

This document is the Integrated Conservation Management Plan (ICMP) for the Robben Island World Heritage Site (RIWHS). Robben Island Museum (RIM) is the authority that manages the RIWHS. It also manages the one-nautical-mile zone around the Island which is part of the World Heritage Site.

The Aims and Purpose of the ICMP

The content of the ICMP is informed by the vision and mission of RIM, as well as by the Statement of Significance of Robben Island. The main purpose of this ICMP is to provide a framework and the necessary strategies to ensure that Robben Island as a WHS retains its outstanding universal significance. The ICMP outlines the main steps to achieve this over a period of five (5) years, from 2007-2012. The ICMP will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that the set objectives are realised. At the end of the five-year period a comprehensive evaluation will also be carried out. It also meets the requirements of:

- The National Heritage Resources Act 25, 1999;
- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) – as an Integrated Management Plan;
- The South African World Heritage Convention Act 49, 1999;
- UNESCO's World Heritage Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972.

Apart from contextualising conservation efforts carried out by RIM, the ICMP articulates the main cultural and natural heritage resources and values which make the Island such a unique place. It also highlights the promotion of awareness and knowledge about the site to visitors, relevant stakeholders and other interested parties; and ensures that RIWHS becomes a source for economic development and relevance to the communities.

As a management tool, the ICMP addresses the prevailing conservation and management conditions of the Island. It focuses on the use of Robben Island as a living and evolving cultural landscape; it takes into account the World Heritage status of Robben Island; and recognises the importance of the site as a place of pilgrimage, a centre for lifelong learning and a world class tourist destination.

The Development of the ICMP and its Key Issues and Objectives

To ensure that a comprehensive management plan was developed, consultative workshops were carried out with a diverse range of stakeholders including: ex-political prisoners, RIM staff, and representatives from the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), Department of

Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the City of Cape Town, Western Cape Provincial Government, Table Mountain World Heritage Site management, and consultants. Through this exercise, and from earlier UNESCO missions, a number of key issues were identified and realistic and achievable objectives and goals were developed to address these issues on a priority basis. These key issues, the goals and objectives are reflected throughout the ICMP and in a comprehensive Action Plan at the end of the document.

During the process of consultation a SWOT analysis was carried out and the Political Imprisonment Landscape was identified as the priority area for action over the next five years. To a large degree this priority area was informed by the fact that Robben Island has various and different types of layers, including tangible and intangible, cultural and natural, prehistoric and historic, and therefore has a characteristic of a mixed site; and that its identification and recognition as a World Heritage Site (WHS) is based on its cultural heritage.

As a management plan the ICMP cannot address all the challenges facing all the layers of the site at once; and therefore the current ICMP has identified long-term conservation issues that may be addressed in subsequent management plans. Thus while the Political Imprisonment Landscape has been identified as a priority area, the general maintenance of the site in totality will still be carried out pending the five year completion of the ICMP, which may lead to the identification of different priority areas. Thus the current ICMP ensures the appropriate medium to long-term sustainable conservation and management of one of South Africa's most important heritage resources.

The Content and Structure of the ICMP

The ICMP includes twelve interlinked chapters which summarise the key issues to be addressed during the life of the plan.

Chapter 1 provides a brief overview of the Island (and its related sites) and highlights some of Robben Island's most significant historical layers. The chapter further outlines the major Strategic Objectives of the ICMP. These Strategic Objectives will guide the management of the site over the next five years. At the same time the ICMP will enable RIM to uphold its Statement of Significance which is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2 focuses on the assessment of significance of Robben Island and its position as a WHS. The values that contribute to the significance of Robben Island's history and multi-layered landscapes are discussed – these are grouped under historical, social, place, educational and environmental categories. The chapter includes the constituent elements of the landscape and their grading. The identification of these values are treated as crucial for

the management of the site. The chapter concludes with the Statement of Significance, which focuses on the triumph of the human spirit over the brutality of the apartheid regime. This Statement of Significance can be used as a lens to understand Robben Island's layered and often traumatic history which dates back over 300 years.

Chapter 3 covers the impact of different occupations within the WHS. It discusses the cultural settings of the site including the cemeteries and graves, the kramat and churches, and a detailed Political Imprisonment Landscape that includes the Maximum Security Prison, *Ou Tronk*, and *Zink Tronk*, quarries and associated sites. These sites and structures form the main features contributing to the significance of the Island. These features map the numerous cultural routes or pathways embedded on Robben Island. The chapter further discusses the impact and development of infrastructure on the WHS over time. Overall the chapter stresses the uniqueness of Robben Island as a WHS.

Chapter 4 commences with the first recorded European landing on the Island in 1498 and discusses the different governing bodies that controlled the Island from the pre-colonial period to the present. It illustrates that Robben Island has been a place of banishment, isolation and incarceration; a place where the chronically and mentally ill and people with leprosy were isolated; later it became a military station and a Maximum Security Prison (MSP). The chapter demonstrates that the two major themes that span the Island's history are those of resistance to oppression and resilience of the human spirit. The chapter further discusses the ways in which the different occupations of the Island have impacted on the physical and built environment. The chapter provides evidence of the values and the significance of the site.

Chapter 5 provides a comparative analysis between Robben Island and other similar sites and discusses the peculiarities of some island sites of incarceration such as Haïfisch or Shark Island, Goreë Island, James Island and Devil's Island, amongst others. It explores other World Heritage Sites such as Auschwitz and Dachau that serve as stark reminders of the brutalities that have been committed by humankind. However, the differences between these sites and Robben Island are that RIWHS, once an icon of oppression and human suffering, has been transformed into a symbol of the liberation, forgiveness and reconciliatory spirit of the South African people.

Chapter 6 stresses that legislative measures need to be complementary for the effective management and protection of the WHS. It identifies and discusses the relevant legal instruments and administrative frameworks for the governance and protection of the site and its significance.

Chapter 7 elaborates on the conservation policies and principles that will guide RIM in preserving Robben Island's heritage. It discusses a variety of interventions required and various conservation principles including minimal intervention, authenticity, and tangible and intangible heritage. It further looks at the management of the various cultural and natural heritage and the place and use of collections.

Chapter 8 is devoted to explaining the Interpretation Strategy that includes site interpretation, research, education, exhibitions and public programmes adopted by RIM. It identifies the principles on which the interpretation planning of the RIWHS is based. Further it isolates narratives, exhibitions, tour routes and education as the key interpretive tools that will be used to flesh out the many themes stemming from the Statement of Significance.

Chapter 9 discusses the objectives and challenges of the Visitor Management Plan that will enable efficient management of the growing visitors' demands in a way that does not compromise the sustainability of the cultural and natural environment. It further provides possible alternative experiences based on work already carried out within the WHS that include among others visitor surveys.

Chapter 10 discusses some key issues affecting Robben Island and the management of this heritage site. It discusses both opportunities and potential threats. While noting that conservation is not an easy task, and that there are challenges, these can be avoided when careful planning is exercised.

Chapter 11 incorporates RIM's Operational Plan for implementing the ICMP. The chapter provides a detailed Programme of Action that is geared towards achieving RIM's vision and mission. This is to ensure that RIM remains a leading World Heritage Site, Museum and educational institution geared towards engaging the public about the triumph of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

Chapter 12 concludes the ICMP, summing up the key issues raised in the document and how these will be addressed.

The ICMP is complemented by other relevant documents in the form of addenda that provide more detailed information on the various plans formulated and adopted by RIM.