A full list of questions and answers to key individuals

1.   Who is taking care of the cultural heritage in South Africa and who should be doing it?

a.   At the moment, no-one. Everybody is waiting for a guideline from SAHRA.

b.   SAHRA is trying to develop with a system to determine who should be taking care of the cultural resources of the country, but it is not available to the public for application.

c.   Cultural heritage should be in the hands of the individual 'owner' group.

d.   Cultural heritage belongs to everyone - the country as a whole must own and manage it.

e.   According to legislation, it is the responsibility of the Provincial governments.

2.   Who is funding the maintenance and care of the cultural heritage?

a.   The biggest problem is neglect due to a lack of funding.

b.   Most of the funding are either subsidies from the national government or research grants from outside sources.

c.   Maintenance is not funded. Where particular NGO or friends of the resources are organised, they take care of the monument or site, otherwise it is usually not maintained.

d.   Once the Provincial Heritage Resources Agencies are in place, they will be funding the management, until then it remains largely under-funded.

3.   How should cultural landscapes be defined and identified?

a.   People who have a stake in the protection and management of a cultural resource must bring it to the attention of SAHRA for evaluation, classification and management.

b.   Cultural landscapes can not be defined. Every landscape out there is a cultural landscape.

c.   The landscapes must be defined in terms of a theme - national, botanical, geological, tribal, religious, agricultural, or any other appropriate theme.

d.   Landscapes can be classified into various levels or scales.

e.   Cultural landscape is a first world concept being applied to a third world reality where culture and nature can not be separated.

f.   Define cultural landscapes into temporal eras. Contemporary versus historically, prehistorically, etc.

g.   Each culture group should define their own heritage.

4.   How pragmatic or implementable are the new National Heritage Resources Acts?

a.   Currently the act cannot be implemented - nobody can identify anything to implement.

b.   The Act is a pie in the sky phenomenon of someone not knowing how things work in reality.

c. The Acts are not linked to reality of funding problems and the realities on the ground.

d. With the initiative currently under way in SAHRA to determine the grading criteria and jurisdiction of cultural heritage the Act may begin to be implementable.

e. The Act does not address the threat of development on the heritage of the country.

f. It is pragmatic, however, due to the Act not being costed, it is not implementable due to a lack of funding. Theoretically it is implementable.

5. Do you think an academic exercise of this nature could be beneficial to cultural heritage in the country?

a. Yes, it flush out all the problems, even if it is only by talking to several people about it and recording their opinions. But then only if it is published.

b. By all means - the problem is always the theoretical in contrast with the pragmatic, but there is little enough done on the subject that this will be a valuable exercise - given it is done adequately.

c. Maybe it will assist in determining the realities of management with the lack of funding and commitment from those that write the laws regarding heritage management.

d. Yes, the Act requires an Inventory of the National Estate and an evaluation of the provincial heritage sites, this study could inform these processes.

6. In your opinion, what are the components of a cultural landscape?

a. Here, a cultural landscape is not a physical entity. It may be a manifestation but it is more intangible than tangible. It is like ubuntu - I am only a person because of people.

b. A cultural landscape is exactly that - a landscape that is comprised of a bio-physical components and the cultural components that humans bring to it. It is inseparable however.

c. There are no scientific boundaries to cultural landscapes.

d. Cultural landscapes have strong tribal (black and white) connotations.

e. All disciplines have a stake in a landscape whether it is a pedologist, an archaeologist, a farmer, an astrologer, or any other one for different reasons - all these have a relevant cultural interpretation of a landscape.

f. Cultural landscape is a hypothetical concept without relevance or substance in South Africa.

g. Cultural landscapes are time bound and should reflect those peoples and times

h. Cultural landscapes are all about who lived there, when and why. If you can answer these questions you will define a cultural landscape.

i. Cultural landscape consists of tangible and intangible, movable and immovable heritages that must all come together in a meaningful concept or plan.

7. What should the various levels of participation encompass as described by the NHRA?

a. Unless you have an over arching authority with a final say, the important cultural heritage resources will not be adequately protected or managed.

b. Management by national, provincial and local authorities will be extremely cumbersome. Provincial authorities with national guidance could work, but a lower level will cause too many inconsistencies.

c. The heritage and management should be recognisable by international standards

d. The provincial governments must proceed to form their Provincial Heritage Resources Agencies to manage the provincial resources under the guidance of the national SAHRA.

8. What would your wish list consist of for a cultural landscape systematics for South Africa.

a. A chronological cultural map of the whole of South Africa.

b. Adequate funding for implementation.

c. A system of mapping and standardised data capturing and representation.

d. Thorough documentation, standardisation and accessibility to all data

e. A system that functions on the inseparability of culture and nature.

f. A bridge between western guilt in conservation and a true Africa.

g. Develop a method to map values.

h. A full operating system for all cultural heritage for evaluation, through to management.

9. What is the biggest problem facing cultural heritage in South Africa?

a. Inadequate funding.

b. Neglect of our cultural heritage.

c. Ignorance and lack of research.

d. Education of the general public to the values of others.

e. Destruction of cultural heritage to protect or restore the biophysical in the name of nature conservation or job creation.

f. International pressure on South Africa to abide by the stipulations of conventions and charters of which South Africa is a signatory, but can not perform to standards. Those who sign these have unrealistic expectations of how these must be implemented on the ground. Without international funding and human resources, we (SA) can not keep up with the rest of the world. Our heritage is at risk.

g. The unfortunate reality that the Act was not costed when promulgated, so neither the national nor the provincial governments has funding to implement the new NHRA.