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# World Heritage

# 35 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-fifth Session

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters  
19 - 29 June 2011

**Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda: Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies**

**5E. *World Heritage Convention* and sustainable development**

## SUMMARY

This document presents a brief report on the progress made in the implementation of Decision **34 COM 5D**.

**Draft Decision: 35 COM 5E**, see Point II

## A. Background

1. The World Heritage Committee at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010) welcomed the outcome of the expert meeting on the relations between the *World Heritage Convention*, conservation and sustainable development that was held in Paraty (Brazil) from 29 to 31 March 2010, and also agreed that it would be desirable to further consider, in the implementation of the *Convention*, policies and procedures that maintain the Outstanding Universal Value of properties, and also contribute to sustainable development. The Committee adopted Decision **34 COM 5D** and a brief progress report on the implementation of the various action points contained therein is given below.
2. Document WHC-11/35.COM/13 concerning the Revision of the *Operational Guidelines* contains *inter alia* proposals for integrating the concept of sustainable development into the management plans and management systems of World Heritage properties, the nomination process and into education and awareness raising programmes.
3. The Declaration on Bio-Cultural Diversity (Montreal, June 2010) urged parties to the 1972 World Heritage Convention and other conventions to strengthen collaboration and coordination between biological and cultural diversity. It also acknowledged the important progress made in building links between biological and cultural diversity to ensure environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability and human well-being. Sustainable development can be seen as a mechanism for drawing together more closely the cultural and natural sides of the World Heritage Convention.
4. The World Heritage Centre continues to work closely with the Secretariats of the other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including through the mechanism of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG). As desired by the World Heritage Committee through its endorsement of the Action Plan for 2012 (Decision 34 COM 5D), the World Heritage Centre proposed the inclusion of sustainable development as an overarching theme and area of cooperation in the agenda for the meeting of the BLG held in April 2011. The feasibility of undertaking some pilot projects, to demonstrate biodiversity conservation and enhancing human well-being, at sites with multiple designations is also proposed to be discussed within this framework. IUCN, as the Advisory Body on Natural Heritage, also represents the *World Heritage Convention* in the periodic meetings of the Chairpersons of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity Related Conventions.
5. Following the Declaration on Bio-Cultural Diversity (Montreal, June 2010) and the World Heritage Committee's Decision **34 COM 5E** (point 7), the results were also presented to COP 10 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010. The Joint Programme between UNESCO and the CBD Secretariat (2010-2020) as drafted by the Montreal Conference was welcomed by CBD COP 10 (Decision X/20). In particular, the CBD COP 10 recognized the Joint Programme as a "useful co-ordination mechanism to advance the implementation of the Convention and deepen global awareness of the interlinkages between cultural and biological diversity". States Parties and other relevant stakeholders were invited to "contribute to and support the implementation of this joint programme". As a follow-up UNESCO and CBD Secretariats are currently preparing the implementation strategy for the Programme and actively seeking partners to ensure financial support for the activities planned under the Programme.
6. UNESCO has established an intersectoral group to prepare its contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which is to be held in May 2012. The World Heritage Centre is part of this group and will endeavour to highlight the positive role of World Heritage for sustainable development.
7. The World Heritage Centre is also continuing its discussions with some interested States Parties on the possibility of convening the consultative meeting on "World Heritage and

Sustainable Development”, as recommended by the World Heritage Committee. This meeting would involve all States Parties to the Convention, Secretariats of the MEAs concerned and the Advisory Bodies. A meeting of the Biodiversity-related Conventions Liaison Group (BLG) took place on 13 April 2011 at the offices of CITES in Geneva. The representatives of CITES, Ramsar, CMS, CBD and the World Heritage Centre had the opportunity to discuss the Rio+20 process and inputs of the secretariats of the MEAs for the consultative meeting on “World Heritage and Sustainable Development”.

8. A project proposal on “Capacity Building to Support the Conservation of World Heritage Sites and Enhance Sustainable Development of Local Communities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)” has been developed and is currently awaiting the approval of a potential donor State Party. The overall objective of the project proposal is to develop regional capacity building programmes for Pacific and African SIDS, and to further strengthen the existing capacity building programme for Caribbean SIDS (CCBP).
9. Opportunities are also being explored for collaboration between World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves to address sustainability issues at regional/ecosystem scales, including covering REDD-plus (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) issues.
10. The contribution of culture to the achievement of development objectives, has been recently emphasized by the UN General Assembly: the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Review Summit held in September 2010, in its adopted Outcome Document, underlines the importance of culture for development and its contribution to the achievement of the MDGs, and encourages international cooperation in the cultural field with the aim of achieving development objectives. In December 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution entitled “Culture and Development” that reaffirms the role of culture in development and calls for its integration in global development policies. There is a need to underscore how World Heritage properties, through management that involves a wide range of stakeholders, can be seen as contributing to the MDGs and to sustainable development.

## II. Draft Decision

### Draft Decision 35 COM 5E

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC-11/35.COM/5E,
2. Recalling Decisions **32 COM 10**, **33 COM 14A.2**, **34 COM 5D** adopted at its 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), 33rd session (Seville, 2009), and 34th (Brasilia, 2010) sessions respectively;
3. Welcomes the progress made in implementing the recommended actions;
4. Requests the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, and with the support of interested States Parties to continue its efforts to implement various activities contained in the Action Plan 2012;
5. Also requests that the results of the proposed consultative meeting on “World Heritage and Sustainable Development” be reported for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session in 2012.