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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: Priority recommendations from the World Heritage Centre/IUCN Workshop on "The Role of the World Heritage in Danger Listing in Promoting International Co-operation for the Conservation of World Natural Heritage", held in Amman, Jordan, from 6 to 7 October 2000.

SUMMARY

At its twenty-third session (Morocco, 1999) the World Heritage Committee, as proposed by the Government of Ecuador, invited the Centre and IUCN to organise a workshop to assess the role of World Heritage in Danger Listing in promoting international co-operation for the conservation of World Natural Heritage. The workshop was organised in Jordan, Amman, during 6-7 October 2000 at the time of the IUCN World Conservation Congress. A publication describing site-information, issues and recommendations is being compiled and will be submitted to the twenty-fifth session of the Committee in 2001. In the meantime however, workshop participants expressed the wish that the twenty-fourth session of the Committee in Cairns, Australia (27 November - 2 December 2000) notes and transmits the following priority-recommendations to the consideration of the expert group on the revision of the Operational Guidelines.

**WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE/IUCN WORKSHOP
THE ROLE OF THE WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER LISTING IN
PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE
CONSERVATION OF WORLD NATURAL HERITAGE**

6-7 OCTOBER 2000, REGENCY PALACE HOTEL, AMMAN, JORDAN

<p>PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE</p>
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At its twenty-third session (Morocco, 1999) the World Heritage Committee, as proposed by the Government of Ecuador, invited the Centre and IUCN to organise a workshop to assess the role of World Heritage in Danger Listing in promoting international co-operation for the conservation of World Natural Heritage. The workshop was organised in Jordan, Amman, during 6-7 October 2000 at the time of the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Representatives from fifteen of the eighteen natural properties included in the List of World Heritage in Danger participated in the workshop. In addition, personnel representing the sites of Galapagos, Kakadu and El Viscaïno, all of which had been considered for inclusion in the List of World Heritage in Danger during recent years, and Plitvice Lakes National Park, removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1997, also participated in the event. A total number of 50 participants attended the two-day workshop. A publication describing site-information, issues and recommendations is being compiled and will be submitted to the twenty-fifth session of the Committee in 2001. In the meantime however, workshop participants expressed the wish that the twenty-fourth session of the Committee in Cairns, Australia (27 November - 2 December 2000):

- (a) notes and transmits the following priority-recommendations to the consideration of the expert group on the revision of the Operational Guidelines; and
- (b) requests the Centre and IUCN to consult with States Parties, NGOs and other partners to study the feasibility of the implementation of the priority-recommendations and submit a report to the twenty-fifth session of the Committee in 2001.

Priority Recommendations:

- (1) Launch a special campaign to communicate the meaning and the value and the operational basis of the List of World Heritage in Danger to key conservation partners, i.e.:
 - Government and NGO personnel at the national, provincial/regional and local levels;
 - and site-staff;
 - local communities, private sector, donors and foundations.

The campaign message must include clear explanations on ways and means by which the inclusion of sites in the List of World Heritage in Danger could strengthen the conservation of those sites and measures that could be taken to avoid the inclusion of sites on that List. The Committee may wish to call upon the Centre and IUCN to develop a handbook that clearly describes the context and the process of World Heritage in Danger Listing and links them in a clear framework of risk assessment, management issues and performance criteria, and systematic monitoring regimes and triggers for initiating steps for World Heritage in Danger listing.

- (2) When inscribing a site on the List of World Heritage in Danger, the Committee should describe, in sufficient detail:
 - the reason(s) for Listing;
 - an assessment of the potential benefits and effects of the Listing;
 - a series of practical actions to be taken and a description of the consequences of not implementing those actions;
 - guidelines for implementing the actions recommended; and
 - a set of benchmarks for measuring improvements in the state of conservation of sites to be attained within a specific timeframe;
- (3) The Committee should ensure a process of thorough assessment and consultations prior to deciding whether or not a site is to be included in the List of World Heritage in Danger. Reasons and justifications for including a site in the “Danger-List” are of interest to the entire conservation community. Hence, perspectives of States Parties, NGOs, local communities, donors and other interests should all be given due consideration. Consultations between States Parties, advisory bodies and individual experts are critical for verifying the quality and accuracy of data and information used in assessments and state of conservation reports. Interpretations of conclusions and their implications for the Committee’s decision for including a site in the List of World Heritage in Danger may vary among the different actors participating in the consultation process. While the Committee is the ultimate authority in all decisions concerning the inclusion of a site in the “Danger-List”, the Committee should, as far as possible, seek consensus among all parties involved in the consultation process before including a site in that List. Such consensus is vital for co-operation among the State Party, advisory bodies, NGOs and other actors to implement plans and actions recommended by the Committee to remove prevailing threats to the site. However, in all cases the Committee must retain its authority to include a site on the List of World Heritage in Danger even if it has not been possible to reach consensus among all concerned parties.
- (4) States Parties, the Centre and IUCN should reflect on the conditions under which threats to World Heritage values could exacerbate to levels that may justify the declaration of sites as being “In Danger”. Carrying out threats-analysis at the time of inscription of sites need to be encouraged and supported. Systematic monitoring regimes addressing changes in the intensity or severity of threats, including triggers that will signal the change in threat-status from “normal” or “no threat” to “issues which will pose a significant

threat if not addressed” to “danger or significant threat not being addressed” need to be established. States Parties must be encouraged and, if necessary, given the appropriate technical support to design and establish monitoring plans that are integral to site-management at the time of nomination of sites. Such monitoring plans should also be developed for all properties currently included in the List of World Heritage in Danger and should include reporting schedules and strategies that satisfy the Committee’s demand for a systematic approach to periodic monitoring by States Parties. The Committee should assign a high priority for financing the development of systematic monitoring plans and regimes from the resources of the World Heritage Fund.

- (5) The Committee should request the Centre and IUCN to explore ways and means to establish a funding mechanism to support the development of monitoring and reporting regimes that are integral to site-management. Possibilities for creating a special fund for supporting targeted, site-specific actions, recommended by the Committee at the time when it declares a site as World Heritage in Danger, must also be investigated. Specific financing mechanisms linked to the systematic monitoring and the “Danger-Listing” processes will contribute to their more effective use for conserving World Natural Heritage. However, checks and balances must be built into those processes so as to guard against financial rewards becoming perverse incentives and leading to unjustifiable and excessive claims for “Danger Listing” and associated monetary benefits.
- (6) In assessing threats to the integrity of World Heritage values and proposing measures for threat-mitigation and for restoration of values, careful consideration must be given to social, economic and cultural aspirations of local communities including indigenous people. Several threats to World Heritage values of sites could be minimised if site-management is committed to helping local communities to develop mechanisms to generate income and improve food-security. In some cases, special Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) addressing threats to World Heritage values from development projects, and contingency plans to mitigate such threats and implement measures to rehabilitate World Heritage values may have to be elaborated; and
- (7) IUCN and the Centre need to be encouraged to use World Heritage sites as pilot/demonstration areas for designing, developing and executing monitoring and reporting schedules that are integral to site-management. Experience from different sites must be analysed to highlight success stories. Case studies drawing lessons from successful as well as unsuccessful monitoring and reporting practices need to be documented and widely disseminated via all possible communication channels including the Internet. Ideally, World Heritage site monitoring regimes should serve as illustrative examples that practitioners from other protected areas could adopt and modify to suit their own needs. World Heritage site-based training and capacity building for assessment, monitoring and reporting should also be designed in a manner so as to benefit the broadest possible sections of the protected area management community.