

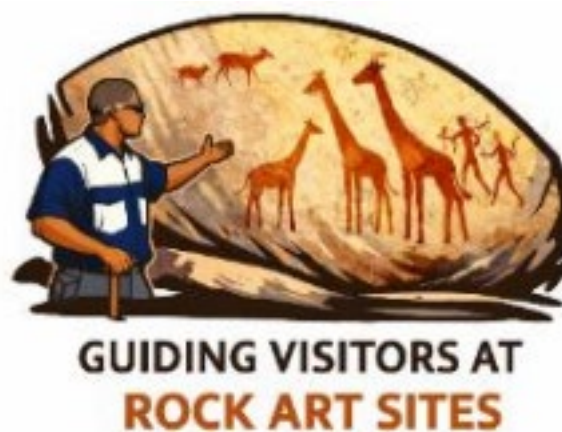


CNRS IRN 2022 - RAHMSA

Rock Art Heritage Management in Southern Africa (RAHMSA)

International Workshop

14 – 18 September 2026



Masunga, Francistown, Botswana

Coordinators and Organising committee

Phenyo Thebe & Kuda Mugabe, University of Botswana, Botswana

Kabelo Kenneth Mogami & Mathe Lebonetse, National Museum of Botswana, Botswana

Lourenço Pinto, University of Sol Plaatje, South-Africa

Mélanie Duval, EDYTEM, CNRS, University of Savoie Mont Blanc, France

Stéphane Hœrlé, PACEA, CNRS, University of Bordeaux, France

Scientific committee

Catherine Cretin, National Museum of Prehistory, France

Lenishwa Engelbrecht, National Heritage Council of Namibia, Namibia

Ancila Nhamo, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe

John Parkington, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Phillip Segadika, Dept of National Museum and Monuments, Botswana

Context

The workshop is organised through IRN RAHMSA, an international collaboration network gathering together teams from Botswana, France, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe researchers from backgrounds as diverse as anthropology, archaeology, geosciences, heritage studies, human geography, with a common interest in rock art. IRN RAHMSA is funded by the French CNRS and various co-funders. It is the vocation of IRN RAHMSA to contribute to the spreading of up-to-date techniques and methodologies in rock art studies, in connection with the results from the COSMO ART research project (<https://cosmo-art.org/>).

Aim of the workshop

The workshop aims to share experiences on the general theme of how to organise the activity of “guiding people at rock art sites.” It will take into account preservation-related aspects (how to guide visitors without causing damage), narrative aspects (what types of content to present and how to construct interpretive narratives addressing different dimensions of rock art sites), as well as economic and social aspects (how to develop tourism around visits to rock art sites and how to involve local communities). These reflections will also be cross-examined in relation to the different types of audiences that may be welcomed at the sites (general visitors, school groups, various forms of disability).

The workshop will include site visits, lectures and group work. Working groups will be asked to reflect on the proposed themes, drawing on the participants' own experience, on the rock art sites visits and talks during the week.

Combining theoretical presentations and fieldwork, participants will be divided into working groups with the aim of designing a rock art site visit that takes into account the following topics:

- the balance between guiding visitors and preserving rock art sites
- taking into account local communities
- developing narratives that link tangible and intangible, natural and cultural dimensions
- the role of cultural sensitivity and visitor enjoyment in the visit
- how we understand the concept of a “rock art experience”
- taking into account diverse audiences (ages, cultures, disabilities)
- marketing issues linked with rock art tourism
- linking the rock art experience with other activities in order to create a “global tourism product
- developing rock art tourism within the framework of a holistic approach

All participants will be invited to put their experiences into perspective and reflect on the issues related to rock art guiding experience in a synthesised report and a final collective discussion.

Venue

Located in northeastern Botswana, about 60 km north of the Francistown region, the Masunga area contains several dozen rock art sites, including the Nlapkwane, Moroka and Zwenshambe rock art. The group will be staying at Domboshaba Lodge. All participants will be provided with shared accommodation and full catering during the workshop.

Practical information

Working language: English

Accommodation will be shared, but if you would prefer more privacy, you are welcome to bring your own tent and necessary camping equipment, as there is space to pitch your tent at the lodge. In any case, please **bring your own towels**.

We'll be doing fieldwork in a bushy area. Please wear appropriate clothing (boots and long sleeves). It will be sunny and hot, so please bring a hat, sunscreen and a water bottle.

Please bring equipment to take notes and photos.

Invited speakers and tutors

Mélanie Duval, EDYTEM, CNRS, Université Savoie Mont Blanc, France

Jeremy Hollmann, independent researcher and tour guide, South Africa

Stéphane Hœrlé, PACEA, CNRS, Université de Bordeaux, France

Kuda Mugabe, independent researcher, Botswana

Ancila Nhamo, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe

Lourenço Pinto, University of Sol Plaatje, South Africa

Phillip Segadika, Dept of National Museum and Monuments, Botswana

Phenyo Thebe, University of Gaborone, Botswana

PROGRAMME

Saturday 12 September: Arrival

Arrival in Gaborone and transfer to accommodation (Avrila Springs Hotel, shared rooms)

Note: This does not apply to people arriving in Francistown (Sunday 13/09)

Sunday 13 September: Transfer to Masunga

09:00 Departure to Masunga. Lunch boxes on the road.

16:00 Arrival at Masunga and splitting of participants between the rooms (shared rooms)

19:00 Dinner

20:00 Evening session: participants introduction (1 min each)

Monday 14 September: Site Visits

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Welcome, organisation of the workshop and introduction about the area

09:30 Visit of rock art sites (lunch in the field)

14:00 Official Opening by Hon. Minister of Environment and Tourism Mr Wynter Mmolotsi

15:15 Feedback session and organisation of the working groups

17:30 End of session

19:00 Dinner

Tuesday 15 September: Training

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Teaching Session: Jeremy Hollmann – « *Introduction to rock art guiding* »

09:00 Teaching Session: Mélanie Duval – « *Rock Art tourism: the need to have an holistic approach* »

09:45 Fieldwork. Each group works on its project (lunch in the field)

14:00 Return to the lodge and break

15:00 Indoor work session

16:30 Teaching session: Phenyio Thebe – « *Rock Art Heritage Management in Botswana: A Social Study Perspective on Southeastern and Northeastern Sites* »

17:30 End of the session

19:00 Dinner

Wednesday 16 September: Training

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Teaching Session: Lourenço Pinto – « *More Than a Tour: Guiding, Conservation and Sustainable Heritage Management at Rock Art Sites* »

09:00 Teaching Session: Stéphane Hœrlé – « *Guiding to rock art sites and conservation issues* »

10:00 Fieldwork. Each group works on its project (lunch in the field)

14:00 Return to the lodge and break

15:00 Indoor work session

16:30 Teaching Session: Phillip Segadika - « *Interpreting Rock Art: Bridging Academic Theory and Tourist Curiosity* »

17:30 End of the session

19:00 Dinner

Thursday 17 September: Training

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Teaching Session: Phillip Segadika – « *How to guide ? Guiding techniques* »

09:00 Teaching Session: Kuda Mugabe – « *Beyond the Rock Art: Engaging Local Communities and Creating Integrated Tourism Experiences. Botswana case studies* »

10:00 Fieldwork. Each group works on its project (lunch in the field)

14:00 Return to the lodge and break

15:00 Indoor work session

16:30 Teaching Session: Ancila Nhamo – « *Sustaining the Canvas: Empowering Communities and Heritage Professionals Through Sustainable Rock Art Tourism Models* »

17:30 End of the session

19:00 Dinner

If necessary, the groups can continue working in the evening to finalise their projects.

Friday 18 September: Feedback

07:00 Breakfast

08:00 Feedback session in the field (lunch in the field)

14:00 Return to the lodge and break

16:00 Indoor work session

17:00 Group presentations

18:30 End of the session

19:00 Distribution of participation certificates and Dinner

Saturday 19 September: Departure

07:00 Breakfast

8:00 Packing

10:00 Leaving

12:00 Francistown

17:00 Gaborone. Night at Avrila Springs Hotel (shared rooms)

A collaboration between



Appendix 1: Abbreviations

ANR: Agence Nationale de la Recherche (French national research funding agency)

CNRS: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique

COSMO-ART: The Cosmopolitan Approach as a New Paradigm for Rock Art Heritage Management in Southern Africa

EDYTEM: Environnements, Dynamiques et Territoires de Montagne

IRN RAHMSA: International Research Network Rock Art Management in Southern Africa, funded by CNRS

NRF: National Research Foundation (South African national research funding agency)

PACEA: De la Préhistoire à l'Actuel : Culture, Environnement et Anthropologie (UMR 5199)

Appendix 2: RAHMSA

RAHMSA (<https://cosmo-art.org/rahmsa>) seeks to combine the efforts of researchers from five countries (Botswana, France, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) who study the issues raised by rock art heritage management in Southern Africa. There, aspects of the nearly universally implemented values-based heritage management doctrine are challenged, like in other parts of the world where culture and population diversity produce intermingling and sometimes conflicting sets of values. Although recent initiatives seek to address diversity in rock art management, they stumble across the difficulty to grasp multi-faceted, contextual, conflicting and constantly changing values and the absence of a strong holistic and integrated methodological framework to achieve it. RAHMSA proposes to address this methodological lack by joining the expertise and comparing the points of views and practices of researchers and heritage practitioners from diverse backgrounds to identify cross-cultural and interacting interest points, according to a cosmopolitan approach.

For this RAHMSA benefits from and expands on an existing ANR project: COSMO-ART. This programme proposes indeed the cosmopolitan approach as a tool to resolve the mentioned challenges facing rock art heritage management and thus better fulfil requirements of sustainability by reconciling various perceptions of rock art heritage and development policies. While COSMO-ART is targeted on research actions in South Africa and Namibia, RAHMSA aims to improve the regional structuring of research on the preservation, presentation and tourism development of rock art sites in Southern Africa, and to encourage the practical application of results from COSMO-ART by including two other southern Africa countries, Botswana and Zimbabwe.

RAHMSA is funded by the French CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research) and the South African NRF (National Research Foundation).

RAHMSA members are:

Botswana National Museum, Botswana

Éco-anthropologie UMR 7206, France

EDYTEM UMR 5204, France

HNHP UMR 7194, France

Musée national de Préhistoire, France

PACEA UMR 5199, France

TRACES UMR 5608, France

University of Namibia, Namibia

University of Sol Plaatje, South Africa

University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe