Are outstanding cultural heritage sites useful territorial resources for community development?

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INTRODUCTION

Territories with heritage sites that have been identified and recognised at a national or international level for their outstanding qualities also have to participate in managing, promoting and transmitting heritage rich in potential as an asset for development but also loaded with day-to-day responsibilities. In France, outstanding locations listed as "Grands Sites de France" or UNESCO World Heritage sites attract many visitors but are intrinsically fragile. The public and private bodies tasked with managing them must cope with the many challenges they pose, as well as the opposition and tension they generate in a wide range of fields. The status of a large number of these heritage sites is equivalent to that of a public property (Benhamou, Thesmar, 2011) or even a common good (Boidin, Hiez, Rousseau, 2008). By the same token, the recognition of their national importance and the role they play in various policies (particularly within the framework of the European Union) justifies financial support by the authorities. However, growing pressure on the use of public funds has cast doubt on costly local models (Gilbert, Guengant, 2014) or has, at the very least, compelled policymakers to reappraise the financial packages that had previously been put together at the local level.

So the overall picture seems very contradictory, with a mesh of conflicting motives and rationales in and around these remarkable places. Yet, they undeniably (indeed, by definition), represent exceptional assets, an essential part of a territory's identity and attraction. The positive impact of natural and/or cultural amenities on the residential and tourist economy of such territories has already been highlighted (Talandier, 2014). Obviously, many resources are available to territories, which gives rise to many theoretical and empirical hypotheses.

More precisely, the notion of territorial resources belongs to the school of thought that defines local development as a process of player interaction liable to capitalising on the characteristics of a given place. In 2007, Bernard Pecqueur and Hervé Gumuchian proposed defining a territorial resource as '*a constructed characteristic of a specific territory from the point of view of development*' (Gumuchian and Pecqueur, 2007, p. 25). Each territory has resources specific to it, in a latent state, yet to be revealed and exploited. Through the concerted action of various players, the resource can be turned into a specific asset, a resource for the territory. The specificity of the resource once it is tapped – the fact that it exists only here in this form – protects the territory from competition and enables the players to derive territorial rent from it (François et al., 2006; Hirczak et al, 2008). More precisely, the fact that the resource exists here rather than somewhere else means there are favourable conditions in place to protect the territory from competition and to enable players to derive territorial rent from it (Mollard et al., 2007).

Thus, remarkable places have the potential to become a specific resource for territories, provided that the relevant players are aware of it, motivated and organised to maintain, conserve and capitalise on this part of heritage. The outstanding nature of the place may be sufficient to make the property or landscape specific and unique, but it will only become an asset if the players are sufficiently organised to capitalise on it and turn it into one of the territory's development factors. Thus, the capacity of such places to drive a local dynamic depends on both endogenous and exogenous factors, which in turn have an impact on both the resources and the places being studied.

The results presented here were obtained during a research programme carried out for the Plan Urbanisme Construction Architecture department of France's Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development (Navarre, F., Talandier, M. (dir), 2017). The key issue addressed by this research is how heritage sites impact territorial development. It is underpinned by two assumptions that also determine our methodology:

- The first assumption concerns the tensions between players on the ground who have a stake in the economy, funding, society or the environment. Only a field study can provide a better understanding of the interplay between these agents.
- The second assumption relates to the stakes themselves, the areas of agreement and disagreement on these different issues, which may take particular forms depending on the type of site and the type of territory where they are located. So we have adopted an approach allowing for territorial and spatial differences in order to better analyse the impact of heritage sites on the surrounding territory.

In order to explore the question from various angles, we have adopted a mixed methodology, quantitative for all the sites and qualitative for targeted study sites. We explain this methodology in the first part of the chapter. In addition, this chapter questions the capacity of outstanding heritage sites to serve as a local resource and, in so doing, drive a territorial-development dynamic. The second part of the chapter discusses the results of quantitative analysis in more detail and measures the (lack of) impact of heritage sites according to their location. Drawing on surveys and field research, the third and final part explains which levers may be used to exploit a resource and outlines possible forms of action in this respect. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the hypothetical system by which a territorial asset – however remarkable – could have a noticeable or enduring effect on local development.

1. Towards a Holistic Approach to the Research Question

1.1 A Mixed-Methods Research Paradigm

Mixed-methods research argues that better findings could be expected by combining qualitative and quantitative methods rather than prioritising one research paradigm over another (Sieber, 1973; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007; Hay, 2016). This paradigm seems more reflective of the complex and systemic building process of social life in general and more relevant to issues related to the management of cultural heritage sites.

As a starting point, the issues in this chapter face two different paradigmatic research problems. The first (mainly quantitative) is about the impact of cultural heritage sites on local development; the second (quite qualitative) is concerned with efficient, if not innovative, means of managing such places sustainably. Obviously, some qualitative findings are also achievable for the first and quantitative findings for the second, but this is not expected to be the case. However, the two challenges are closely interlinked because of the suspicion that community development raises management capacity and, consequently, one can be treated separately from the other. Furthermore, both community development and management capacity are embedded in territorial specificities, which means at least multidimensional place-based (geomorphology, climate, land quality, geographical location, inherited natural capital…) and social-based attributes (historical trajectories, knowledge, institutions, infrastructures, adaptability…). As a result, the first mixed-methods research adaptation came from the research project coordinators – both economists – who decided to set up a multidisciplinary research team sensitive to economics, geography, sociology, political science, environmental planning and management. The second point was then to agree how to do interdisciplinary work collectively.

1.2 Interdisciplinary Agreements and Shared Use of the *Territorial Resource* Concept

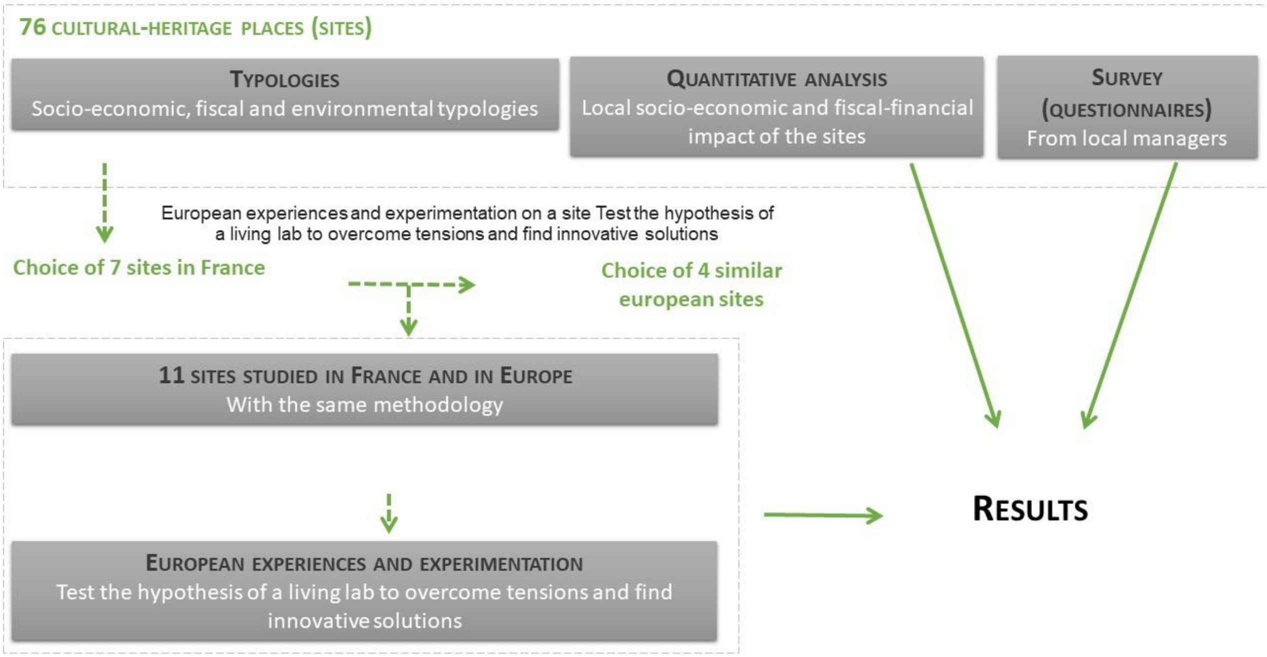
For an interdisciplinary research team, working together is not always easy; some of the reasons include recurring, time-consuming dialogues, the costs of learning from each other, the need for conciliation of paradigms and, inevitably, scientific arbitration (Johnson et al., 2007). The research team finally found its feet by ensuring four types of agreements: (1) adopting a common understanding of key concepts, (2) making room for all disciplinary sensitivities through the different stages of the research process, (3) allowing time to have scholarly conversations and (4) exchanging and combining methods and findings before drawing any definitive conclusions.

The first steps in doing mixed-methods research are taken by coming to a collective agreement on what will be our representative sample of outstanding French cultural heritage sites and the adoption of the common concept of a *territorial resource*. The first decision was made easier, mainly by the shared belief that the UNESCO list of world heritage sites is an unrivalled international platform recognising outstanding heritage attributes, and secondly by the fact that the “Grand Site de France” (GSF) label was one of the most relevant for national recognition. The latter only concerns French cultural heritage sites that meet the necessary conditions of being among “the most prestigious and most visited” ones, already a protected area, facing excessive tourist pressure and committed to large-scale governance issues. In the end, 76 French cultural heritage sites are listed in either one of the two statuses, and the research team unanimously labelled them as being “outstanding”.

However, each disciplinary sensitivity is able to express its view differently about how to study and analyse the contribution of cultural heritage sites to community development or how to reveal sustainable ways of managing them. Should places be considered as recreation services characterised by their attraction or as cultural areas defined by identity? Can sales revenue account for community development, even if there is no change in the local living standards? Is site management capacity determined by skill transfers and knowledge spill-overs? Is it rather the result of experience acquired and endogenous empowerment? In the end, the concept of territorial resources provides a comprehensive, holistic and attractive concept to address the research question in an interdisciplinary way. If resources provide a means of subsistence to local communities, they do so as a by-product of human territoriality (Dyson-Hudson and Smith, 1978; Sack, 1983) because without land control, there is no possible extraction, transformation or economic valorisation of raw materials (Georgescu-Roegen, 1977; Hudson, 2005). As a consequence, the same raw materials don’t provide equivalent resources to mankind but depend on locally used knowledge and technologies, which are the result of varying historical trajectories across territories in which a specific control and management of land have been established. Territory-specific resources are then major factors of regional development differentiation (Colletis-Wahl and Pecqueur, 2001; Dissart and Vollet, 2011). In the long run, the concept of territorial resources is an effective basis for multidisciplinary expression because its holistic nature does not lend itself well to fragmented views.

That is precisely why the second agreement is about integrating mixed views and methods at different stages of the research process. By maintaining a steady pace of almost two meetings a year throughout the research programme, the team collectively ensured the interdisciplinary nature of the different research stages, starting with the choice of a common methodological framework mixing methods from a macroscopic, quantitative overview to field surveys (cf. Figure 1) and using multi-thematic approaches (economy, governance, finance, environment, socio-cultural, heritage nature…).

Figure 1. A mixed-method framework to study outstanding French cultural heritage sites



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The macroscopic overview includes analyses of secondary data regarding population, employment, income, local tax, local environmental protections and natural/technological risks, as well as data collection (national survey) from cultural heritage site managers in the representative sample. The multi-thematic secondary data were used to develop statistically both a typology of cultural heritage sites and a typology of an extended area, including cultural heritage sites and their adjacent inter-municipality institutions. The main idea was to compare the principal component analysis (PCA) of cultural heritage sites with the PCA extended to the surrounding area in order to examine the relationship between the two parts. It also provides the characteristics of and a means to interpret economic and financial impact analyses. The latter are another component of the macroscopic overview strictly interested in quantitative measures of community development. However, secondary data do not, in any way, help to give an overview of territorial resource capacity or, even more, sustainable site management issues. That is why the last part of the macroscopic stage of the research encompasses the conduct of a national site-manager survey from a selection of 76 French cultural heritage sites. With a participation rate of 62% and a low nonresponse bias to questions, a confident analysis is possible. All site managers were requested to present their view of the site's impact, as well as the tourist impact, on community development and environment, and of the benefits and disadvantages of managing such an "outstanding" cultural heritage site in the short and long term. In so doing, the macroscopic overview as a whole introduces various findings of which attributes bind similar outstanding cultural heritage sites, what differentiates them, how they are embedded in regional dynamics, how site managers currently perceive the impact of cultural heritage sites and what the main perceived issues are for sustainable management. Furthermore, each

disciplinary sensitivity has been expressed through dedicated thematic views of territorial resources related to selected places in France.
Ultimately, the last two mixed-method agreements, which are scholarly conversations and a combined method analysis, were reached through a systematic collective presentation of findings and drawing up of definitive conclusions. Seven French case studies were selected from the representative sample of 76 outstanding French cultural heritage sites following a participatory decision-process among the research team and after focusing on emblematic case studies for thematic key issues. In addition to the biannual meetings and cross-reading of science materials, field surveys were conducted with the basic rule of an interdisciplinary two- or three-person team. Most of all, each field team followed a common and interdisciplinary interview grid to provide homogenous and cross-disciplinary science materials.
Obviously, mixed methods are not easy to implement by people who have never worked in such a way before. Lengthy discussions and tough decisions are inevitable. Furthermore, the representation of disciplinary sensitivities is still perfectible considering the absence of anthropologists, ecologists or even true historians. Ultimately, it is less easy to fully understand the cross-disciplinary conclusions but also more realistic to meet the research issue, which is what motivated the team in the first place.

2. Socio-economic Impact of Heritage Sites on Their Home Territory

A distinction needs to be made between the problems, the stakes at play and the impact of sites on territorial development, but first, we need to define the local conditions on which they depend. To this end, prior to the statistical study of territorial dynamics, we defined a typology of sites and territories. On the basis of this typology, we studied the impact of sites on local dynamics.

2.1 Diversity of sites under varying territorial conditions

Our typology of 76 remarkable sites in mainland France is based on a quantitative socio-economic analysis at various overlapping scales.

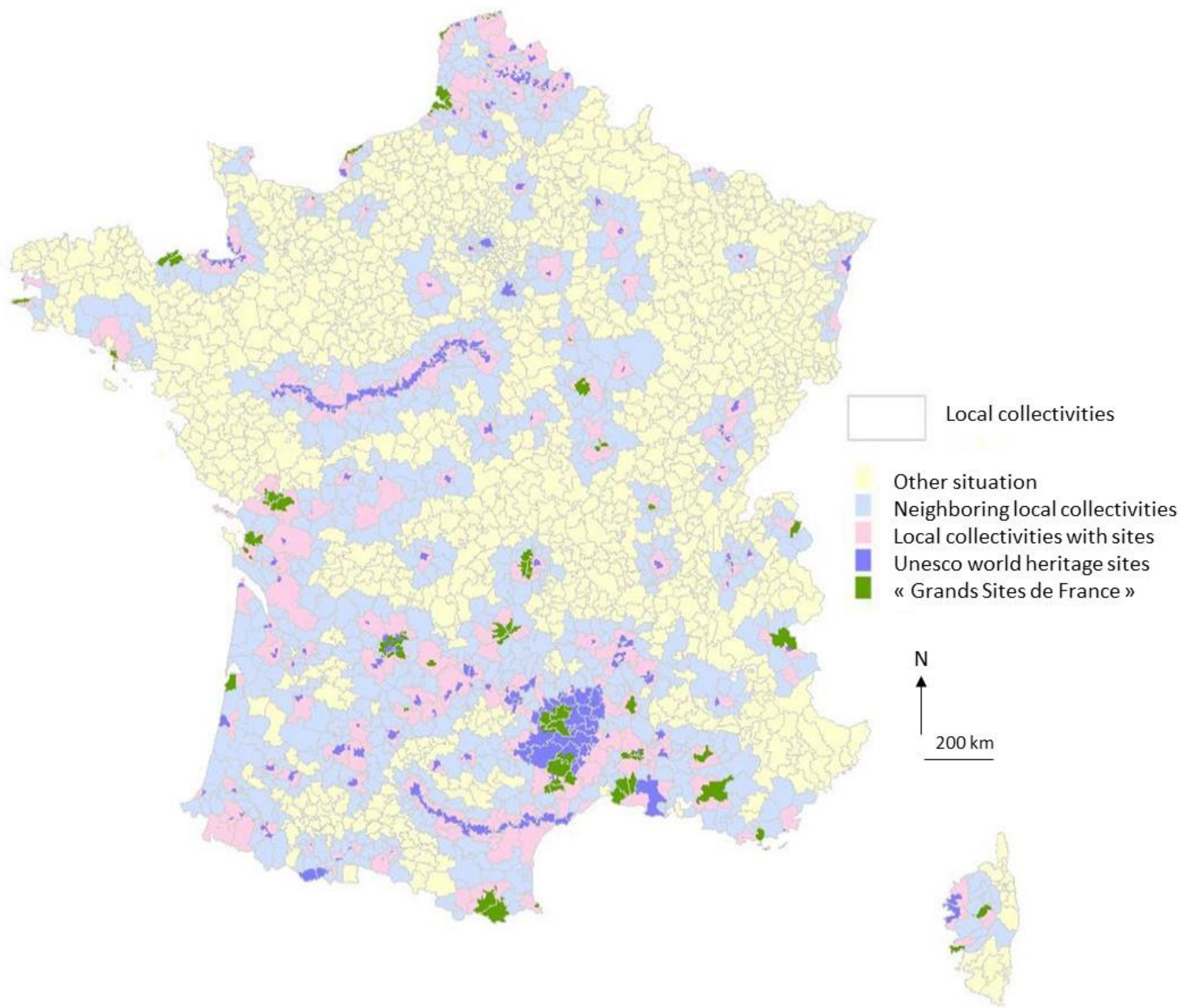
The smallest scale we considered corresponds to the *commune* (or municipality, France's smallest administrative unit) or *communes* where the site is located, then we looked at the site as a whole, then the one or more *établissement public de coopération intercommunale à fiscalité propre* (a framework for inter-municipal collaboration with the power to levy taxes) home to the site and neighbouring EPCIs. Thus, we can distinguish between the following five overlapping scales (see Map 1):

1. Each municipality that is home to a remarkable site (UNESCO, Grand Site de France);
2. All the municipalities that are home to the site;
3. The EPCI(s) hosting the site;
4. Neighbouring EPCI(s);

5. The rest of mainland France.

When analysing the typology, we only took into account the first three scales; for the statistical analysis of territorial dynamics, we considered the last four. The aim of the typological approach was to identify the different configurations of sites in their immediate local environment. However, to examine how the sites impact on or interact with territorial development, a broader view is needed, which reveals possible territorial ratchet effects at much larger scales than that of the site itself or the host EPCI.

<u>*Map 1. Remarkable sites in their territorial context, scales of analysis*</u>



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Using a funnel approach, the resulting typology is based on socio-economic variables. We start by trying to qualify the site's socio-economic environment at a local level, corresponding to the EPCI, then the profile of the site itself (one or more municipalities covered by the site) and lastly the degree of heterogeneity of the site itself (differences between component municipalities).

The local socio-economic environment is determined by PCA, followed by hierarchical ranking drawing on a database that indicates for each EPCI and then for each site:

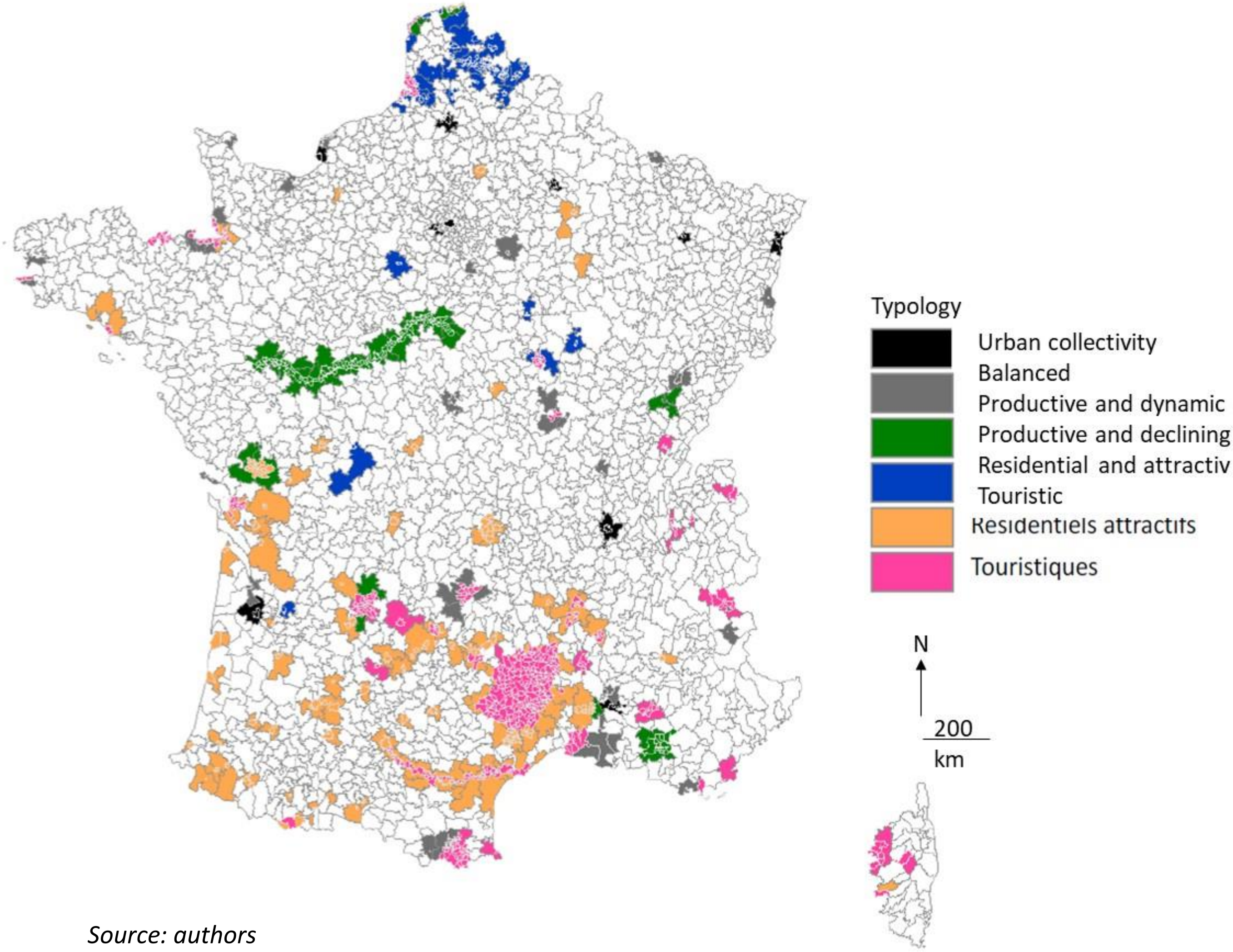
- the weight of the various economic assets or driving forces;
- the tendency to convert such assets into income for people living in the territory;
- the intensity of the seasonal variations in visitor numbers;
- the territorial dynamics regarding population, jobs and income; and
- the profile of the local population.

On this basis, we produced a typology of local territorial environments at the scale of each EPCI home to a remarkable site. Then we carried out the second round of typological analysis by using the same variables to identify the specific features of the one or more municipalities making up the site. Next, we identified sites with a profile similar to – or, on the contrary, at odds with – their local environment and the EPCI in which they are located. Finally, we used a weighted variance analysis of each of the variables at the municipality level to highlight the heterogeneity of the sites. Details of the various calculations and results can be found in the final report on the study (Navarre, F., Talandier, M. (eds), 2017).
Ultimately, our analysis revealed several types of site and territory (

Map 2)

Some sites attract large numbers of visitors and are located in territories that also receive many visitors. In attractive, dynamic territories, two types of sites may be identified on the basis of their drawing power; here, the municipal make-up is fairly uneven. In formerly productive but currently declining territories, the sites themselves are either related to business and in decline or attractive to tourists despite the local environment. Dynamic productive territories are home to the greatest diversity of sites, with all the various types represented. Lastly, sites located in areas where the local economy is functionally balanced are either balanced or attractive to tourists.

Map 2. Socio-economic typology of sites in their territorial environment



Source: authors

So we see a concentration in northern France of EPCIs that are industrial, production-related and facing a relative decline in terms of their socio-economic and demographic dynamics. This type of territory is also found in rural areas of central France but at a lower concentration. What seems more interesting is when tourist attractions, such as the Somme Bay cultural heritage site, are located along the coast of the English Channel, in what at first blush might seem like a 'difficult' environment. On its own, the presence of a particular site is obviously not sufficient to make a territory attractive and dynamic, but it seems worthwhile to examine the role and economic contribution of a tourist attraction in an unpopular area. There are places with thriving businesses all over France. Several EPCIs in this category are to be found in northern France. They include tourist or residential sites (Deux Caps and Dunes de Flandre, in the north of France) that may contribute to feeding a tourist attraction in a predominantly business environment. Our analysis shows the Marais Poitevin wetland (located along the coast of Atlantic Ocean, next to La Rochelle) to be primarily residential, but they are set in a fairly dynamic business environment. Here again, it would be interesting to see how combining the two trends produces (or not) a particular dynamic. There are several residential and tourist clusters south of the Loire River, and here it seems the outstanding heritage sites do contribute further to this type of economy. This,

in turn, raises the question of the degree of dependence on the tourist trade alone that these combined dynamics may sometimes create. Here again, it would be worthwhile to examine in greater detail the situation of these remarkable sites which, along with their host territories, are as attractive as both tourist destinations and residential locations. Lastly, some EPCIs seem more functionally balanced, in the sense that business and residential activities are relatively well represented. The remarkable sites located in this type of EPCI are balanced because they are in the core municipality (Roman theatre and triumphal arch in Orange; the Bourges cathedral), or highly attractive (Puy Mary, Pointe du Raz, Mont Saint Michel). So, does the contribution of tourism-based resources bolster the balanced character of a territory by supplementing other types of economic assets?
Whatever the answer, our initial results show that, for any consideration of the role and operation of remarkable sites, it is essential that allowance be made for the diversity of environments.

2.2 Sites and territories, what are the forms of socio-economic interaction?

We used the same scale as for the analysis of typology to quantify territorial dynamics but shifted the smallest scale down to that of the municipality (or municipalities) hosting the site, followed by the host EPCI and any neighbouring EPCIs. The sites taken as a whole were compared with the average for all the remaining French municipalities.
We analysed the following variables: demographics (population, natural balance, migratory balance), jobs and per-capita income; tourist reception capacity, measuring the number of visitors a given territory can accommodate in hotels, campsites and second homes compared with the resident population; salaried jobs in the private sector.

The period of observation ran from 2007 to 2013 or 2014 for salaried jobs in the private sector, a recent period of six to seven years marked by the financial crash and a rise in unemployment, its gravity depending on the part of France.

The analysis of the changes in the different variables, at different scales over the 2007–14 period, yielded several results.

On the whole, the heritage sites are predominantly dynamic spaces located in similarly dynamic territories. It is apparent that these territorial entities, consisting of a site and its perimeter, evolve in a largely similar way, with the presence of tourist activities in particular – and, more broadly, an economic organisation – enabling them to weather the crisis in 2008. It is also worth noting that retail activities serving the demands of resident households or visitors account for 48% of local jobs! But the fact that these sites are specialised in visitor or resident-oriented services has in no way discouraged growth in intermediate jobs, such as upper-grade (or highly qualified) business services.

A spatially situated analysis, which allows for the features of a given site and its environment, yielded interesting results, too, with three typical situations.

Firstly, we identified sites contributing to the overall dynamic observed in France. Such sites are undoubtedly assets, but only assets among others. This is the case, for instance, with tourist attractions or residential centres in a tourist- or residential-oriented setting. The whole territory is attractive, with rising per-capita income and the creation of new jobs, particularly in retailing, personal, hospitality and business services. By taking a closer look at these territorial-heritage configurations, we can see that sites largely serving the hospitality or residential market may be subject to a high demand for housing (large, positive migratory balance). This may conflict with the place's key function as a tourist attraction (and associated amenities), potentially leading to some young families with children or indeed less prosperous households being driven out by rising property prices. In the tourist-residential configuration growth in the number of visitors is primarily due to the site itself, ultimately not spilling over into neighbouring territories very much.

Secondly, by contrast, there are cases where neither the site nor its surrounding territory seems particularly prosperous. It is as if the predicament of the territory is increasingly penalising the site, failing to constitute an asset for the latter, regardless of how remarkable it may be. This is the case in particular with sites located in small or medium-sized towns currently jeopardised by their poor strategic position in economic terms but also by the lack of a clearly defined image and identity. They are competing with large metropolises, on the one hand, and, on the other, with places that are more attractive to visitors and prospective residents. Under these circumstances, even a 'remarkable' site cannot work miracles. Without the benefit of a minimum amount of commitment, drive and strategic thinking, the presence of a remarkable site is not enough to power territorial development. The site may be an asset for its host territory but only if the latter can secure a minimum amount of resources and drive.

Lastly, there are some positive, albeit not spectacular, signs worthy of note. The case of remarkable sites located in declining industrial territories is particularly interesting. These rustbelt territories are the victims of globalisation and the current emphasis on urban areas. The presence of a remarkable site does not reverse this overall trend, nor can it solve all manner of problems on its own, but positive signals are nevertheless apparent. For example, the tourist venues in these territories have confirmed their drawing power (potential for attracting tourists and jobs) despite the economic climate, and thus far the other municipalities belonging to the relevant EPCI have benefitted from this trend. In the case of sites that are still mirror images of their host territory (productive and in decline), there has been very limited tourist development. The potential for attracting visitors has increased. Above all, the rise in the number of jobs in hospitality, retailing and personal services, as well as jobs in the arts, at the site itself and in the vicinity, is restoring the functional balance of the local economy. This slight lift, driven by tourism and the in-place economy and accompanied by a rise in intermediate activities in EPCIs, setting aside heritage sites, has dispelled some of the gloom in territories where unemployment and poverty remain the predominant features.

3. Mobilising Cultural Heritage Sites as Territorial Resources

The survey of the managers of remarkable sites shows that heritage is both dynamic and socially constructed, which means it is shaped by time. However, such places may not be used carelessly to satisfy the needs of present generations, precisely because the heritage value is currently identified as valuable resources that require protection for the future. Time can affect, transform and enrich the heritage value, but putting it under a bell jar doesn't prevent anything from happening to it. That is why several authors have already suggested treating heritage as neither immutable (free from significant intervention by humans) nor perishable (for example, an exploited market good) (Soucy, 1996; Choay, 2001; Sgard, 2011). In other words, local communities should consider heritage as an evolving resource that is territorially managed and preserved for future generations.

However, in this way it becomes a complex economic asset involving costs and obligations, raising tensions between the community players (Varine, 2006) and possibly being called into question in the end (3.1). The heritage value is not unrelated to short-term economic benefits, particularly with tourism (Zeppel and Hall, 1991; Prentice, 1993; Cuvelier et al., 1994; Benhamou, 2010), but the question of wealth (re)distribution then arises, considering the joint effort to manage it (3.2). Lastly, cultural heritage sites are attractive to recreational and various other social practices, but the public's sensitivity to ongoing degradation varies and is not directly committed to preserving the heritage value (3.3).

3.1 Economic development & protection rules

The recognition of cultural heritage contributes to raising both landscape issues and protection needs. Consequently, the high number of regulatory instruments is one of the typical features of outstanding cultural heritage sites, as the national site manager survey highlights (Table 1).

Table 1. Regulatory instruments to protect outstanding cultural heritage sites in 2016

Regulatory Instruments	**Survey Sample**
Protected national (natural or historical) monuments	93%
Natura 2000	78%
National sensitive natural environment	48%
UNESCO World Heritage Site	39%
National architectural heritage managed area	33%
Other instruments	26%
Regional natural park	26%
Biosphere reserve - UNESCO	13%
National natural park	7%
RAMSAR Convention	7%

Source: National site manager survey

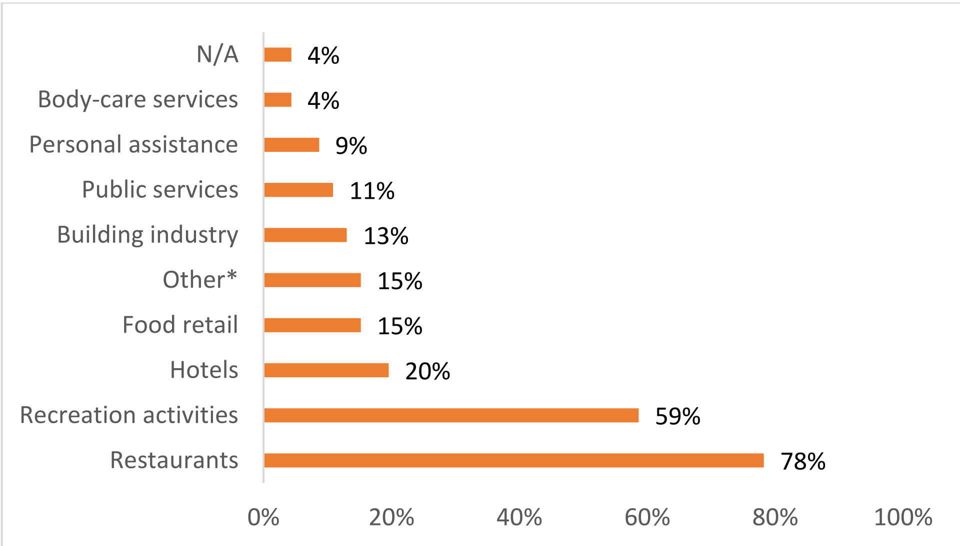
Almost every cultural heritage site has protected national monuments and Natura 2000 rules. Nearly half of the sample is covered by national sensitive natural environments, and one-third by national architectural heritage managed areas. Therefore, each cultural heritage site is, on average, affected by at least four different regulatory instruments protecting heritage and the environment. Such instruments are not specific to outstanding cultural heritage sites, but such an accumulation of them is. Sixty-five percent of the surveyed site managers feel that way and believe that regulatory instruments are less numerous outside their area of action.

During field interviews, local stakeholders were very understanding about cultural heritage protection but simultaneously also very concerned about the resulting limited opportunities for economic development, considering the constraints on accumulation. The irritation of local elected representatives is frequently reported through an exhausting "*accumulation of procedures*" claim. Some of them accommodate this issue by "*becoming complex project management experts*" (Poitevin wetland). Others are much more critical: "*We are constantly annoyed rather than helped. Public administration is a drag on community development*" (Canal du Midi). They share concerns about the limited potential of local areas for urbanisation and the increasing time to process land use authorisation (Nord-Pas-de-Calais Basin, Canal du Midi, prehistoric sites and decorated caves of the Vézère Valley). Protection rules also produce many misunderstandings among landowners and economic players who are not fully allowed to use their property as they please (Canal du Midi, Ocres Mountains, Nord-Pas-de-Calais Mining Basin, Somme Bay).

Outstanding cultural heritage sites taken separately do not have such economic diversity; instead, each territorial context rather leads to a specific economic specialisation around one or a few economic services. These places are not particularly attractive to major business groups, and protection rules – sometimes in combination with low population density – often discourage major investment.

Despite the fact that economic development and cultural heritage management are currently regarded as rivals by the people surveyed, some weak signals may be observed that indicate possible co-development. For example, the national site manager survey, as well as the macroscopic statistical overview, reveals that a wide range of economic services benefits from the existence of outstanding cultural-heritage places as a whole (Figure 2): restaurants, hotels, leisure activities, building industry, retail, public services… Moreover, at the local level, rules to protect cultural heritage provide something similar to "protectionist barriers" for traditional (extensive agriculture, local craft…) or emerging (organic market, ecotourism, high-quality or socially responsible products and services) economic activities that are otherwise endangered by mainstream business development. For example, landscape protection instruments prevented a huge warehouse development in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais Mining Basin and thus preserved agricultural land and valuable ecosystem services. All cultural heritage sites also create site management jobs and, frequently, provide training activities (Somme Bay, Poitevin wetland, prehistoric sites and decorated caves of Vézère Valley…).

Figure 2. In your view, which primary business sectors are positively affected by cultural heritage?



** Other: agriculture, site management, nature guides…*

Source: National site manager survey

Additionally, protection rules could potentially stimulate economic innovation and favour the strengthening of quality products and services through the branding of local know-how and heritage (Bessière, 1998; Cortright, 2002; Mollard et al., 2007; Sims, 2009). In the case of the Ocres Mountains, a social cooperative company is promoting ochre colours as a territorial resource, including traditional (paint, coating…) and creative goods and services (coloured concrete, graffiti, photography workshop…) and even know-how through specialised training. In short, to quote the site manager of the Poitevin wetland, his cultural heritage site is used as "a living lab and an experimentation field" for community initiatives and resource construction processes.

3.2 Unfair distribution of economic benefits & shared commitment

When the magnitude of cultural heritage management costs is well known and a cause for concern, the magnitude of economic benefits provided by cultural heritage sites is often unclear, if not overestimated (Greffe, 2004). This is particularly true when it is primarily focused on the growth of inhabitants' disposable income benefits rather than on wealth creation, which can easily leak outside the local community (Talandier, 2013; Ruault, 2017). Both the national site manager survey and the field interviews provided some insights on the perception of economic benefits, including job creation, the valorisation of local know-how and the rise of property values. Nonetheless, such benefits are neither pervasive nor fairly distributed among local communities.

First of all, the impact on employment is globally judged as positive but moderate into cultural heritage sites as a whole, or possibly even low for 40% of respondents. Job creation is rather stable or showing a slight increase for 35% of site managers. More than 80% of the jobs are full-time, and most of them are locally filled (80% on average) but mainly seasonal. Therefore, no significant differences seem to be observable between total economic income benefits and inhabitants' disposable income, but it is not as much in most cases.

Secondly, half the respondents have developed famous local goods or services related to the cultural heritage site: cheese, pastry, local cuisine, traditional events… An outstanding site, by attracting visitors, is indeed a medium of choice to make local know-how visible and build a new in-place market. Authentic goods and craft-made products can gain visibility from cultural heritage sites but also benefit from the extra market value for visitors. Frequently, there is a growth of local brands, which requires coordination between stakeholders and specification requirements and leads to brands such as "Les Saveurs du Marais" (Poitevin wetland), "Émerveillés par l'Ardèche" (Ardèche Gorges) or "LH" (Le Havre). However, the free appropriation of the cultural heritage image is also a growing issue for local managers, who commonly perceive such practices as potentially discrediting for local brands and damaging to consumer confidence. Consequently, some site managers and local elected representatives are currently trying to ensure more stringent specification requirements and create controlled label brands (Puy Mary, Poitevin wetland).

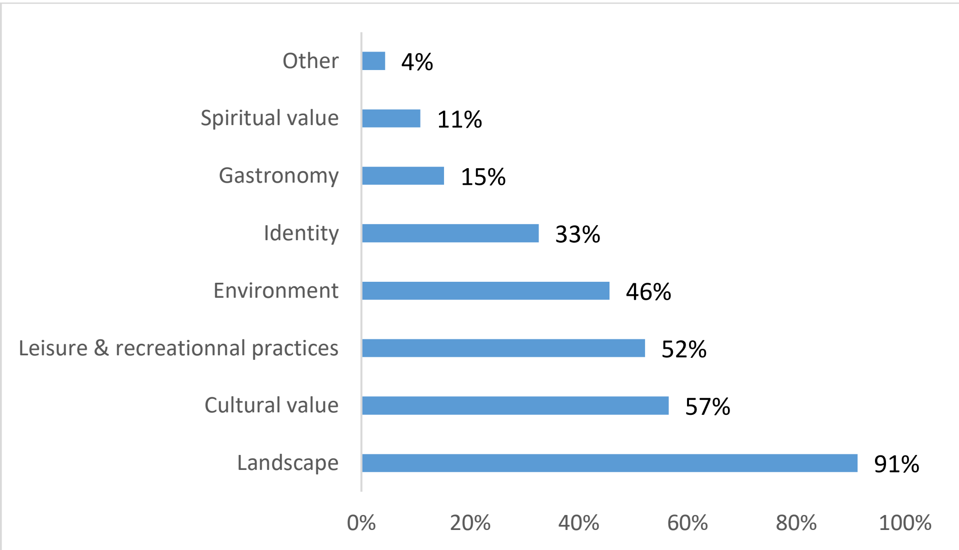
Thirdly, cultural heritage can also improve the perceived living conditions by providing amazing landscapes or natural amenities. At the same time, it reduces opportunities for new urbanisation. Hence, the existing property can increase in value and benefit local landowners. According to the national site manager survey, no fewer than 73% of respondents consider the cultural heritage to have had a positive impact on property value and 30% a very big one (Jurisdiction of Saint-Émilion, Giens Peninsula, Pilat Dune…).

However, these different economic benefits are fairly distributed neither among cultural heritage sites nor inside them, which poses problems when seeking to ensure equal collective involvement. Outstanding cultural heritage sites are common goods involving significant costs that are difficult to bear efficiently without a financial sharing of responsibility. The trouble is that the latter is not easy to secure when only some benefit while others pay for it, or when economic benefits are simply low in the end. This is particularly true for economically dynamic cultural heritage sites that are often almost exclusively led by tourism and tourism affected by a spatial polarisation around a few favoured destinations. For example, only two or three coastal towns on the Somme Bay take full advantage of cultural heritage, while most of the inland ones are neglected. Thus, developing cultural heritage primarily as a territorial resource for tourism raises managerial and collective issues. That does not seem to be the most desirable community development perspective and certainly not the most favourable to sustainable place management. In the end, most interviewees argue that economic benefits are either of a low order or unfairly distributed among local stakeholders, which complicates cultural heritage management and financial commitment.

3.3 Attractive destinations & unengaged public

Cultural heritage places are common goods and, consequently, accompanied by a duty of public access – perhaps even regulated. The amazing feeling of outstanding cultural heritage sites makes it attractive for various reasons (Figure 3): contemplation of the landscape, nature sports, cultural events, spiritual quest, local cuisine…

Figure 3. What are people's main motivations to visit?

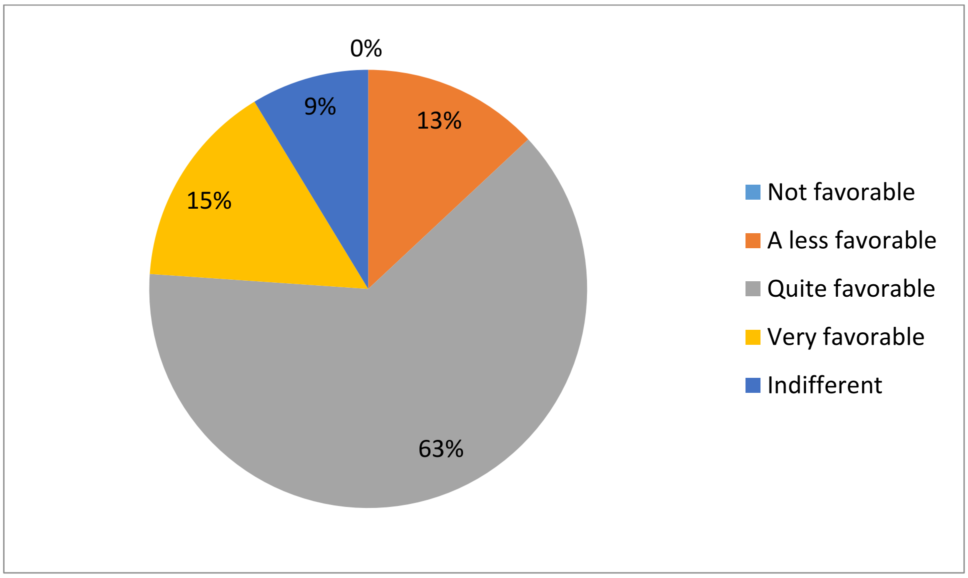


Source: National site manager survey

It comes as no surprise that most surveyed site managers have major tourist traffic – at least 500,000 visitors a year, and even 1 million visitors a year or more for two-fifths of the sites. The national or international visibility of outstanding cultural heritage sites not only attracts visitors but also exposes protection rules and governance efficiency to the outside world. What these places have in common is that they are under the outside scrutiny of heritage advocates and have to be prepared to account for their successes and failures. Interviewed local representatives are well aware of their public exposure, their "the global audience" (Ardèche Gorges, Canal du Midi), their "national or international aura" (Nord-Pas-de-Calais Mining Basin) and the "media coverage" of their actions (Le Havre). They perceive it as a moral obligation to do the best they can to protect their cultural heritage, which might make them more reluctant to join heritage management with economic development. In some cases, this global audience helps site managers gain support from local stakeholders and financial commitment. The Puy-de-Dôme cultural heritage is currently supported by a private foundation, with various donors including regional industrial leaders (Michelin, EDF, Volvic, Limagrain, Aubert & Duval, Echalier, Rockwool…), which promotes Puy-de-Dôme to UNESCO. Above all, national and international heritage recognition builds global networks between sites and local communities. This makes the sharing of experiences between site managers possible, allows tourism and protection coordination projects, creates an awareness of new practices and sparks a useful collective momentum.

However, cultural heritage sites are firstly experienced by people – inhabitants and visitors – with individual motivations, which is certainly the most powerful driver for both cultural heritage management and resource construction processes. They can provide additional workforce, ideas, political legitimacy and much more to secure future generation goals instead of immediate economic use. All outstanding French cultural heritage sites are (sometimes densely) populated. According to the national site manager survey, 63% of the inhabitants living close to outstanding sites support management and heritage protection rules, and 15% are greatly in favour of such rules (Figure 4).

Figure 4. What is the local population's view of the cultural heritage site and its protection rules?

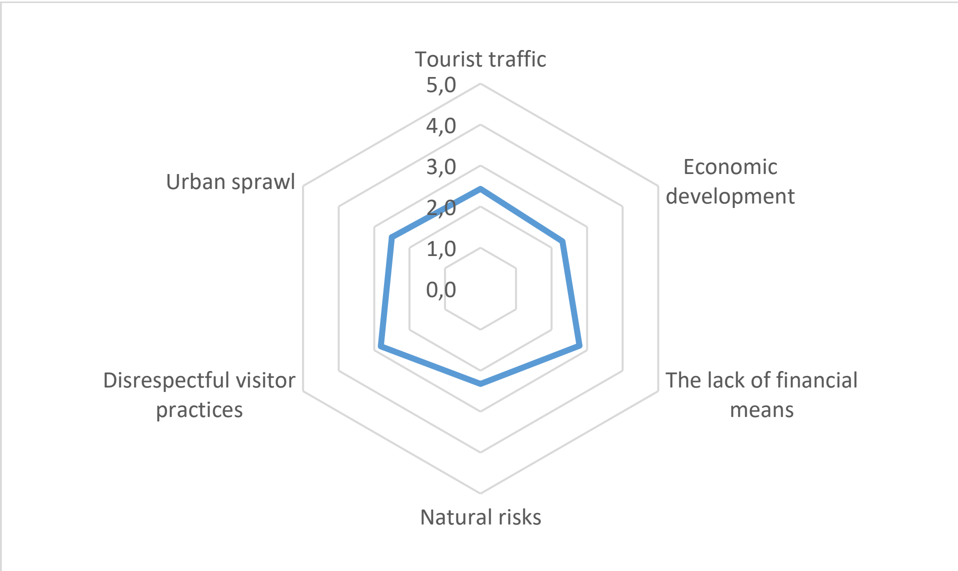


Source: National site manager survey

The local community's feeling of sharing a common history and belonging to an enviable living area goes a long way towards involving people at the local level (Poitevin wetland, Somme Bay, Ardèche Gorges…). In a case like Le Havre, there was an unexpected “pride building” process that started with the period of rebuilding following the bombing trauma during the Second World War and ended with a new pride in living in a UNESCO World Heritage city. Inhabitants sometimes become local cultural heritage ambassadors (Le Havre, Poitevin wetland…), drivers of participatory funding (Somme Bay) or even micro-project directors (Nord-Pas-de-Calais Mining Basin).

However, these spin-off effects of national or international heritage recognition vary according to territorial context. Visitors are still slow learners and can be careless consumers. Indeed, site managers point to disrespectful visitor practices as the primary threat to cultural heritage value protection (Figure 5).

Figure 5. What do you see as the main threat to cultural heritage value protection on a scale of 1 (no threat) to 5 (major threat)?



Source: National site manager survey

It is probably even truer for heritage places surrounding large cities or into long-time tourist areas where bad habits could already be in place and high-intensive tourist traffic hard to manage. For this reason, most site managers currently promote cultural heritage awareness, provide environmental education, encourage alternatives to private transportation, build facilities such as public dustbins or erosion barriers, try to contain the flow of visitors and so on. However, eco- and heritage-friendly behaviour starts off slowly, and a lot remains to be done. Outstanding cultural heritage sites are territorial resources for current generation recreation practices, but current visitors are still mostly unengaged when it comes to protecting its value for those in the future.

Conclusion

Territories that have remarkable heritage sites are subject to substantial regulatory frameworks and must contribute to protecting their sites. As a result, they face a whole series of development constraints. So it is often far from easy to attract new business or for some activities to prosper. Furthermore, the survey of players on the ground underlines the failure to redistribute heritage rent socially, spatially and to other economic sectors. The economic spill-overs of these remarkable assets thus seem to be localised in the hands of only a few, key economic agents. However, as we have shown in parts two and three, heritage sites can boost the local economy, although this is not always the case. Their positive impact on local jobs, attractiveness and income differs according to the local context. Our approach, with its mixed methodology, yields a better understanding of the factors driving or holding back such ratchet effects. So the remarkable – indeed, unique – nature of these sites is not enough to guarantee the development of the territories in which they are found. The cooperation of, support from and investment by public and private players in and around the site are essential to securing positive outcomes, but the manner in which the heritage sites are promoted is just as important. The functions of remarkable heritage sites must be diversified, for they have a huge potential for leveraging cooperation, with scope for greater profits that could be used to better manage and protect each site. Such diversification should seek to develop business that has a self-sustaining impact on the site itself – both its intrinsic qualities and those of heritage value.

Thus, our results question the concept of a territorial resource. The presence of a specific, exceptional resource activated by local actors is not enough to ensure local development. It is necessary to rethink the notion of a territorial resource as part of a more dynamic model and extend it into the medium or long term in order to better accommodate successive interactions between the asset and development. In the case of remarkable sites, capitalising on their heritage value affords a way of keeping a record of past economic activity that has often produced little more than tourism. In France, in particular, it seems a complex, conflict-ridden task to relaunch productive business in these key heritage venues. Yet it is probably essential for the host territory's development and the upkeep of heritage. Consider the Canal du Midi, in southern France: Goods transport ended in the 1980s, and for years now no barges have dredged its bottom. The canal has silted up and deteriorated as a navigable watercourse. Whatever the specific concerns may be, there is no discussion of re-developing past activities 'as they were', particularly if they are no longer viable.

The priority is to discover, or re-discover, economic, social and cultural activities that are often linked to the essence of a place. And there is no question of replacing tourist activities, which represent an essential source of revenue for territorial development. What is needed is to multiply the economic possibilities afforded by this exceptional resource. These new activities may give rise to a positive synergy between different sectors: agriculture and tourism; property and cultural services; manufacturing, construction and recreational activities; and logistics and hospitality, among others.

Ultimately, the aim is to turn the territory into a resource for heritage sites and vice versa by striking a balance that benefits both.

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