UNESCO Heritage Sites Growth in Vietnam from 1990 till 2015

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Abstract
This research article provides a comprehensive overview of the expansions of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam between 1990 and 2015. It examines the notable additions made during this period and analyzes the criteria and processes involved in their inclusion. Furthermore, this study aims to present recommendations for potential new UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam based on their cultural, natural, and historical significance. By examining the past developments and proposing future additions, this research contributes to the preservation and promotion of Vietnam's exceptional heritage.

Keywords: UNESCO, Vietnam, World Heritage

1. Introduction
This is an introductory overview article focusing on presenting development of UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam from 1990 till 2015.

World cultural and natural heritage is a important part of our lives, past and future and therefore it is necessary to preserve heritage for future generations. This research paper drafts development of cultural and natural heritage in Vietnam and provides possible recommendations for addition in future.
2. Literature Review

The main point of UNESCO World Heritage is to preserve cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible for future generations. The UNESCO World Heritage consists of (UNESCO, 1972):

- Cultural heritage such as monuments, buildings and groups of buildings, sites (work of humans or combined with nature),
- Natural heritage which is represented by special natural features such as physical and biological formations; geological and physiographical formations; and natural sites (which are natural areas of outstanding universal value).

If cultural or natural heritage is accepted by the UNESCO and added to UNESCO World Heritage list, it can enjoy extended protection, not only on national level, but also on international and global level (UNESCO, 1972).

UNESCO World Heritage Sites are natural and/or cultural locations that have been included on the World Heritage List by the World Heritage Committee as having "Outstanding Universal Value" (Historic Environment Scotland, 2022).

2.1 Disruption of World Heritage Sites

War, colonization, and natural disasters are only a few historical occurrences that have disrupted the physical evidence, customs, and transfer of tangible and intangible cultural heritages (Earth Changers, 2021).

For several reasons, for instance, tangible indigenous cultural heritage artifacts have been gathered and taken from their setting and "country." One example of this is museum exhibits, which frequently lack information about their owner or place of origin as a result of inadequate referencing systems (Earth Changers, 2021).

The fact that it proved to be "too difficult" to fully interpret, document, and accurately depict in terms of its context, purpose, or the people or locations from whence it initially became known over the years was another problem with the intangible cultural legacy of indigenous people (Earth Changers, 2021).
3. Current UNESCO Heritage Sites in Vietnam

Current UNESCO Heritage Sites in Vietnam cover five cultural heritage sites, two natural heritage sites and one mixed natural heritage site.

Cultural heritage sites include (UNESCO, 2022):

- Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Hanoi (2010)
- Citadel of the Ho Dynasty (2011)
- Complex of Hué Monuments (1993)
- Hoi An Ancient Town (1999)
- My Son Sanctuary (1999)

Natural heritage sites include (UNESCO, 2022):


And one mixed cultural-natural heritage site which is Trang An Landscape Complex which has been added to UNESCO Heritage in 2014 (UNESCO, 2022).

Figure List of UNESCO Heritage Sites in Vietnam by the end of 2022.

The following chapters focus on developing of UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam from 1990 till 2015.


The following table shows names, years of additions, type and changes in UNESCO World Heritage in 1990-2015.

Table UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam 1990-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Change +/-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Complex of Hué Monuments</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ha Long Bay</td>
<td>1994, 2000</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hoi An Ancient Town</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>+ 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>My Son Sanctuary</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park</td>
<td>2003, 2015</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long - Hanoi</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Citadel of the Ho Dynasty</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Trang An Landscape Complex</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>+ 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own based on UNESCO, 2022.
It is also necessary to provide information regarding yearly change in cultural heritage in Vietnam in 1990-2015. Statistically there is one addition to UNESCO World Heritage every 2.6 years from 1993 till 2014.

### UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam in 1990-2015

[![chart showing UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Vietnam from 1993 to 2014](chart.png)]

Source: Own based on UNESCO, 2022.

5. Recommendations

The question is why there is no other new UNESCO World Heritage site from 2014 till 2022, as it may be due to complexity and difficulty of adding cultural or natural heritage to UNESCO World Heritage List or simple fact that Heritage protection on national level is sufficient and therefore there is no need of expanding World Heritage by UNESCO in Vietnam from 2014. Following recommendations may apply for further discussion:

- Applying for cultural heritage to be added to UNESCO World Heritage list – especially continuing efforts on additions of intangible cultural heritage,
Facilitating the addition of cultural and natural heritage to be added to UNESCO World Heritage list in future, e.g.:

- Vịnh Hạ Long–Quần đảo Cát Bà – the bay and beautiful natural island in North Vietnam (natural UNESCO World Heritage),
- Quần thể di tích và danh thắng Yên Tử – historical man-made cultural site with buddhas statues.

6. Conclusion

The main point of UNESCO World Heritage is to preserve cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible for future generations. The UNESCO World Heritage consists of Cultural heritage such as monuments, buildings and groups of buildings, sites work of humans or combined with nature, and Natural heritage which is represented by special natural features such as physical and biological formations geological and physiographical formations and natural sites which are natural areas of outstanding universal value.

Current UNESCO Heritage Sites in Vietnam Current UNESCO Heritage Sites in Vietnam cover five cultural heritage sites, two natural heritage side and one mixed natural heritage stie. Statistically there is one addition to UNESCO World Heritage every 2,6 years from 1993 till 2014.

For future it is possible to recommend especially Applying for cultural heritage to be added to UNESCO World Heritage list – especially continuing efforts on additions of intangible cultural heritage, in Vietnam does a great job.

References

