



ANNOUNCEMENT / CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS SEMINAR

Theme: “Experiences of World Heritage in Africa”
14-16 October 2014, Rabat, Morocco

BACKGROUND

Since July 2013, the world has 981 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. With a total of 128 properties located in 40 State Parties, the African continent has 13% of the World Heritage properties. This modest representation requires the initiation of supported inscription projects. The African continent is also home to rich heritage and has a diversity of properties and exceptional practices that deserve to be promoted globally. The results of the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Arab states and for the Africa region have been adopted at the 34th and 35th World Heritage Committee meetings in Brasilia (2010) and Paris (2011) respectively. Both periodic reports and their Action Plans have recognised the need to reinforce the existing mechanisms of conservation and management of World Heritage by the efficient utilisation of regional resources and international cooperation for the benefit of people. Issues such as indigenous knowledge and expertise, development pressure, community empowerment and political risks were highlighted as concerns to be addressed in the coming years. Many good practices in the field of conservation and management deserve to be known and widely disseminated. The periodic reports also emphasised the need to organise regional and inter-regional meetings in order to improve networking and sharing of experiences on the African continent.

In 2012, on the occasion of the celebration in Africa of the 40th anniversary of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, the Government of South Africa, the African World Heritage Fund and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, organised the conference “Living with World Heritage in Africa” in South Africa from the 26th to the 29th September 2012. One of the recommendations of the conference was to organise a regional meeting every two years on the Africa continent. In application of this recommendation, the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the African World Heritage Fund, in partnership with the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Cluster Office in Rabat, are pleased to announce an international seminar on the theme: “Experiences of World Heritage in Africa”.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SEMINAR

The seminar aims to reflect on the experiences of World Heritage in Africa, specifically in the areas related to indigenous systems, management, community participation, economic awareness and impacts of armed conflict.

The aim is to analyse the management practices of African World Heritage sites in order to share experiences on the successes and challenges of regional and international interest.

The results of the conference will be published.

THEME AND CONTENT OF THE SEMINAR

The general theme of the seminar is: “**Experiences of World Heritage in Africa**”.

This theme will be addressed through four sub-themes as following:

1. **Recognition, formalisation and documentation of traditional management systems:** despite denials suffered during the colonial and post-colonial period, indigenous management systems have helped the survival of many cultural and natural heritage properties in Africa. Communications could look at the experiences of formalisation and documentation of existing systems. They could also reflect on the possibilities of harmonisation of existing systems with modern management mechanisms, including those which are already approved for World Heritage. Finally, they could evaluate the existing systems and propose realistic scenarios for their (re) utilisation at different academic and managerial levels of heritage.
2. **World Heritage in conflict and post conflict areas and the strategies of rehabilitation:** the existence of conflict areas in Africa has an impact on the quality of conservation of several heritage properties. As an illustration, 14 of the 17 African sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger are located in countries in conflict or affected by conflict in the past 10 years. Whether the conflicts are active or recent, it is important to diagnose the impacts and define the strategies of resistance and resilience. A better understanding of the issues and strategies for rehabilitation would also be beneficial.
3. **Experiences on World Heritage and development in Africa:** with a total economic growth of about 5% in the past 10 years, Africa is a continent in full development. Despite the positive impacts, the dynamics observed in both economic and social terms are sometimes the cause of various pressures on the conservation of cultural and natural properties. In particular, mining activities, agriculture and new settlements may pose challenges for the sustainability of attributes and values of the sites. It is necessary to capitalise on the experiences and to broaden national perspectives on international issues in regards to planning, resources and sustainable development.
4. **Issues and challenges of conservation of World Heritage in Africa:** in light of the action plans arising from the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Arab and African regions, the immovable cultural and natural heritage faces serious challenges. The issue of disaster and

risk management must now extend to the effects of climate change. In addition, the involvement of academic centres for the promotion of data and knowledge based on World Heritage becomes a strategic issue, as well as the involvement of local communities and the implementation of professional and institutional networks. These are all aspects of conservation that would be interesting to illustrate during the seminar with some concrete experiences and examples.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

The call for papers is open to a diverse range of the public who have worked or are working with African heritage. In total, twenty (20) participants will be selected from the following groups:

- Researchers and academics;
- Professionals and practitioners of cultural and natural heritage;
- Surrounding communities of World Heritage properties;
- Development actors.

Participation and support of the seminar participants is subject to the selection of the abstract and the reception of the full paper by the organisers. The Government of the Kingdom of Morocco will cover the costs of international travel and stay in Morocco for the selected participants.

SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS AND ARTICLES

The applicants are invited to submit the abstract of their article no later than the 30 April 2014. All abstracts will be presented in the following format:

- Preferred sub-theme
- Title of the document
- Summary of the document (maximum 500 words)
- Name and affiliation of authors
- Contacts (functional telephone and emails required)

All candidates whose abstracts have been approved are requested to submit the complete article by the 31 July 2014. Only candidates who have sent their "complete article" on time will be covered by the organisers.

All participants who presented a paper at the seminar will be requested to send the final version to the organisers no later than 30 November 2014. The format and the specifications of the final document will be sent to participants after the selection of abstracts. An editorial committee will be established to evaluate the articles.

CONTACTS

For the submission of abstracts of articles and for more information on the seminar, please simultaneously contact:

- Mr Samir Kafas : kafas255@yahoo.fr
- Mr Abdoul Aziz Guissé : abdaziz3155@gmail.com
- Ms Vanessa Fanjul : VanessaF@awhf.net

OBTAINING A VISA

For participants who need a visa to travel to the Kingdom of Morocco, the seminar organisers will send you an official letter of invitation. The participant will be responsible for obtaining the entry visa by contacting the nearest Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco. The participant will be responsible for conducting the necessary steps to obtain the visa.