envanter-sistemi-mues.html);

- the National Inventory for Intangible Heritage (aregem.kulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,50840/somut-olmayan-kulturel-miras-ulusal-envanteri.html);

- the Culture Portal of Turkey ('Türkiye Kültür Portalı') (<http://www.kulturportali.gov.tr>, website only in Turkish);
- the Official Tourism Portal of Turkey, approaching sites more in 'destination' terms (www.goturkey.com, website in Turkish, English and German);
- the National Bio-Diversity Inventory and Monitoring Project initiated by the MoFWA in 2015;
- various online City Archives and City Museums, mostly in mid-sized to large cities.

A large body of information is thus being gathered, although it seems fragmented in nature, and the connection of these projects with TUES, the authoritative inventory for heritage, is not clear. This connection should be established – addressing the coordination of cultural and natural resource inventories within themselves and between each other – for a centralized and coordinated system to develop, to avoid gaps and repetitions, and ensure consistency.

Regional inventories at the super-national/ global level

One can take further the notion of the Tentative List as a pivotal tool, bridging inventory hierarchies at levels above and below it, and explore regional inventories not only at the sub-national but also at the supra-national level. Figure 3 presents an attempt to formulate this, with well-established inventory levels (shown in darker shade) – of the WHL, WH TL and national registers – being augmented by the lesser used lower-tier inventories (in lighter shade) and the level of the global regions, not used from this perspective within the WH system (not shaded).

A reason for the interest in global regions is that there are mounting pressures and competition observed both for the WH List and the TLs, as is the case for Turkey, and may also be for other countries with a strong interest in the WH agenda. Mechanisms to 'spread the burden' of this pressure to all intermediary levels may be an option worth considering for the future, and has thus been examined briefly here.

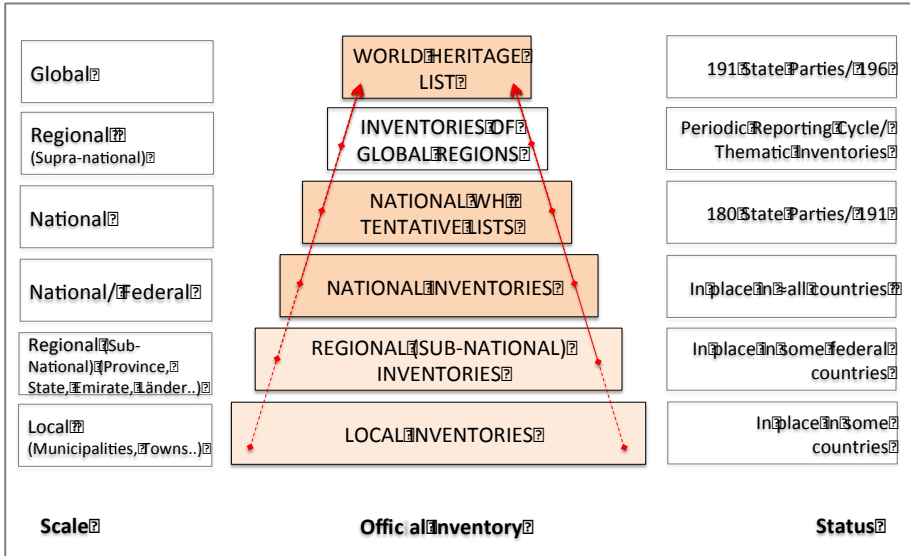


Figure 3: Diagram showing hierarchy of inventories.

The WH system is organized into the five regions of Africa, Latin America & the Caribbean, Arab States, Asia-Pacific and Europe & North America, which is followed closely throughout WH procedures. One of these procedures is the Periodic Reporting cycles, where WH sites are monitored for their State of Conservation on a six-year rotational basis. One of the main goals of this exercise is cited as providing “a mechanism for regional co-operation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties”. This important aspect is reinforced by the practice of Regional ‘Category 2’ centres, established for capacity building in nine countries (UNESCO WHC, 2016a). Although the regional approach is used in such matters, the WH system has not defined an official designation of ‘regionally important heritage sites’ using the global regions. Inventories established for specific themes, such as for earthen architecture are useful in bringing different countries together, and the including of TL sites within their scope is noteworthy. Similarly, the thematic approach spanning many countries at once can be observed in the Thematic Studies conducted by ICOMOS (ICOMOS, n.d.) and the trans-national serial WHS nominations, which are often based on cultural routes.

The WH Centre has also developed guidance on optimizing the TLs from a regional and supra-national perspective, as the ‘Operational

Guidelines for the Implementation of the WH Convention' (para. 71-73) state that States Parties are encouraged to consult the analyses of both the WH List and TLs prepared by ICOMOS and IUCN, which could enable States Parties to compare themes, regions, geo-cultural groupings and bio-geographic provinces for prospective WH properties; States Parties are encouraged to harmonize their Tentative Lists at regional and thematic levels.

Outside the WH system, some regional inventory practices are found in Europe. The General Directorate for Monuments and Museums of the Turkish MoCT has been working for many years with 'Inventory Fiches for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Property' that are annotated with the phrase 'Council of Europe' (CoE), indicating their connection with a Europe-wide system. The CoE has traditionally been one of the major sources of international guidance on heritage matters, issuing seminal charters and conventions – the Amsterdam, Faro and Florence Conventions, to name a few – and can be observed to have organic ties with the UNESCO WH system. Thus some of its practices may be replicated for other regions around the world⁴.

Conclusion

The World Heritage List, with its high visibility and prestige, is a platform where heritage inventory issues come forward into the spotlight. Setting aside the popular narratives of the list being just a 'beauty contest for places', one should recognize that it is here to stay on the global agenda, at least for the foreseeable future. Even though the WH List may not be an 'ultimate' list in a literal, exhaustive sense, the symbolic power of its sampling different types of heritage offers incentives for national authorities to look at their inventories with this critical eye. Furthermore, as Frey et al (2013, p. 19) informs, the WH List is systematically correlated with economic and political factors unrelated to the expected scope of 'World Heritage', which testifies to the importance of the List. "Politicians, public officials, and interest groups in the various countries find it

⁴ There may, in fact, be systematic inventory initiatives for other global regions and they may be connected to the WH system, though this could not be researched within the scope of this paper.

desirable to try to influence the selections, because the List is considered to be relevant."

As the UN system leads by example and sets many rules and guidelines that other countries follow, the effect of the WH system reaches beyond the extent of selected WH sites and the responsibilities of the WH Centre and WH Committee. The Operational Guidelines provide definitions and principles from which professionals and authorities around the world take reference for their heritage-related work at large.

Building on this potential, it is proposed that a strong 'vertical line of information traffic' can be created, to use the hierarchy of inventories more actively at a global scale. New tiers of significance can also be celebrated, to spread the load on the WHL and TLs, and closer links can be developed between these well-known lists and the inventory systems – existing and potential – at other levels i.e. national, local, regional. The ultimate goal is to get as much of the world's heritage identified, documented and recognized as possible, harnessing the power of recognition and designation to motivate good practice in conservation.

A last topic to mention is the constantly evolving nature of site types and numbers. Notwithstanding the legal and practical limitations of enlarging inventories, not just for the WH and TL but on all scales, there is a continuous dynamic of this increase in motion. Ashworth & Howard (1999, p. 45) suggests that "heritage does not exist in finite measurable quantities waiting for someone to recognise it but is, in fact, created by the demand for it, as much in natural as in cultural heritage (...); then, such lists will never be completed and countries will never run out of possible heritage. One advantage of this is that (...) heritage planning is in essence a 'sustainable' activity". The WH system has been adaptive and responded to such demands in widening scope, most recently in the cultural landscape and historic urban landscape approaches. New technologies will continue to help us deal more effectively with the expanding wealth of heritage requiring attention. More ironically, the emergence of 'new heritage' can console one in the face of 'lost heritage' due to natural and disasters and human action, and implies that despite the irreplaceable nature of specific cultural heritage sites, culture, like nature, is overall a self-replenishing organism.

By exploring the interplay between levels of identification and designation, from local and national inventories up to World Heritage, poten-

tial approaches have been sought for building on the power of inventories to contribute to improved systems of appropriating value to cultural and natural resources, and thus contributing to their protection, appreciation and sustainable use by local and global communities.

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