Impact of cultural dynamics on conservation of Suakin, Sudan

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The aim of this work was to explore the impact of local cultural dynamics on the conservation of the built heritage of Suakin, an abandoned historic port on the Red Sea coast of Sudan, through a collaborative stakeholder approach. Key representatives of local stakeholder groups attended a two-day workshop and took part in a series of collaborative activities. These encompassed the production of a rank-ordered list of the key local cultural dynamics impacting on the port's conservation, agreement to a number of actions to address obstacles to conservation, identification of local cultural values collectively determined by stakeholder and confirmation of the value of an integrated conservation approach. The workshop enabled a shared understanding and responsibility between stakeholders and established a commitment to further action to address the key local cultural dynamics impacting on the conservation. This collaborative stakeholder participation represented a new step in the port's conservation and invited the development of more formal protocols to enable the equal representation and participation of stakeholders in future conservation activities and initiatives.

1. Introduction

Built cultural heritage, such as monuments and historic urban areas, is regarded as an economic, political and socio-cultural resource, and is invested with various values by those seeking to expand it in different ways (Henderson, 2008; Orbasli, 2008; Roders and van Oers, 2011; Rypkema, 2008). Accordingly, conservation philosophy today advocates a values-based approach that determines the significance of a cultural heritage site and its subsequent conservation (Orbasli, 2008). The common definition of conservation is that termed by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (Icomos) in the 1999 Burra charter as 'all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance' (Icomos, 2000).

For built cultural heritage to qualify as World Heritage, it must have 'outstanding universal value' (Jokilehto, 2006; Unesco, 1972). The concept of 'value' in this context refers to a social association of qualities to things, and that is produced through cultural–social processes. After qualifying for outstanding universal value, the heritage is conserved through processes by which the outstanding universal value of the property is protected and consideration is given to heritage resources in both global and local contexts (Rössler, 2010).

The need for conservation initiatives to address both global and local contexts is recognised throughout conservation legislation and research. This is demonstrated by a defined shift from a primarily monumental and aesthetic appreciation of heritage as isolated objects from Unesco's 1972 World Heritage convention (Unesco, 1972) to 'inhabited historic towns' as described in Unesco's operational guidelines (Unesco, 2008). Emphasising this shift is the World Heritage convention's inclusion of 'community' in 2007 as a key strategic objective for implementation; this was intended to ensure participation of local community stakeholders in the identification, nomination and protection of their heritage (Rössler, 2010). As Jokilehto (2006) argues, the concept of universal value can be seen in the 'authentic' expression of a specific or rather local culture, in addition to the physical and historical characteristics of a heritage. Supporting this argument is the view of Henderson (2008), that feelings of authenticity about heritage sites that are living and working communities emerge as critical to both residents and visitors, and that people are increasingly likely to recognise and reject the 'fake' and contrived. Heritage values ought thus to be generated by/within local cultures and to therefore enable the heritage and subsequent conservation initiatives to become an integral part of the local culture (Jokilehto, 2006; Lamei, 2005).

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While the need to include local stakeholders and integrate local values and conditions within conservation initiatives has been recognised in previous research (Chapagain, 2008; Chirikure *et al.*, 2010; Daher, 2005), there is little evidence of this effectively translating to conservation practice. Many local stakeholders and conditions are not understood within formal government-driven conservation initiatives and policies (Chapagain, 2008; Hill, 2011; Nasser, 2003; Zancheti and Kulikauskas, 2007). The numerous international parties that influence conservation legislation, such as international charters, are argued to result in a conventional universal conservation approach that neglects the local socio-cultural dynamics of a specific site (Chapagain, 2008; Jokilehto, 2011). Consequently, a distinct contrast has emerged between the legislative sense of values, the local sense of values and what is implemented in conservation practice (Orbasli, 2008). Factors that contribute towards the disparity between legislative and local levels include

- the rapidly evolving context of historic urban areas that results in local cultural values being in a constant state of flux and needing to be engaged in the conservation process on an ongoing basis (Araoz, 2011; Henderson, 2008), yet often prevented by the static nature of internationally determined conservation
- the low financial and technical capacity of many communities, especially within developing regions, which renders the recognition and conservation of a local heritage to be even more vulnerable to the dominance of international forces (Breen, 2007; Saouma-Forero, 2006).

To redress the imbalance between legislative and local levels in the conservation of built heritage, a call has been made for a collaborative goal-orientated approach that engages the stakeholders involved (Bott *et al.*, 2011; Fahmi and Sutton, 2010; Zancheti and Hidaka, 2011). This enables stakeholders to enjoy a greater degree of consensus and a sense of ownership over their heritage and its safeguarding, which is recognised as a key requirement by international conservation policy makers and the donor community (Araoz, 2011; Chirikure *et al.*, 2010). To achieve this approach, stakeholders need to first share their intentions towards the actions that need to take place (Lisitzin, 2005). However, a clear differentiation can be made between those 'shared intentions' derived from individual initiatives (but commonly shared) and those derived from collective actions and commitment (Gilbert, 2009). It can be argued that collectively derived shared intentions underwrite collaborative activity and a shared responsibility towards a common goal (Grosz and Hunsberger, 2006; Perkin, 2010; Tomasello and Carpenter, 2007). To help generate shared intentions, effective communication and understanding needs to be facilitated between stakeholders to convince all parties of the merits of working together (Bott *et al.*, 2011; Grimwade and Carter, 2000; Zancheti and Hidaka, 2011). Enabling such mutual exchange between all stakeholders is essential to enable a more relevant bottom-up approach that respects the values and true needs of existing communities and places, rather than top-down confrontational approaches that impose a more restricted set of pre-determined ideas and criteria (Jokilehto, 2011; Lamei, 2005; Rypkema, 2008). Yet, as Aas *et al.* (2005) argue, a lack of communicative methods is a major challenge that prevents essential understanding and subsequent collaboration and responsibility among conservation stakeholders, and must therefore be investigated further.

This paper details research undertaken to explore the impact of local cultural dynamics on the conservation of the built heritage of Suakin, an abandoned historic port on the Red Sea coast, through initiation of a collaborative stakeholder approach.

2. Context

Suakin was once Sudan's major port and one of the largest ports on the Red Sea, and still provides the gateway between eastern Africa and Jeddah on the pilgrimage route to Mecca (Figure 1). Yet despite Suakin's historic and cultural significance, the old town is increasingly threatened. Physical deterioration ensued as the historic coral block buildings were largely abandoned following the opening of Sudan's new Port Sudan in 1909 (Figure 2) and development pressures were introduced following the opening of Suakin's new Osman Digna Port in 1991 (Salim, 1997) (Figure 3).

Numerous studies and proposals for Suakin's conservation and revival have been produced, including surveys, a number of formal Unesco reports and an application for World Heritage status (Greenlaw, 1995; Hansen, 1973; Lane, 1994; Mallinson, 2012). However, many of these proposals have not materialised on the ground due to a number of financial restrictions such as limited government resources (Salim, 1997) and difficulties in obtaining available funds for conservation initiatives as opposed to Sudan's more immediate needs (Hansen, 1973). Legal restrictions have formed the other major challenge to Suakin's conservation – private ownership of historic properties has prevented government-led interventions and restrictive government legislation has prevented privately led interventions. Suakin has thus remained on the World Heritage tentative list since 1994 without full status being gained (Mallinson, 2012). While the majority of previous research has focused on the historic and/or physical environment (Greenlaw, 1995; Hansen, 1973; Lane, 1994), two examples also attempted to address Suakin's conservation in relation to its socio-cultural and economic context.

The first example is a proposal made by Salim (1997), which identified the major challenges preventing Suakin's conservation as finances, ownership and lack of active involvement of
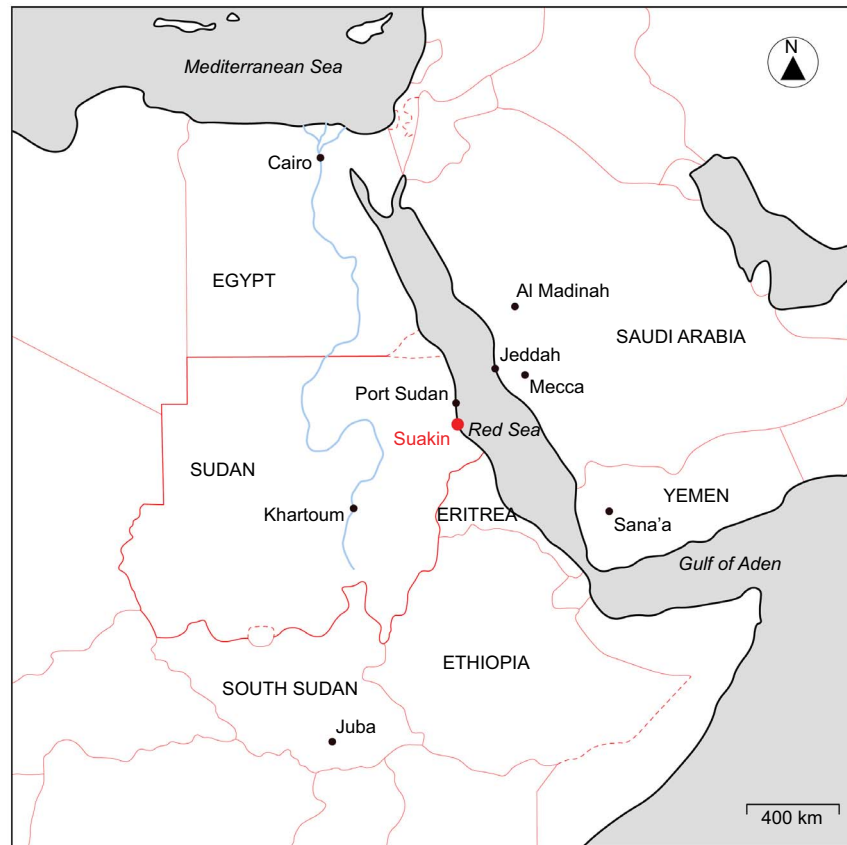
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Figure 1. Location of Suakin

both government and non-government parties. National and local stakeholder committees were formed and international involvement was sought from foreign governments and organisations such as Unesco. Salim (1997) suggested the

Figure 2. Deterioration of Suakin's historic coral block buildings

development of an initial action plan and a master plan for Suakin, to include

- identification of resources
- reconstruction and development priorities
- resolution of reconstruction and development obstacles
- roles and relationships of the stakeholders concerning Suakin's reconstruction and development
- reconstruction and development guidelines
- future prospects and viability of the proposal.

The second attempt, in 2007, was by Sudan's National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums (NCAM), funded through Unesco, to address the future of NCAM's Suakin development plan (SDP) and recognition of Suakin's cultural heritage (NCAM, 2007). The SDP was developed by NCAM in 2007 for historic Suakin's conservation and sustainable development of the surrounding new town. A range of Suakin's stakeholders participated in a workshop and a number of conservation-related parameters were identified concerning the future of the SDP and Suakin's cultural heritage, including
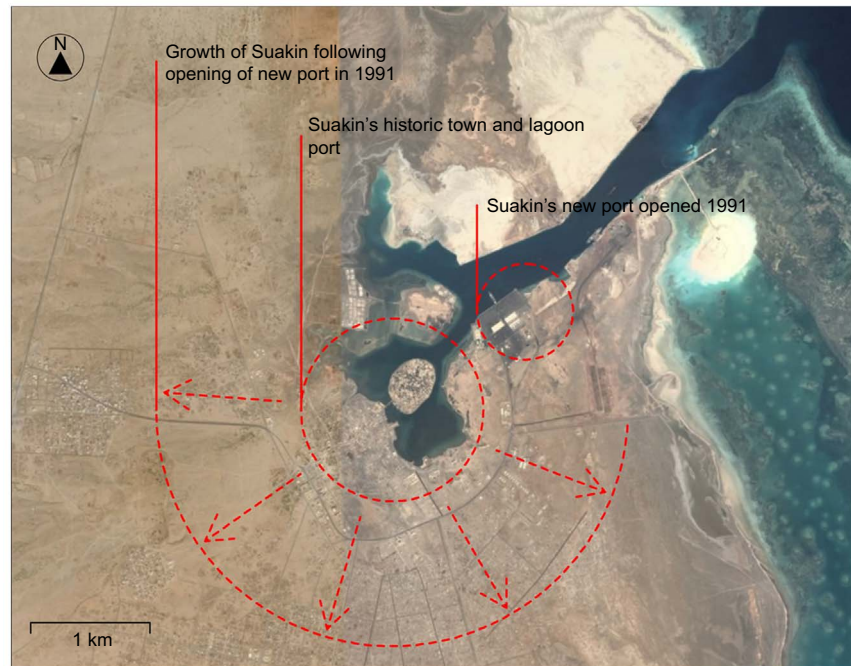
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Figure 3. Growth of Suakin town following opening of new Suakin
port in 1991 (adapted from Google Earth)

■ Suakin's cultural value
■ Suakin's conservation and development drivers
■ ownership as the major obstacle to be addressed
■ suggested restorations and reconstructions
■ the over-arching consensus that the revival of 'life' within
  Suakin's abandoned historic town was essential to its
  restoration and reconstruction (NCAM, 2007).

Both Salim's proposal and the NCAM initiative identified a
number of actions supposedly needed for the reconstruction of
historic Suakin and the development of the surrounding new
town. Both endeavours recognised Suakin's stakeholders and
began to involve them in efforts towards Suakin's conserva-
tion, yet there is no evidence of follow-up actions from either
study. Hence, the work described here adopted participatory
action research (PAR; http://participaction.wordpress.com) to
enable Suakin's stakeholders to collectively explore the impact
of local cultural dynamics on the conservation of their built
heritage and to establish a shared intention and responsibility
towards this goal.

3. Method
To explore the impact of local cultural dynamics on the
conservation of Suakin's built heritage, an ethnographic
approach and PAR was conducted through a two-day work-
shop event. The workshop, facilitated by the lead author,

involved a series of collaborative activities and discussion
among Suakin's stakeholder participants. The first day of the
workshop involved the stakeholders ranking the local cultural
dynamics that impact on Suakin's conservation and determin-
ing a number of actions to address these issues. The second day
focused on stakeholders' identification of Suakin's cultural
values and the plenary session.

3.1 Participatory action research
This research sought to address the local cultural dynamics
impacting on Suakin's conservation through a collaborative
stakeholder approach. There was no previous evidence of such an
approach, and methods to achieve this, conducted within the
specific context of Suakin. Consequently, a review of available
research methods was conducted. Methods that involved the
stakeholders on an individual basis (e.g. interviews and ques-
tionnaires) did not facilitate the representation and collaborative
participation of Suakin's stakeholder groups required for this
research. Participatory action research (PAR) – an umbrella term
for a variety of participatory approaches to action-orientated
research (Kindon *et al.*, 2007) – did, however, enable the
researcher and participants to work together collectively to
examine the issues under investigation (Bergold and Thomas,
2012; Dover, 2008; McIntyre, 2008; Pain *et al.*, 2012; Predota,
2009; Wadsworth, 1998). Through such collaborative activity,
PAR had the major advantage over other research methods of

generating shared ownership of the research project by the researcher and the participants (Denzin, 2000). This was critical to establish a shared understanding among Suakin's conservation stakeholders and a collective responsibility towards further action.

Similar to the local cultural dynamics addressed through this research, previous studies have conducted PAR through participant workshops to address varying stakeholders' perspectives. For example, workshops have been used to facilitate instruction, activity and discussion, and subsequently established effective dialogue between stakeholders to reach a common ground (Borg et al., 2012; Silverman et al., 2008). The major benefits of such an approach are the ability to design a carefully structured and reflexive process and to enable stakeholders to have profound influence on both strategic and delivery levels of the research being conducted (Borg et al., 2012). Therefore, PAR was conducted through workshop activities for this research to enable the inclusion of stakeholders, as both participant researchers and research subjects, to collaboratively address the local cultural dynamics impacting on Suakin's conservation.

3.2 Sampling frame

Suakin's major stakeholder groups and representative workshop participants were identified through discussions with those involved in previous research (NCAM, 2007; Salim, 1997). They were selected according to their previous, current or potential/future roles in Suakin's conservation (Table 1). To conduct the workshop activities, the participants were organised into stakeholder groups (government, investors, consultants and end users).

3.3 Workshop design and activities

The aim of the workshop was to explore the impact of local cultural dynamics on the conservation of Suakin's built heritage. The major local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation identified through previous research (Hansen, 1973; Lane, 1994; NCAM, 2007; Salim, 1997) were the focus of the workshop design. The local cultural dynamics were

- financial restrictions (FR)
- ownership (O)
- stakeholder inclusion and collaboration (SIC)
- political and legislative support (PLS)
- response to the local context (RLC)
- conservation knowledge and awareness (CKA).

The workshop activities were carefully structured and sequenced according to the recurrent stages of action and reflection within PAR (Pain et al., 2012) to enable the stakeholders to collectively, within their groups, address the issues under investigation (Figure 4). An exhibition, provided by the lead author throughout

the workshop, explained the context of Suakin's historical and cultural significance and proposed conservation (Figure 5). An introductory presentation outlined the workshop background concerning the conservation of Suakin's built heritage. The workshop aims, activities and expected outcomes were then explained. These included

- the stakeholders' individual and then collective group ranking of the local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation (activity 1)
- collective determination of a number of actions to address these dynamics (activity 2)
- collective identification of Suakin's cultural values (activity 3)
- plenary session.

Activity templates were completed by the stakeholder participants individually (activity 1) and collectively within their stakeholder groups (activities 1, 2 and 3) (Figure 6).

Activity 1 provided a background explanation for each major local cultural dynamic impacting Suakin's conservation.

- Financial restrictions (FR) concerned limited financial resources at government and local levels, the need for a fundraising strategy to address this issue and the long-term feasibility of potential investment.
- Ownership (O) involved conflicts between the owners themselves and the government's restriction by owners and the owners' restriction by the government to implement conservation and/or development efforts within historic Suakin.
- Stakeholder inclusion and collaboration (SIC) consisted of a lack of collaboration due to divergences between stakeholders' interests and operations, and the need for increased local involvement.
- Political and legislative support (PLS) was explained as involving a removal between the interest and understanding of 'top' governmental and policy-making levels, and 'bottom' local levels, and a reliance on top-down conservation approaches, policies and strategies towards Suakin's conservation.
- Response to the local context (RLC) involved the local community often neglected by, and not included within, conservation efforts.
- Conservation knowledge and awareness (CKA) concerned an inadequate awareness of conservation-related issues at both local and decision-making levels.

The stakeholders were asked to, first individually and then collectively within their groups, rank these dynamics in order of importance to be addressed and to carefully consider and discuss their justification for these rankings. Following completion of the activity 1 templates, a representative from

Stakeholder group role(s)	Participant code	Participant position
Government (G) stakeholder group		
Federal government party: Sudan's NCAM responsible for Suakin as an antiquities site and the SDP	G1	Head of conservation
	G5	Senior inspector for archaeology (previously director of NCAM's Suakin office)
Red Sea state government: authority for the state in which Suakin is located; partners with and directs/influences government and foreign investment efforts within Suakin and the surrounding area	G2	Ministry of Culture department manager
	G3	Manager, Ministry of Tourism
Local authorities: part of the state government; close relationship with and influence over the local community and their support towards conservation and development initiatives	G4	Suakin Commissioner representative
	G6	General director of government and civil service (and local Beja tribe representative)
Investors (I) stakeholder group		
State government ministry of physical planning and development: responsible for development (and conservation) initiatives within Suakin and the surrounding area; directs state funds towards specific developments/initiatives	I2	Director and architect
Foreign research parties: have funded, and intend to fund, research efforts that contribute to Suakin's future conservation and previous restoration of Suakin's historic structures	I1	Co-director and archaeologist, Suakin archaeology project, Cambridge University (involving excavation and reconstruction efforts)
Educational parties: educational groups regularly visit the site, potentially influencing future investment towards the site's conservation and establishment as an educational resource	I6	Student, Red Sea University (previously conducted research in Suakin and often visits the site; potential implementation of future research efforts contributing towards Suakin's conservation and attracting funding for Suakin as an educational resource)
International development parties: current and future funding of new developments within Suakin's historic town and surrounding area that directly impact the historic town as a 'cultural heritage' site; previous funding of missions towards Suakin's conservation as a cultural heritage; potential investment towards Suakin's conservation as a cultural heritage	I3	Gender consultant, UNIDO (recently funded new Suakin Fisheries building within the historic site; potential to fund future conservation and development efforts)
	I4	Retired World Bank employee (and current Suakin Mayor) (although not previously involved in Suakin, the World Bank represents a multi-lateral development agency that could provide access to future funding towards Suakin's conservation)
Local industries: representing current local context that must be responded to by conservation and development efforts; currently influencing development and growth within the historic town and surrounding area, directly impacting the conservation of the historic site; potential to attract and direct funding towards the site's conservation and new development efforts that would support the site's conservation	I5	Fish landing site manager, Suakin Fisheries (involved in recent construction of new Suakin Fisheries building within Suakin's historic town and direct impact of this on the site's conservation status)
	I7	Port manager, Suakin Port, Sudan Sea Ports Corporation (currently funding new developments throughout Suakin, potential to fund conservation efforts)

Table 1. Workshop stakeholder groups and participants (continued on next page)

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Stakeholder group role(s)	Participant code	Participant position
Consultants (C) stakeholder group		
National and local consultants: previously involved in direct efforts towards Suakin's conservation; involved in new developments throughout the local area that could potentially impact Suakin's conservation, and/or representing consultants who could become involved with Suakin's conservation	C2	Conservator/restorer
	C3	Architect restorer and urban planner
	C4	Conservation architect and Suakin Project consultant
	C5	Architect and town planner
Foreign consultants: previously involved in direct efforts towards Suakin's conservation	C1	Architect and Suakin project consultant
End users (E) stakeholder group		
Local landowners and residents: influencing the potential conservation of privately owned properties within historic Suakin; representing current local context that must be responded to by conservation and development efforts; potential to participate within future conservation efforts improving and/or providing their homes and/or local facilities	E1	Local landowner
	E2	Local resident and head of Historic Suakin Town Community Committee
	E3	Representative of Khatmeya Sufi Sect, a local religious group
	E4	Local Beja tribe (nomadic tribes throughout Suakin's surrounding area). Representative and Head of Port Sudan Beja Cultural Centre
	E5	Local civil activist

Table 1. Continued

each stakeholder group presented their group's results to the rest of the workshop participants.

Activity 2 enabled the stakeholders to collectively (within their groups) determine a number of actions to address their top three ranked local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation identified during activity 1. The stakeholders were also asked to include a timescale for implementation of each of these actions as imminent, short, medium or long term. Following completion of the activity 2 templates, a representative from each stakeholder group presented the group results to the other participants.

Activity 3 involved a presentation on cultural heritage 'values' and conservation by a Unesco World Heritage Centre consultant. This provided a background to the concept of 'cultural values' within conservation and encouraged the stakeholders to consider what Suakin's cultural values were to them. This consideration of what they were trying to conserve, and why, was intended to develop a sense of collective motivation among the stakeholders towards implementation of the actions proposed during activity 2. The stakeholders collectively (within their groups) then identified Suakin's cultural values and listed/ranked them in order of significance (the most significant being listed first). It was explained to the stakeholders that their cultural values for Suakin could be whatever they wished, not selected from a prescribed list. Following completion of the activity 3 templates, a representative from each stakeholder group presented their group's results to the workshop.

A plenary session facilitated by the lead author invited all workshop participants to raise questions or remarks concerning the activities that had been conducted. Quantitative analysis of the completed activity templates determined average rankings of the local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation by both individual stakeholders and the stakeholder groups. Qualitative analysis of the completed activity templates and observational notes completed throughout the workshop event determined similarities and differences between the stakeholders' responses and over-arching themes among the workshop activities. The activity results and workshop findings are discussed in Section 4.

3.4 Methodological challenges
A number of challenges were encountered during the organisation and implementation of the workshop event. Although invited, key political and authoritative stakeholders concerning Suakin's conservation, including the Red Sea state governor and the Sudan Unesco ambassador, were unable to attend the workshop. The necessity for this key political support has already been demonstrated: proposals for Suakin's conservation have been made (NCAM, 2007; Salim, 1997) yet none have been endorsed as legal measures or part of the political agenda and therefore were not implemented. The potential impact of this research was thus not realised as much as it could have been if all key political and authoritative figures had been able to attend the workshop event. That said, the invited stakeholders who were not able to attend the workshop and/or their representatives stated their keen interest in what had been achieved through the research and their enthusiasm to participate in future initiatives.
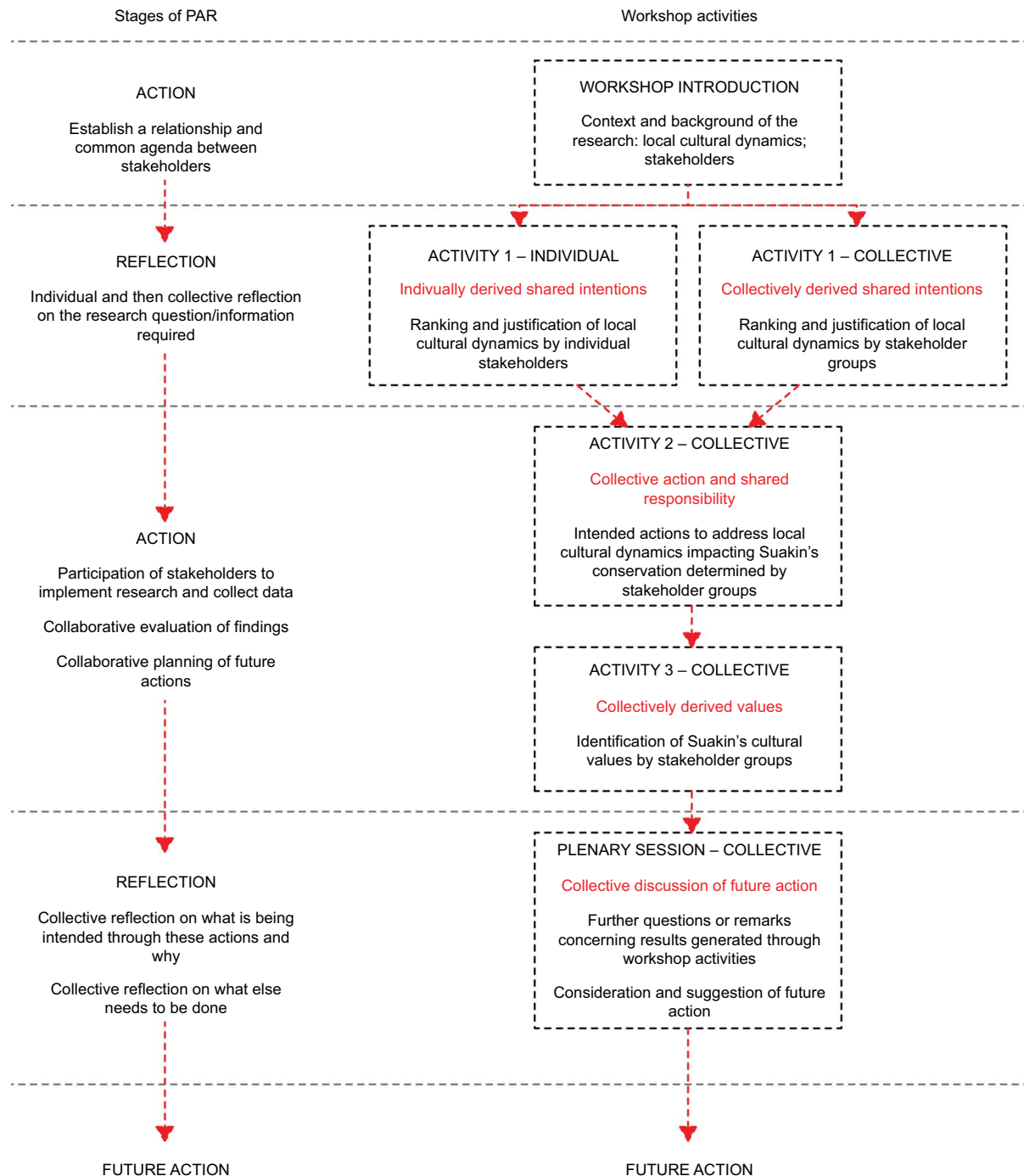
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Stages of PAR   Workshop activities

Figure 4. Typical stages of PAR and Suakin's workshop activities

Throughout the discussions it was specified that creating greater awareness of Suakin's conservation and longer-term notice of initiatives conducted towards this would encourage greater participation. Recognition by Sudan's government and specialist organisations (e.g. Unesco) of ongoing work towards Suakin's conservation was also suggested as a means to encourage attendance of future events and formal endorsement of outcomes generated. Working towards these suggestions, the Sudan federal government's NCAM has since provided formal recognition of this research. Accordingly, NCAM has agreed to facilitate formal correspondence and invitations to key political and authoritative figures concerning future events associated with this research.

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Figure 5. Exhibition set up throughout workshop event on the context of Suakin's historical and cultural significance and proposed conservation

The second major challenge was achieving equal representation (and participation) of Suakin's stakeholder groups within the workshop activities. This was due to an expressed reluctance by some of Suakin's government stakeholders to include local stakeholders in the workshop conducted for this research and future activities. The expressed opinion was that local stake-holders did not and should not have significant input or authority towards Suakin's conservation, as this was considered the responsibility of government stakeholders. This challenge is reinforced by previous research demonstrating that local communities are often marginalised and unable to participate in, initialise or continue conservation programmes (Bergold and Thomas, 2012; Hill, 2011). In addition to the capacity of local stakeholders to participate in the conservation process, Chirikure *et al.* (2010) question whether conservation actors from these 'top'

Figure 6. Workshop activity templates being completed collectively by participants within stakeholder groups

governmental and management levels are adequately skilled to effectively engage local communities. This challenge was overcome to an extent within this research as efforts by the lead author to facilitate the workshop event ensured that local stakeholders were equally represented. This does, however, question the probability that all Suakin's stakeholder groups, notably local parties, will be equally represented in future conservation initiatives, especially those implemented at government level.

4. Results and analysis

4.1 Activity 1: Ranking of Suakin's local cultural dynamics

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate the individual stakeholder (Table 2) and stakeholder group (Table 3) rankings of the local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation completed during activity 1. The focus of activity 1 was not to highlight and then analyse major differences between the stakeholders' responses – it aimed to encourage the stakeholders to reflect on and rank the local cultural dynamics in order of importance, or urgency to be addressed, in preparation for activity 2.

Activity 1 revealed the same average top three local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation generated by both the individual and stakeholder group activities. The top three local cultural dynamics in order of importance, or urgency to be addressed, were ownership (O), financial restrictions (FR) and stakeholder inclusion and collaboration (SIC). The individual stakeholder activities revealed an average ranking of political and legislative support (PLS) as the fourth major dynamic, response to the local context (RLC) as the fifth and conservation knowledge and awareness (CKA) as the sixth. The stakeholder group activities revealed an average ranking of CKA as the fourth major dynamic, RLC as the fifth and PLS as the sixth.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, there were a number of significant contrasts between the average rankings and the rankings of individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups, demonstrating the specific interests and agendas of the stakeholders and stakeholder groups. For example, the majority of individual investors emphasised the importance (with first or second ranking) of FR and O, as these immediately impact the ability to invest in and implement Suakin's conservation and development efforts. The government's group ranking of SIC was lower than the average stakeholder groups' ranking, as Suakin's conservation is generally conducted at government level and often without the inclusion of other stakeholders considered a necessity.

4.2 Activity 2: Impact of local cultural dynamics on Suakin's conservation

Table 4 summarises the proposed actions and timescales determined by each stakeholder group during activity 2 to

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Participant code	Local cultural dynamic					
	FR	O	SIC	PLS	RLC	CKA
G1	3	1	4	5	6	2
G2	3	1	4	5	2	6
G3	2	1	5	3	6	4
G4	5	1	4	2	6	3
G5	1	4	5	2	3	6
G6	1	4	5	2	6	3
I1	1	4	6	2	5	3
I2	1	2	4	6	5	3
I3	1	6	2	5	3	4
I4	2	3	1	5	4	6
I5	2	1	4	3	5	6
I6	2	3	1	5	4	6
C1	5	3	1	6	4	2
C2	1	3	2	4	5	6
C3	4	2	3	5	6	1
C4	2	1	3	6	4	5
C5	4	1	3	2	1	5
E1	5	1	2	3	4	6
E2	4	5	1	3	2	6
E3	1	4	4	2	3	4
E4	4	3	3	6	5	1
E5	2	3	6	5	1	4
Average ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6

Table 2. Activity 1: Individual stakeholder rankings of local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation

address the top three local cultural dynamics ranked by each stakeholder group during activity 1.

After deducting a number of overlaps, activity 2 resulted in a total of 16 actions determined by the stakeholder groups to

address the local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation. Reflecting the average individual stakeholder and stakeholder group rankings during activity 1, the major focus of the actions determined during activity 2 addressed O, FR and SIC. Subsequently, CKA, RLC and PLS received comparatively

Stakeholder group	Local cultural dynamic					
	O	FR	SIC	CKA	RLC	PLS
Government	4	1 + 2[a]	5	1 + 2[a]	6	3
Investors	1	2	4	6	3	5
Consultants	1	4	2	3	5	6
End users	1	2	4	6	3	5
Average ranking	1	2	3	4	5	6

[a]1 + 2: Jointly ranked by the stakeholder group as the joint first and second local cultural dynamics impacting on Suakin's conservation

Table 3. Activity 1: Stakeholder group rankings of local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation

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Stakeholder group [a]	Action	Timescale
Local cultural dynamic addressed: Ownership (O)		
G	O1 – identify property owners to take responsibility and action	Imminent
G	O2 – enable collaboration between property owners and government to overcome 'stalemate' situation between private ownership and legislative restrictions within the historic site	Imminent
I	O3 – same as O1	Imminent
I	O4 – provide government compensation of private land within historic Suakin with larger land areas elsewhere more commercially viable in the short-term; this enables historic Suakin property to be used by government or other public bodies, or re-sold	Imminent
C	O5 – generate a new local order to permit land registration within historic Suakin under current owners' name, with options for the family to implement construction/conservation works, to divide the land between the owning family members, or re-sell	Imminent
E	O6 – same as O4	Imminent
Local cultural dynamic addressed: Financial restrictions (FR)		
G	FR1 – increase awareness of Suakin's conservation to enable investment in conservation initiatives (through various facilities, events and activities)	Long term/ongoing
I	FR2 – same as FR1	Imminent
I	FR3 – provide a contribution from Suakin's port (e.g. toll paid by ships and ferry passengers) towards a conservation fund	Imminent/short term
C	No proposed actions	
E	FR4 – enable property owners to implement construction to integrate historic Suakin with local economy and therefore generate income towards future/ongoing conservation initiatives	Medium term
Local cultural dynamic addressed: Stakeholder inclusion and collaboration (SIC)		
G	No proposed actions	
I	No proposed actions	
C	SIC1 – facilitate consultation with public parties to develop a management plan applicable to all stakeholders, and encouraging their collaboration	Short term
C	SIC2 – produce a guidance plan for implementation of all conservation/archaeological/development works to ensure they are appropriate and coordinated (enabling collaboration between the stakeholders involved within these initiatives)	Imminent
C	SIC3 – develop a master plan including zoned areas for various activities (enabling collaboration between the stakeholders involved within these initiatives, and following 'guidance plan' outlined in action SIC2)	Medium term
E	No proposed actions	
Local cultural dynamic addressed: Conservation knowledge and awareness (CKA)		
G	No proposed actions	
I	No proposed actions	
C	CKA1 – produce a guidance plan for implementation of all conservation/archaeological/development works to ensure they are appropriate and coordinated (providing information to increase awareness amongst stakeholders involved within these initiatives)	Imminent
C	CKA2 – increase awareness of Suakin's conservation through various facilities, events and activities	Imminent
E	No proposed actions	

Table 4. Activity 2: Stakeholder group actions addressing local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation (continued on next page)

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Stakeholder group [a]	Action	Timescale
Local cultural dynamic addressed: Response to the local context (RLC)		
G	No proposed actions	
I	RLC1 – increase awareness of Suakin's conservation and the local context that must be responded to by conservation initiatives	Long term/ongoing
I	RLC2 – consider Suakin's historic appearance and ongoing socio-cultural activities in future developments	Long term/ongoing
C	No proposed actions	
E	RLC3 – same as RLC2	Long term/ongoing
E	RLC4 – engage Suakin's whole/surrounding area and all stakeholders in future efforts and potential benefits	Long term/ongoing
Local cultural dynamic addressed: political and legislative support (PLS)		
G	PLS1: enforce legal regulations that enable/specify the roles and responsibilities of conservation actors, ensuring a relationship to reduce the contrast between them	Medium–long term
I	No proposed actions	
C	No proposed actions	
E	No proposed actions	

[a]G, government; I, investors; C, consultants; E, end users

Table 4. Continued

fewer specified actions. Although individually addressed, the relativity between the local cultural dynamics was revealed throughout the actions suggested to address them, such as

- increasing stakeholders' awareness suggested to address FR, CKA and RLC
- legislative and formal planning measures suggested to address O, SIC, CKA and PLS.

Reinforcing these recurrent themes, suggesting the relative impact between local cultural dynamics, was a number of direct statements by the stakeholders. For example, the suggestion that FR would be resolved as a result of first addressing the other local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation, and a lack of CKA explained as a major contributing factor to inadequate SIC. Therefore, actions addressing CKA also addressed SIC.

4.3 Activity 3: Identifying Suakin's cultural values

Table 5 illustrates the stakeholder groups' ranking in order of importance or significance (the most significant being listed first) of Suakin's cultural values determined during activity 3. This followed a brief presentation made on cultural heritage 'values' and conservation by a Unesco World Heritage Centre consultant. The results illustrated in Table 5 were categorised into the two major themes of tangible and intangible, and within these a number of sub-themes.

The stakeholder group presentations at the end of activity 3, and as shown in Table 5, revealed an initial general focus on

Suakin's tangible values. Suakin's intangible values also received the highest ranking by all of the stakeholder groups apart from investors, who recognised only Suakin's tangible values. Yet intangible values, despite their lower ranking compared to tangible values, occupied the majority of the discussion during activity 3. This was especially apparent among the end users, and demonstrated the direct link these values had to their everyday lives and subsequent relationship with Suakin and its conservation. Reinforcing this major focus on intangible values were the common values shared by all stakeholder groups as 'historical significance' and 'living culture', both intangible.

4.4 Plenary session

During the concluding plenary session there were no further questions or prevailing remarks raised concerning the previous workshop activities. The discussion instead focused on how to progress towards implementation of the suggested actions to address Suakin's conservation. It was proposed that the actions identified be developed into a formal management system for both Suakin's conservation and development through

- formal legislative and planning measures
- ongoing consultation
- collaborative efforts between stakeholders.

It was also suggested that this management system be submitted as a key document in Suakin's application for World Heritage status. To ensure effective implementation of the suggested

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	Stakeholder groups' ranked recognition of cultural values [a]			
	G	I	C	E
Tangible values				
Architecture/built form (style, materials, methods)	1	NR	1	1
Physical environment (natural lagoon port)	4	NR	2	NR
Intangible values				
Historical significance (trade and pilgrimage)	2	1	3	4
Living culture (tribal influences, music, folk narratives, dance, clothes, food)	3	3	4	3
Suakin's cultural mix co-existing/interacting. Suakin is a hub of many cultures (e.g. Islamic/Arab, African and European) through trade and pilgrimage	5	2	5	2

[a]NR: No recognition of cultural value by stakeholder group

Table 5. Stakeholder group perspectives on Suakin's cultural values

actions and formal recognition of the intended management system, many participants emphasised the importance of having key government officials present at future events.

5. Discussion

The workshop activities enabled stakeholders to rank in order of significance the major local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation, both individually and collectively within their stakeholder groups. The collective results of these activities revealed financial restrictions and ownership as the first two major local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation, and stakeholder inclusion and collaboration as the third. Conservation knowledge and awareness, response to the local context, and political and legislative support received varied rankings by the individual stakeholder and stakeholder group activities as the fourth, fifth and sixth local cultural dynamics impacting on Suakin's conservation.

A total of 16 actions and corresponding timescales to address these dynamics were then determined within the stakeholder groups, with each group addressing their top three ranked dynamics. The relative impact between local cultural dynamics and determined actions to address them was emphasised throughout the activity results. A major focus on the local living culture – and the need for Suakin's conservation to respond to this – was revealed throughout the actions proposed to address local cultural dynamics and the identification of Suakin's cultural values within the stakeholder groups.

Previous research has already established the impact of a number of the dynamics explored during this research on Suakin's conservation, such as ownership (Lane, 1994; Salim, 1997) and financial restrictions (Hansen, 1973; Salim, 1997). However, the structure and implementation of the workshop

activities conducted for this research enabled a shared understanding among stakeholders and included the stakeholders themselves as an integral part of the research. This resulted in their collective responsibility to achieve the actions specified throughout the workshop activities and expressed during the workshop's plenary session towards Suakin's conservation to

- enable stakeholders to contribute towards Suakin's conservation through increased awareness and participation
- implement suggested actions through formal legislative and planning measures.

These findings reinforce the need acknowledged in previous research to address the living cultural context of conservation (Chapagain, 2008; Zancheti and Kulikauskas, 2007) and for a collaborative stakeholder approach (Aas *et al.*, 2005; Zancheti and Hidaka, 2011). However, there is little evidence of this being successfully achieved within the specific context of Suakin. Previous efforts have indeed attempted to join Suakin's stakeholders together in the formation of stakeholder committees (Salim, 1997) and a workshop event concerning the Suakin development plan (NCAM, 2007), yet neither of these attempts included the stakeholders within the design of the research being conducted or in future intentions resulting from the data obtained. The outcomes generated through previous efforts thus lacked a collective stakeholder understanding and input towards Suakin's conservation, which is vital to generate shared goals and a collective responsibility towards future action (Grosz and Hunsberger, 2006; Perkin, 2010) and which was addressed in this research.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to explore the impact of local cultural dynamics on the conservation of the built heritage of Suakin

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through a collaborative stakeholder approach. The workshop activities resulted in the ranking of local cultural dynamics impacting Suakin's conservation, a number of actions to address these and identification of Suakin's cultural values, collectively determined by the stakeholder participants. The workshop activities began to generate the communicative structure necessary to encourage Suakin's stakeholders to work together. This enabled a collaborative process between the stakeholders through a shared understanding and collective commitment towards further action. There is no evidence that such inclusion and collaborative participation of Suakin's stakeholders has previously been achieved, and it has been demonstrated throughout this research that this is essential to progress Suakin's conservation effectively. As suggested by the stakeholders, their determined actions need to be implemented through formal legislative and planning measures, working towards a formal management system for Suakin's conservation. These efforts should be facilitated through a protocol that addresses Suakin's local culture, ensuring a comprehensive and inclusive approach with equal representation and participation of Suakin's stakeholders throughout future initiatives.

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