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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-fourth session

Cairns, Australia

27 November – 2 December 2000

**Information Document: Report of the International Task Force on the Global Strategy for Natural Heritage, outreach, education, cooperation, and training (CONNECT), Paris, France, 17-20 April 2000**

An International Task Force meeting to elaborate a 5-year Strategic Action Plan for “Capacity Building to serve Outreach, Natural Heritage Networking, Education, Co-operation and Training” for World Natural Heritage sites management approved by the twenty-third session of the World Heritage Committee, and financed with income generated by the Self-Financing Programme, was convened at UNESCO Headquarters from 17-20 April 2000. Over thirty -five individuals representing a wide diversity of perspectives, expertise, interests and organizations participated. The Task Force came to a common agreement on the need for actions to promote communication, education and public awareness in Natural World Heritage conservation to support the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Among the recommendations made by the Task Force include the need to: Expand partnerships and increase joint activities with organizations and programmes with shared objectives for conserving natural heritage and further develop substantive working relationships with NGOs and Conventions; Place greater emphasis on strengthening international self-help networks of natural protected area practitioners and faculty resources of regional training centres to increase natural heritage management effectiveness; Develop effective and systematic delivery systems to assure World Heritage materials actually reach strategic focal points, and in particular, all natural World Heritage sites, training centres and partners; Increase efforts to directly involve natural World Heritage site personnel in World Heritage activities and decision-making; and Develop systematic project performance evaluation mechanisms and incentive programmes (such as a Global Natural World Heritage Conservation Award) to recognize and promote excellence in natural World Heritage achievements. The major outcomes of the Task Force meeting include the preparation of a Strategic Plan for CONNECT and elaboration of a proposal for a collaborative project with the United Nations Foundation and GLOBE (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) to provide conservation/environmental education in schools and other such institutions near World Natural Heritage sites. **The findings of the CONNECT Task Force meeting, the Strategic Plan and the Programme of Work (2001 - 2005) are presented to the twenty-fourth session the World Heritage Committee for consideration and approval.**

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR  
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR OUTREACH, NATURAL HERITAGE  
NETWORKING, EDUCATION, COOPERATION AND TRAINING  
(CONNECT)**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee, December 1999 in Marrakesh, Morocco, authorized the convening of a Task Force to elaborate on World Natural Heritage capacity building and outreach initiatives. This meeting was convened at the World Heritage Centre, UNESCO, Paris 17-20 April 2000. Over thirty-five individuals representing a wide diversity of perspectives, expertise, interests and organizations participated. Keynote speakers presented theme topics on conventions and partnerships, global climate change, communications, sustainable use and *in situ* conservation of biological diversity, education and capacity building. Small working groups focused on communications, capacity building and partnerships. Summaries of the working group conclusions were reviewed and discussed in plenary sessions. A high level of interest and commitment to World Heritage participation was demonstrated by the participants, many of which expressed satisfaction, enthusiasm and appreciation to UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee in follow-up communications.

The participants identified a variety of critical needs and significant opportunities for collaborative and convergent World Natural Heritage actions. Emphasis was placed on determining World Natural Heritage conservation requirements and strengthening partnerships which through outreach programmes would benefit World Natural Heritage sites in the context of both increased site management effectiveness, and contributing to meeting broad biodiversity and nature protection goals. It was recognised that most if not all World Natural Heritage sites require remedial actions to establish sufficient base-line information to provide quantitative indices to World Heritage values. Also required were both vigorous monitoring programmes to determine the nature and extent of changing conditions and an adequate management capacity to protect and to present natural sites in accordance with the Convention. It was further recognised that World Natural Heritage sites have yet unrealized potentials for environmental, economic and educational contributions to society and future generations, only if they are effectively managed and presented. The urgent circumstances of the growing number of natural properties on the World Heritage In-Danger List were given special consideration. Specific opportunities for programmatic and institutional convergence and collaboration were identified by the participants.

The participants concluded with the following general recommendations:

General Recommendations:

- (1) Increase joint activities with organizations and programmes with shared objectives for conserving natural heritage and further develop substantive working relationships with NGOs and Conventions addressing broader global environmental issues to achieve greater environmental, social and economic relevance for World Heritage.
- (2) Implement the approved natural World Heritage Training Strategy and strengthen international self-help networks of natural protected area practitioners and faculty resources of regional training centres to increase natural heritage management effectiveness.
- (3) Develop more effective and systematic delivery systems to assure World Heritage materials such as "Heritage in Young Hands" and Information sheets actually reach strategic focal points, and in particular, all World Natural Heritage sites, Training Centres and partners.
- (4) Increase direct involvement of World Natural Heritage site personnel in World Heritage activities and decision making and give high priority to resolving existing adverse conditions eroding World Heritage values in most, if not all World Natural Heritage sites; emphasis to be placed on properties on the World Heritage In-Danger List.
- (5) Develop National World Heritage Committees in each country with broad representation national authorities, local communities, private sector and the NGOs.
- (6) Establish a national Focal Point – with capacity and facility to mobilize nation-wide actions for the promotion of the Convention and for sensitizing the public at large.
- (7) Develop systematic project performance evaluation mechanisms and incentive programmes to recognize and promote excellence in World Natural Heritage achievements.
- (8) Monitor the implementation of the CONNECT Programme and report progress to the Committee.

Based upon the deliberations of the participants and their general recommendations, a series of strategic short-term and mid-term actions were formulated.

**Immediate and Short Term Actions (2000-2002):** Existing successful programmes supporting the primary objectives of the World Heritage Convention have been identified and can be adapted and expanded within partnership frameworks on a high priority basis for implementation. The on-going need for enhanced capacity and capability for effective World Natural Heritage management is fundamental and ubiquitous. Several programmes have demonstrable potential for quickly addressing this objective through cost effective and timely collaboration.

**1. International Practitioner Networks and Training Centres.** Protected area national and international practitioner networks such as the International Ranger Federation (IRF), Training Centres and increased collaboration among stakeholders including other key conventions were viewed as essential elements to both successful natural heritage conservation and to heightened public awareness of acknowledged global environmental concerns. Within the framework of the approved World Natural Heritage Training Strategy:

- Strengthen support to IRF Congresses and participate in related professional development activities; develop a coherent work plan for specific joint IRF/WHC actions to enhance management of World Natural Heritage; develop a shared data base from the IRF membership for qualified field personnel to assist Training Centres, IUCN and States Parties in World Heritage training.
- Continue to support regional and national Training Centres in their preparation of capable protected natural area personnel; initiate an evaluation of Training Centre World Heritage curriculum materials and strengthen identified weaknesses in World Natural Heritage training; systematically provide Training Centres with World Heritage materials for use with trainees.
- Convene world-wide Congress of World Natural Heritage managers and personnel to commemorate Convention anniversary (2002) with World Congress on National Parks; case studies to be prepared on issues affecting World Natural Heritage values and management.
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**2. Educational Initiatives.** The GLOBE (General Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) Programme will seek to expand their highly successful world-wide student initiative to involve World Natural Heritage sites in participating countries. Gender equity and community involvement would be reflected in the design of experiential student learning experiences in World Natural Heritage sites and the expansion of career opportunities in natural science and heritage conservation for young women would be addressed.

- Develop a UNESCO-WHC/GLOBE funding proposal to submit to United Nations Foundation for a joint initiative utilizing World Natural Heritage sites and personnel and involving near by and urban schools to provide experiential learning experiences in basic science and biological diversity conservation.
- Subject to available funding,, develop a joint UNESCO-WHC/GLOBE framework for the management and execution of pilot project activities; develop materials and protocols for a standardized collection and sharing of data with the conservation and scientific communities world-wide through the Internet; provide the means and mechanism for students to collect and share data for informed decision making, public awareness and more effective World Natural Heritage management.

- Integrate existing World Heritage materials including those developed for "Heritage in Young Hands" into GLOBE learning materials and develop new materials to address World Natural Heritage biodiversity conservation and climate change issues.

**3. Advisory Body Collaboration.** Within the terms and conditions of the IUCN/UNESCO-WHC Memorandum of Understanding (1996), re-examine opportunities for increased collaboration on World Natural Heritage protection and presentation; selectively strengthen collaboration in capacity building and public awareness activities.

- Develop a joint work plan to expand and integrate World Natural Heritage more effectively into IUCN membership activities, regional offices and publication programmes for increased public awareness and management capability.
- Strengthen IUCN capacity building capabilities including the development and distribution of natural protected area management handbook series to set appropriate standards and provide guidelines for site managers and personnel.

**4. Collaboration Between Conventions.** The World Heritage Committee and the States Parties of other concerned Conventions have both encouraged and endorsed closer working relationships between Convention Secretariats to reduce redundancy, costs and burdens of State Party reporting requirements and to increase effectiveness. Direct and mutually supportive actions can be taken to increase the implementation effectiveness of these international instruments including Ramsar, the Convention on Biodiversity and the Endangered Species Convention.

- Convene with UNEP a follow-up meeting to the CONNECT initiative of Convention Secretariat representatives to develop a protocol for collaboration for consideration and action by the respective States Parties.
- Provide a full range of World Natural Heritage publications and relevant information to the Secretariats of other Conventions and data to be systematically exchanged particularly on potentially threatened and threatened resources and values.
- Representatives of the participating Secretariats to attend statutory meetings of the Conventions and exchange information on critical issues and inform the respective States Parties accordingly.

**5. Private Sector Partnerships.** World Natural Heritage partnerships with the private sector, and in particular, the tourism industry provide opportunities to both mitigate the impact of increased visitation on sites and to increase public awareness of World Heritage values and issues.

- Strengthen and build upon WHC initiatives with the tourism industry and actively pursue and conclude negotiations with key international tourism operators.
- Establish World Natural Heritage tourism and visitor-use protocols satisfactory, equitable and beneficial to site management and nearby communities.

**Mid-Term and Longer Term Actions (2003-2005):**

The CONNECT Programme will expand and evolve in the mid to long term. This will be a period of assessment, evaluation and expansion particularly with NGOs. The CONNECT Meeting recommends that a small standing committee of organizational representatives be regularly convened to monitor and evaluate the progress of the programme.

- Analyze and evaluate GLOBE/WHC World Natural Heritage world-wide student learning initiative project; refine learning materials accordingly. Develop recognition programme for outstanding students. Incorporate student collected data into GLOBE Internet web-site.
- Based upon a satisfactory and continued international expansion of IRF membership, develop a work plan and schedule for joint World Natural Heritage site and Training Centre assistance projects.
- Integrate case studies from the world-wide Congress of World Natural Heritage managers into Training Centre and IRF training materials and IUCN management guidelines.
- Continue to strengthen NGO involvement in World Natural Heritage activities and in particular, potentially threatened and threatened World Natural Heritage sites for increased public awareness.

**The World Heritage Committee is encouraged to favourably consider the findings of the CONNECT Meeting and is requested to endorse its general recommendations and proposed strategic actions.**

**PROCEEDING OF THE MEETING  
ON  
CAPACITY BUILDING FOR OUTREACH, NATURAL HERITAGE NETWORKING,  
EDUCATION, COOPERATION AND TRAINING (CONNECT)  
UNESCO, WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE  
Paris, France, 17 - 20 April 2000**

**FINAL REPORT**

The 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the World Heritage Committee, December 1999 in Marrakesh, Morocco, authorized the convening of a Task Force to elaborate on natural World Heritage capacity building and outreach initiatives. The meeting was convened under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Wangari, Senior Programme Specialist, World Heritage Centre, UNESCO, Paris 17-20 April 2000.

**Objectives of the Task Force meeting:**

Define, amongst others, mechanisms for the following:

- (a) co-operation between the Centre and partners including conservation NGOs such as IUCN, WWF and others, Foundations and Funds to build support for protected area management and biodiversity conservation based on the prestige of World Natural Heritage;
- (b) demonstrate the use of outreach, promotional and educational activities in selected World Natural Heritage as a mechanism for generating sustainable financing for long-term conservation; and
- (c) demonstrate the use of outreach and educational activities focussed on World Natural Heritage for generating local community support and for raising local and national awareness of global environmental problems and contributions made by the sites in solving those problems.

UNESCO's Acting Assistant Director General for Science Dr. Gisbert Glaser opened the meeting and DR. N. Ishwaran, Senior Programme Specialist, World Heritage Centre welcomed the participants.

Over thirty-five individuals representing a wide diversity of perspectives, expertise, interests and organizations participated (see Participant List Appendix I). For the large majority of the participants, the meeting was their first direct involvement in World Heritage and in the process, it provided an initial basis for exchanging programmatic information. Representation from field training institutions, professional networks and site management directly and indirectly responsible for the day-to-day actions within protected areas provided new insights into the pragmatic needs and priorities for the effective management of natural heritage resources. The participation of influential non-governmental conservation organizations contributed to a collective appreciation of their respective pivotal and complementary roles in illuminating issues, contributions to informed decision making, and in particular, to increasing public awareness.

Emphasis was placed on determining natural World Heritage conservation requirements and strengthening partnerships which would benefit natural World

Heritage sites in the context of both increased site management effectiveness, and contributing to meeting broad biodiversity and nature protection goals. Participants identified critical needs, considered collaborative opportunities and options, and developed a series of strategic actions that would produce tangible and reciprocal benefits. It was recognised that natural World Heritage sites require remedial actions to establish sufficient base-line information to provide indices to World Heritage values, on-going monitoring programmes to determine the nature and extent of changing conditions and sufficient management capacity to protect and present natural sites in accordance with the Convention. Natural World Heritage sites have yet unrealized potentials for environmental, economic and educational contributions to society, if they are effectively managed and presented. The special circumstances of the growing number of natural properties on the List of World Heritage In-Danger were given special consideration.

Capacity building through protected area national and international practitioner networks, training centres and increased collaboration among stakeholders including other key conventions were viewed as essential elements to both successful natural heritage conservation and to heightened public awareness of acknowledged global environmental concerns. While excellent examples of materials intended for raising public awareness were reviewed, it was revealed that many of the sample communication materials failed, not in production, but in delivery systems - meeting participants from outside UNESCO had not seen, nor were aware of the range of materials produced by the World Heritage Centre.

In plenary session, selected experts made strategic theme presentations on Conventions and Partnerships, Climate Change, Communications, Sustainable Use and In-situ Conservation, and Capacity Building; a Synthesis paper was presented to integrate these theme topics. Smaller working groups elaborated on these topics and considered additional programmatic presentations by participants.

### **Summaries of theme topics considered by participants:**

Conventions and Partnerships: An aggregate of inter-governmental conventions provides an imperfect, but potentially interlocking statutory framework for addressing many conservation issues of direct relevance to natural World Heritage area conservation. (See Theme paper "Key Conventions for International Conservation", Division of Environmental Conventions, UNEP, Appendix 2). While fully recognizing State sovereignty, this family of international instruments articulates and assigns certain agreed upon responsibilities intended to constructively address and resolve environmental issues of regional and global concern. Where there is a convergence of statutory responsibilities involving widely recognized tangible natural assets such as a "popular" species, or well-known places, there are special opportunities to constructively highlight resource issues and provide a clear focus for institutional resources and public awareness. In the latter instance and where the non-governmental conservation community has taken active roles, collaborative actions have been instrumental in bringing a variety of environmentally adverse events and potential threats to light for informed decision making. Without such collaborative efforts between Convention Secretariats, advisory body experts and NGOs, it is unlikely that the potential EL Vizcaino whale-salt production conflicts or threats to the Galapagos World Heritage site would have been successfully mitigated.



A variety of recent collaborative arrangements between Convention secretariats are indicative of the perceived need to minimize Convention redundancy, and to more fully utilize all available resources for equitable resolutions. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) encouraged by the States Parties and negotiated by their respective Secretariats now link some of these Conventions. In principle, such cooperative arrangements offer substantive mutual benefits, reduced overlap, shared data and opportunities for joint endeavors. However, without a process for periodic critical review and expanding involvement, MOUs could become an end in themselves - paper products, rather than the more effective and efficient conservation efforts that were intended by the States Parties.

On behalf of State Parties, a variety of supplementary partnerships and contractual relationships between Convention Secretariats, select stakeholders and the private sector have also been forged. As with concession operations providing services within protected areas, some have produced mutually equitable benefits and definable conservation measures; others have been less fruitful. Generally overlooked, but increasingly documented, are the billions of dollars that natural World Heritage sites generate for national economies through the tourism industry and for which there are few returns to conservation in general, or site-related asset management.

It was recognised that threats to natural area values have increasingly involved armed conflict and civil unrest. Complex humanitarian considerations have emerged in conflict with these values and adequate international instruments or actions do not appear to satisfactorily mitigate such social, economic and environmental issues.

Climate Change: It is widely accepted by scientists and increasingly acknowledged by governments that the earth is undergoing now measurable global climate change. Many studies support a global temperature increase of 2-6 C; it is anticipated that the mean annual global surface temperature will increase by 1 to 3.5 degrees C by 2100. Efforts to reduce the extent of this predicted warming and in particular, the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere commenced with the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). With the likelihood of significant climatic events becoming more frequent, a predicted significant rise in global mean sea level and climatic zones (e.g. tropical, subtropical and temperate) shifting hundreds of miles all within this century, the anticipated environmental, social and economic impacts are of a magnitude beyond experience in human history. It is essential such trends be identified and monitored with sufficient time to develop adequate responses and adaptive strategies. The nature and extent of such climatic change could be first detected in areas where reliable baseline data and on-going monitoring programmes exist. Natural World Heritage sites and protected areas theoretically required to have this capacity and capability for basic management purposes should logically be prepared to serve in this role. However, entire populations of non-adaptive plant and less-mobile animal species will be displaced and replaced, or extinguished without record or notice unless extensive remedial actions are taken within such sites. If adequately equipped and staffed, protected natural areas would provide an in-situ early warning and monitoring system and a communications launch pad to raise public awareness in a timely manner.

Communications: The keystone in the arch between issue and action is communication: Classroom education in the formal sense for the longer term, and information in the informal sense for more immediate responses. Sample curriculum development initiatives and teaching kits, interactive student involvement and community participation in decision making are now increasingly possible with available technology and enlightened resource management agencies. Mass media for the public at large and communication internetworking between constituency groups have recently demonstrated success in addressing urgent issues. Target audiences and the nature of the intended responses are among the critical factors in determining the most appropriate media for effective communications to occur. The lack of effective dissemination of relevant information remains a serious obstacle to public awareness and informed decision making.

A multi-level and interrelated approach will be necessary to influence social attitudes and behavior with respect to natural heritage conservation. The "Education, information and communication" (EIC) approach embraces and advocates this notion - a system saturation effort in an idealized sense ultimately requiring both national level legislative framework and policy direction penetrating through society to grass-root levels and rebounding upwards through accepted political processes. Neither the opportunities, nor the tools for expansion and strategic actions are lacking, but linkages between programmes and the convergence of resources to address common interests require further development.

Natural World Heritage sites are often icons of the earth's most prominent features and intricate functions. They are by definition the subject of national pride and international recognition, and as a consequence, receive global attention. With an estimated sixty million annual visitors to these areas alone, on-site presentations to this self-selected and motivated audience may have been largely ignored as valuable opportunities to convey not only international significance and inherent World Heritage values, but a range of relevant international environmental issues as well. Presentation is among the least addressed of the World Heritage Convention's statutory requirements.

Sustainable Use and In-situ Conservation: Repeatedly scientists have emphasized that the most effective method of conserving plant and animal species is through in-situ management of protected natural areas where the integrity of ecosystem functions is perpetuated and sustained. In light of burgeoning human population pressures and ever-increasing competition for space and resources, considerably more debate occurs over the suitability and appropriateness of a variety of competing resource uses that may, or may not be sustainable. "Sustainability" is the operative concept in both instances. It was noted by the Chief Scientist for IUCN that: "...the concept [of sustainability] is meaningful only as it relates to entire ecosystems, not simply on the species targeted for harvest". (See theme paper "Sustainable Use and In Situ Conservation, Chief Scientist, IUCN - Appendix 3). In so far as ecosystems in themselves are inextricably linked within the biosphere, and small units most often measure time, sustainability remains the "highly elusive goal". Suggested and imagined success in this regard may prove to be a momentary illusion. On the other hand, dynamic ecosystems have proven remarkably resilient if viable elements are given functional refuge, and many conflicting land uses may be of a relatively temporary nature with the application of an extended time scale.

As the concept of designating and protecting nationally and internationally significant natural areas for public benefit has expanded and evolved, so have the issues involved in their effective management grown more complex. No longer can mere geographical isolation and simple physical protection be relied on to sustain these properties unimpaired.

Capacity Building: Following a recent and exhaustive Canadian government sponsored evaluation of its own natural national parks, an article on the "World's Treasures" appeared in the Canadian Nature journal which noted that: "... it's easier to identify them [natural World Heritage sites] than to protect them". The article further suggested that "...none of the Canadian national parks designated as World Heritage are in a pristine condition, nor do any stand out as a model of protection". The same may be said of most, if not all natural World Heritage sites. It was noted that placing natural areas on the World Heritage List should not be an end point, but a starting point in strengthened national and international capacity building initiatives. Further emphasis on implementing and developing the World Heritage Training Strategy previously adopted by the World Heritage Committee is required.

Among the primary deficiencies of natural World Heritage site protection is the inability of individuals and institutions to effectively identify and avert potential and/or ascertained threats to the World Heritage values of these properties. Remedial efforts are necessary to clarify, quantify and further articulate natural World Heritage values revealed in the nomination process. Not every threat to World Heritage is of the highly conspicuous nature inherent to many regional development projects; many are subtle, known only to field personnel at the site. Even at that, the long-term erosion of World Heritage values may not be readily identified without sufficient baseline data, monitoring and staff capacities to interpret changes within the resources under protection.

In addition to the necessary capacity to collect and analyze baseline data, "management teams" with the capacity to plan, manage and present the values of designated natural areas are necessary. The aggregate of specialized skills, experience and knowledge of site personnel and management teams necessary to meet these requirements has grown increasingly complex and difficult to acquire in the abstract. Such technical skills and management experience are simply not available in most university degree curriculums. Often "concept-reality gaps" exist between external sources of assistance dependant on theoretical models and field personnel with day-to-day responsibilities to meet statutory and policy requirements. Strategic planning sessions and conservation decisions are too frequently made in the absence of the ground truth of local knowledge and experience from within a protected area system and affected communities. It is appropriate and necessary that closer and on-going connections be made between vested interest groups at every level and site management.

Two sources of unmatched, but under-utilized expertise and knowledge in the effective management natural of protected areas are the global cadre of well-trained site personnel and wildlife and protected area training centres (national and regional). In inescapable irony, the accepted mantra of international assistance to fully involve local communities most often excludes the one local community actually responsible

for the protection of natural areas - field personnel. In response, vigorous self-help efforts of park and protected area personnel networking at regional and international levels are becoming increasingly in demand as the most credible and cost-efficient sources of invaluable assistance.

The International Federation of Rangers (IRF) now represents a rapidly growing global network of natural protected area practitioners committed to self-help and dedicated to professional development opportunities not available elsewhere. Within this international body can be found an ample number of tried and proven practitioners experienced in every facet of natural protected area management. It is vital that such an international network resource be nurtured, actively strengthened and encouraged to more fully participate in the conservation process.

Regional training centres have been long viewed as an essential source of meeting the basic quotas and requirements of personnel for natural protected areas. In some instances, more forward thinking nations and those unable to have their personnel requirements adequately met by regional centres, have invested in national level training institutions. Both regional and national level field training endeavors hold special responsibility for qualifying individuals for natural protected area management. Training centre faculties are both in a position to know the specialized needs of their trainees and may be fully capable of delivering the technical assistance requested by many natural protected areas from within their region. For this reason, it would be desirable to invest in strengthening faculty capabilities and resources, and encouraging training centres to have a more proactive role in providing technical assistance to sites within their region. In principle, there would appear to be substantive value and cost savings in having the faculty and student body together with site staff engage in the management planning of a protected area, or preparing presentation materials which in the process would be an unmatched and practical learning experience.

Recognition from the international community for outstanding individual and institutional performance would be a powerful incentive for increased effectiveness in natural area management and protecting natural World Heritage values. Where practiced, such incentive awards programmes have proved effective, popular and effective.

#### **Working Group Considerations, Summary Conclusions and Proposed Actions:**

Following keynote theme presentations and discussion, the meeting divided into smaller working groups to elaborate on the selected topics of Strengthening Partnerships, Communications and Capacity Building:

**Strengthening Partnerships:** The Partnership working group selected to concentrate on the following areas for elaboration: Promoting Accession, Fund Raising, Site-Related Conservation, Political Information Exchange, Scientific Information Exchange and Capacity Building Partnerships.

1. Continued Promoting Accession to and Developing of the World Heritage Convention. There remain a dwindling number of nations that are not party to, or have not acceded to the World Heritage Convention and other relevant environmental Conventions. There are potential natural World Heritage sites

which appear to meet the Convention's criteria in under-represented regions. A strategic, rather than general approach should be taken.

- Nations that have not done so should continue to be encouraged to ratify, or accede to the World Heritage Convention.
- Catalyse the nomination of sites appearing to meet the Convention's criteria and in particular, sites located in under-represented regions of the world.
- Identify sites in danger (ascertained and potential); identify both the source of threats and necessary recovery options and plans.
- Inform policy and decision-makers of current sites with a view to both encourage additional site nominations and to assure recognition of World Heritage benefits.

Partnership Initiatives:

<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>INTER-NATIONAL</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>GLOBAL</b>
NGOs	Government	Government	Agreements	Conventions
IGOs	NGOs	Media	Media	IGOs
Media	Media			Media

Schedule: Ongoing initiatives - priorities given to strategic development of NGO and Media partnerships for promoting accession and new nominations from under-represented regions; Secretariats to review existing partnerships and non-productive or non-beneficial partnerships to be dissolved.

2. Fund Raising - The cost of effectively protecting, managing and presenting World Heritage values far exceeds the resources of the World Heritage Fund. Significantly greater efforts must be made in establishing partnerships and focussing available fiscal resources on natural World Heritage sites if the goals of the Convention are to be achieved.

- Establish partnerships with the private sector to support site-specific requirements; in particular seek to establish partnerships with those entities associated with the tourism industry.
- Assist States Parties as required to define requirements and priorities for protecting and presenting natural World Heritage values and encourage funding institutions to include World Heritage needs in the context of sustainable development projects.
- Seek sponsors for incentive awards programmes to recognize outstanding individual and institutional efforts to protect and present natural World Heritage values; recognize sponsors which have made significant contributions to conserving World Heritage.

- Explore with potential sponsors innovative fund raising concepts such as World Heritage passports.

**Fund Raising Partnership Initiatives:**

	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>INTER-NATIONAL</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>GLOBAL</b>
Private	Business, Tour Operators, Tourists	Business, Tour Operators	Business	Business	Business, Tour industry, Foundations
Public	Local Authorities	Government		REIO's	GEF, UNFIT, Trusts
Awards	Media, Business	Media, Business	Media, Business	Media, Business	Media, Business

**Schedule:**

- Short-Term - WHC to Develop Business Plan and Strategy for Fund Raising Partnerships; WHC to continue to seek Tourism Industry partnerships; WHC to satisfactorily conclude negotiations with key individual international Tourism Operators.
  - Mid-Term - Advisory Body to establish standards for excellence in natural World Heritage site management; WHC to seek private and public sector sponsors for International natural World Heritage site Recognition Programmes and arrange appropriate attendant media publicity; NGOs and private sector to negotiate equitable terms for benefiting natural World Heritage sites. NGOs and Regional Training Centres to collaborate on development of partnership training modules.
  - Long-Term - WHC to establish a partnership review process to evaluate merits and benefits of partnership relationships.
3. Site-Related Conservation - All natural World Heritage sites would benefit from increased management and conservation effectiveness.
- Development of standardized site-specific baseline inventories.
  - Develop methodologies for site management plans utilizing an ecosystem approach.
  - Identify appropriate transboundary sites involving two or more States Parties and set up (in keeping with separate legal regimes) harmonized management and development plans for such sites.
  - Link management plans with biodiversity related Conventions as early warning for potential dangers to heritage sites.
  - Organize joint advisory missions to sites with a view to making management recommendations to appropriate Conventions to augment implementation at national levels.

Site-Related Conservation Partnership Initiatives:

	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>INTER-NATIONAL</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>GLOBAL</b>
Baseline Inventory & State of Conservation	Local Officials, NGOs, Local Communities	Agencies, Museums, Laboratories, Universities, NGOs	Research Laboratories, NGOs	Agreements, Secretariats	Conventions, IGOs, International Assessment Panels, Practitioner Networks, IUCN & WCMC
Site Management Plans	Local Officials, NGOs, Local Communities	NGOs, Government, Convention Focal Points	Practitioner Networks	Training Centres, Practitioner Networks, Universities	Conventions, Practitioner Networks
Trans-boundary Sites	NGOs, Local Officials	Agencies, Governments, NGOs, Convention Focal Points	Agencies, Government, Bi- & Multi-Lateral Agreements		
Sites In-Danger	Local officials, NGOs	Convention Focal Points, Governments, NGOs	NGOs	IGOs	NGOs, IGOs Conventions, IUCN & WCMC

Schedule:

- Short-Term - IUCN/WCMC in collaboration with States Parties to review past nominations for gaps in quantitative World Heritage nomination information; Practitioner networks to develop site management performance standards; Training centres to develop site and management evaluation training modules;
- Mid-Term - Agencies and as appropriate in collaboration with IUCN, NGOs and practitioner networks to review natural World Heritage site management plans for adequacy and update; Training Centres in collaboration with practitioner networks and agencies develop training modules in management planning.
- Long-Term - Agencies and technical bodies to develop threat-mitigation plans for all natural World Heritage In-Danger sites; Agencies and as appropriate practitioner networks and training centres to strengthen systematic monitoring capabilities; Agencies and NGOs to identify potential transboundary sites for nomination and to harmonize management plans for existing transboundary natural World Heritage sites.

4. Political and Scientific Information Exchange - The States Parties have the responsibility to implement the Convention and adhere to the related

Operational Guidelines of the Convention. This task is facilitated by exchanges of information between governments and the Convention Secretariat and may be further assisted by a variety of other information sources including the Advisory Body for natural areas, site personnel and NGOs.

- IUCN working with the Secretariat, States Parties and other appropriate organizations as necessary should seek to standardize the level of detail necessary to clarify and quantify the level of information required in the nomination process to assess subsequent changes in World Heritage values, including site integrity.
- Information management should be given a high priority within Convention Secretariats so that accurate and detailed information can be readily available in a timely manner.
- WHC in conjunction with States Parties should assemble and make available summaries of all assistance (nature and source of assistance, cost and results) provided to individual natural World Heritage Sites through a regular reporting process.
- In instances of documented potential or ascertained threats to natural World Heritage values, sufficient information should be exchanged between involved States Parties, relevant Convention Secretariats and appropriate scientific advisory bodies for validation or repudiation.
- Hosts and sponsors of technical meetings should provide Convention Secretariats with meeting summaries and relevant technical papers concerning natural World Heritage sites.
- Convention Secretariats should attend relevant Conferences of Parties and provide meeting summaries to their respective executive bodies with particular emphasis on identifying cost-sharing joint endeavors of common concern and reducing overlap.

Political and Scientific Information Exchange Initiatives:

	<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>INTER-NATIONAL</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>GLOBAL</b>
Convention and Guideline Implementation	Local Communities & Officials, Site Personnel	Agencies, Inter-Ministerial Coordination & NGOs, Convention Focal Points	CoPs of Regional Agreements & NGOs	CoPs of Regional Agreements, Regional Training Centres	CoPs of Conventions NGOs Secretariats, Financial Institutions



Scientific Information Exchanges	Local Officials & Personnel, NGOs	Convention Focal Points, Technical Bodies, Universities	Agreements, IGOs, Technical Bodies	CoPs of Regional Agreements, NGOs	CoPs of Conventions & Advisory Bodies, Secretariats, NGOs
Workshops & Technical Meetings	Local Officials and Personnel, NGOs	Agencies, NGOs, Universities, Convention Focal Points	Government, NGOs, Bilateral Agreements	NGOs, Multilateral Agreements,	Secretariats, NGOs, Networks, Site Personnel, Advisory Bodies

Schedule:

- Short-Term - Secretariats to evolve a clear information strategy for information management and internal and external exchanges; IUCN and Secretariats in conjunction with appropriate UNESCO offices to develop standardized approaches to base-line inventory, monitoring including climate change and management assessment; Secretariats to develop effective systems for information dissemination.
  - Mid-Term - Training Centres to develop training modules for base-line inventory, monitoring, management assessment and Convention implementation based on standardized materials; Secretariats in conjunction with technical bodies and States Parties raise awareness to risks and impacts of invasive species; NGOs and agencies to exchange and disseminate monitoring information to raise public awareness.
  - Long-Term - Secretariats and NGOs in collaboration with UNEP to facilitate ongoing interactive information exchanges; Link information exchanges with scientific assessment bodies (as appropriate) to build a body of knowledge furthering the objectives of the Convention; NGOs and agencies to develop an integrated public awareness information programme targeting communities adjacent to natural World Heritage sites, policy makers and other stakeholders.
5. Capacity Building Partnerships: Increased individual and institutional management capacity is essential for effective protection and presentation of natural World Heritage site values.
- Regional and international practitioner self-help networks to continue to expand in membership and capabilities to collaborate with agencies and training centres.
  - Secretariats and Convention focal points to provide information and support to regional training centres.
  - States Parties to continue to be encouraged to include natural World Heritage site personnel in delegations to the Convention's statutory meetings.

Capacity Building Partnership Initiatives:

<b>LOCAL</b>	<b>NATIONAL</b>	<b>INTER-NATIONAL</b>	<b>REGIONAL</b>	<b>GLOBAL</b>
Com- munities and site personnel	Agencies, NGOs, Convention Focal Points, Training Centres		Practitioner Networks, NGOs, IGOs, Training Centres	Practitioner Networks, Secretariats, NGOs, IGOs

Schedule:

- On-going initiatives to be integrated with Capacity Building actions.

**Communications.** The level of public and government awareness and understanding of natural World Heritage values, opportunities and requirements is inadequate to effectively protect and present these properties. An increased effort to collaborate with willing partners with similar objectives and to diversify substantive communication efforts is required. Particular attention was given to assessing existing awareness levels of stakeholders, setting goals to fill the gaps, considering specific remedial actions and seeking indicators of success.

- Systematic regional meetings of natural World Heritage site managers and personnel to determine site related issues and requirements; a global meeting of World Heritage site managers would serve a variety of partnership, communication and capacity building needs.
- Maximize use and dissemination of existing Convention materials, identify gaps and requirements and develop new materials as required; a more effective system of Secretariat internal and external communications is needed.
- Build upon outreach programmes such as the highly successful Globe Programme and pilot IUCN-PARC project to further raise public awareness, student involvement and strengthen professional development.
- More fully utilize and expand partnerships to strengthen programmes for outreach and community involvement with balanced gender and age-group target audiences in mind.
- Seek ways to develop more effective and pervasive media relations supportive of natural World Heritage sites and related issues.
- Actively participate in collaborative planning opportunities to encourage inclusion of World Heritage dimensions.

#### **Communication Connections:**

1. Establish Globe/World Heritage Centre Project in partnership with National authorities, National Commissions, site management officials, community

partners, NGOs and private sector to develop global learning centres for student, teacher, scientist and site manager collaboration to monitor events and change in natural World Heritage sites and enhance environmental awareness.

- Select pilot natural World Heritage sites representing all regions
  - Select local community schools and nearby urban schools to:
    - Monitor environmental parameters in sites
    - Conduct basic site-related research
    - Learn about cultural dimensions of sites
    - Develop appropriate methodology and indices for measurements of biodiversity and climate change
    - Present results at sites and internationally
2. Develop and disseminate an on-going Series of Guidelines for Managers of natural World Heritage sites.
- Media Kits. Secretariat in partnership with training centres, and others as appropriate to develop media kits for public relations and working with the media.  
To include:
    - Press release format, World Heritage content and techniques
    - Media interview techniques
    - Web-based media information
    - Newsletters (traditional and electronic)
  - Media Relations. Secretariat in conjunction with IUCN, National Commissions, IFEJ and others as appropriate, to identify and establish relationships with media partners.  
To include:
    - Events such as Seminars for Journalists
    - Calendar of events for media such as 30 year Convention anniversary, 2002 PARCs conference, dedication ceremonies, etc.
    - News and "human interest" stories of success and failure, issues and accomplishments.
  - IUCN in collaboration with the Secretariat, Training Centres and regional distribution and resource centres to produce and disseminate Technical Guidelines and resource materials for practitioners.  
To include:
    - Ecotourism and public use
    - Economic valuation of site and resources
    - Managing theme areas such as mountain and marine protected areas
    - On-site presentation of World Heritage values
  - Secretariat in collaboration with other UNESCO units sponsors and select schools on the World Heritage Education Kit Project to:
    - Continue World Heritage education KITS evaluation and revisions
    - Produce lower cost versions of materials
    - Emphasize gender sensitive materials-

- Develop site-specific teacher guides
  - Issue specific materials-
  - Adapt materials for increased national and regional use
- IUCN in collaboration with Secretariat and others (training centres and practitioner networks to produce, document and make available through regional distribution centres materials on "site interpretation/presentation":
    - Visitor information and orientation centres
    - Audio-visual programmes
    - Electronic media (Internet web sites)
    - Sign programmes (interpretive, administrative and directional)
    - Self-guided nature trails (markers and leaflets)
    - Personal services and guide programmes
    - Additional materials could be considered on volunteer programmes, youth activities, emergency response and visitor safety guidelines, regulatory enforcement, concessions management, cyclic maintenance, training methods, etc.

**Capacity Building:** The "Natural World Heritage Training Strategy (adopted by the Committee, 1996) recognized that the protection and presentation of natural World Heritage values depends largely on the effectiveness of the day-to-day site management in keeping with national statutes and in accordance with the Convention and its related Operational Guidelines. Only minimal emphasis has been placed on implementing the "strategy" to date.

The working group on capacity building acknowledged a myriad of skills is mandatory for a site management team to be effective. For the most part, such necessary skills, knowledge and experience required for success are not available except through Regional and National Training Centres for park and wildlife personnel, networks of highly qualified practitioners from within the region and/or internationally, or on-site training from qualified supervisory personnel where they exist. Such human resources require increased support and strengthening to develop the capacity to meet existing and continually emerging management demands.

1. The International Ranger Federation (IRF). A growing grass-roots movement of national ranger associations and regional and national World Heritage site manager organizations is emerging to address wide spread deficiencies of information and training and to seek greater involvement in World Heritage actions.
  - The IRF will continue to foster and develop an increasing number of national practitioner associations world wide as part of the Federation's international network.
    - The IRF will hold its third international congress in South Africa (September 2000) with the support of public and private sponsors; over 50 countries will be represented by 300 participants; subsequent congresses will continue to be held on different continents.
    - At the September 2000 Congress, the Secretariat will assist in special workshops to provide focal points on natural World Heritage sites for site

manager participants supported by the World Heritage Fund and other managers, and other topics addressing international environmental issues.

- Further efforts will be made by the IRF to develop performance standards and training requirements for field ranger personnel for enhanced management capability.
  - Regional and international personnel databases of the IRF membership will continue to expand on a regional basis and be collated on for a global coverage.
    - Working with States Parties, agencies and training centres, exchanges of qualified experts in natural heritage area management will be arranged when possible.
    - Experienced practitioners within the international network will be available to States Parties, Secretariats, agencies and training centres for technical and training assistance and technology transfer for natural World Heritage sites.
  - The IRF and the Secretariat will collaborate on the dissemination of World Heritage information and materials through its international membership and network.
  - Collaboration with training centres to objectively assess the quality and quantity of existing training modules and methodology and the identification of outstanding training opportunities.
  - The Secretariat and State Party agencies are collaborating to expand national and regional World Heritage site manager associations.
2. National and Regional Training Centres - These institutions have the primary role of providing qualified personnel for meeting State Party requirements for the management of natural protected areas, including natural World Heritage sites.
- World Heritage Funds have been traditionally and primarily used to sponsor individual trainees at regional training centres in Cameroon, Tanzania, India and Costa Rica; an assessment of the merit and effectiveness of such training has not been made.
    - The Secretariat, IRF, and IUCN could assist training centres review, assess and strengthen relevant training modules.
    - The Secretariat will provide national and regional training centres with World Heritage materials on a systematic and ongoing basis.
    - The Secretariat will seek to involve training centres in a more active natural World Heritage role such as meetings and training workshops.
    - Select States Parties, the Secretariat and the Tanzanian Regional Training Centre (M'weka) will collaborate to host and train on a regional basis Anglophone African World Heritage site managers in Fall 2000.
  - Training centres will collaborate with the IRF, the Secretariat and IUCN in developing and updating training modules with the emphasis on case studies.

- Training Centres, in collaboration with appropriate organizations, will seek to develop training modules for enhanced monitoring, tourist management, conflict resolution, community relations and development planning.
- Through Training Centres and networks, a Directory of national and regional training opportunities will be developed.
- Training Centres, in collaboration with the Secretariat will seek to develop a natural World Heritage training module on the implementation of the Convention and related Operational Guidelines.
- Training Centres and networks will seek to identify and deliver appropriate training materials to natural World Heritage sites.

**Conclusion: Copies of participant papers and small working group summaries were distributed among the participants. Based on the information exchanged and relationships established, the participants concluded that the meeting objectives had been met, and further, the meeting itself was a major success in initiating the Connect Programme by linking previously unconnected organizations. A climate of cooperation and collaboration has been established for natural World Heritage participants and stakeholders. The establishment of a small on-going Task Force of 5-6 participants to monitor and assist in the implementation of the meeting proposals is recommended.**