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## New cultural sites inscribed on the UN world heritage list



Phoenix Islands Protected Area (Kiribati)

1 August 2010 – The United Nations agency mandated to conserve the world's heritage today inscribed new cultural sites in Viet Nam, China, Tajikistan, France, the Netherlands, Mexico and Brazil on the World Heritage List in Bulgaria.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's ([UNESCO](#)) also inscribed three natural sites in China, Kiribati and Reunion Island, France.

The Thang Long Imperial Citadel in Viet Nam yesterday became the 900th site to be inscribed on UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage List. The Citadel was built in the 11th century by the Ly Viet Dynasty, marking the independence of the Dai Viet. It was constructed on the remains of a Chinese fortress dating from the 7th century and stands on drained land reclaimed from the Red River Delta in Hanoi.

The World Heritage Committee is meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, to review candidates for inclusion on its World Heritage List and assess the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Also gaining recognition is the historic monuments of Dengfeng in China. Mount Songshang is considered to be the central sacred mountain of China. At the foot of the 1,500 metre high mountain, close to the city of Dengfeng in Henan province and spread over a 40 square-kilometre circle, stand eight clusters of buildings and

sites, including three Han Que gates – remains of the oldest religious edifices in China – temples, the Zhougong Sundial Platform and the Dengfeng Observatory.

In Tajikistan, the Sarazm, which means “where the land begins,” is an archaeological site bearing testimony to the development of human settlements in Central Asia, from the 4th millennium BCE to the end of the 3rd millennium BCE. The ruins demonstrate the early development of proto-urbanization in this region. The centre of settlement, one of the oldest in Central Asia, is situated between a mountainous region suitable for cattle rearing by nomadic pastoralists, and a large valley conducive to the development of agriculture and irrigation by the first settled populations in the region.

The Episcopal city of Albi in south-western France reflects the culmination of a medieval architectural and urban ensemble. Today the Old Bridge (Pont-Vieux), the Saint-Salvi quarter and its church are testimony to its initial development in the 10th and 11th centuries. Following the Albigensian Crusade against the Cathar heretics in the 13th century it became a powerful episcopal city. Built in a unique southern French Gothic style from local brick in characteristic red and orange colours, the lofty fortified cathedral dominates the city, demonstrating the power regained by the Roman Catholic clergy.

In the Netherlands, the 17th Singelgracht is a historic urban ensemble of the canal district of Amsterdam and was a project for a new “port city” built at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries. It comprises a network of canals to the west and south of the historic old town and the medieval port that encircled the old town and was accompanied by the repositioning inland of the city's fortified boundaries, the Singelgracht.

The Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in Mexico was the Royal Inland Road, also known as the Silver Route. The inscribed property consists of 55 sites and five existing World Heritage sites lying along a 1,400-kilometre (km) section of this 2,600 km route, that extends north from Mexico City to Texas and New Mexico in the United States. Also in Mexico, the prehistoric caves of Yagul and Mitla in the Central Valley of Oaxaca were added to the list. They consist of two pre-Hispanic archaeological complexes and a series of pre-historic caves and rock shelters. Some of these shelters provide archaeological and rock-art evidence for the progress of nomadic hunter-gathers to incipient farmers.

In Brazil, the São Francisco Square site in the town of São Cristovão was put on the list. It is a quadrilateral open space surrounded by substantial early buildings such as São Francisco Church and convent, the Church and Santa Casa da Misericórdia, the Provincial Palace and the associated houses of different historical periods surrounding the Square.

The natural sites inscribed are: The China Danxia, the name given in China to landscapes developed on continental red terrigenous sedimentary beds influenced by endogenous forces and exogenous forces the Phoenix Islands Protected Area in Kiribati, a 408,250 square kilometers expanse of marine and terrestrial habitats in the Southern Pacific Ocean. The property encompasses the Phoenix Island Group,

one of three island groups in Kiribati, and is the largest designated Marine Protected Area in the world.

The other natural site recognized is the Pitons in the French-administered island of Reunion, which forms part of the La Réunion National Park. The property covers more than 100,000 hectares or per cent of La Réunion, an island comprising two adjoining volcanic massifs located in the south-west of the Indian Ocean.

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