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The Evaluation of interpretation and presentation efforts at cultural heritage sites based on the ICOMOS 'Ename Charter' as a Driver for Conservation and Management

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Abstract

Interpretation/presentation programs offered at cultural heritage sites (CHSs) make a major contribution to conservation. It is important to know how successful such efforts are. However, the literature emphasizes that interpretation/presentation effort at CHSs lack scientific evaluation criteria. CHS managers require an effective and reliable evaluation tool. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of CHSs – widely known as the ‘Ename Charter’ – defines seven fundamental principles for the interpretation/presentation of CHSs in heritage conservation efforts, which could underpin an evaluation tool.

This paper develops a checklist for evaluating interpretation/presentation program effectiveness based on ICOMOS principles designed to contribute to sustainable CHS conservation. Through qualitative content analysis of the ICOMOS Charter, a checklist to evaluate the effectiveness of CHS interpretation/presentation programs in its conservation was developed to help CHS evaluators and managers. Consensus on the checklist was developed through a Delphi study with heritage professionals.

Keywords: cultural heritage sites (CHS); Delphi study; International Council on

Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS); interpretation; presentation