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# World Heritage

# 31 COM

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Thirty first Session**

**Christchurch, New Zealand**  
**23 June – 2 July 2007**

**Item 11D of the Provisional Agenda: Reflection on the preparation of the  
next cycle of Periodic Reporting**

**11D.1: Main results and recommendations of the Periodic Reporting  
Reflection Meetings**

## **SUMMARY**

This document presents a synthesis of the two Periodic Reporting Reflection Meetings as well the main conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Report Questionnaire and setting up of indicators.

**Draft Decision: 31 COM 11D1, see Point IV**

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The completion of the first Cycle of Periodic Reporting has generated important information regarding the state of implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*, as well as about the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Many States Parties found the periodic reporting exercise a useful activity with numerous positive outcomes. For example, many World Heritage site managers met each other for the first time and started developing a professional network.
2. In line with the Committee's Decision **7 EXT.COM 5**, "to study and reflect on the first cycle of Periodic Reporting", some general conclusions were drawn from the completion of the first cycle and some issues and lessons were identified. The first Cycle has also exposed some flaws in the process and a need to revise the questionnaire and the type of information that can realistically be expected from States Parties.
3. Two preparatory meetings to pave the way for the Periodic Reporting Reflection Year 2007 were organized by the World Heritage Centre (10-11 November 2005, Berlin, Germany, and 2-3 March 2006 at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France). These preparatory meetings offered a good opportunity to make an overall assessment of the process of the first cycle of Periodic Reporting in all regions and to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the format adopted by the World Heritage Committee and questionnaire developed by the World Heritage Centre. The results of these two meetings were presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006) (See Document *WHC-06/30.COM/11G*).
4. By its **Decision 30 COM 11G**, the World Heritage Committee adopted at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006), the following terms of reference:
  - 1) Review the outcomes of and reflect on the first cycle of Periodic Reporting;
  - 2) Develop strategic direction on the form and format of Periodic Reports;
  - 3) Streamline the Committee's consideration of matters raised through Periodic Reporting (Changes of names, changes of boundaries, revision of Statement of Outstanding Universal Value...);
  - 4) Ensure effective links between Reactive Monitoring (State of Conservation Reports) and Periodic Reporting as well as other processes (Nominations, Retrospective Inventory);
  - 5) Identify training and capacity development priorities from all Periodic Reports;
  - 6) Identify international cooperation priorities from all Periodic Reports;
  - 7) Undertake a reflection on a new regional grouping;
5. Following the calendar adopted by the Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006), two Periodic Reporting Reflection Meetings were organized at UNESCO/Headquarters in Paris to cover the Terms of Reference 4, 5, 6 and 7.
  - ▶ **Periodic Reporting Reflection Meeting, 9-10 November 2006, with the following terms of reference:**
    - Ensure effective links between State of Conservation and Periodic Reporting as well as other processes (Nominations, Retrospective Inventory);

- Identify training and capacity development priorities from all Periodic Reports;
- ▶ Periodic Reporting Reflection Meeting: 24 January 2007, with the following terms of reference:
- Identify international cooperation priorities from all Periodic Reports;
  - Undertake a reflection on a new regional grouping;
6. These two meetings brought together site managers, international experts and representatives from all regions having been responsible or fully involved in the Periodic Reporting of their respective regions, some Committee Members, the Advisory Bodies (ICCRROM, IUCN and ICOMOS), the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (Montreal, Canada) and the World Heritage Centre. Both meetings benefited from the presence of the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee.
7. The World Heritage Committee requested also by its Decision **30 COM 11G** that a “Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire and setting up of indicators” be established. It is composed of some key experts being associated to the first cycle of Periodic Reporting and/or having developed a monitoring/reporting system for their own institutions. The Advisory Bodies were naturally associated to this work.
8. For logistical reasons, the meetings on Periodic Reporting Reflection were preceded by the Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Report Questionnaire for the latter to be able to present its results.

## **II. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TWO PERIODIC REPORTING REFLECTION MEETINGS**

### **A. Terms of Reference: Ensure effective links between State of Conservation and Periodic Reporting as well as other processes (Nominations, Retrospective Inventory)**

#### ***Links between Periodic Reporting and Reactive Monitoring (State of conservation reports)***

9. Recognizing the different nature of the two processes, Periodic Reporting being a cyclic State Party driven exercise of all World Heritage properties while State of conservation report -also called Reactive Monitoring- is a punctual and specific assessment of properties for which specific problems have been identified based on information received from different stakeholders and sources, it was acknowledged by all participants that the two processes have obvious linkages which should be reinforced. For reference, it is worth noting that 496 properties from 146 States Parties were assessed through the first cycle of Periodic Reporting while 142 properties were assessed during the same period through Reactive Monitoring. Periodic Reporting could play also a substantive role in identifying properties where the Outstanding Universal Value is threatened and act as a “Red Flag System” drawing the attention of the World Heritage Committee on the necessity to request a State of Conservation Report. In a reciprocal manner, the Periodic Reporting offers a good opportunity to follow the properties which have been phased-out of the State of Conservation process and to drawing lessons and conclusions across the whole system of World Heritage properties.

In conclusion, it clearly appears that processes and databases of Periodic Reporting and State of Conservation report should be coordinated and linked more closely.

### ***Links between Periodic Reporting and Nominations***

10. Data on individual World Heritage properties were collected during the first Cycle of Periodic Reporting, but in many cases, there was no assessment of that data in relation to data in the original nomination dossiers (the "baseline data"). It is therefore proposed for the next cycle of Periodic Reporting to bridge as much as possible these data by pre-filling the Section II questionnaire for each property with basic data about the property and asking States Parties to verify the data as part of the reporting process. This pre-filled data should be extracted from the first cycle of Periodic Reporting, the Nomination Files and the additional documentation obtained through the Retrospective Inventory.

### ***Links between Periodic Reporting and Retrospective Inventory***

11. These linkages were already described in Document *WHC-06/30.COM/11G*.

### **B. Term of Reference: To identify training and capacity development priorities from all Periodic Reports**

12. The Periodic Reports from all regions highlighted a high level of concern about training and capacity building issues. States Parties' global remarks on the areas in which improvement was desirable, largely converged on the training and recruitment of competent professionals in all fields. The States Parties identified the need for improved training opportunities in all fields of activities linked to cultural and natural heritage: heritage identification, protection, management, conservation, restoration, and presentation. If training needs are acknowledged by most of the States Parties, only a few of them provide a detailed list of skills to be enhanced. In the case of Asia, this detailed list was provided by site managers and does not necessarily reflect a national trend. On the basis of all this information, the World Heritage Centre presented a synthesis of the Training priorities by region during the Periodic Reporting Reflection Meeting held on 9-10 November 2006 (See documents at the following Web address <http://whc.unesco.org/en/reflectionyear/>).
13. These priorities were translated into regional Action Plans in the following manner:
  - ARAB STATES: Arab States Programme (including assistance modules with ICCROM/IUCN)
  - AFRICA: AFRICA 2009 / Africa Nature Programme
  - ASIA/PACIFIC: Action Asia 2003 – 2009 / World Heritage Pacific 2009
  - LATIN AMERICA: Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean
  - EUROPE/NORTH AMERICA: Action Plan for Europe
14. Links were established with the Global Training Strategy (2002-2006) and these training priorities were integrated in it in cooperation with ICCROM. It is recommended, however, that a more systematic approach to the development of training strategies and programmes on the regional or sub-regional levels (as appropriate) be incorporated as part of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting. Periodic Reporting also offers an opportunity to raise general awareness about the *World Heritage Convention* and management of World Heritage properties. It was expressed, during the Reflection Meeting, that Periodic

Reporting should, in the future, provide an opportunity for training on basic concepts of the *Convention*, as well as on the new Statement of Outstanding Universal Value as stated in the paragraph 155 of the *Operational Guidelines*.

### **C. To identify international cooperation priorities from all Periodic Reports**

15. Despite their outstanding universal value, many World Heritage properties lack human and financial resources to ensure their conservation. World Heritage properties rely on government budgets to fund staff and other maintenance costs which are judged insufficient in many cases. Numerous bilateral and multilateral donors, International Assistance provided by the World Heritage Fund and extra-budgetary resources mobilised by UNESCO continue to provide a vital 'financial lifeline' for many natural and cultural World Heritage properties.
16. During the Periodic Reporting Reflection meeting held on 24 January 2007, it was recalled that before exploring International cooperation, the best use should be made of regional financial and human resources in particular for the implementation of the Regional Programmes. The case of the African World Heritage Fund was considered exemplary in this respect. For the Europe Region, the development of a partnership with Council of Europe and its heritage related Conventions and programmes, as well as the European Union has been mentioned in the Action Plan for Europe. Specifically, the possibility of creating a European Programme and Fund for World Heritage with the European Union should be explored. In addition, suggestions were made to use international assistance from the World Heritage Fund as seed money to catalyze funds from regional co-operation organizations.
17. At the international level, the participants agreed also that to avoid the redundancy of assistance (Training, funding, technical cooperation) on some key and visible projects and to ensure a real coordination among the different donors, UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies should ensure coordinated approaches to funding sources. Further UNESCO should assist States Parties in bringing together and sharing information on funding for World Heritage with a view to optimize the limited resources of the World Heritage Fund, as well as exploring other funding sources to support properties

### **D. Undertake a reflection on a new regional grouping**

18. According to the Decision **26 COM 17.2** adopted at the 26th session of the World Heritage Committee (Budapest, 2002) specific programmes for each region must be developed based on regional reports. These Regional Programmes are aimed to strengthen the application of the *Convention* by States Parties and to achieve its Strategic Objectives. Some Regions were sub-divided into sub-regions as an attempt to respect cultural, bio-geographical, socio-historical, linguistic contexts and sometimes similarities in administrative and legal issues in heritage management and conservation.
19. For the purposes of the Periodic Reporting exercise, Europe was, for example, divided into five sub-regions: Nordic and Baltic countries, Western Europe, Mediterranean countries, Central and South Europe.
20. The grouping and sub-grouping organization is motivated only by the desire to facilitate the coordination process for the Periodic Reporting exercise, it is not mandatory and can be revised according to the necessities. In this regard, the participants of the Reflection Meeting concluded on the necessity to keep a flexible approach as much as possible.

### **III. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PERIODIC REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE AND SETTING UP OF INDICATORS**

21. The Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Report Questionnaire and setting up of indicators (the Working Group) met twice (6-7 November 2006 and 22-23 January 2007) in UNESCO/Headquarters in Paris, France. It presented its conclusions to the two Periodic Reporting Reflection Meetings. Considering the tight schedule of the Working Group, intensive preparatory work was undertaken by each participant and three subgroups were created to be able to work in parallel processes. After the last meeting, an informal field-testing was undertaken by all participants within his/her professional networks to check the pertinence of the Revised Questionnaire.

#### **A. Main principles of the revision of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire**

22. Based on the ideas that Periodic Reporting is:

- a product (periodic report) but also a process (periodic reporting);
- intended to assist all levels e.g. site managers, States Parties, the World Heritage Centre, and the Advisory Bodies;
- likely to cover all listed World Heritage properties during the second cycle of Periodic Reporting;

the main principles of the revised Periodic Reporting questionnaire (See *Document WHC-07/31.COM/INF.11.D.1*) would be:

##### ***Good practice***

- The revised tool is built on lessons learned from the previous Periodic Reporting cycle;
- The revised tool is built on lessons learned from experience and good practice in monitoring and assessment from other Conventions and multilateral funding bodies
- The revised tool is designed to encourage good practice in World Heritage property management such as encouraging the participation of stakeholders in Periodic Reporting process and information-sharing with other partners.

##### ***Efficiency***

- The revised tool includes an “up-front” preparation of data by the World Heritage Centre for verification of accuracy rather than data collection from States Parties;
- The revised tool is easier and quicker to complete for States Parties
- The revised tool is easier for the World Heritage Centre to access and assess the results
- The revised tool guides States Parties through logical steps to undertake assessment of the State of Conservation and management of their World Heritage Properties.

##### ***Utility***

- The revised tool is useful for different audiences: Site managers, States Parties, World Heritage Committee, World heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies;
- The revised tool is consistent with other World Heritage processes (Nomination, reactive monitoring...)
- The revised tool is harmonized with other Conventions reporting.

## **Sustainability**

- The revised tool is developed for long-term use and is capable of providing clear trends and providing continuity for future cycles of Periodic Reporting;
- The revised tool is consistent across regions;
- The revised tool is flexible to accommodate future development of the World Heritage processes.

### **A. Section I of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire**

23. Section I refers to the legislative and administrative provisions which the States Parties have adopted for the application of the *World Heritage Convention*. Section I was relatively well understood, but a clarification about its scope is required as to whether it intends to address all national heritage conservation, protection and presentation programmes or just those related to World Heritage. Deficiencies such as repetitions in the formulation of Section I of the questionnaire were perceived by States Parties. Further work is required to finalize the revision of the Section I of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.

### **B. Section II of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire**

24. Section II refers to the state of conservation of World Heritage properties located on the territory of the States concerned. The Periodic Reporting Reflection meetings highlighted the difficulty of assessing whether the Outstanding Universal Value of a property is maintained over time or not given that it is often not clearly defined. In addition, the meetings recognized extreme variety of information/documentation levels concerning the properties. The Working Group therefore agreed that two prerequisites are needed before starting the 2nd cycle of Periodic Reporting for all properties:

- **A Statement of Outstanding Universal Value:** should be drafted if it does not exist. The preparation of the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value could be facilitated by training modules and training manual to be developed by the Advisory Bodies, in particular ICCROM, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre. The technical nature and the specialization of the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value require engaging high level experts who are very knowledgeable about the *World Heritage Convention*, the properties and site management. Based on the pilot case undertaken in 2006 in United States and Canada (see Document **WHC-06/30.COM/11A**), it is estimated that the revision by the Advisory Bodies of a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for one property costs around US\$ 150. This work should be planned region per region according to the Periodic Reporting cycle. For the Arab States Region, US\$ 10.000 would be necessary for the work by the Advisory Bodies.
- **A compilation of basic data on each property:** the World Heritage Centre should compile these data on each property from the existing documents (First cycle of Periodic Reporting, nomination dossier and additional documentation gained through the Retrospective Inventory) and pre-fill the Section II of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire (one questionnaire per property). These data should be checked and updated by States Parties, as part of completing the Section II report for each property in the second cycle.

**These two prerequisites should be considered as a preparatory phase of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting.**

25. Building on the experience of the evaluation tool and the electronic format used by the Europe Region during the first cycle of Periodic Reporting, a web-based **electronic format** for Periodic Reporting is recommended. It would save re-keying of information and assist long term storage/retrieval and facilitate the analysis of data. The Working Group acknowledged nevertheless the necessity to present alternative solutions to those States Parties which do not benefit of such a facility.

### **C. Indicators**

26. Given the complexity and the vital importance of the definition of indicators, the Working Group came to the conclusion that this task requires a thorough thinking and that indicators could be developed after several other processes are achieved e.g. the analysis and consideration of the existing key indicators for measuring the State of conservation appearing in the nomination dossiers as well as for the sake of coherence, the updating of the UNESCO Framework for Culture Statistics which is being undertaken by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) in close cooperation with the UNESCO Sector of Culture.

### **D. Proposed next steps and corresponding budget**

- **July 2007-June 2008: Support for the development and finalization of the revised questionnaire:**  
Fees for two consultants, one nature/one culture (USD 20,000)
  
- **15 July-26 November 2007: Development of an online tool (US\$ 50,000)**
  
- **12 September 2007: Workshop with the Advisory Bodies on factors affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (US\$ 15,000)**  
On the occasion of the Advisory Bodies meeting which will be held on 10 and 11 September 2007, it is proposed to finalize the list of factors affecting the Outstanding Universal Value (see Section III of Document *WHC-07/31.COM/INF.11.D.1*).
  
- **26 - 27 November 2007: Meeting of the Working Group (US\$ 20,000)**  
This meeting has four objectives:
  - a) To finalize Section I
  - b) To draft the explanatory notes
  - c) Demonstration of the on-line tool
  - d) Final organization of the Field Testing
  
- **28 November (a.m.) 2007: Presentation to the World Heritage Committee**  
The Working Group should present the final version of the on-line tool of the revised questionnaire to the Committee Members. The end of the meeting will mark the launching of the Official Field Testing.

- **1 December 2007- 30 March 2008: Official Field Testing**  
This new Periodic Reporting approach needs to be officially field-tested in several World Heritage properties across all regions before launching the second cycle of Periodic Reporting. This indispensable prerequisite will allow refining the draft revised Periodic Reporting questionnaire (Section 1 and 2).
- **31 March - 1 April 2008: Meeting of the Working Group (US\$ 20,000)**  
One meeting of the “Working Group” is needed to finalize the revised questionnaire and the explanatory notes after the official Field Testing.

#### IV. DRAFT DECISION

##### **Draft Decision: 31 COM 11D.1**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/11D.1,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **25 COM VII.25-27** adopted at its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001), **7 EXT.COM 5** and **7 EXT.COM 5A.1** adopted at its 7th extraordinary session (UNESCO, 2004), **29 COM 11.A** adopted at its 29th session (Durban, 2005), **30 COM 11G** adopted at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006),*
3. *Recognizing the range of benefits for the World Heritage community of the new approach for Section II of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire proposed by the “Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire and setting up of indicators” (the Working Group),*
4. *Welcomes the new format for Section II as presented in Document WHC-07/31.COM/INF.11D.1;*
5. *Requests the World Heritage Centre and the Working Group to develop a new format for Section I, incorporating the lessons learnt from the revision of the Section II questionnaire and to finalize both Sections I and II of the revised questionnaire and decides to allocate USD 75,000 from the World Heritage Fund for these activities;*
6. *Requests the World Heritage Centre to develop a Web-based application of the revised questionnaire as found in WHC-07/31.COM/INF.11D.1 and decides to allocate U\$50,000 from the World Heritage Fund for this task;*
7. *Recognizing the pivotal importance of Statements of Outstanding Universal Value in all World Heritage processes, urges States Parties, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to prepare all missing Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for properties in their territory before the launching of the second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in their Region and decides to allocate USD 10,000 from the World Heritage Fund to the Advisory Bodies to undertake the revision of the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for the Arab States Region;*

8. Requests the World Heritage Centre to ensure it has adequate capacity and resources to continue the Retrospective Inventory as the basis to prefill the questionnaire at the outset of the Second cycle of periodic reporting in each region;
9. Acknowledges the importance and complexity of adopting a consistent approach for indicators for World Heritage properties and requests the World Heritage Centre to prepare a working document on this issue to be presented at its 32nd session in 2008;
10. Invites the States Parties wishing to participate to the Field Testing of the Revised questionnaire to contact the World Heritage Centre before **30 September 2007**.