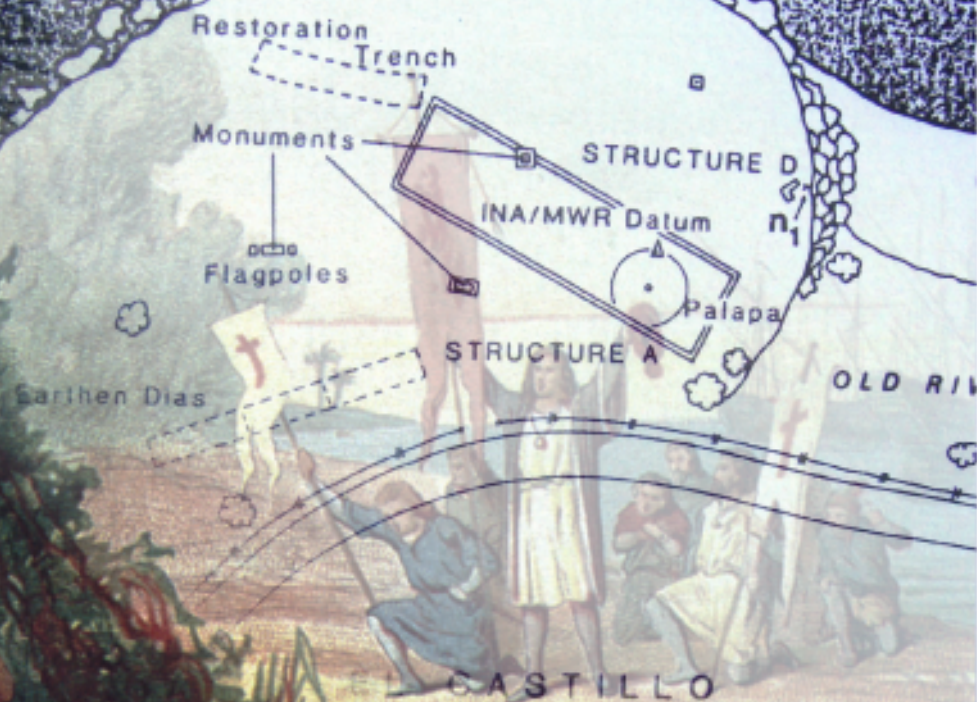




United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Regional Bureau for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean
Cluster Office for Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Aruba
Representation Office to Cuba, Dominican Republic and Aruba
UNESCO HAVANA



La Isabela

Historical and Archeological site,
Dominican Republic
Report of the UNESCO Technical Assistance Mission

La Isabela, in the present Dominican Republic, is a relevant and significant cultural site for the history of Latin America and the Caribbean. Founded by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage in 1404, it became the first Spanish settlement in the New World.



The UNESCO Office in Havana wishes to express its gratitude to the Dominican Republic's Department of State for Culture and Department of State for Tourism, as well as to the Dominican National Commission for UNESCO, for its collaboration during the technical mission, carried out from June 17 to July 4, 2007.

The following text is a summary of the original report prepared by the authors. Both this summary and the full version of the report may be consulted at the Portal of Latin American and Caribbean Culture at www.lacult.org, or by e-mail contacting webmaster@unesco.org.cu.

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La Isabela Historical and Archeological site, Dominican Republic.

Report of the UNESCO Technical Assistance Mission

A summary of the report drafted by consultants Grazia Piras and Carolina Castellanos, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean / July, 2007.

Executive Summary

Answering a request by the authorities of the Dominican Republic, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Culture in Latin America and the Caribbean organized a technical assistance mission to La Isabela historical and archeological site. The mission had three main objectives:

1. Examining the site's values, its state of conservation and present conditions with the purpose of identifying the main elements for the site's conservation and management, according to international guidelines and standards.
2. Evaluating project proposals made by the ministries of Culture and Tourism for the creation of a theme park based on the colonialization process and to foster exploitation with tourist ends.
3. Organizing a consultative workshop to familiarize the actors involved on the site's conservation and management with basic notions of patrimonial conservation, particularly in relation with the requirements established for World Heritage properties, and also to discuss the results derived from the examination by the technical assistance mission.

La Isabela historical and archeological site is a relevant and significant location for the history of Latin America and the Caribbean, for it was the first Spanish settlement in the New World, founded by Christopher Columbus in 1494 on his second voyage. At present there is little physical evidence of the architecture set up there, due in large measure to the neglect of the settlement years after its foundation; to deteriorating processes on structures made from perishable materials; and to the razing of the location for cleaning the site.

The most relevant research was made from 1983 to 1986 by the Museum of Dominican Man, and by the National Direction of Parks and the University of Florida from 1994 to 1998. There are regulations for the site's protection, and recently the Sectorial Law of Protected Areas, N. 202-04, G.O., August 3, 2004, provided the transfer of La Isabela Historical Park to be administered by the Department of State for Culture, through its Office of Cultural Patrimony.

This report presents the results of the technical assistance mission to the historical and archeological site, summarizes the research and conservation records, and makes specific recommendations for La Isabela's conservation and management, as an answer to the conditions found and the potential for conservation and promotion of the values that make the historical site significant. Lastly, the results obtained at the consultative and training workshop are presented.

Background and Justification of the Technical Assistance Mission

La Isabela historical and archeological site is registered in the Indicative List of the Dominican Republic as of 2002. The Indicative List is the inventory of assets that the Party State keeps with the intention of proposing them for its inclusion in the Indicative List of World Heritage in the course of the subsequent five or ten years. The Indicative List is a step of the utmost importance, for the World Heritage Committee can not consider a proposal of inscription unless the asset has been included in the Party State's Indicative List. All indicative lists can be seen at <http://www.whc.unesco.org>.

In November, 2006, when Secretary of State for Tourism Félix Jiménez visited UNESCO's director general Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, he presented the first official request of technical assistance for the creation of Villa La Isabela theme park. The project is inscribed in the Dominican national strategies for the extension and diversification of tourist offers, and consists of a life-size reconstruction of La Isabela historical and archeological site in the immediate vicinity of this significant site. World Heritage Center director Francesco Bandarin and other officials were also present at the meeting.

Subsequently there were several exchanges between the Party State, the Paris and Havana UNESCO offices and the National Dominican Commission for UNESCO.

In March, 2007, during a working session attended by Mr. Frédéric Vacheron, UNESCO's Office in Havana; Ms. Tati Olmos, Department of State for Tourism (Cultural Tourism); Ms Risoris Silvestre, Department

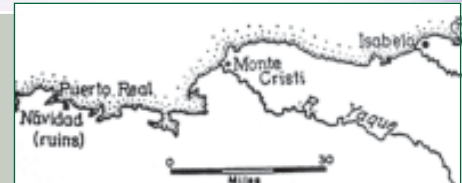
of State for Culture; and Ms. Nikaully Vargas, National Dominican Commission for UNESCO, a consensus was reached for establishing cooperation between all parties. It was agreed that UNESCO, through its Havana Office, would allocate the necessary financial resources for a technical assistance mission, define its objectives and composition. The mission would consist of two experts in the application of the Convention on World Heritage at archeological sites. Likewise, Dominican authorities agreed to finance logistical expenses of internal transportation, lodgings for the consultants and everything in relation to the workshop's organization.

From June 17 to July 4, 2007 the technical assistance mission to La Isabela historical and archeological site was carried out, organized by UNESCO's Office in Havana, in its condition as Office of Representation for the Dominican Republic.

Considering the relevance of La Isabela historical and archeological site for the history of Latin America and the Caribbean, and its inscription in the Indicative List, it was decided that the consultancy of the experts from the World Heritage Center would focus mainly on the analysis of the state of conservation as well as in tourist management and promotion, according to international norms and standards, particularly the Operational Guidelines for the application of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Therefore, it was established that the mission would carry out two main actions:

- a) Technical evaluation of the site inscribed in the Indicative List, which would include a study of the scientific information on the area in question, and an analysis of the values and factors that could or do influence the conservation of the physical matter and the natural context/environment. The results of the analysis would be useful for:
 1. Verifying the feasibility/viability of the proposal of a theme park at La Isabela, as well as its conformity with the authenticity and integrity of the site, and
 2. Creating the base for harmonizing the proposals of fitting out the site for tourism, developed by the Departments of Tourism and Culture, in accordance with international guidelines, and its possible nomination to the List of World Heritage.
- b) The organization of a consultation workshop in order to:
 1. Socialize the results of the technical assistance mission;
 2. Familiarize the social actors (at the local, provincial and national levels) linked to the conservation, management and promotion of La Isabela historical and archeological site with the main notions of patrimonial conservation (particularly the requirements for World Heritage properties);



The Historical Site

On November 28, 1493, on occasion of his second voyage to America, Christopher Columbus lands on Navidad, a fort he had built on his first voyage, and faces a disaster: it had been burned down and the 39 men he had left had died at the hands of aborigines. On December 7 he abandons it and sails along the north coast of Hispaniola, looking for a suitable location for a new settlement. After sailing for 25 days, the fleet of fourteen caravels and three topsail ships, with a crew of 1,500 exhausted, sick and hungry men, drops anchor at a cove.

The site chosen by Columbus and named La Isabela, in honor of the Spanish Queen, is a small inlet located on one of the most protected sectors of the great bay, open to the Atlantic Ocean and partially closed by a coral atoll and the alluvial plain of the Bajabonico and Unijica Rivers.

La Isabela is an excellent natural port and an easily defended area. The location for the site was for military reasons: an elevated spot protected by natural elements to the East and the sea to the West; to the North, a lake, and to the South a spring. The Bajabonico River, a source of drinking water, was a short distance away.

At present, the area occupied by archeological vestiges is part of Luperón municipality, province of Puerto Plata.



3. Analyze the defined proposals; and
4. Generate conditions for the sustainable management of the site.

Recommendations of the Technical Assistance Mission of UNESCO's Office in Havana

Conservation and sustainable management of La Isabela and its vicinity imply important challenges, not only in relation to conservation of the fragile architectural vestiges in a humid tropical climate, but also regarding conciliation between conservation and the social and development needs of the country. Guaranteeing the future of patrimonial sites such as this one requires the commitment and responsibility of several public and private institutions. La Isabela has the potential of becoming the axis of many other projects linked to the cultural development that, with adequate and efficient practices, could benefit the different communities and promote human development of several social groups.

There are different strategic options to address a diversity of situations on conservation and management of the historical site and its environment. The proposals made here try to respond to present conditions, but they also aim to achieve conservation and promotion of the values that make the site important and significant. Obviously these recommendations are conceived as a starting point for the discussion, for a course of sustainable action will have to be defined in an interdisciplinary, interinstitutional and multisectorial process. It is also important that when actions for the site's future conservation and management are defined, the roles, accountability and commitments of each sector are clearly established for its full and integrated execution.

General Recommendations

- Relevant documentation on the archeological site and its vicinity was requested and revised during the technical assistance mission. Nevertheless, this meant an important effort in order to collect it. For this reason, it is fundamental that all existing information, both written (technical reports, printed bibliography) and graphic (plans, drawings, photographs) is compiled and systematized in a single location, in such a manner that there is an information base for reference, evaluation and follow up actions, and that it constitutes a useful system for analysis and adoption of decisions in relation to the historical site and its vicinity.
- It is important to regulate scientific research being done at La Isabela and its vicinity, from archaeology, to underwater archaeology, anthropology, environment and studies of a sociological character. It is recommended that agreements of cooperation for research guarantee the socialization of the obtained information, conservation of materials, remains or researched sites, and production of materials for the



The Settlement's Development

According to several sources, La Isabela was founded on January 2, 1494, on the plain known today as Punta del Castillo. The settlement was small: about 100 steps wide. Doctor Alberti mentions that "La Isabela, in spite of all that has been written, must have been no more than a shantytown with a chapel made of stone and a tiled roof."

However, the sources report that Columbus designed streets, distributed plots of land, built walls, mills and irrigation ditches, and ordered that everyone built his own house as best he could: the public edifices in stone, the rest from wood and straw, similar to the aboriginal "bohío", the first Indian-Hispanic constructions in America.

Historical sources, documented by archeological information, say that the church, the fort, the royal warehouse and the hospital were built of stone. The quarry has been found on the margins of the Bajabonico



River, where some stones still lie partially cut.

Archeological evidence indicates that the promontory of the Castle and the whole surrounding area were visited and inhabited by Taíno Indians, but that several groups coexisted and constituted an area of meeting and frontier between those ethnic groups.



release of the results of investigative work. This is important for increasing the knowledge of the site and its vicinity.

- It is critical to make the inventory, cataloguing and conservation of the museum's movable items, as well as of artifacts from archeological excavations. Present conditions of storage are deplorable and certainly make a significant contribution to the loss of archeological materials, besides being detrimental to possible future research.

Research

The design of research strategies at La Isabela is linked to the evaluation of the scientific values of the historical settlement and its natural patrimony, as well as to the specific needs of knowledge evidenced during the analysis. The type of research was determined by the priorities for the obtaining of knowledge in different fields, but also trying to boost the scientific value that the location still has.

It is considered important:

- Ending and/or completing archeological reconnaissance of the historical and influential area in order to understand the evolution of the place since the pre-Hispanic era up to the present. This is also important for the wrecks, to the extent that data can be linked in order to understand the site's development at later times.
- Systematizing and analyzing in a critical and scientific manner the research generated up to the present in different fields, in order to identify research needs in a more precisely manner, in such a way that project designs respond to gaps of knowledge, allowing for the boosting of the site's scientific values and contributing to its historical knowledge.
- The archeological material from previous excavations must be studied, catalogued and adequately stored. Many of the studies previously carried out could be repeated with the use of new technologies, which could produce new scientific data about the site and its development.
- It is important to continue researching locations that were part of the initial colonialization process in other regions of the country and which are clearly related with the role played by La Isabela. The value of the historical site largely resides in its role as detonator or starting point for this whole process.

Conservation

Numerous documents and directives serve to guide intervention in patrimonial sites, particularly those from the Committee of World Heritage's Consultative Bodies. These criteria form the basis for deciding the level and type of acceptable intervention in a site considered for nomination on the List of World Heritage.

In this section some of the predominant positions considered at present for interventions are mentioned:

•**Excavation:** In general, it is required that unless there is a guarantee of adequate conservation and management of the sites, no excavations should be made or no materials should be left exposed. Considering that La Isabela is still an important reserve of knowledge, some sectors or features could be left without research waiting for future technologies or methods that could provide a greater contribution to the knowledge of the site and its associated areas.



Archeological Remains

J. M. Cruxent claimed ("Relación y noticias acerca de La Isabela", *Isabela* magazine, Santo Domingo, No. 1, 1989) that the settlement was formed by two separate nuclei, but functionally integrated: the first one, craft-agricultural at Las Coles; and the second one formed by the town: the Admiral's house, the church, the cemetery, the royal warehouse and several dwellings. According to the archaeologist, the whole settlement was surrounded by a wall with towers at the accesses and strategic points of defense.

From the remains mentioned by Cruxent, scientific archeological excavations have identified only the church, the cemetery and Columbus' home. It must be noted that at present the reading and interpretation of the vestiges have been compromised by modern interventions of consolidation that apparently do not follow an organic and consistent methodology: degradation due to climatic conditions and the history of the site (for example, the "cleaning" during the Trujillo era, approximately in 1950).

Due to the high degree of alteration, visitors can hardly imagine or visualize how the structures were. However, the difficulty in the interpretation of the site is compensated in part by some plans and models presented in the museum's two rooms. Several pre- and post-Columbian pieces are exhibited found at the site or in the immediate vicinity.



•**Reconstruction:** In the World Heritage Operational Guidelines it is clearly indicated that reconstruction of archeological remains, buildings and historical districts is justifiable only in extreme circumstances.

Reconstruction is acceptable only if there are complete and detailed documentary basis that prevent any speculation, therefore it generally is not considered a valid course of action.

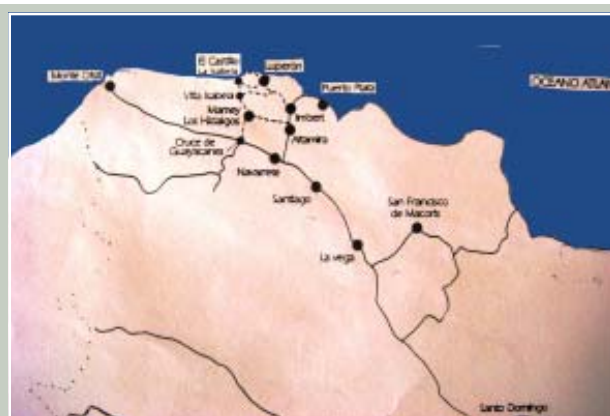
- **Conservation:** Conservation comprises different types of intervention, including maintenance, consolidation and structural reinforcement. In order to maintain authenticity and integrity, the predominant principle is to focus on preventive conservation, centered on mitigating and preventing factors of deterioration. It is important to consider that patrimonial sites such as La Isabela are public places, so there must be a balance between the needs for conservation and looking for alternatives of intervention that are compatible with the use of the site and do not exclude the presentation and interpretation of its values.

Stabilization is a frequently used intervention to keep structures in optimum state, for it allows decreasing levels of deterioration. Its acceptance is because it requires minimum intervention, as long as it is done with materials compatible with the original. Nevertheless, were it necessary to use modern materials for guaranteeing conservation, then the materials should have little visual impact, should integrate with the original context of the site and should not cause or promote deterioration in the original materials.

In regard to physical protection, it is acceptable to use alternative measures, such as covers, re-interments, etc., but only when all other options have been tried and there is no adequate or sustainable alternative in the long term. Nevertheless, these interventions are considered as having a high impact in the character, values, integrity and authenticity of a site, thus requiring considerable analysis and observing principles of precaution before deciding on this course of action.

- **Maintenance:** Maintenance of a site and its vicinity is essential for sustainable conservation. It allows lowering costs and the necessary level of intervention in the long term. Regarding specific recommendations it is considered necessary to:

- Carry out systematic diagnosis of the historical site and other archeological sites identified in the vicinity. Graphic documentation should be revised and completed in such a manner that it can be used for recording the state of conservation of the architectural remains. This should serve as basis for recording conditions in standardized formats, in such a manner that periodic follow up of the state of conservation can be done and, if necessary, intervene.
- One of the most important problems in the reading of a site is lack of homogeneity in interventions and lack of clear criteria that permit understanding the logic behind each intervention or its function. This is confusing for the expert and obviously for the visitor too.



The Conquering Process of the Island

From La Isabela Columbus and over 200 men set out to found, on March, 1494, the first fort in the interior, Santo Tomás de Jánico; in passing, they built the first road in the Western Hemisphere, *el Paso de los Hidalgos* (Noblemen's Pass).

J. G. Guerrero reconstructs the Indian-Hispanic sense of the journey and documents more than 20 archeological contact sites.

This process of exploration and conquest of the interior of the island is expanded with the building of three forts —La Magdalena, Concepción de la Vega and La Esperanza— for the control of gold mines, roads and submission of the Indians, who were forced to work in the mines.

Decline of the Settlement

La Isabela did not prospered in great part because of Columbus mismanagement, compounded by Taíno resistance, the lack of gold in the area, bad crops and diseases that decimated the Spaniards and the local population. In 1497 the settlement had been totally abandoned. Settlers and all the resources were transferred to Santo Domingo and Santiago de la Vega.

Subsequently the site was abandoned and used only by pirates as unloading point of smuggled goods and the slave trade.

Its short life and sad stories associated to it won for the site and ill fame or bad luck or "fucú."

- Therefore, and based on the diagnosis, interventions of consolidation and structural stabilization should be made with materials compatible with the original and having reversible application. These interventions should be clearly differentiated from the original. It is important to carry out emergency stabilization actions at the sector where the original material has collapsed.
- Design an adequate drainage system for the terrain, according to the area's topography, to avoid accumulation of water at the bases of architectural remains.
- Carry out maintenance work on the protection cover of the Admiral's House, for the remains of soil could be seriously compromised due to direct filtering of humidity. Likewise, it is important to verify the cover's drainage system.



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LA ISABELA

Integrity of the Environment and relation between Topography, the Landscape and the Settlement's Remains

The remains of the historical site are framed in a natural environment which is significant, both for its esthetic contribution and its potential for understanding the conditions that fostered the selection of the site for the settlement, not only by Spanish conquistadors, but also by autochthonous populations. The present landscape allows the recreation of conditions that were attractive to the Spaniards. The location of La Isabela at the mouth of the Bajabonico River gave it a natural port and an easily defended area. The Unijica and Bajabonico Rivers are the axis of the landscape and promote the development of specific vegetation that offers conditions for the development of different kinds of species and subsistence since pre-Hispanic times.

The Surrounding Natural Patrimony

Mangroves are a dynamic ecosystem that plays an essential role in the conservation of coast lines. They are not only elements of environmental protection, but also are home to important species that can be used in a sustainable manner in the local economy.

La Isabela's natural patrimony is highly dynamic and shows the trace of agricultural exploitation of tropical forests. Nevertheless, the remains of natural landscapes in the bottom of valleys may be promoted, recovered and valued.

The Scale of Spanish Settlement

La Isabela was a village with elements of an urban character and shows different construction scales, in spite of its limited physical and architectural evolution. The structures of a communal character or public function had larger dimensions than those built as housing. Although the scale was simple, it shows an intention in the conception of a settlement that for several reasons was not fully developed.



- Continue basic maintenance tasks at the site (eliminating invading vegetation at the foundations of architectural structures, sweeping of visitors' paths, collection of garbage and other refuse).
- Design a monitoring system of the conditions that can be easily carried out by personnel of the site. This requires both the generation of basic information and training of personnel in simple recording and follow up techniques. The results should be used for designing strategies of intervention and an integrated plan of conservation that considers needs regarding stabilization, maintenance, etc.
- Design an integral conservation project that covers not only La Isabela, but also pre-Hispanic and historical sites clearly related to the pre-Hispanic settlement. Any option for the development of a historical-cultural route that promotes tourism in the area should be preceded by research, conservation and value implementation of those patrimonial locations.

• **Natural environment:** The landscape and natural environment of La Isabela is perhaps one of the most significant elements, so particular attention should be dedicated to long term conservation and management. The natural patrimony at the site not only gives character to the settlement, but mangroves also have an important role in the conservation of coastal areas and are strategic for mitigating environmental impact.

- If inexistent, it would be important to carry out a diagnosis of present conditions of the natural patrimony in order to understand the evolution of the landscape and be able to link environmental conditions to the process of deterioration of the historical site.
- It is important to establish the potential vulnerabilities due to natural catastrophe, in such a manner that the information be the starting point of a disaster prevention and risk mitigation plan.
- Based on the diagnosis and on existing information, it is critical to have a plan that guarantees the conservation and sustainable use of the area's natural patrimony. Mangrove conservation is an important aspect for mitigating anticipated effects due to climate change and for the role they play in preventing disasters in coastal areas.
- The protected environment and the integrity of natural patrimony is an important axis for generating attractions for the visitors, as it has been successfully demonstrated in Costa Rica. On the other hand, lessons learned in countries of the region in relation to consequences of environmental devastation are important bases for the rational use of this country's resources.

Public Use

- Public use of La Isabela is largely related to its values and importance. In general, it is thought that

compatible use of the site should not involve changes in its original material, for this could compromise not only the features that give it character, but also its authenticity and integrity.

- It is important to coordinate institutional efforts in order to reach a consensus on projections and balance proposals for the use of the historical site and its environment, in correspondence with its values.
- The influx of visitors to La Isabela is important both in economic and cultural terms, thus it is necessary to design strategies that guarantee that visits become a didactic and attractive experience.
- Under this perspective, visitors' management as an objective not only has to achieve a better appreciation of the site's value, but also that visitors do not become active agents of deterioration as a consequence of non controlled or not integrally planned visits. For that matter, it is fundamental to carry out studies of load capacity at the site and, together with the attached values, establish the limits of acceptable changes for the site.
- La Isabela has an adequate infrastructure and equipment that only need some improvement and maintenance. The most important investment has already been done and must be put to good use.
- Presentation and interpretation of La Isabela is fundamental for understanding and efficiently transmitting the values of the historical site and its vicinity, and for transmitting the importance of its conservation. Nevertheless, precaution is required on defining interventions focused on the presentation of vestiges, reducing to a minimum direct intervention on the original matter and promoting alternative mechanisms for interpretation, preferably at centers and museums, where interpretative tools may be used more freely.
- In relation to interpretation, it must be done *in situ* with an adequate signposting and information system that permits precise indications on the function of each area of the settlement.
- As mentioned above in regard to conservation, vestiges should be exhibited to the public with total clarity, identifying interventions made and allowing that, with adequate intervention and accompanied by proper information notes, explanations about the site can be read and understood.
- A possible scenario could be that the historical site be presented at the Spanish settlement, and the interpretation of the groups that inhabited the area in pre-Hispanic times at the museum. This would imply collecting all the information already obtained in the area, as well as artifacts and material from excavations, in order to contextualize the settlements.
- It is important to consider a presentation and a more respectful treatment of the human remains on exhibit.
- The paths for visitors may be built with materials such as carved stone, more compatible with the area than



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LA ISABELA

The Tracing, Distribution and Space Geometry

Even though it was the first village, apparently from the beginning there was a design and conception of space. As mentioned in a letter by Guillermo Coma, an eye witness at the time, "He (Columbus) was very diligent to build later the House for supplies and ammunition of the Army and Church and Hospital and for his dwelling a strong house, as best it could be done, and he distributed lots, ordering its streets and plaza and the principal persons to settle, and he ordered that every one build his house as best he could; public houses were made of stone, the rest each one made it of wood and straw and however he could."

The site is consistent in the distribution of space. Apparently a reticule with patrons was followed, although it answered immediate needs of settling and defense out of the lessons learned from the site of The Nativity. Thus it may be elucidated that the settlement was surrounded by a protective wall and several towers, although the northeast tower is the only identified remain that supports the idea of a walled ground. Inside were the most important buildings: the church, the exchange, the magazine and the Admiral's house.

Constructions had simple geometry and architectural elements. It can be considered that separations among buildings were consistent and regular, although these elements will be attributed with greater clarity when the different remains can be intervened to present the feature. Additionally, the reading of this characteristic is influenced by the recent tracing of visitors' paths, thus intervention will have to be reconsidered in order to avoid compromising the feature.



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LA ISABELA

Constructive Typology: Stone Bases, Earth Architecture and Autochthonous Architecture

For construction different materials and constructive technologies were used, in correspondence with the function and importance of each building. The remains of this differentiated use of materials cause contrasts, both in textures and colors, and variations in architectural details. However, there is a certain consistency in tonality of materials, so that at various distances there is certain uniformity in the reading of the site.

The use of constructive materials and techniques also allows for the explanation, in a large measure of the fragility of the settlement and its present state of conservation. The Admiral's house is perhaps the most distinctive feature that illustrates this concept. On one hand, it has a larger number of conserved remains, and allows appreciating what could have been the constructive technology of the most important buildings. Very rudimentary cut stone was used in the base of the inner fence and in the interior of the walls, as well as carved stone in the threshold and the main façade. On the stone base a wall of earth architecture was raised, apparently in packed earth, inside of which, as some authors suggest, there could have been beams to support the wooden and tile covered roof. There are remains of plaster on the walls.

Restoration of the Admiral's house makes it the dominant and distinctive element of the site, although the combination of modern materials together with the use of a protection cover has compromised the authenticity and integrity of this element.

Of the church there are only stone remains, but it can be elucidated from the existing foundations that it was a simple construction. From the type of materials found, it is possible that it was built with packed earth and then whitewashed. Bibliography and research results seem to indicate that the constructive technique was the same for the magazine and the exchange.

Regarding the inhabitants' houses, sources indicate that they were built following the system of the typical bohío of the area, which seems to be based on the numerous marks of wooden posts that would indicate their location.

cement. This would also generate temporary employment for those workers in charge of its construction.

- Green areas should be maintained as long as tree roots do not affect architectural remains or promote humidity. The vegetable canopy allows making the visit in a fresh and agreeable atmosphere.
- The presentation of La Isabela should be understood as a whole in which the sites that explain its development —such as La Cantera, Las Coles, El Peral and Bajabonico— are integrated.

• **Visitors' Management:** In general, a good program for the management of visitors, particularly in a place with limited capacity such as La Isabela, should consider the following measures:

- *Visitors' Management:*

Visit patterns and circulation routes.

Recreation and rest areas.

Complementary areas for attention to visitors and information.

Facilities for visitors with different capacities.

- *Infrastructure at the location:*

Water (installation and maintenance).

Electricity (installation and maintenance).

Drainage/sewage management (installation and maintenance).

Communications: telephone, radio, security, etc.

Storage areas for equipment and maintenance tools.

- *In-Area Services:*

Access and exit control.

Parking and handling of large capacity buses.

Bathrooms.

Handling of solid refuse.

Commerce: setting up of spaces, types and quality for the sale of products and offer of services.

Security: protection of the site, civil protection, first aid, etc.

Development in the Vicinity

• Considering the role played by the historical site in the identity and development of different social groups, both in neighboring communities and in the municipality as a whole, it is important to define human development strategies that permit those groups not only to understand the significance of the site, but also to appropriate it, and therefore feel a greater commitment to its conservation.

• Continuing promoting activities that reflect symbolic and associative values, such as patron saints' days and October 12 festivities, among others.

• Collaborating with the communities, non governmental organizations and other entities for the development of sustainable proposals, respectful of local customs and traditions for a use of the location that fosters human development.

- Regarding education, it is important to integrate in the curricula of schools at different levels information on the site and its vicinity, production of didactic materials, talks to students and promotion of regular visits by students from different levels.

- Promoting the values of the site and its vicinity, and sensitizing the different groups and actors to the non renewable and fragile nature of the site and its vicinity. For that purpose, mass media such as the press, television and radio may be used.

- Including the communities in activities related with the conservation of the patrimony, such as garbage collecting, control of vegetation and fostering of cultural events in the region, like conferences, discussion groups, festivities, etc.

- Promoting the development of local capacities in different subjects and fields, from services to visitors (guides) to production of handicrafts and generation of productive activities.

- For the area's promotion it is important to consider the site, its vicinity and other patrimonial locations that permit its clear identification as a historical and environmental component. It is essential to carry out market studies to clearly identify elements that can encourage more visits to the area, which would generate integrated offers that privilege human and sustainable development in the region.

- Proposals such as a theme park can be a complement to the site, but caution should be exercised so that they do not exceed the importance of the cultural and natural patrimony of the area. As mentioned in the project proposal, the selection of the area for developing the theme park should privilege the integrity of the present environment and adopt measures for mitigating possible environmental and cultural impact. It is preferable to use materials that illustrate the original constructive technology, environmentally adequate, and whose maintenance and functioning contribute to the generation of local employment. A park of this kind must be based on a strict control of information and present scientifically demonstrated data, in order not to incur in speculations or fantasies.

- Besides fostering La Isabela and its immediate vicinity, it is important to integrate the offer of other attractive sites at Luperón and thus promote its function as a starting point. The location has interesting features, like vernacular architecture and the lake, among others. An adequate presentation, articulation and management of components could promote a visit of several days that generates an important economic complement for contributing to human development.

- It is important to reintroduce the idea of creating a historical route that presents the sites associated to La Isabela in the *Ruta de Los Hídalgos* (Route of the Noblemen). This would permit not only the creation of a tourist product, but also to promote the conservation of patrimonial sites that at present are in a poor state.



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LA ISABELA

Relation of the Spanish Site with other Pre-Hispanic Settlements

La Isabela is important for understanding the colonialization process of the island. However, pre-Hispanic history of the area and the scant remains that reflect periods and forms of living previous to the arrival of the Spaniards can not be cast aside.

The present territory of the Dominican Republic was occupied in pre-Hispanic times by five great chieftainships: Marién, Jaragua, Maguana, Maguá and Higüey. The Maguá chieftainship has in its north part or Atlantic coast region the sub-chieftainship Mayobanex, which had almost the extension of the present province of Puerto Plata. At the site there were groups of the Macorí Ciguayo culture, who were linguistically different from other groups such as Ingerí, sub-Taíno and Taíno.

Regarding the specific area, research in 1976 by Veloz Maggiolo point out the existence of two different ethnic groups, Chicoide Taíno and Meillacoides Macorí, identified with the villages of El Perenal and Bajabonico, respectively. Both groups had cultural differences shown in pottery series, tools and exploitation systems of resources. At Bajabonico there is a settlement of a more agricultural than sea-going character, while in Perenal there were more advanced systems of agricultural exploitation, as well as a greater marine activity, evidenced by the great number of weight for fishing nets. Additionally, other pre-Hispanic settlements have been located at Carretera Podrida, Laguna La Playa, La Landra, Las Paredes and El Paradero.

Evidence of the way of life of the groups that inhabited the area in the pre-Hispanic period is very limited. Settlements are small, follow a much dispersed pattern and evidence of construction are limited to those that can be found at caves and hovels, for they were made of perishable materials, mainly wood and palm leaves. These bohíos were the direct ancestors of the present Dominican rural homes, which indicate the persistence and continuity in a form of life and in a functional constructive technology and fully adapted to the conditions of the environment.



CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF LA ISABELA

Relation of the Site with Areas of Extraction of Materials and with Production

One of the interesting aspects of La Isabela is the clear identification of related areas with the extraction of materials and with production, in spite of the short life of the settlement.

La Cantera (The Quarry) is the place that supplied the carved stone materials for the construction of main buildings and for the port. Marks on the rocks can still be seen at the area, which bear witness of preparation of ashlar that probably were given the final touch once taken to the site.

At Las Coles, located on the left bank of the Bajabonico river's mouth, an oven for ceramic firing was found, remains of production of bricks and tiles, and marks of wooden posts, perhaps belonging to bohíos. The evidence seems to suggest that this area was of agricultural exploitation and handcrafted production at the service of La Isabela, which functioned as the nucleus and military area.

Besides these physical features that give character and value to the historical settlement and its vicinity, La Isabela must be valued for elements that not necessarily have left tangible remains.

In this sense, La Isabela was the starting point for a whole historical process. At this site were introduced elements such as pigs, horses, wheat seeds, sugar cane and others that were essential for the process of the conquest of America. It was also the place where the first Christian missionaries arrived, and the first epidemics and plagues that decimated the aborigine population. The first town council and the first court of law were set up there, which marks the judicial and administrative beginning of colonialization.

As a strategic site, it was the starting point for the exploration and colonialization of the Island. From there set out the expeditions that crossed the northern mountain range to explore Cibao, thus establishing the first known route, the Noblemen's Port or Pass.

La Isabela acquired, from the beginning, a great symbolic value as a starting point. The founding stone of the convent of Saint Peter Martyr, of the Dominican Order in Puerto Plata, was brought from La Isabela.

This symbolic value, supported by the first sources, persists today, for the site still is the space *par excellence* for the commemoration of several events, particularly October 12.

- The possibility of including La Isabela as a memory site in the UNESCO project known as the Ruta del Esclavo (Route of the Slave) could be considered.

Management

• The main goal of a patrimonial site's management is the preservation of its values, significance and importance. It implies the adoption of informed decisions in a systematic, logical and methodological manner. Since every patrimonial site presents contextual conditions, it is thought that there may be different management systems, ranking from traditional practices to different planning instruments, and from site plans to urban or territorial ones. In general, it is thought that an efficient system and an adequate management contemplate the following aspects:

- a) A shared understanding among different sectors and individuals about the site, its values and importance.
- b) A cycle that includes planning, execution, follow up, evaluation and feedback.
- c) Participation of several interest groups linked to the location in conservation and management actions.
- d) Availability of the necessary resources for an efficient execution.
- e) Creation and support of capacities.
- f) A transparent description with clear accountability of how the management system works.

One of the system's most efficient tools is a management plan. This must be constant and reflecting how the location's conditions are going to be treated, and how its values will be preserved and promoted. Generally, a plan has the following components:

- Clear and precise policies that serve as reference for all the other components and having a clear link with the site's values.
- A concise declaration of the management objectives, with clear and measurable goals to attain conservation in the short, medium and long terms.
- A practical plan indicating how to implement policies, including the technical, material, administrative and financial requirements for its implementation, as well as a schedule with follow up and evaluation actions.
- Components for research, conservation, risk mitigation, public use, environmental development, etc.
- In the case of La Isabela, it is necessary to establish the precise limits of the historical site and related settlements, as well as establishing buffer areas. For this delimitation it is important to consider not only historical remains, archeological surface deposits, and areas of potential archeological value, but also the visual integrity that reflects the strategic placing of the architecture in the environment, that is, the visuals that at present maintain the integrity of the reading.

- The resulting delimitations should be integrated in the proposals of territorial and municipal distribution.

- For integral management and conservation of La Isabela, it is recommendable to consider the establishing of several areas of use for defining different admissible uses on the physical space of the historical site, at the buffer area and in its vicinity. This will avoid future conflicts by precisely establishing the different levels of development to be attained at each location. Besides, there will be a greater articulation among the different actions to be executed in the short, medium and long range on each area. Some suggestions in this sense could constitute a starting point. The creation of areas should also consider the existing integrity between the settlement and the landscape in its vicinity. Already there are preliminary proposals for this zoning that could become starting points.

- The initiative for developing a management plan must conciliate interests and expectations of different groups linked to the location or interested in it. Giving priority to this initiative is important, in order to attain its execution as soon as possible

- The management plan must contain provisions for specific uses and types of infrastructure that will be allowed in the vicinity.

- Projects and activities of public and private institutions involved in the site must be clearly articulated in a single proposal for the conservation, management and development of La Isabela and its vicinity.

- It is important to promote a greater social and community participation and interest in conservation and management in order to foster a greater appropriation of the location.

- La Isabela's present legal context is perhaps one of the factors that influence the most in its state of conservation. It is essential to address this issue, so that execution of proposals is viable and sustainable. For that reason, it is fundamental to regularize the situation regarding institutional responsibility, as indicated in the 2004 international agreement; that is, to complete the procedures for the transfer of functions to the Department of Culture.

- In this sense, it is necessary to define mechanisms and the specific regulation that guarantees the legal basis of the projections agreed on consensus, as well as a multisectorial and interinstitutional commitment that exceed political situations.

- It is important to clarify the roles, responsibilities and functions of public institutions, according to the framework of the law, and acknowledge this in decision making regarding zoning, projected uses and development of the location.

- Sustainable execution of proposals for conservation and management of La Isabela will be also determined in great measure by the administrative and financial context. It is important to establish different strategic options for improving the present conditions, among which could be considered a better administrative organization, possible scenarios of joint management at different levels, alternative financing sources and, particularly, strategies for attaining self-sustainability in conservation and maintenance in the future.

- It is necessary to have experts in patrimony on a permanent basis at the site to address conservation needs and to oversee research, ransoming archaeology or infrastructure development projects. It is important to find the means for promoting the development of capabilities in the personnel through technical exchanges; in that sense the potential for international collaboration should be explored.

- Searching for donations of equipment and collaborating with research institutions in the use of specialized tools and equipment for data management.

- Searching for financing alternatives in an active way for compensating shortages in the budget allocated by the State. Exploring scenarios of joint management at the site as a possible alternative.

- Resources generated by visits to the site and by entrance to locations linked to the site should be reinvested in its conservation and maintenance.

Results of the Consultative Workshop

During the consultative workshop, the concepts related to conservation and management of patrimonial sites were discussed, and emphasis was made on the requirements and standards for the practice at an international level.

The workshop's main result was the drafting of an action plan focused on the protection, management and promotion of La Isabela historical and archaeological site.

The plan was drafted and approved by consensus by the workshop's participants from different public and private institutions, as well as representatives of civil society.

Plan for ten immediate actions

Deadline: December, 2007.

1. Creation of Working Group: follow up of Action Plan generated at the Workshop, coordination of activities, fund raising.
2. Documentation: collect, systematize and digitize all existing information, both written (technical reports, printed bibliography) and graphic (plans, drawings, photographs). Archives will be at Santo Domingo and at Luperón.
3. Research: define the nucleus area and the buffer area, and generate a precise zoning plan for establishing and regulating uses of every area, in coordination with projections for territorial and municipal development.
4. Conservation: stabilize the corner where the Admiral's House is located; complete roofing of the Admiral's House; protect the exhibited bones and change the frame.
5. Conservation: carry out the systematic diagnosis of conditions and establish a conservation plan for the historical site.
6. Public use: define the values and potentials of the site in order to establish guidelines of an integral plan of public use that includes interpretation of the site.
7. Training: organize a training course for tourist management on patrimonial sites.
8. Conservation: carry out the architectural Project for the ransoming of the existing infrastructure (SECTUR is committed to backing this action).
9. Conservation: carry out a "quick wash" of the museum and the patio, that is, execute basic repairs. Luperón municipality is committed to backing this action.
10. Promotion of the site: carry out a communication campaign for disseminating the 10 points Action Plan (radio, printed press, TV, Internet) for obtaining institutional and financial backing.

Key dates: October 12, 2007, and December 5, 2007.

Action Plan drafted at the Consultative Workshop		
Action	Who	When
<p>1. Creation of a Coordinating Group</p> <p>1.1 Follow up of the Action Plan generated at the Workshop, coordination of activities, fund raising.</p>	<p>1.1 SECTUR (Luis Simó), SEC (Lourdes de Cuello), SEMARN (Danerys Santana), Luperón City Hall (Mario Martínez), La Isabela City Hall (Inés Sandoval), UASD (José Guerrero), CNDU (N. Vargas), Dr. Cantisano.</p> <p>1.2 CNDU (N. Vargas).</p>	<p>July 12, 4:00 PM, Santiago de los Caballeros (creation). Summoned by Luis Simó (SECTUR).</p>
<p>1.2 Dissemination of Action Plan.</p>		
<p>2. Documentation</p> <p>Collecting, systematizing and digitizing all existing information, both written (technical reports, printed bibliography) and graphic (plans, drawings, photographs).</p>	<p>Center for Inventory of Cultural Goods (Nerva Fondear), Dr. Cantisano, Luperón Municipality.</p>	<p>October 12, 2007 (date of delivery).</p>
<p>3. Research</p> <p>3.1 Designing rules of cooperation agreements for research that guarantee socialization of information, conservation of materials, researched remains or sites, and production of materials for dissemination of research results.</p> <p>3.2 Researching pending archeological materials.</p> <p>3.3 Ending and/or completing archeological reconnaissance of historical and influential areas.</p> <p>3.4 Defining the nucleus area and the buffer area, and establishing zones for the handling of the location.</p> <p>3.5 Archeologically researching the area where the modern settlement stood.</p> <p>3.6 Carrying out environmental impact studies of areas that potentially could be impacted by the development of infrastructure.</p> <p>3.7 Updating social and economical data of Luperón municipality and La Isabela district.</p>	<p>Museum of Man, Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, Iberian-American University, University of Indiana, National Office for Cultural Underwater Patrimony, National Direction of Monuments' Patrimony, SEMARN, ONE.</p> <p>3.4 SEC, SEMARN, Military Cartographic Institute.</p>	<p>3.4 December, 2007.</p>

Action	Who	When
4. Conservation 4.1 Stabilizing the corner where the Admiral's House is located. 4.2 Carrying out systematic diagnosis of conditions. 4.3 Designing an integral conservation project that includes not only La Isabela, but also the related pre-Hispanic and historical sites. 4.4 Carrying out conservation and cataloguing of stored archeological material and also the one exhibited <i>in situ</i> . 4.5 Guaranteeing homogeneity in interventions (after diagnosis). 4.6 Renovating the museum and adapting it to foreign tourist influx (including appropriate personnel). 4.7 Adopting decisions regarding existing infrastructure. 4.8 Defining a plan for risk mitigation and disaster prevention. <i>Natural Environment</i> 4.8 Carrying out diagnosis of the natural patrimony's present conditions. 4.9 Defining a plan that guarantees conservation and sustainable use of the area's natural patrimony.	4.1 Coordinating Group. 4.2 Direction of Monuments' Patrimony, ICOMOS. 4.3 SEC, Working Group. 4.4 University of Indiana, SEC, Museum of Man. 4.5 Direction of Monuments' Patrimony. 4.6 General Direction of Museums, SECTOR. 4.7 Coordinating Group. 4.8 y 4.9 Coordinating Group, SEMARN, CNDU, National Environmental Assembly, CECULAS.	4.4 Inventory finished on November, 2007. 4.6 October, 2007.
5. Public Use 5.1 Defining the site's values and generating a declaration of significance reached by consensus and endorsed by all connected actors. 5.2 Establishing strategic guidelines and precise policies for public use of La Isabela and its vicinity. 5.3 Carry out load capacity studies and establish acceptable change limits. 5.4 Create an interpretation plan for defining visiting routes signposting, theme content and readjustment of the site's museum. 5.5 Establish precise guidelines for the handling of visitors. 5.6 Improve services in the area. 5.7 Train different groups in plan implementation of public use.	Coordinating Group (through Technical Working Groups).	

Action	Who	When
<p>6. Development in the vicinity/promotion of the site</p> <p>6.1 Carry out an inventory of potentials.</p> <p>6.2 Carry out a marketing study (Insertion of La Isabela in national and international markets).</p> <p>6.3 Promote celebration of significant anniversaries for La Isabela.</p> <p>6.4 Contribute to the ransoming of local traditions.</p> <p>6.5 Develop local handicrafts.</p> <p>6.6 Restore and use the site's infrastructure as a study center.</p> <p>6.7 Foster the educational value of the site by training the population of students and teachers.</p> <p>6.8 Promote tourist excursions to the site.</p> <p>6.9 Improve accessibility of the site.</p> <p>6.10 Develop promotional initiatives of the Action Plan (community radio, newsletter, website, etc).</p> <p>6.11 Carry out the Fair of the Americas (productive and promotional fair).</p>	Coordinating Group (through Technical Working Groups).	
<p>7. Management</p> <p>7.1 Finnish transfer of functions for handling and managing of the site.</p> <p>7.2 Implement existing rules and regulations.</p> <p>7.3 Develop a plan of territorial distribution.</p> <p>7.4 Develop financing strategies to guarantee sustainability of conservation and promotion of the site.</p> <p>7.5 Create/strengthen an administrative structure at the local level that contributes to the human and cultural development of the area.</p>	Coordinating Group (through Technical Working Groups).	