

Submission Form

At its 35th session (UNESCO Paris, 2011), the World Heritage Committee (Decision 35COM12D.7) “requested the World Heritage Centre, with the support of the Advisory Bodies, **to develop, for further consideration the proposal** contained in Document WHC-11/35.COM/12D [...] and to further **explore ways of recognising and rewarding best practice through a one-off initiative** at the closing event of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (November 2012, Japan)...”.

States Parties to the World Heritage Convention are invited to participate in this initiative by proposing World Heritage properties in their country that they regard as an example of successful management and sustainable development.

In order to be eligible the site has to apply with the following criteria:

- The suggested site must be a property inscribed on the World Heritage List;
- Successful management and sustainable development has to be clearly demonstrated;
- Best practices are considered those that are tried, tested and applied in different situations and in a wider context;
- An overall good performance on all headings mentioned in the submission form, with an exemplary performance in at least one of the areas;
- An outstanding example of innovative management in dealing with one or more management challenges / issues that could offer lessons to other sites.

Each State Party may propose a maximum of two properties, preferably relating to one cultural and one natural site.

This form contains 9 topics for demonstrating best management practice – it is not necessary to comply with all of them but it would be appreciated if you could provide a comprehensive response to as many topics as possible. In your responses to the question, please provide all facts and figures to substantiate the answers, and describe the before and after situation of implementing the best practice intervention. The objective is to illustrate clearly why the example can qualify as a best practice and can be used as a source of inspiration for other World Heritage properties.

The topics are based on questions dealt with in the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.

Recognizing and rewarding best practice in management of World Heritage properties

State Party: **GREECE**

Title proposed World Heritage property: **Medieval City of Rhodes**

Brief description of the property:

The Order of Saint John of Jerusalem occupied Rhodes from 1309 to 1523 and set about transforming the city into a stronghold. It subsequently came under Turkish and Italian rule. With the Palace of the Grand Masters, the Great Hospital and the Street of the Knights, the Upper Town is one of the most beautiful urban ensembles of the Gothic period. In the Lower Town, Gothic architecture coexists with mosques, public baths and other buildings dating from the Ottoman period.

Please answer the questions below demonstrating the successful management and sustainable development of the World Heritage property and why it is an example of a best practice.

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:	Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:
1. Conservation: <i>What innovative management practices or strategies are being applied in order to ensure the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property (e.g. better resource management, restoration and rehabilitation, addressing various man-made or natural threats and challenges,</i>	The strategies of conservation of the medieval city of Rhodes focuses on the preservation and protection of its authenticity and integrity not only by using the primary building materials, but also by utilising every historical architectural or structural piece of evidence that can contribute to ‘faithful’ repair, restoration or conservation of the monumental complex. The activities that ensure the preservation of the form, structure and historical use of the cultural property are the following: attention to the preservation of the urban and architectural organization of the medieval city, respect for the traditional building techniques and development of the historical layering of the property, which bears witness to its living and

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<p><i>etc.)?</i></p>	<p>perpetually evolving character. The continuous and thorough morphological monitoring carried out by the responsible archaeological authority (4th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities), combined with the documented architectural or other interventions taking place within the settlement ensures the preservation of the authenticity and integrity of the monumental complex, elements that, according to the UNESCO specifications, are of great significance for a world heritage property.</p> <p>The first program of restoration of the monuments within the fortified city:</p> <p>First unit: Complex interventions at the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orthodox monastery of Saint George • Complex including the archaeological site of the order of the knights of Saint John and the mosque of Suleiman the Magnificent • Big complex of the lodge of the knights of Spain <p>Second unit: Continuation and completed the following interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest room of Saint Catherine and its surrounding archaeological site (which was awarded the Prize of Europa Nostra) • Gothic metropolitan church of Panagia Bourgou • Archaeological site of Panagia tis Nikis and non-identified churches at the Kisthiniou road • the Jewish synagogue Kahal-Shalom • church of Saint Cathering (Ilk_Michrab) and the complex of urban residences in which it is included

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	<p>Restoration works at the mosque of Mehmet Aga, Syntrivan and Hamza Bei</p> <p>The second restoration program involves the restoration of the medieval fortifications</p> <p>It should be noted that the restoration of the Süleyman Mosque together with that of the Gothic Chapel of the Santa Maria del Burgo and the Orthodox monastery of Agios Georgios (Hurmali) were awarded the Europa nova prize as paradigmatic examples of the restoration of monuments from three different dogmas.</p> <p>The following research programs have been carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of wear and methods of preservation of the medieval city of Rhodes • Exhibition of geotechnical research at the Old City of Rhodes • Cooperation and exchange of experiences between regions of the European Union regarding the protection of the historical and environmental heritage in relation to their socioeconomic growth and the touristic evaluation of the areas in question (Publication of the volume: “Archeologia & Ambiente Naturale Prospettive di cooperazione tra le autonomie locali nel sud dell’ Europa”) • EURORAN 2- Launch of international architectural contest of ideas entitled: “Life in the city, a new perception about the urban areas” • Research program about the materials and methods of conservation and protection of limestone in the medieval city of Rhodes • Program RECITE of the Net REBUILD: ‘Renewable energy for the buildings in European cities with historic centres’ • Program TOSQA: ‘Antiseismic protection of historic centres’ • Program EUROMOL-Professional training courses on the techniques of restoration of European windmills • ‘Conservation problems of the foundation of the fortifications of the medieval city of Rhodes’

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2.	<p>Local People:</p> <p><i>What exemplary practices are you using in order to effectively address the needs of local stakeholders within the management system for the property, and enable their full and active participation?</i></p>	<p>The practice adopted by the responsible archaeological authority with respect to the relation between the local people and the cultural property and their awareness regarding the principles of protection and maintenance of the monumental complex are focused on the following activities: promotion and presentation of the archaeological activities in the local press and other media, participation in cultural and scientific symposia and seminars at local level, participation in working groups and committees that manage issues of common interest, activities in the form of thematic tributes involving the active participation of the local people, the pilot adoption of pioneering practices concerning the waste management and the use of non polluting means of transportation, the organization of cultural and artistic activities open to the wider public etc. In addition, at the disposal of the public, both local and foreign, is the website of the cultural property including historical information and photographic material as well as informative sign posts placed at crucial landmarks of the settlement and infokiosks.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the following projects have been carried out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of more than 25 ruined properties owned by the Greek State and managed by the Credit Management Fund for the Execution of Archaeological Projects which were granted to destitute residents • In order to improve the life of the residents and to create social infrastructure, a municipal health centre, a crèche, a place for old people and a citizen information office started to operate.

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<p>3. Legal framework:</p> <p><i>What special measures have you taken to ensure that the legal framework for the World Heritage site is effective in maintaining the OUV of the property?</i></p>	<p>The property is fully protected by the provisions of the Archaeological Law 3028/2002 “On the Protection of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in general”, by the delineation of the medieval city of Rhodes as an archaeological site in 2009 and by separate ministerial decrees on land use published in the Official Government Gazette (1923-1938, 1948, 1960, 1989, 1995 and 2001). This modern and up-to-date institutional and legal framework is expected to be consolidated and enhanced by a Presidential Decree regarding the new town planning study which will define specific regulations for building and use of land within the limits of the cultural property. This Presidential Decree, the result of cooperation between the Municipality of Rhodes and the 4th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities, which is aimed at the effective preservation of the cultural property, will soon be submitted for approval.</p>

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<p>4. Boundaries:</p> <p><i>What innovative ways of dealing with the boundaries of the property, including for management of the buffer zone do you have in place, to effectively to manage the site and protect its OUV?</i></p>	<p>The existence since 1920's of a buffer zone of the medieval city of Rhodes determined the protected area of the fortified medieval complex. The current delineation of the medieval city and its declaration as an archaeological site in 2009 reinforced the status of protection of the cultural property preserving not only the medieval settlement which is clearly defined by its powerful and complex medieval fortifications but also the buffer zone with the verdant parks and the seacoast, a dominant element of the city since the antiquity. The town planning study which will define specific regulations for building and use of land within the limits of the medieval city will become another legal tool useful for the management of both the medieval core of the cultural property and its buffer zone.</p>
<p>5. Sustainable finance:</p> <p><i>What effective strategies have you developed and implemented to assure</i></p>	<p>The basic sources of funding for the management and preservation of the medieval city of Rhodes either for the conservation and restoration of the medieval fortifications or for the individual ecclesiastical and secular buildings that are spread within the settlement come from the Public Investments, the State Budget and the European Programs - in the form of the</p>

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<p><i>adequate and sustainable financial resources for implementing the management measures required to maintain the site's OUV?</i></p>	<p>Second and Third Community Support Framework, the Mediterranean Programs and the National Strategic Reference Framework. Moreover, the Credit Management Fund for the Execution of Archaeological Projects is operational in Rhodes.</p>
<p>6. Staffing training and development:</p> <p><i>What approaches and strategies have you developed and implemented to assure that the human resources are adequate to manage the World Heritage property?</i></p>	<p>The competent institution for the management and protection of the monumental complex seeks for the education and training of technical and scientific personnel, either through apprenticeship under the supervision of specialized personnel in situ- mainly in the fields of restoration techniques, support work, and conservation, or through seminars and educational programs. Moreover, the constant and open communication between staff of the 4th Ephorate of Byzantine Antiquities and individuals- owners of properties, and professionals - architects and engineers- working in the settlement, contributes significantly both in providing guidance and expertise, as well as in the exchange of ideas and speculations concerning the effective protection and preservation of the cultural object.</p>

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:	Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:
<p>7. Sustainable development:</p> <p><i>What are the effective mechanisms in place to ensure that resource use permitted in and around the World Heritage site is sustainable and does not impact negatively on OUV?</i></p>	<p>All the activities for the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the monumental complex of the medieval city of Rhodes, are subject to a strict, systematic and thorough administrative control. General supervision is carried out by the competent central service of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The provisions of the Archaeological Law 3028/2002 ensure the sustainable development of the cultural property.</p>
<p>8. Education and interpretation programmes:</p> <p><i>How do the education, interpretation and awareness programmes you have developed and implemented significantly enhance the understanding of OUV of the site among stakeholders?</i></p>	<p>Participation of the scientific staff of the management body, to conferences, cultural symposiums and national or international conferences (7th International Symposium of the Organization of the World Heritage Cities, international conference “15 years of conservation works in the medieval city of Rhodes” etc) and the consequent promotion of the outstanding importance of the medieval city of Rhodes, are tangible proof of the intense efforts taking place for systematic study, documentation, interpretation and management of this unique</p>

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	<p>cultural object of the period of the Knights. The medieval city of Rhodes claims a prominent place on the map of World Heritage Properties, as a crossroads of civilizations of the past, whose influence was not limited geographically, but was spread throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin during the Middle Ages, and mainly as a meeting place of the present and the future. Its importance as a World Heritage monument transcends national borders making its protection a universal concern. We mention, for your information, the following educational programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhodes, the impregnable city • Nine archaeological riddles require solution
<p>9. Tourism and interpretation:</p> <p><i>What innovative plans have you designed and successfully implemented to ensure that visitor management does not negatively impact on the maintenance of the property's OUV?</i></p>	<p>Tourism development and the increase of visitor numbers during the summer are major menaces for the monumental complex of the medieval city of Rhodes. The following are just some of the measures aimed to protect the cultural property from the growing tourist pressure: traffic control of vehicles within the medieval settlement, definition of controlled parking areas outside the circuit of the city walls, extension of opening hours of museums and archaeological sites in order to avoid overcrowding, control of operating conditions of food establishments and their geographical restriction to the commercial zone of the settlement,</p>

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	<p>policing and stricter rules that extend to revocation of establishment's authorization in case of infringements.</p>
Additional comments:	
<p>The medieval city of Rhodes designated as a historical monumental complex in 1960 and declared as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988, is an outstanding cultural object of universal value. Protection and management are accomplished by the systematic and continuous monitoring of the interventions undertaken, the continuous monitoring of the dynamic relationship between built and natural environment and the updating of the institutional and legislative regulations. Increased risks due to tourism development and overexploitation of the area, combined with the pressing tendency to change land uses, require vigilance and strategic planning, in order to defuse the pressures and reduce the losses. Like every active settlement, the city of Rhodes is subject to constant change which increases the risks, making management and continuous adaptation to new practices, extremely important.</p>	
Brief description/ summary of the best practice, including a statement on how it can be useful for other sites (max.600 words)	
<p>Secret recipes do not exist. The success is based on hard, systematic work, perseverance, vision and open mind. The management of a city is</p>	

not an object of only one person or a small group; definitely it is not something static, something that remains stable and unchangeable over time. Times change, conditions change and therefore cities are changing. Our task is to limit those losses which are related to the deterioration of the authenticity and integrity of the cultural object. We must also adapt to the demands of the times ensuring what is at stake: Maintaining the uniqueness of the cultural object that we are called upon to protect.

Finally, please provide us, if possible, with up to ten images of the concerned World Heritage property that can be used free of rights in UNESCO publications (commercial and/or non-commercial), and on the UNESCO website. Please provide the name of the photographer and the caption along with the images (he/she will be credited for any use of the images).

We have already sent by post the ten images requested in electronic form (cd-rom).