

Report of the Follow-up Meeting on World Heritage Periodic Reporting for Western Europe Sub-region, 8-10 December 2010, Amersfoort, the Netherlands.



General observations

The annual meeting of focal points is very much appreciated. It is a good opportunity to exchange information, ideas and experiences, but also to find common positions and to express common concerns. The presence of the World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies and observers from other regions is also helpful and recommended. Besides meeting at least once a year, other moments for meeting up should be used as well, like the Committee Meeting, General Assembly and expert meetings.

The suggestion is to make the issue of Management Plans and Training in relation to the Periodic Reporting the two main topics of the next meeting.

Second Cycle Period Reporting

Regarding Europe and North America: all sites inscribed on the World Heritage right up till 2012 will have to take part in the exercise.

Part of the forms of the Periodic Reporting will be prefilled – it is important to check this information before sending it on! The exercise will be entirely online, though the Centre will also need a signed copy of the report. A question for each State Party is how they want to deal with Section II, the part that has to be filled in by the site manager: have it sent directly by them to the Centre or only after a check / validating by the Focal Point. The idea is to have training for both the focal points and the site managers (in 2011 / 2012 respectively).

Dates in relation to the second cycle of periodic reporting:

- 1 April 2011: deadline answers in relation to the retrospective inventory
- 1 February 2012: deadline SoOUV

- launch during Committee Session in 2012 (sites inscribed 1978 – 2012)
- 31 July 2013: submission section I + II
- February 2014: compilation of regional report for the World Heritage Committee
- Summer 2014: examination report by World Heritage Committee.

There are some concerns in relation to the deadline of the SoOUV for Europe and North America (Feb. 2012). There is already a backlog of SoOUV that the Advisory Bodies have to deal with and Europe and North America are the last in line. The advice is to get the SoOUV in a.s.a.p. – and if the statement is needed for management issues, the Centre will try to get it treated as a priority by the Advisory Bodies. Also, the aim is to have SoOUV that are no longer than 2 A4 pages, but it is however important to get all the relevant information in there, as they do have to be useful in the end for management and evaluation purposes.

The First cycle of Periodic Reporting for Europe and North America started with a meeting in Nicosia (Cyprus) and ended with one in Berlin (Germany). Something similar could be considered for the second cycle. (Some documents regarding the Periodic Reporting will be branded on a CD and forwarded to the participants).

Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (SoOUV)

The Guidance on the Preparation of retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage Properties, July 2010, is the final guideline on writing the SoOUV. How this is done, e.g. bottom-up or down, differs from country to country.

ICOMOS is open to suggestions on how to deal with the large number of SoOUV, including organising meetings by State Parties or regions to evaluate them, but it has to be practical and time saving as well. The issue is that the background check has to be done on forehand, cannot be done on the spot. The dialogue regarding the SoOUV could take place at such a meeting, but that would imply that all stakeholders are present. ICOMOS only has a small team of experts to evaluate the SoOUV, and this is not done on a national level.

Clear factual errors can simply be corrected with a footnote.

The Dutch informally asked Susan Denyer's advice regarding one SoOUV in order to see if they were on the right track. Their experience is that the information under the heading 'brief synthesis' needed a different order as to make it more coherent. Also, the justification of the criteria for the site should reflect the wording of the criteria as stated in the *Operational Guidelines*, e.g. if the criterion speaks of 'influence', demonstrate this influence. Furthermore, some information placed under authenticity actually belonged under the justification of criteria, e.g. that it was an outstanding example of such and such. Finally, the site has no buffer zone, and the question was if this was needed or not.

State of Conservation (SoC) reports

When a State Party submits a project to the World Heritage Centre in accordance with paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, it is good to indicate a possible deadline that it faces. Sometimes a State Party only has a few weeks between sending it to the Centre and having to make a decision. When this is stated in the submission, the Centre will do its best to get it reviewed by the Advisory Bodies as soon as possible. Also, it is important to notify the Centre promptly.

There are four mechanisms for monitoring: letters, missions, reports by States Parties (e.g. Periodic Reporting) and joint decisions by Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre (selection of SoC's). The missions can be divided into three groups: reactive monitoring mission, advisory mission (at request and expense State Party) and reinforced monitoring mechanism.

It would be appreciated by the States Parties to also receive a notification from the World Heritage Centre if the SoC is in order. The evaluation of which developments are a threat to the OUV, and should be reported according to paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, and which are not remains difficult. The presentation of the case studies of Brugge (Belgium) and the Defence Line of Amsterdam (Netherlands) brought up the issue of assessing the cumulative effect of many small developments, especially when they occur over a longer period of time.

Tentative List and nominations

A publication with best practices of how to draft a Tentative List and harmonisation with other Tentative List would be very useful. The current Tentative Lists for Western Europe indicate a further imbalance of the List (it contains suggestions for 90 culture, 9 nature and 12 mixed sites). Western European countries should set the good example.

Certain issues in relation to nominations need to be further worked out. For example, a policy decision is needed by the Committee regarding transnational properties. There are now still too many obscurities in relation to this kind of heritage, e.g. if one part should be on the List of World Heritage in Danger, does then the entire property go on it or just that part?

Upstream processes are a good idea, though one has to be careful not to create false expectations. The Committee has asked the Advisory Bodies to be more pro-active, but it mainly comes down to resources (not enough finances or experts). The comparative analysis is a crucial tool to establish the OUV. Feasibility studies are also an important tool. Furthermore, the fact that the Committee often does not follow the advice given by the Advisory Bodies in relation to nominations is a dangerous development.

Historic Urban Landscapes

The *Vienna Memorandum* of 2005, on dealing with developments in historic urban environments, forms the basis for the Historic Urban Landscape Approach. The deadline for comments by States Parties concerning the Draft Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes is 25 December 2010, and there will be a meeting in Paris regarding this topic from 25-27 May 2011. It is considered

essential to place the document in the right context. There is a contradiction between the traditional and modern interpretation of heritage. The fact that the Recommendation comes together with an Action Plan was seen as a good initiative. Furthermore, there is a need for more awareness raising at the political level of the potential implications of developments in World Heritage sites, especially as this is the level where the decisions get taken. The joint reaction of Belgium and the Netherlands regarding the Draft Recommendation will be forwarded to the participants.

Management Plans

The aim of the management plan is to manage the OUV of the site in a sustainable way. All World Heritage sites in the UK and Ireland have a management plan. Other countries are working on the management plans of their sites. Some management plans have a duration of 5 years, other 10, and the extent of detail differ from plan to plan. In the UK and Netherlands the management plan is drawn up by the siteholders, as they are primarily responsible for the management of the site.

The *Operational Guidelines* are not clear concerning the obligation of the State Party to have a management plan / system in relation to relatively 'old' sites on the World Heritage list. It does state that a nominated property must have one but what about those that were inscribed before this was decided? It also not clear whether or not a State Party has to sent the management plan to the World Heritage Centre. It is, however, recommended.

Annex I - Programme

Day 1 – Wednesday 8 December 2010	
<i>Afternoon session</i>	
12.30 – 14.00	<i>Registration & Welcome lunch</i>
14.00 – 14.15	Opening by the Director of the Cultural Heritage Agency, mr. Cees van 't Veen
14.15 – 14.35	Dublin Recommendations
14.35 – 14.55	Update World Heritage Centre
14.55 – 15.15	Discussion
15.15 – 15.30	<i>Coffee break</i>
15.30 – 16.00	Lessons Learned from Experiences with Statements of OUV in the African Region
16.00 – 16.15	Dutch experience with Statements of OUV
16.15 – 17.30	Progress reports Member States on Statements of OUV & Discussion
17.30 – 19.00	<i>Happy hour (drinks & finger food)</i>
Day 2 – Thursday 9 December 2010	
<i>Morning session</i>	
09.00 – 09.30	Update Periodic Reporting and State of Conservation
09.30 – 10.00	Progress reports Member States on Periodic Reporting and State of Conservation
10.00 – 10.15	<i>Coffee break</i>
10.15 – 12.00	State of Conservation reports and two case studies: Spaarndam (Netherlands) and Brugge (Belgium) & Discussion
<i>Afternoon session</i>	
12.00 – 21.00	Field visit to the Defence Line of Amsterdam and Amsterdam Canal District WHS & Dinner.

Day 3 – Friday 10 December 2010Morning session

09.00 – 09.45	Exchange of experiences on Management plans
09.45 – 10.00	Dutch experience Tentative List
10.00 – 10.45	Progress reports Member States on Tentative List & Discussion
10.45 – 11.15	<i>Coffee break & Remarkable Finds</i>
11.15 – 12.15	Question and Answer session with the Advisory Bodies
12.15 – 12.30	Follow-up action plan to enhance further cooperation Western European Sub Region
12.30 – 13.30	Farewell lunch

Annex II - List of Participants

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