Special Section:
Heritage and Conservation in Israel

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Delineating Buffer Zones around World Heritage Sites

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Although the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention require buffer zones to ensure the conservation of World Heritage sites, many sites are still threatened as a result of inappropriate delineation of their buffer zones. "Current policies and practices of the World Heritage Convention do not appear to have exploited or even realized the potential of buffer zones as a tool for sustainability" (Boccardi, 2006), suggesting the need for appropriate methods and tools for their practical delineation. The present paper is the first in a series towards the development of a constructed methodology for the delineation of buffer zones around cultural World Heritage sites. It examines the range of considerations under various space-time conditions and their consequent results, in order to define the appropriate delineation and negotiation components needed under the various conditions. This is considered essential for the development of a constructed, global, methodology. The consequent study scans the delineation process, the considerations, and the limitations of 80 cultural sites around the world which were submitted for subscription to the World Heritage Committee in recent years. The results of various cross-classifications are presented and analyzed. The basic forms of cross-classifications include the frequency distributions of delineation considerations by various characteristics such as type of site, level of national development, location, size, subscription criteria, level of threat, and others. Typology analysis enabled the construction of delineation profiles, and their comparative analyses provided the major components needed for the development of a constructed methodological framework. Tel Beer Sheva, Israel, served as a case study to exemplify the complexity and the space-time dependency of the process and to examine the proposed methodology. A minimax solution