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# World Heritage

# 32 COM

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## UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

### CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

#### WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

**Thirty-second Session**

**Quebec City, Canada**  
**2 – 10 July 2008**

#### **Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda: Periodic Reporting**

11E Reflection on the preparation of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting

#### **SUMMARY**

This document presents a synthesis of the last Periodic Reporting Reflection Meeting as well as the latest steps taken by the Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Report Questionnaire and setting up of indicators to finalize the Revised Questionnaire.

**Draft Decision: 32 COM 11E**, see Point VI

## 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 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. The detailed results of the Periodic Reporting Reflection meetings which worked following the above-mentioned Terms of Reference were presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006) (See Document *WHC-06/30.COM/11G*) and at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007) (See Document *WHC-07/31.COM/11D.1*).
6. Decision **30 COM 11G** also created a small Working Group to simplify the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire and elaborate indicators.

## **II. The Periodic Reporting Reflection Years (June 2006-July 2008)**

### **A. Main conclusions and outcomes of the Periodic Reporting Reflection Years**

#### **7. To reaffirm Outstanding Universal Value as the cornerstone of all World Heritage processes**

Outstanding Universal Value is the key-concept of the 1972 *Convention*. It constitutes the key condition for the inscription of a property on the World Heritage List. Monitoring and reporting processes (ie Periodic Reporting, Reactive Monitoring and Reinforced Monitoring) focus on the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value of a property. To fully acknowledge the pivotal importance of Outstanding Universal Value to all World Heritage processes, the World Heritage Committee urged (Decision **31 COM 11D.1**) all States Parties to draft a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value before the launching of the second Cycle of Periodic Reporting. This request was applied by the Committee (Decision **31 COM 7.3**), in particular, to all properties on the World Heritage List in Danger, as well as properties subject to a reactive monitoring mission.

#### **8. To link the different World Heritage processes**

It is important to clearly make the links between all the different World Heritage processes: nominations, inscription of the World Heritage List, reactive monitoring, reinforced monitoring, Periodic Reporting, and eventually deletion from the World Heritage List. . With the revised Questionnaire (see document *WHC.08-32.COM-11INF*), all pre-filled data are extracted from the Nomination Files and the additional documentation obtained through the Retrospective Inventory. Periodic Reporting can play a substantive role in identifying properties where the Outstanding Universal Value is threatened, drawing the attention of the World Heritage Committee to the necessity of requesting 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.

#### **9. Consolidating data through the Retrospective Inventory**

The Retrospective Inventory helps in acquiring and confirming baseline data (geographic identification, boundaries of the properties, cartography) for each property. Recognizing the importance of the Retrospective Inventory, the Committee requested (Decision **31 COM 11D.1**) the World Heritage Centre to ensure it has adequate capacity to undertake the inventory in advance of each region's second Cycle Periodic Reporting exercise in order to collect the baseline data for each property to pre-fill the second Cycle Questionnaire where possible. The Retrospective Inventory has been undertaken in the European and the Arab States Regions and will be undertaken in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

#### **10. To integrate all data bases to offer a complete documentation on each property**

The first Cycle of the Periodic Reporting revealed that baseline data concerning World Heritage sites was dispersed and often not available in any single location, whether with the site, national authority, World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS or IUCN. Instead, over time, the information has become extremely fragmented. Consequently, in the first Cycle of Periodic Reporting, it was often impossible for States Parties to retrieve information concerning their own properties, either through their own national administration or through the World Heritage Centre. As requested by the Committee (Decision **30 COM 11G**), an integration of all existing databases concerning World Heritage Properties (i.e. Nominations database, State of conservation reports database, International Assistance database, mission reports database and Management plans database) has been undertaken by the World Heritage Centre and is being finalized for the launching of the

second Cycle of Periodic Reporting. This access to data will facilitate the pre-filling of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire, the preparation of State of Conservation Missions and will allow access to data for States Parties for the next cycle of Periodic Reporting.

#### 11. To simplify the Questionnaire and the process for completing it

The Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Report Questionnaire and setting up of indicators (the Working Group), established by the Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006) (Decision **30 COM 11G**), focused its efforts on a revision of the Questionnaire and presented its initial conclusions to the Committee at its 31st session (see Document *WHC-07-31.COM-INF.11D.1*). It emphasized that the main principles to guide development of the revised Questionnaire should be: good practice; efficiency, utility and sustainability. The Committee accepted the Working Group's recommendations and requested it to complete its revision of the Questionnaire as a web-based application (Decision **31 COM 11D.1**). The latest steps taken to finalize the Questionnaire are described below.

### III. The elaboration of a revised Questionnaire

#### A. Meetings of the Working Group

12. The Working Group has met three times since the last session of the Committee (12-13 September 2007, 26-27 November 2007 and 31 March-4 April 2008) at UNESCO/Headquarters in Paris, France. It presented the on-line revised Periodic Reporting Questionnaire to the World Heritage Committee on 28 November 2007 prior to the official launching of the Field Testing of the Periodic Reporting.

#### B. Fifth Periodic Reporting Reflection Meeting, 28 November 2007

13. This meeting brought together international experts and some representatives having been responsible for or fully involved in the Periodic Reporting of their respective regions, the Advisory Bodies (ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS) and members of the World Heritage Committee. It aimed to present the on-line revised Periodic Reporting Questionnaire prior to launching field testing.

14. Participants asked for clarifications about the process of preparing and finalizing the report, as well as commenting on the possibility of getting the on-line tool translated into languages other than English and French.

15. The Working Group clarified that the **World Heritage Focal Point(s)** designated by the States Parties for periodic reporting would be invited to report on Section I (Implementation of the *Convention*), while Section II (State of Conservation of each World Heritage Property) should be prepared by those who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the World Heritage property i.e. the **World Heritage property manager/coordinator**. Nevertheless, the process envisaged is that only the Focal Point has the ability to finalize and submit the on-line Periodic Reporting Questionnaire to the World Heritage Centre. The Periodic Report has been designed in a format that allows a consultation process to take place. Consultation will be at the discretion of the Focal Points and the nominated Property contact.

16. The Working Group clarified that the pre-filled Questionnaire can only be accessed through the World Heritage Web site and that the finalization and submission of the Questionnaire will also need to be done on-line. However the Questionnaire has been designed in such a way that it can be emailed or printed out as a PDF and Word document and can thus be widely distributed during the reporting process. A PDF CD

17. With respect to languages, the meeting discussed the possibility of putting in place a bilingual system to allow the property manager/coordinator to answer in any language, provided that the World Heritage Focal Point would translate it into English or French before submitting the final report. The Working Group took this point seriously and a suggested process was agreed to deal with this issue at their final meeting (see below paragraph 21).

### **C. Field Testing of the on-line revised Periodic Reporting Questionnaire**

18. Eighteen States Parties volunteered to be part of the Field Testing for 32 properties in total. The Field-Testing took place from 1 January- 28 March 2008.

19. Pre-filling of the Section I of the Questionnaire by the World Heritage Centre takes at least 1/2 a day, while pre-filling Section II takes at least two days per property. This is much more time than was expected and this fact should be taken into account in future.

20. During the Meeting of Evaluation of the Field Testing held at UNESCO/Headquarters from 31 March to 4 April 2008, the Working Group integrated as much as possible all comments and corrections suggested by States Parties and finalized the Users' Guide accordingly.

21. Regarding the languages of the Periodic Reporting process, the Working Group concluded that to put the burden of the translation only on the World Heritage Focal Point(s) is impractical. The current proposal is to create a Fund-in-Trust, funded by extra-budgetary sources, for the translation of the Questionnaire and reports from States Parties from Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish to English or French. It is estimated that US\$ 100,000 would be needed to undertake the full exercise of Periodic Reporting in Arabic.

## **IV. Launching of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting**

### **A. Timeframe of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting for all regions**

22. As agreed by the Committee at its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006), the timeframe of the next cycles of Periodic Reporting in all regions would be as follows:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Launch of second Cycle of PR</b>	<b>Sessions of the World Heritage Committee</b>	<b>Year of Examination by World Heritage Committee and sessions</b>
<b>Arab States</b>	2008	32nd	June-July 2010 (34th session)
<b>Africa</b>	2009	33rd	June-July 2011 (35th session)
<b>Asia-Pacific</b>	2010	34th	June-July 2012 (36th session)
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	2011	35th	June-July 2013 (37th session)
<b>Europe-North America</b>	2012	36th	June-July 2014 (38th session)

## **B. Work plan for the next cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States Region**

23. The next cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Arab States Region will be launched at the 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee. A Regional Conference organized in Algiers, Algeria, by ALECSO in November 2007 was the opportunity to inform States Parties of the launching of the next cycle of Periodic Reporting. On this occasion, ALECSO announced that it would take responsibility for the translation of the Revised Questionnaire into Arabic.
24. In addition, the Kingdom of Bahrain has generously offered to host a Regional Periodic Reporting Workshop in October 2008 in order to explain the revised Periodic Reporting Questionnaire and the Periodic Reporting process to the focal points designated by the States Parties. The workshop should be organized in close cooperation between the World Heritage Centre, ICCROM and the Sector for Culture and National Heritage in Bahrain. This workshop should also be the opportunity to provide guidance to States Parties on the drafting of the Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for properties in the region, where these statements are missing. The Advisory Bodies will contribute to drafting the missing Statements of Outstanding Universal Value.
25. Sub-regional meetings will be organized in 2009, in collaboration with the UNESCO field offices in the Arab States, to further explain and share the first results of the Periodic Reporting exercise.

## **V. Indicators**

26. Given the complexity and the vital importance of the definition of indicators, the Working Group concluded that this task requires a more thorough thinking than time permitted since the 31st session (Christchurch, 2007). The Working Group proposes to continue this research on the occasion of an expert meeting. If extrabudgetary funding is available to support this Expert Meeting in 2008-2009, preliminary conclusions could be presented to the Committee at its 33rd session. The Advisory Bodies and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) should be closely associated with this exercise.

## **VI. Draft Decision**

### **Draft Decision: 32 COM 11E**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC-08/32.COM/11.E,
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), and **31 COM 11D1** adopted at its 31st session (Christchurch, 2007),
3. Emphasizing the pivotal importance of Statements of Outstanding Universal Value in all World Heritage processes;

4. Thanks the States Parties which participated to the Field Testing of the Revised Questionnaire;
5. Congratulates the Working Group on the simplification of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire and setting up of indicators and the World heritage Centre for its work and welcomes the Revised Periodic Reporting Questionnaire (Sections I and II) and its web-based application, as presented in Document WHC-08/32.COM/INF.11E, for use during the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting;
6. Decides to launch the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States Region;
7. Thanks ALECSO for its offer to translate the revised Questionnaire into Arabic and requests the Director of the World Heritage Centre to identify extra budgetary funding to ensure the translation of the entire second Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Arab States Region in Arabic;
8. Thanks the Kingdom of Bahrain for its offer to host a workshop of States Parties in the Arab Region to launch the Periodic Reporting process in the region;
9. Requests all Arab States Parties, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to finalize all missing Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for properties in their territory at the beginning of the second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in their Region;
10. Invites all African 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;
11. Requests the World Heritage Centre 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;
12. Requests the World Heritage Centre to seek extrabudgetary funding for the Working Group to develop indicators for World Heritage properties and, if possible, to report on the progress made on this issue at its 33rd session in 2009.