

Review

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Review

Cultural Routes as Cultural Tourism Products for Heritage Conservation and Regional Development :A Systematic Review

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Abstract: Cultural routes are a composite set of heritage, referring to any ancient routes of human communication. As one of the key products of cultural tourism, they providing visitors with a rich cultural experience across regions. We systematically review reports and studies related to the tourism development of 38 cultural routes cases around the world, with a special focus on their distribution, typology, planning patterns and tools for cultural tourism. We summarized eight tools, there are some differences in how often these eight tools are used by the different types of routes and different planning patterns for routes tourism. The study also made an evaluation system based on the conservation principles of cultural routes to find out how different tools of tourism affect the conservation and development of the historical region. It was found that although many efforts have been made by tourism decision-makers to protect and develop cultural routes there are still many problems and challenges in the process of tourism development along cultural routes. We close the paper by making a few recommendations for decision makers and researchers concerning future routes' tourism planning and study.

Keywords: cultural routes; cultural tourism; heritage conservation; regional planning; tourism impact

1. Introduction

In recent years, Cultural Routes has been increasingly discussed as an important product for cultural tourism that can bring tourists experiences across time and space. Previous research has described the contribution of cultural routes to sustainable tourism and socio-economic development through numerous cultural tourism cases (Dayoub, Yang et al., 2020; s; Khovanova-Rubicondo, 2012; Majdoub, 2009; Srichandan, Pasupuleti et al., 2021). However, there are still many problems and challenges in how to establish tourism planning for cross-regional cultural routes from the whole to the local level, and how to create a systematic tourism development methodology and evaluation system. The aim of this paper is to give answers to these questions in terms of the current situation, types, models and tools of cultural tourism development of Cultural Routes.

1.1. Definition of Cultural Routes

Cultural route is a relatively new idea of heritage conservation. It was first proposed in the 1980s by the European Commission for the revival of the de Compostela pilgrimage route in Spain. In 1998, in order to achieve an international consensus on the concept of cultural routes, a minority of

members of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) established the International Committee on Cultural Routes (CIIC), which promulgated the THE ICOMOS CHARTER ON CULTURAL ROUTES in 2008.

The Charter gives a clear definition: cultural routes refers to any ancient routes of human communication, having its own specific dynamic and historic functionality to serve a specific and well determined purpose [1].

Cultural routes provide a way to interpret a history and culture as a whole [2]. The process of developing cultural routes helps to discover various ancient routes with important historical and cultural significance, and designate tangible and intangible resources along the routes as proof of the existence of the routes [3]. It can bring a new dimension of cultural heritage management through cross-regional cooperation [1], and also can be used as a tool to achieve local cultural cohesion and sustainable development [4,5].

1.2. Cultural Tourism and Heritage Sites

In 1995, the World Tourism Organization (WOT) introduced "cultural tourism" as a type of tourism that responds to consumers' own cultural motivations and needs¹ [6]. The Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC) gave a clear definition of "cultural tourism" at the 22nd WTO General Assembly in 2018 : cultural tourism is a type of tourism in which the main goal of the traveler is to learn about, discover, experience, and enjoy the tangible and intangible cultural attractions and goods of the location. These attractions/products are unique to a society and include arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, gastronomic heritage, literature, music, creative industries, and living cultures with their ways of life, value systems, beliefs, and traditions [7].

Cultural heritage sites with a long history are the most significant cultural tourist attractions. The tourist industry, as well as the accompany protection, interpretation, of heritage, are key instruments for the sustainable development of heritage sites [8,9], it helps to build territorial cohesion and strengthen local identity, while improving the local economy [1,10,11]. However over-tourism also has the potential to cause problems such as destruction of cultural artifacts, environmental pollution, and loss of residents in heritage communities [8,12].

1.3. Cultural Routes as Cultural Tourism Products

Cultural Routes and Cultural Tourism are closely intertwined. Cultural routes can bring together many tourist attractions in the region, some of which may be less well known, in order to market them more effectively under a unifying theme and to improve the management and conservation of heritage assets. Tourists can create a comprehensive experience of local history and culture through various heritage landscapes while traveling through the routes, hence achieving the goal of cultural tourism [13,14]. At the same time, the fact that many different heritages linked along the route makes the preservation of Cultural Routes more difficult and complex which require new instruments for their assessment protection and conservation. For this purpose, ICOMOS proposed that protection and promotion of a Cultural Route can harmoniously integrate for tourist activities [1] The Council of Europe (2010b) also states that promoting culture tourism is a natural next step in creating Cultural Routes because this type of tourism builds on the uniqueness and genuineness of distant locations, local knowledge, skills, history, and customs [15].

Given the growing number of cultural tourism initiatives linked to Cultural Routes. In this paper, we present a systematic review of the existing academic and professional literature about the cultural tourism development cases along Cultural Routes. We sought to summarize the current status and tools of cultural tourism development and what impacts will these tools have on the conservation of cultural routes and regional development. Our results are intended to facilitate the

¹ “ the movements of people because those satisfy the need for diversity inherent in the human nature and tend to raise the cultural level of the man by getting the occasion of new knowledge, experiments and meetings to him.”

cross-fertilization of tourism and Cultural Routes conservation experiences and offer inspiration and recommendations for the planning and management of Cultural Routes.

2. Methodology

The review can be divided into following 3 steps: (1) selection of studies to be included; (2) analysis and classification of cases; (3) summarizing and evaluation of tools for tourism development along the routes.

2.1. Selection of Studies to Be Included

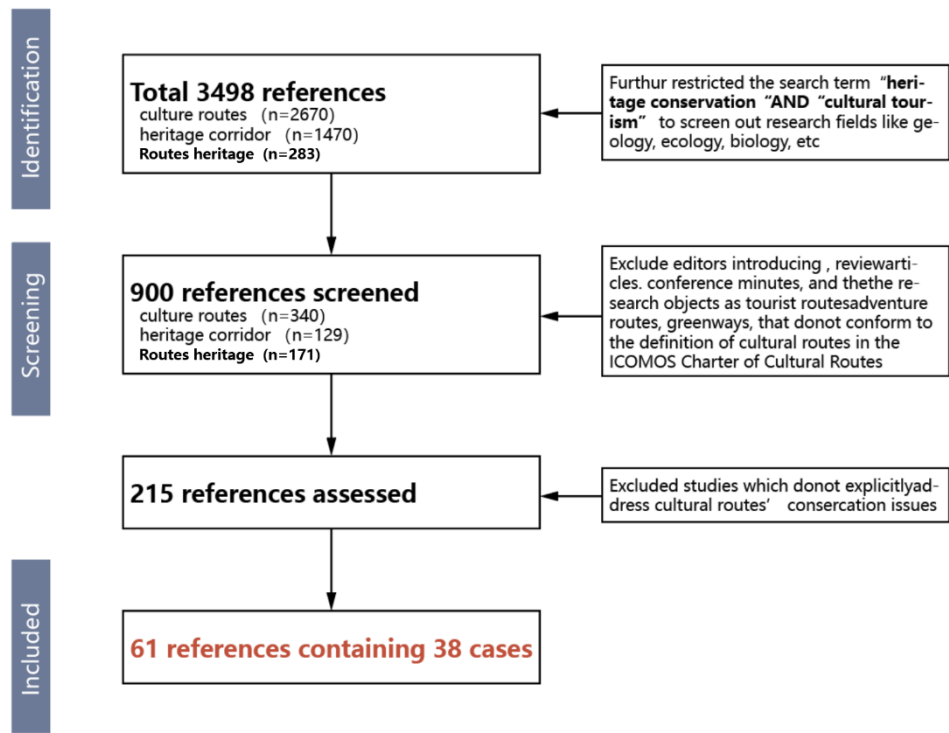


Figure 1. Methodological diagram of the process of selecting cases for systematic review.

In the first step, we found out a comprehensive set of search keywords. As the “cultural routes” is a complex concept, a preliminary literature review found other two variations, we presented an overview of these concepts in Table 1. These keywords were used to identify plausibly relevant studies cited in the Web of Science (Core collection) and Google Scholar databases. The searches were not limited by language but they were limited to studies published after 2008 when ICOMOS published THE ICOMOS CHARTER ON CULTURAL ROUTES. A total of 3498 references were found after the removal of duplicates. These studies had diverse contents, and some did not precisely engage with the objectives of our study. Therefore, by adding qualifiers “heritage conservation” and “cultural tourism” for further screening, the number of references was reduced to 900.

Though the title and publication information, we excluded the editor's introduction, review articles, meeting speech minutes. In addition, some studies will consider those that do not matching up with the characteristics of cultural routes (Table 2), such as tourist routes and greenways. In order to avoid conceptual confusion, such literatures were also excluded through abstracts and keywords, and the number of literatures is reduced to 215.

The literature that does not substantively solve the problem of protection and management of cultural routes was eliminated through full text browsing. Finally, 61 references were selected included in this study which involving 38 cases of cultural routes.

Table 1. Identification of concepts used as keywords.

Keywords	Definitions
Cultural route	Cultural routes display route systems of cultural assets and historical sites created by cultural exchange and dialogue. These routes can integrate spiritual, economic, environmental, and cultural values into tourism systems [16].
Heritage corridor	Cultural corridors are networks of cultural creativity and economic exchange based on a wide range of stakeholders. They form historical axes of ancient cultural and economic ties [2].
Routes heritage	A heritage route is composed of tangible elements of which the cultural significance comes from exchanges and a multi-dimen-sional dialogue across countries or regions, and that illustrate the interaction of move-ment, along the route, in space and time [17].

Table 2. The overview of the characteristics of cultural routes.

Keywords	Definitions
Origin	A geographically defined pathway of human movement that might have been created as a planned project or taken advantage (fully or partially) of pre-existing roads and evolved over a long period to fulfill a collective purpose [5].
Context	Within a given cultural region or extended across different geographical areas that share a process of reciprocal influences in the formation or evolution of cultural values [1].
Fundamental Features	Long-lasting History with Continuity in space and time, Multi-dimensional function, Wholeness, Crossing and connecting borders,Reflects cross-fertilization of cultures (include a dynamic factor), associational value [1,4,18].
Content	The communication routes itself, the tangible heritage assets and intangible heritage elements [1].

2.2. Analysis and Classification of Cultural Routes’ Cases

The second step is to categorize the cases according to the region, function, context and content of the cases, which helps to understand the division of Cultural Routes projects that have been identified and developed for tourist purpose, as well as the relevant institutions and policy supports in different countries. After classifying the routes themselves, we also make a classification about the tourism models depending on the level of development and also make the analyse about the value that different models bring.

2.3. Summarizing and Evaluation of Tools for Cultural Tourism

We also summarized the tools of tourism along cultural routes which helps to create a toolbox for tourism decision-makers, matching different types of the networks. And as cultural tourism is a double-edged sword for heritage sites ’conservation. When tourism is carried out, it will bring more or less changes to the natural environment, transportation, and residents' lives around the route, thus affecting the authenticity and integrity of the heritage and the sustainability of its preservation and development. Therefore, after understanding the different methods of tourism development through literature research, it is necessary to establish an evaluation framework based on the conservation

principles of cultural routes, to find out the impact of different methods of tourism on the protection and promotion of the routes (Table 3).

Table 3. Evaluation framework based on the conservation principles of cultural routes.

The conservation principle of cultural routes	Description	References
Authenticity	Historical and cultural characteristics	Authenticity should be evident in the natural and cultural context to prove its historic functionality. Authenticity should be reflected in[1]
	Heritage discovery and restoration	every part of the route, and evident by the tangible and intangible heritage.
Integrity	Historical and cultural background	To ensure that the significance of the cultural and historical processes of routes can be fully demonstrated. Evidences of the historic relationships and dynamic functions essential to the distinctive character of the Cultural Route, whether its physical fabric and/or its significant features are in good condition and the impact of deterioration processes controlled. [1]
	Routes’ structure	
Sustainability	Environmental protection	To protect the environment and natural landscape around the routes. [13]
	Activation and utilization	To promote local community well-being and economic development. [13,19]
	Education and promotion	To improve the visibility of the routes and people’s awareness of heritage conservation. [20]

3. Distribution and Classification of Cultural Routes Products

3.1. Cases’ Distribution

Of the 38 cases covered in the literature (some of which are overlapping in parts), the distribution is mostly in the USA (n=6), China (n=6) and Europe (n=19) (with many cases spanning multiple countries) (Figure2) . This suggests that cultural routes have been well studied in these three regions, and that there are political systems or institutions for heritage management and tourism development to support the conservation and utilization of such composite heritage across regions.



Figure 2. Cases’ distribution.

Through the National Heritage Area (NHA), the United States has established a series of mature, interfederal programs that combine natural, cultural, and historical resources. In Europe, the European Commission (COE) established the Institute for Cultural Routes (EICR) in 1998. As an important part of the new cultural heritage policy in Europe, the Cultural Routes Programme is a project combining cooperation in the fields of literature, educational heritage and tourism. In China, the Guidelines for the Protection of Cultural Relics and Monuments (2015) also included cultural landscapes, cultural routes, and heritage canals as new heritage types in the cultural heritage protection system.

3.2. Cases’ Classification

The origins of cultural routes are diverse. The study categorized these networks into 3 main categories and 7 sub-categories based on their function, context and content (Table 4).

Table 4. Routes’ classification according to their functions , context and content.

Categories	Description	Subcategories	References
A	Routes used for specific events in a period of history	Pilgrimage route	[17]
		Military route	
B	Routes defined with the use of heritage or landscape	Heritage canal or valley	Timothy and Boyd [21]
		Historical border	
		Railway heritage	
		Highway heritages	
C	Important routes in ancient times Because of the need for transportation and trade.	Trade、migrate or transportation routes	[1],Timothy and Boyd [21]

Of the 38 cases covered by the literature, Category B (heritage canal or valley, historical border, railway heritage, highway heritage) has the highest number of tourism projects associated with the routes (n=16), because they based on nature (canals or valleys) or large heritage (e.g. ancient city walls

or railway tracks) itself, and the remains of their linear mechanisms can be better excavated and preserved. Category A (pilgrimage route and military route), although fewer in number (n=9), are generally better preserved due to their specific historical and cultural contexts, and there are a series of governmental institutions, academic organizations and civil society groups related to the preservation of these networks especially pilgrimage routes in both Japan and Europe [3,22,23]. Category C (ancient trade、migrate or transportation routes), on the other hand, often crosses multiple regions or even countries (e.g. the Silk Road and the Phoenician Way), and with the changes in urban development and transportation modes, these routes have lost their own functional significance, and the relics around the routes have suffered serious damage, making them relatively difficult to protect, excavate and develop for tourism (n=13).

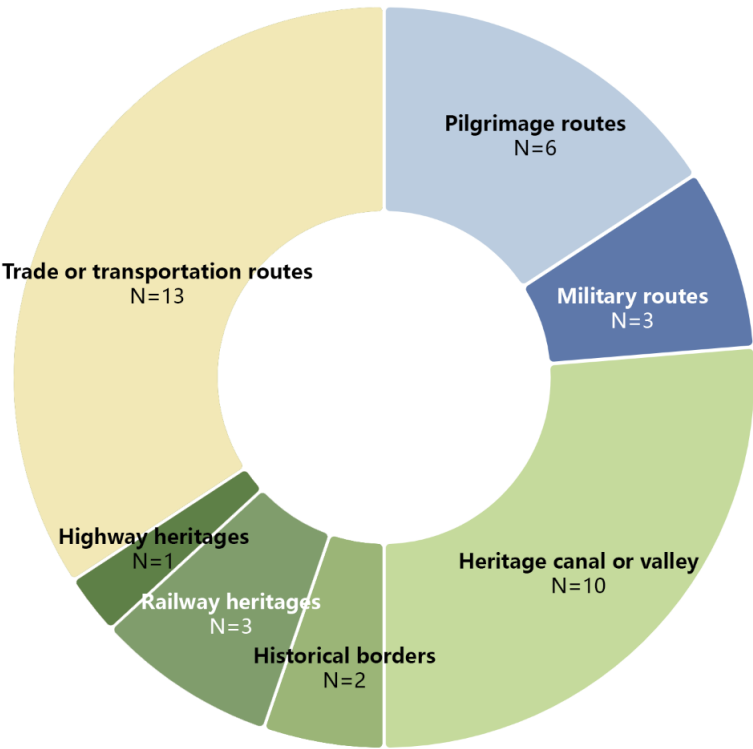


Figure 3. Different types of cases to be included (N=number of cases of this type).

4. Planning Patterns for Routes Tourism

Planning can be thought of in a general way as a set of actions, choices, and decisions that are made in a systematic way to reach a set of goals. This is done by taking into account all the existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, policies, facilities, and challenges. Cultural routes' planning is an area of tourism and conservation planning that has grown in the last few decades. There are many different meanings and classifications of cultural routes, but there isn't a clear system for planning cultural routes yet , and isn't even a general way to handle them. The study found that cultural routes have brought new planning approaches to cultural tourism, which we documented and summarised into the following three routes tourism planning patterns: point-based pattern, linear-based pattern and area-based pattern (Figure 4).

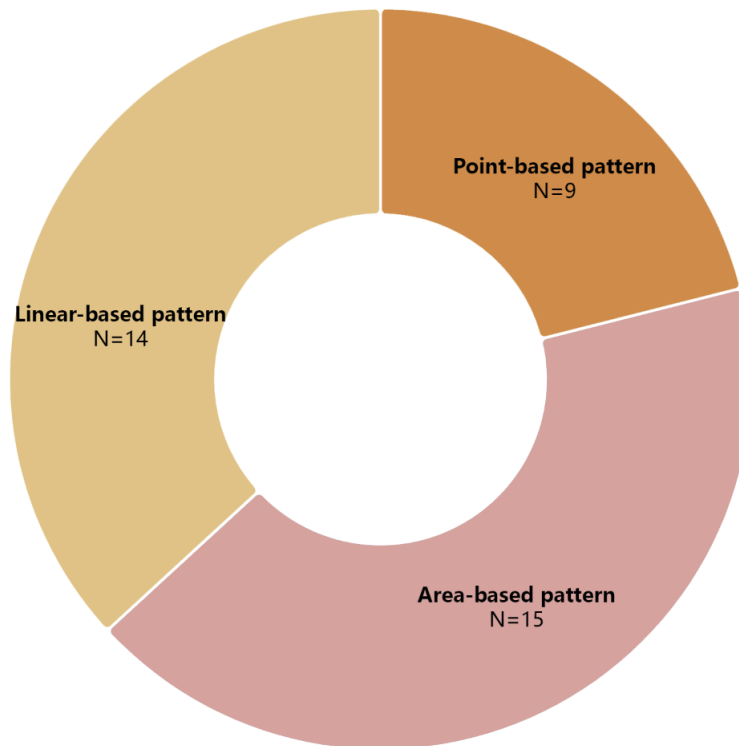


Figure 4. Different planning patterns for routes tourism (N=number of cases of this pattern).

4.1. Point-Based Pattern

In this pattern, the planning of the route consists of a series of cultural heritages that present different scales and are linked by a theme, in other words, the routes lack the character of territorial continuity and provide only intangible connections. The Silk Road, for example, consists of a series of monuments spanning Europe and Asia (Figure 5), which do not represent the same historical/cultural group or a uniform type of heritage within the agreed geographical area [24]. This is because various socio-political factors such as regional conflicts and changing markets meant that the Silk Road was not static and consisted of a wide variety of paths, tracks and roads. Many of the cities along the route grew to become major cultural and artistic centres, deriving power and wealth from trade, providing infrastructure for production and redistribution, and regulating routes within their borders. Today, as transport modes have evolved, these routes no longer exist, but many remnants of the intermingling of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds remain in the cities. These sites are now landmarks for travellers exploring the traces of the Silk Road; the passage of the ancient trade routes has added value and symbolism to these sites.

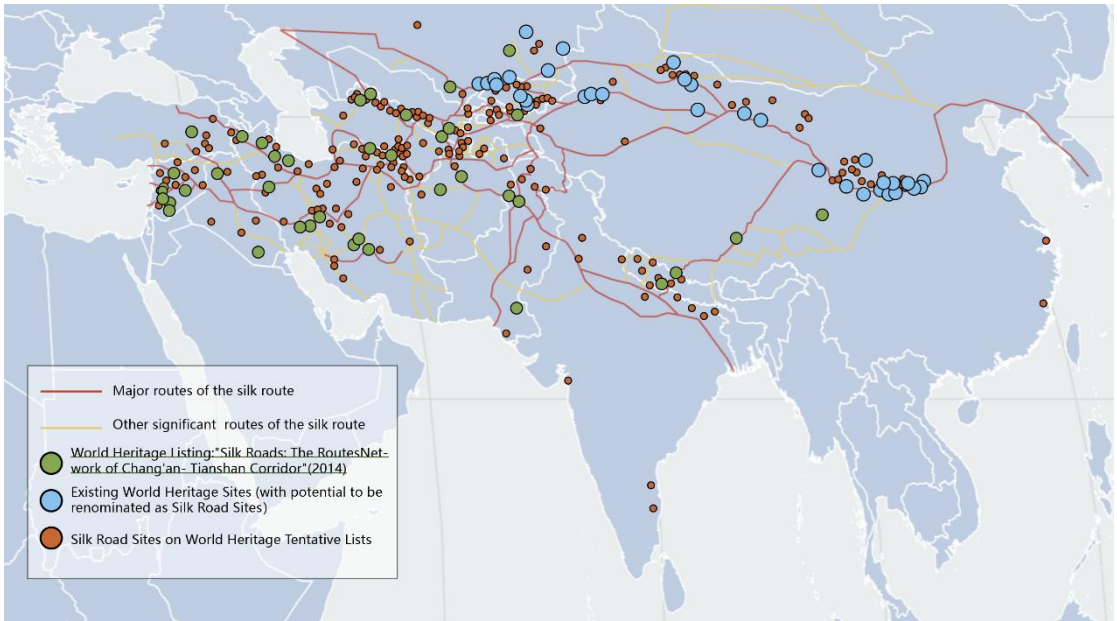


Figure 5. Silk Road and heritage locations for World Heritage.

4.2. Linear-Based Pattern

In this pattern, the main element constituting the route is usually the path itself. As in the case of marching routes and pilgrimage routes, these routes are special and unique and hardly change over time. Routes have evolved, transformed, and strengthened over the course of history, establishing a close connection with the territories they traverse. As routes are part of regional territories, these places themselves transformed by the routes and the travellers, which makes it possible for these territories to be culturally connected through the routes even if they are geographically far apart. For example, the masterplan of the De Compostela Pilgrimage Route from Sarria spans about 100 kilometres, with several municipalities along the official route collaborating to plan and implement projects to produce uniform wayfinding signage, street furniture, restoration works, key stops and rest areas along the route, etc., to provide a safe travel plan for pilgrims on foot or by bicycle (Figure 6). It takes several days for visitors to experience the entire route in its entirety, and as they travel, they encounter ancient transport infrastructure, pilgrim shelters, and towns that have developed as a result of the route.

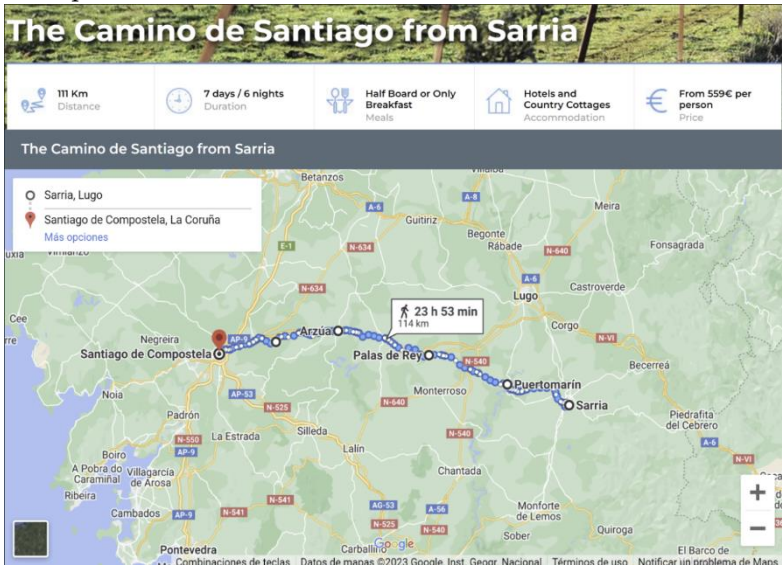


Figure 6. Map of The Camino de Santiago from Sarria and tourism service.
Source: <https://santigoways.com/en/camino-de-santiago-routes/camino-frances/the-way-of-saint-james-from-sarria/>.

4.3. Area-Based Pattern

The main elements that make up the routes in this pattern are themes and natural landscapes that are shared on a regional scale, such as canals, mountains and farms. Routes such as shipping, commerce, and migration develop themes of civilisational currents, imbue cross-regional natural landscapes with culture and identity, and, based on this theme, continually link culturally distant but geographically adjacent regions. For example, the Blackstone River Valley heritage corridor in the United States, including mill towns stretching across 25 cities and towns near the river's course in Worcester County (Figure 7). There are multiple historic districts within the conservation area, and visitors can start anywhere and choose a single or multiple historic districts to experience the industrial landscapes, agricultural landscapes, national monuments, etc. along the canal. Regardless of where they begin, the cultural landscape, including mill villages, rural villages, monuments, transportation systems, and waterways integrated into an integrated industrial network speak to the history of the thriving American industry of the eighteenth century.

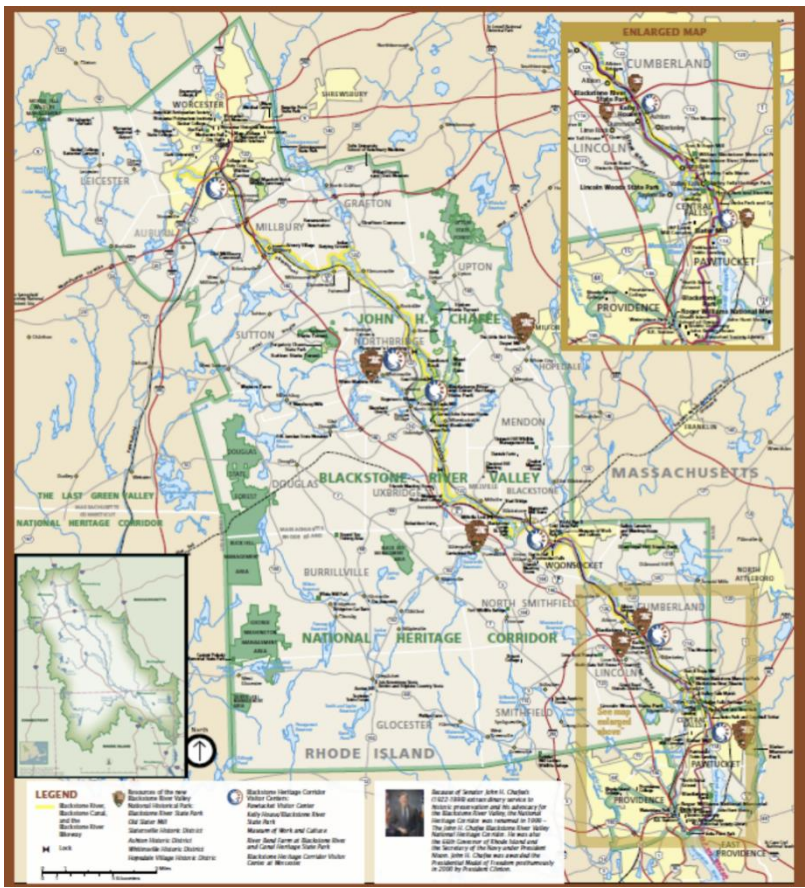


Figure 7. The Blackstone River Valley heritage corridor and tourism regions.
Source: <https://blackstoneheritagecorridor.org/exploring-the-blackstone-river-valley/maps-tours-guides/>.

5. Tools of Cultural Tourism for Regional Conservation and Development

5.1. The Summary of Tools

After a systematic literature analysis, we summarized eight types of tools to tourism development of cultural routes were mentioned in 61 references (Figure 8). In almost all cases ($n=35$), route committees or associations were established to bring together socioeconomic and cultural actors and agents interested in and affecting the governance and dynamics of the route to design a more rational tourism plan. It is particularly important for routes that cross different countries or regions (e.g., THE DANUBE REGION crosses 14 countries in Europe, and THE SILK ROAD involves 33 countries in Europe and Asia) and that involve a wide range of stakeholders (e.g. The preservation of the Way of St. James involves residents, church clergy, city planners, tourists, tourism industry players, etc.).

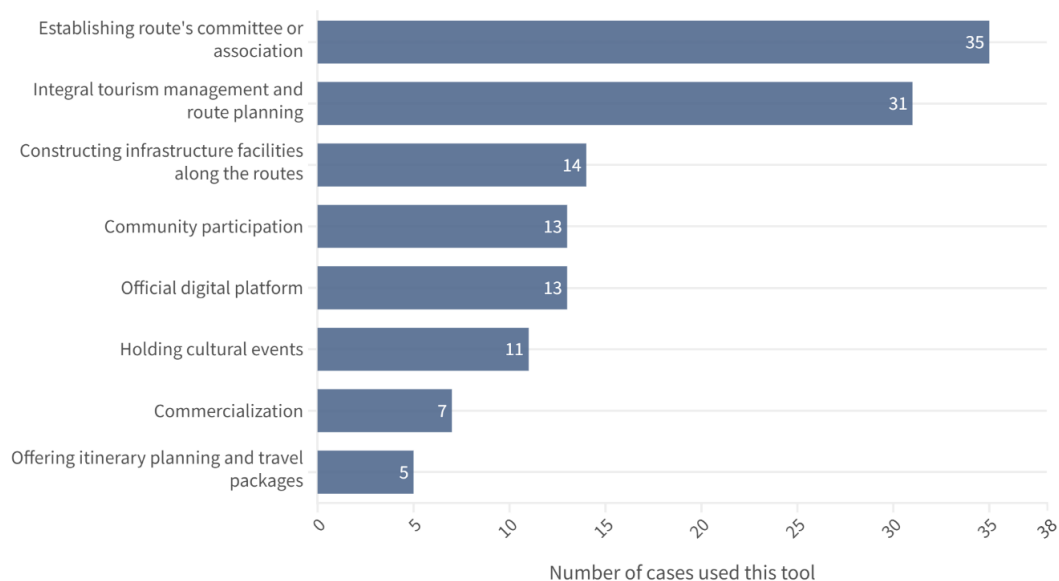


Figure 8. Tools of cultural tourism for regional conservation and development.

The second most common approach is to conduct integral tourism management and route planning ($n=31$), however, some large-scale routes with poorly preserved historical relics are difficult to adopt this holistic management approach. For example, the Silk Road and the Phoenicians' Route have lost most of the specific traces of their routes, and only important nodes can be traced now.

Moreover, in order to make the Cultural Routes more attractive and increase the accessibility of important sites along the routes, the Route Committee will establish a series of transport and artistic infrastructures along the routes, such as museums, art galleries, highways, stations ($n=14$); organize regular cultural events ($n=11$); create official information platforms for tourists to access the history and attractions along the routes, update the information about the events on a regular basis ($n=13$); appropriately commercialize some of the historical areas ($n=7$). And some routes will provide multi-day travel packages with accommodation, food and guided tours ($n=5$). In order to make tourism development more sustainable, communities along the route are sometimes called upon to participate in tourism development and route planning from the bottom up ($n=13$).

When the information that was gathered is analyzed, it is clear that there are some disparities in the frequency of usage of these eight tools for the different types of cultural routes and different planning patterns for routes tourism. (Figure 9、 Figure 10).

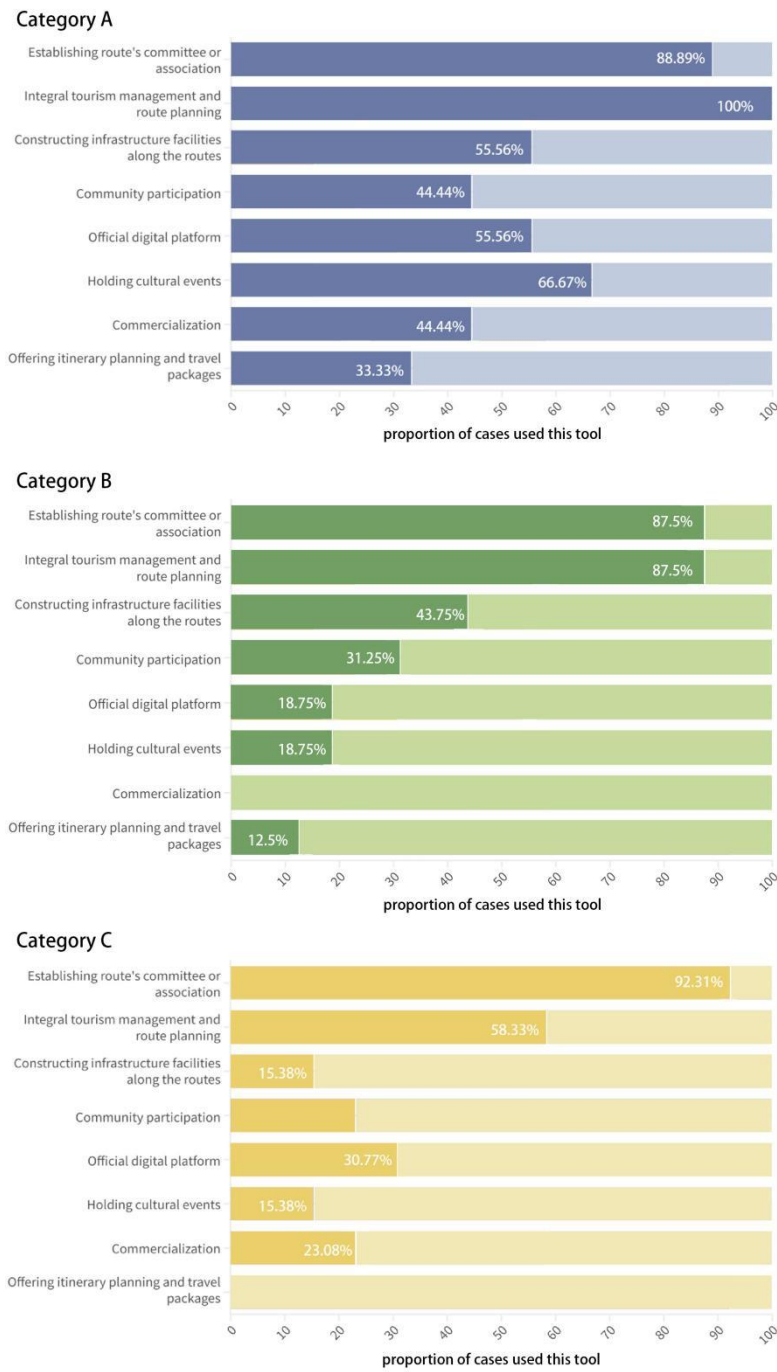


Figure 9. Different types of cultural routes and proportion of usage tools.

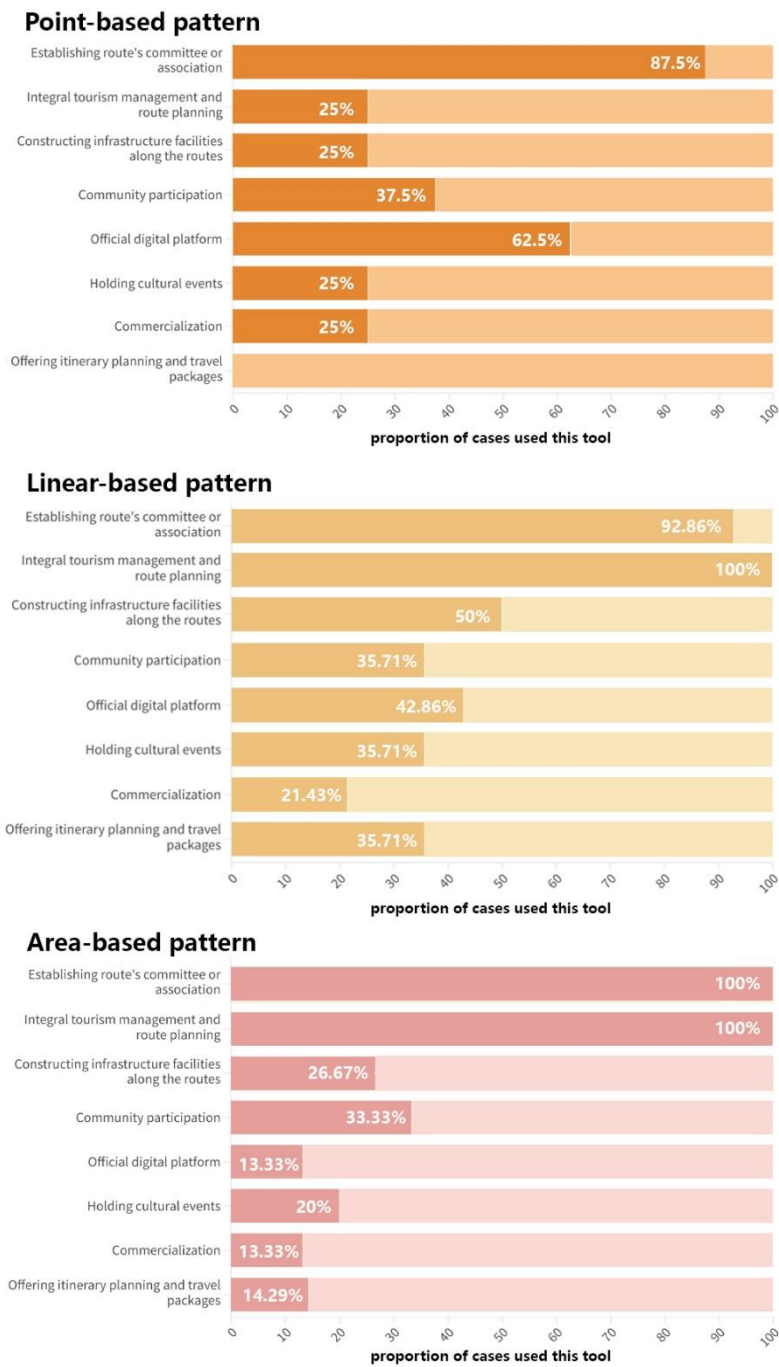


Figure 10. Different planning patterns for routes tourism and proportion of usage tools.

5.2. The Evaluation of Tools

The study created an assessment framework based on the conservation principles of the cultural routes and evaluated the eight tourism development tools mentioned above (Table 5). The results show that cultural tourism contributes to the authenticity, integrity and sustainability of cultural routes, but there are also some problems and challenges. The benefits and problems of each tool are discussed in detail below.

Table 5. Tools evaluation.

Tools of cultural tourism	Authenticity		Integrity		Sustainability		
	Historical and	Heritage discovery	Historical and	Routes' structure	Environ mental	Activatio n and	Educatio n and

	cultural characteristics	and restoration n	cultural background d		protection n	utilization n	promotion n
Establishing routes' committees or associations	√	√	√	√	√	-	√
Integral tourism management and route planning	√	√	√	√	√	√	/
Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	√	√	√	√	/	√	/
Community participation	√	/	/	/	√	√	√
Establishing official digital platform	√	/	√	/	√	/	√
Holding cultural events	√	/	√	/	×	-	√
Commercialization	×	-	/	/	×	√	/
Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	√	/	√	/	/	/	√

√: positive; ×: negative; -: ambiguous; /-: uncorrelated.

5.2.1. Establishing Routes' Committees or Associations

The establishment of route committees or associations is to create a platform that facilitates cooperation and communication among various stakeholders (e.g., government, NGOs, residents, tourists, experts in various disciplines, etc.), which contributes to heritage management, conservation and revitalization, financing and management, itinerary design, route promotion and publicity [25–29]. However, sometimes, tourism may bring too many stakeholders, which can affect the progress of heritage conservation and development [27].

In the case of routes that cross several countries or even continents (e.g., the Phoenicians' Route, the Roman emperors and Danube wine route, the Silk Road, the Qhapaq Ñan, the Danube region), this approach can help countries to cooperate, communicate and discuss with each other, strengthen cooperation with international organizations such as UNESCO and UNWTO [4,30–36].

In addition to contributing to the conservation of individual routes, this approach also facilitates cooperation between routes. For example, the committee of Kumano Kodo in Japan and the committee of Camino de Santiago in Europe, have established a close partnership. Santiago de Compostela and Tanabe have become twinning cities and grant "Dual pilgrim status" to visitors who complete pilgrimages along the two routes. They are working together on finding innovative ways of harnessing cultural, religious, and natural heritage along the pilgrimage routes [22].

5.2.2. Integral Tourism Management and Route Planning

Integral tourism management and route planning includes comprehensive onsite surveys and interviews of heritage, collect historical documents ,identify the routes on old maps and the restoration of ancient routes [37]; sustainable tourism development assessment built on comprehensive heritage research [38,39] ; and many places will also establish a multi-level management and development system from the whole to local level [25,38,40].

By these means, travelling itinerary connects unconnected and unknown but important archaeological sites along the route [30,41,42], allowing travelers to focus more on the travel process rather than the destination [43]. This contributes to the overall research, preservation and revitalization of tangible and intangible cultural heritage along the route, and promotes the average development of each area on the route.

5.2.3. Constructing Infrastructure Facilities along the Routes

Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes includes transportation infrastructure and cultural infrastructure. The establishment of transportation infrastructure includes the restoration of ancient paths to connect important archaeological sites [37,44,45]; Constructing stations and highways to increase the accessibility of the route [45,46]; adding bicycle paths or jogging paths along ancient routes as part of the thematic tourism activities to increase the interest of the routes' tourism [27,47,48].

As for the cultural infrastructure, routes' museums and art galleries are good place to display history and culture of the region, so that tourists can establish a comprehensive understanding of the historical background and cultural characteristics of the sites [29,45,49–53]. For example, more than 60 art venues have been established along the Erie Canal in an attempt to make the canal an outdoor "art gallery", which has become a new landmark for tourism, where tourists can enjoy art museums and galleries, locally based artistic traditions, and historical theaters [52].

5.2.4. Community Participation

The development of cultural tourism has changed the lives of regional communities, and accordingly, some places along the route seek to develop community-oriented and appropriate ways to heritage preservation and utilization. Community involvement raises local awareness of cultural and heritage preservation and increases community integration and people's sense of place [36,38,54]. At the same time, inhabitants are more focused on respecting local cultural heritage than attracting large numbers of tourists to increase economic benefits, which also contributes to more sustainable tourism development [22].

5.2.5. Establishing Official Digital Platform

In recent years, many cultural routes have carried out actions to digitalize the tourism sector to improve communication before, during, and after the trip, achieving intensive and intelligent use of a digital technology ecosystem. The approaches including: the internet of things; augmented reality and virtual reality; artificial intelligence and robotization; geolocalisation and TIG; and big data, small data, and open data. Some routes like the Camino de Santiago have created official websites where the historical, cultural and tourist information about the route is visualized and information about activities along the route is regularly updated (Figure 11) [13,32,47,55,56] . These sites enrich tourists' knowledge of the history and culture of the routes and help them to plan their respective itineraries based on the overall understanding of the region.

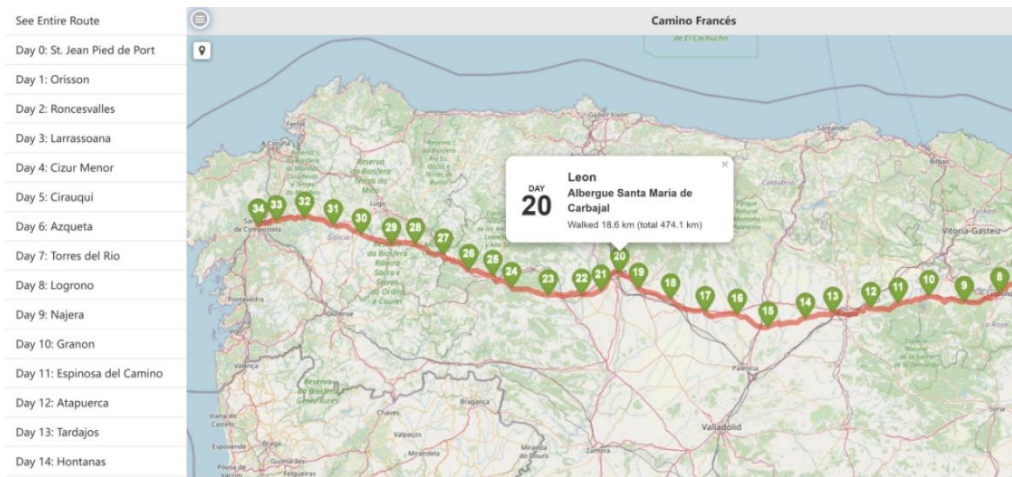


Figure 11. the interactive map on the website of the Camino de Santiago
source: <https://caminofrances.info/>

In addition, digital technologies are used in the restoration and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage along the routes, in educating tourists about history and culture and improving the professional capacity of heritage conservationists, in monitoring the environment of the sites, and in managing the impact of tourism on the sites (Figure 12) [54,56].



The Museum AR application 3D Reconstruction of a bridge along via Francigena Statistical results in current preservation state produced by GIS management and analysis tools

Figure 12. The digital technologies used in different aspects of cultural routes protection and development. source: [57–59].

5.2.6. Holding Cultural Events

Cultural and artistic events, concerts, festivals and ceremonies are often organized along cultural routes. Some of these events originate from traditional festivals [49], while others are organized to promote cultural tourism [25,51]. These activities stimulate tourists' interest during the trip, but they also have the risk of result in overtourism, destroying the route's monuments, and polluting the environment [25].

In addition, several routes have multi-expert seminars on a regular basis in order to present and discuss the findings of route research and the achievements of heritage preservation. This acts contribute to encourage the multidisciplinary preservation of the historical and cultural context of the route [37].

5.2.7. Commercialization

Along cultural routes, there will always be an increase in the number of commercial activities as a result of cultural tourism, such as tourism marketing [25,36,60] , crafts selling[61] , commercialization of historical buildings , and so other similar endeavors [39,62]. Commercialization can help raise funds for heritage restoration and promote economic development in less developed areas along the route [39]; however, it can also bring about overtourism, resulting in environmental

pollution and damage to monuments in historical area [39,62]. Moreover, the sale of handicrafts that differ from local traditions and the construction of commercial buildings that differ from local architectural styles can threaten traditional ways of life and lead to the secularization of symbolism in many parts of the route [39,61,62].

5.2.8. Offering Itinerary Planning and Travel Programs

Because cultural routes are generally large in scale which make it difficult for tourists to experience the many attractions in a single day, many route committees offer multi-day route travel packages that even include meals, lodging, and tour guide service [50,63–65]. For example, The path of peace in Italy offers packages to visitors and school groups for the educational purpose. The "package of the Great War Anniversary" trip comprises of a stay of two to four days, visits to strongholds and trenches, as well as historical lectures given at the locations visited [1]. It greatly enriches the travel experience of tourists and strengthens the historical and cultural education and publicity of the route.

6. Conclusion

This study analyzes the relationship between cultural tourism and cultural routes. Cultural routes are significant cultural tourism items since they may give a wonderful travel experience. The development of cultural tourism is a way to protect cultural routes and also plays an important role in the protection and transmission of regional culture and history. Cultural tourism can promote the economic development of historical area, integrate cultural heritage resources, increase their publicity and attractiveness, thus guide and promote people's awareness of cultural heritage so as to form a sense of heritage protection and inheritance.

Though the systematically review of the current research status on tourism development of cultural routes, our study summarized 3 different categories according to routes functions , context and content, 3 planning patterns of routes tourism and 8 tools of cultural tourism for regional conservation and development. Establishing routes' committees or associations and Integral tourism management are the two most common tools. These tools aim to address the destruction of historic sites, lack of scenic quality, urban sprawl and depopulation of historic areas, especially for the poor historical remains of ancient trade or transportation routes.

Through the evaluation of the tools, it was found that there are still many problems and challenges in the process of tourism development along cultural routes. The following aspects are proposed for future research: （1） Establishment of a planning and management framework from the whole to the local level (2) Creation of assessment tools to achieve the integration of objectives related to heritage preservation, local aesthetics, recreation, and the specific interests of the various stakeholders, including the public, professionals, and decision-makers (3) All-encompassing assessment of the cultural routes from the pre-tourism phase, the mid-term phase, and the post-tourism phase to the balance between the preservation and utilisation of cultural heritage and avoiding the secularization of the symbolic significance of the routes. preservation and utilisation of cultural heritage and avoiding the secularization of the symbolic significance of the routes.

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Appendix A

N O.	Name	Country	Types	Planning patterns	Tools	References
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1	VIA REGIA	France、Germany、Poland、Ukraine、Belarus	Trade、migrate or transportati on routes	Point-based planning	<div>Official digital platform</div> <div>Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes</div> <div>Establishing routes’ committees or associations</div>	[13,41,66]
2	Rideau Canal	Canada	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	<div>Integral tourism management and route planning</div> <div>Community participation</div> <div>Establishing routes’ committees or associations</div> <div>Holding cultural events</div> <div>Offering itinerary planning and travel programs</div>	[25,64]
3	THE DANUBE REGION	Germany、Austria、Hungary、Slovakia、Romania、Bulgaria、Moldova、Serbia、Croatia	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	<div>Community participation</div> <div>Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes</div> <div>Integral tourism management and route planning</div> <div>Establishing routes’ committees or associations</div>	[34,38,67,68]
4	the Way of St. James (The Camino de Santiago)	Spain, France, Portugal	Pilgrimage routes	Linear-based planning	<div>Commercialization</div> <div>Offering itinerary planning and travel programs</div> <div>Holding cultural events</div> <div>Community participation</div> <div>Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes</div> <div>Official digital platform</div> <div>Integral tourism management and route planning</div>	[39,41,54,69–71]

5	via Francigena	England, France, Switzerland, Italy	Pilgrimage routes	Linear-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	[32,43,44,63,72,73]
					Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Official digital platform	
					Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	
					Community participation	
					Commercialization	
					Holding cultural events	
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
6	the Phoenicians' Route	Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Spain, Tunisia, Slovenia, Ukraine	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Point-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	[4,74–76]
					Community participation	
					Holding cultural events	
7	The Qhapaq Ñan	Peru, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Point-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	[35,36,61,77]
					Community participation	
					Commercialization	
8	Saint Martin of Tours route	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg	Pilgrimage routes	Point-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	[33]
					Official digital platform	
					Community participation	
					Holding cultural events	

		Netherlands 、Slovak、 Slovenia、 Poland			Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Commercialization	
		Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Turkey	Historical borders	Linear- based planning	Official digital platform Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes Establishing routes' committees or associations	[47]
9	Iron Curtain Trail				Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Official digital platform	
					Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Holding cultural events	
10	Via Romea Germani ca	Germany, Italy,Austria	Pilgrimage routes	Linear- based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	[47]
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
					Holding cultural events	
11	Ibar Valley	Serbia	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning Establishing routes' committees or associations	[49]
					Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	
12	The path of peace	Italy	Military routes	Linear- based planning	Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes Establishing routes' committees or associations	[50]

					Commercialization	[45]
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
13	Great Ocean Road	Australia	Military routes	Linear-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	[56]
14	Batik cultural route	Indonesia	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Point-based planning	Official digital platform	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Official digital platform	[78]
15	St Paul Trail	Turkey	Pilgrimage routes	Linear-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Integral tourism management and route planning	[78]
16	The Lycian Way	Turkey	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Linear-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Integral tourism management and route planning	[37]
17	Tamsui-Kavalan trails	China (Taiwan)	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Linear-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Community participation	
					Holding cultural events	[62]
18	the Phrygian Way	Turkey	Trade, migrate or transportation routes	Linear-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Commercialization	[22]
19	the Kumano	Japan	Pilgrimage routes	Linear-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	

	Kodo Route				Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Community participation	
					Holding cultural events	
20	Oscypek Trail	Poland	Trade, migrate or transportati on routes	Area-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	[26]
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
21	ROMAN EMPERORS AND DANUBE WINE ROUTE	Albania、Bosnia and Herzegovina、Bulgaria、Croatia、Hungary、Montenegro、north Macedonia、Romania、Serbia、Slovenia	Trade, migrate or transportati on routes	Point-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Official digital platform	
					Commercialization	[30,60]
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
22	the Great Wall in the Ming Dynasty	China	Historical borders	Linear-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	[42,79]
					Integral tourism management and route planning	
23	The Illinois & Michigan Canal	America	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Community participation	
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
					Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	[27,65]
24	the Grand Canal	China	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	[40,46,80]

25	Meiguan Historical Trail	China	Trade、migrate or transportation routes	Area-based planning	<u>Integral tourism management and route planning</u> Establishing routes' committees or associations	[81]
26	Cane River	America	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	<u>Community participation</u> <u>Establishing routes' committees or associations</u> Integral tourism management and route planning	[82,83]
27	Blackstone River Valley	America	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	<u>Integral tourism management and route planning</u> Establishing routes' committees or associations	[82,83]
28	Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor	America	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based development	<u>Integral tourism management and route planning</u> Establishing routes' committees or associations	[82,83]
29	The Piast Trail	Poland	Trade、migrate or transportation routes	Area-based planning	<u>Establishing routes' committees or associations</u> Integral tourism management and route planning	[28]
30	The Underground Military Galleries of the Petrovaradin Fortress	Serbia	Military routes	Area-based planning	<u>Integral tourism management and route planning</u> <u>Construction of infrastructure facilities along the routes</u> Establishing routes' committees or associations	[29]
31	The Silk Road	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Korea, Egypt, Georgia,	Trade、migrate or transportation routes	Point-based planning	<u>Establishing routes' committees or associations</u> Official digital platform	[31,84,85]

			Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenista n, Ukraine, Uzbekistan			
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
32	Erie Cannal	America	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	Establishing routes' committees or associations Integral tourism management and route planning Official digital platform	[52,86]
33	Chishui River	China	Trade、 migrate or transportati on routes	Point-based planning	Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	[48]
34	Canal du Midi	France	Heritage canal or valley	Area-based planning	Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes Official digital platform Establishing routes' committees or associations Integral tourism management and route planning	[41,87]
35	Cyprus governm	Cyprus	Railway heritage	Point-based planning	Constructing infrastructure	[53]

ent railways					facilities along the routes	
36	Puffing Billy	Austria	Railway heritage	Linear- based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	[51]
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	
					Constructing infrastructure facilities along the routes	
					Community participation	
					Holding cultural events	
					Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	
					Integral tourism management and route planning	
37	Kuranda train	Austria	Railway heritage	Linear- based planning	Community participation	[51]
					Official digital platform	
					Offering itinerary planning and travel programs	
38	Route 66	America	Highway heritage	Linear- based planning	Integral tourism management and route planning	[88]
					Establishing routes' committees or associations	

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