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WHC-06/30.COM/11B

Paris, 6 June 2006

Original: English/French

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD  
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirtieth Session

Vilnius, Lithuania  
8-16 July 2006

**Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda: Periodic Reports**

**11B. Follow-up to the Periodic Report for North America**

## SUMMARY

This document contains a summary of follow-up activities to the Periodic Report for North America presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005). It also includes steps taken towards the implementation of the decisions **29 COM 11 A.4** and **29 COM 11 A.5**.

Decisions containing names and criteria changes will be reviewed under the agenda item 8 Nominations of properties to the World Heritage List, and are contained in documents *WHC-06/30.COM/8B* and *WHC-06/30.COM/8D* respectively.

**Draft Decision : 30 COM 11B**, see Point II.

## **I. Follow-up to the Periodic Report for North America**

1. In 2005, at its 29th session the Committee approved the Periodic Report for the North American Region. Subsequently steps were undertaken towards the implementation of the Committee's decisions **29 COM 11 A.4** and **29 COM 11 A.5**.
2. In January and February 2006 a *consultative process* between the two States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre started to address all the follow-up activities to the North American Report. Specifically, the issues of name changes, changes to criteria, statements of significance, clarifications of imprecise original boundary definitions and minor/major boundary changes were reviewed. Furthermore, two Circular Letters were issued by the World Heritage Centre: Circular Letter 1/2006 dated 23 January 2006 concerned changes requested by States Parties in the Periodic Reporting process; and Circular Letter 4/2006 dated 5 April 2006 concerned a correction to sites inscribed before 1994 for geological values (See document *WHC-06/30.COM/8D*). These issues were also reviewed in the framework of the preparations of the Year of Reflection (2007) (see document *WHC-06/30.COM/11G*).
3. Concerning *Statements of significance* a new process had to be developed, as the *Operational Guidelines* do not foresee any process with deadlines for this review. As a result, with the agreement of the States Parties concerned, the review of the proposed changes for North America resulted in a pilot exercise to determine the best methodology for reviewing revisions requested, which can then be used for other regions. The Advisory Bodies agreed to the following procedure: (a) to review the proposed draft statements of significance by the States Parties, included as part of the Periodic Reports to make sure that they are in line with the Committee's original decision and/or the Advisory Body's recommendation, and (b) to edit the statements using a common format. The draft statements of significance, agreed upon by the Advisory Bodies and the States Parties, are attached in Annex I for approval by the Committee. The Advisory Bodies pointed out that the process to review these statements is time consuming and requires financial resources.
4. Both Canada and the United States of America have submitted to the World Heritage Centre letters requesting *name changes*. These requests are included for decision in document *WHC-06/30.COM/8B*.
5. Both States Parties are currently reviewing a number of substantive issues related to the *changes to criteria* and are providing the feedback to Circular Letter 4/2006. In addition, clarifications concerning the use of criteria at the time of the inscription of properties will be sought for selected properties. Correcting errors in transcription of the criteria by the Secretariat or the Advisory Bodies would not be considered as a formal change to the criteria under *Operational Guidelines*, paragraph 166.

6. Concerning clarifications of imprecise original *boundary definitions* and minor/major boundary changes, a separate process for adoption by the Committee under the item Nominations will be followed for the forthcoming sessions of the Committee.
7. The *cooperation with Mexico* has been considered a long-term issue and will be addressed jointly by both States Parties in matters of shared interest for natural and cultural heritage.
8. Concerning the potential for *developing guidelines for management plans and principles for evaluating visual impacts* for activities in and adjacent to World Heritage properties further cooperation with other Committee members, States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre is being envisaged. Specialized institutions, international organizations and universities are also encouraged to undertake further research.

## II. Draft Decision

### Draft Decision: 30 COM 11B

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC-06/30.COM/11B,
2. Recalling Decisions 29 COM 11 A.4 and 29 COM 11 A.5 adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005),
3. Noting proposals for changes to the nomination dossiers for some World Heritage properties in North America,
4. Approves the Statements of significance for the World Heritage properties in North America as included in Annex I of document WHC-06/30.COM/11B;
5. Notes the changes to the names as indicated in document WHC-06/30.COM/8B, and further notes the adjustments to natural heritage criteria concerning geological values, as indicated in document WHC-06/30.COM/8D;
6. Encourages the State Party of Canada to put forward extensions to Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks and Wood Buffalo National Park, pursuant to Canada's Tentative List for World Heritage Sites (2004);
7. Encourages Canada to submit detailed requests to clarify the criteria used for the initial inscriptions of L'Anse-aux-Meadows National Historic Site, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump and Nahanni National Park by 1 February 2007;
8. Encourages Canada and the United States of America to submit any outstanding documentation related to World Heritage properties, as soon as possible;

9. *Recommends that Canada and the United States of America continue, in cooperation with other Committee members, States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre to explore, as appropriate, the potential for developing guidelines for management plans and principles for evaluating visual impacts for activities in and adjacent to World Heritage properties;*
10. *Encourages Canada and the United States of America to continue their strong collaboration and to consider how to enhance collaboration with the State Party of Mexico in matters of shared interest for natural and cultural heritage.*

Annex I of document *WHC-06/30.COM/11B: under preparation.*

## **STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE**