

ACTION PLAN FOR WORLD HERITAGE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (2014-2024)

The current Regional Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2014-2024 has been elaborated by the State Parties of the Latin America and the Caribbean Region in close collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, the Category 2 Centres of the Region and the World Heritage Centre issued on the outcome of the Regional Meeting “Towards an Action Plan for World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean”, which took place in Brasilia (Brazil), 23-25th April 2014. This document responds to the request made by **Decision 37COM 10A**, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in its 37th session in Phnom Penh in June 2013.

The Action Plan constitutes a specific agenda that will serve mainly to promote regional cooperation, to reinforce synergies and to strengthen coordination of the Latin America and the Caribbean World Heritage Community’s efforts. The Action Plan has been designed in response to the specific context and needs identified by State Parties, and formulated into priority actions and activities for the next decade.

This regional Plan provides a common framework on the priority actions and activities of the region as a whole; thus it may not necessarily reflect the position and the specific needs of each State Party.

I. REGIONAL CONTEXT

So far, 32 countries in the region have ratified the World Heritage Convention and there are 129 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List: 90 cultural properties, 36 natural properties and 3 mixed properties recognized for their Outstanding Universal Value. The Latin America and the Caribbean Region possesses a rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage as well as diverse social, political and economic conditions. Despite the economic growth of many of its countries, poverty and unequal income distribution still affects the region. It can also be said of the diversity of institutional situations concerning heritage policies of each country.

II. OBJECTIVES

As well as providing a framework to promote regional cooperation, the strengthening of synergies and the coordination of the efforts of the Community of World Heritage in the region, the Action Plan furthermore wishes to define an experimental strategic action programme, in order to generate good practices in the region.

The Action Plan is structured around the strategic objectives for the implementation of the Convention, synthesized in the Budapest Declaration on World Heritage (adopted in 2002), which were reaffirmed and finalised in 2007:

- Strengthen the **Credibility** of the World Heritage List, as a representative and geographically balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of Outstanding Universal Value; ensure the effective **Conservation** of World Heritage properties;
- Promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** measures, including assistance for preparing the nomination of properties to the World Heritage List, for the understanding and implementation of the World Heritage Convention and related instruments;
- Increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through **Communication**.

- Enhance the role of **Communities** in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The overall goal that brings together all the others is that heritage can be a factor of sustainable development that contributes to: a) improve the quality of life of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean b) poverty reduction c) gender equality and d) to promote cultural and natural diversity.

III. GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Cooperation:

Cooperation is an essential guiding principle for the implementation of the Plan. It involves the implementation of priority regional actions, to provide synergies between countries and the World Heritage sites in the region, whilst taking into account the cultural, social, political and economic diversity, reinforcing the principles of South-South cooperation and stimulating North-South cooperation in the development of those actions.

Funding:

In order to ensure the viability of this Action it is necessary to use mechanisms that integrate expected actions into governmental, intergovernmental and other agencies' agendas, articulating national, regional and international strategic partnerships.

Pilot projects:

The plan proposes the development of pilot projects that reflect the priorities of the region and represent testing grounds, with the aim of developing good practices in the conservation and management of World Heritage. These projects are seen as strategic for cooperation and furthermore as an opportunity to implement its strategic objectives. The pilot projects would be selected by taking into consideration general criteria, including: how they meet the needs of one of the prioritized categories, how they meet the agreed principles of the Plan, how they contribute to the development of the five strategic objectives of the Convention and how it benefits from an effective participation of the State Party for its implementation. Specific criteria will be defined at a sub-regional level and must correspond to the defined prioritized categories and rely on the World Heritage Programs already in place.

Monitoring:

The implementation of the Action Plan will be monitored by the World Heritage Centre with the States Parties at a sub-regional level every three years at least, in order to identify the current strengths and points of weakness and to propose the necessary adjustments to achieve the objectives. Indicators for different actions and performance targets will be defined in subregional plans.

IV. REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The Plan provides challenges identified in one or more sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, considered as regional priority issues by the States Parties. In addition, the Plan provides information on some heritage categories considered relevant for the region; special attention will be given to them in the next decade.

1. Education, communication and information

Education in a very large sense has been identified as a necessity to improve the comprehension, conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage. Therefore, it is essential to develop outreach activities at all levels and particularly targeting different groups in society (civil society, including children and young people, local, traditional and

indigenous communities, managers and political decision-makers, etc.), with the purpose of raising awareness of the sentiment and the value of cultural and natural heritage as an identity factor and a tool for development.

2. Integrated heritage management

States Parties in the Region have identified the urgent need to establish and improve mechanisms and tools that contribute to effective and sustainable heritage management based on an integrated perspective. Questions related to management indicators, integrated management approaches for natural sites containing cultural components or vice versa, and governance and public use management are joined by another fundamental element: that of disaster risk management (analysis, prevention and mitigation).

The region is subject to high geographical and climatic vulnerability, which has considerable effects on World Heritage. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, torrential rains, fires, among others, have had significant impacts on several World Heritage properties in the Region. This highlights the existence of limited mechanisms and tools to assess, prevent and mitigate those impacts. Furthermore, human-induced hazards such as armed conflict were also considered important.

Priority actions regarding these issues will be addressed through capacity-building activities for disaster risk management and reduction, particularly concerning the increase of phenomena derived from **climate change**. Furthermore it is necessary to take measures not only to know how heritage can be preserved but also to take into account the way in which heritage can be used to improve resilience to natural and human-induced disasters.

3. Sustainable tourism in World Heritage sites

Although tourism is considered an opportunity for development and improving conservation of the World Heritage in the Region, the current context reveals that increasing tourism is one of the important threats that should be considered in management and conservation of World Heritage sites in the Region. A significant number report a spectacular increasing flow of visitors without having appropriate planning mechanisms and tools to deal with its effects, as well as an increase in threats related to the infrastructure and development services needed to satisfy the tourism demands. Increasing tourism has also led, in some cases, to gentrification and other social impacts, and in several World Heritage properties, the benefits of tourism have neither led to an improvement of the local population's living conditions nor to the creation of sustainable means of subsistence.

However, efforts are underway in the region that could provide valuable lessons on the challenges improving tourism management and developing tourism as an activity that contributes effectively to sustainable development. Efforts for that matter will progressively reinforce local participation as well as the capacities of all agents so that tourism can be a factor in heritage conservation and the sustainable development of local, traditional and indigenous communities.

4. Categories of Heritage

Urban Heritage

Population growth and urban densification present a challenge for the Urban Heritage of the region due to its impact on quality of life and especially, on certain vulnerable groups. It is necessary to cope with urgent pressure and, in particular, potential impacts of development projects.

Although progress has been made, the coordination of conservation plans with comprehensive urban and territorial planning remains a priority for the region, as well as the coordination of different spheres of management and joint responsibility for urban and heritage management.

Natural Sites

The immense wealth of Natural Heritage in the Region is currently not represented sufficiently in the World Heritage List. However, recent studies indicate that the region has great potential to fill the gaps regarding those properties in the List, ensuring its credibility and World Conservation. Marine Sites are a very important category of natural sites; a dedicated World Heritage Programme that targets this category of heritage can be helpful.

Moreover, management mechanisms and tools for Natural Sites have to be improved to ensure their conservation and a better awareness of their Outstanding Universal Value amongst the general public and, in particular, amongst local, traditional and indigenous communities.

Cultural Landscapes

As with Natural Sites, only 8 Cultural Landscapes are inscribed in the World Heritage List in LAC, which does not completely reflect the region's diversity. It is necessary to generate knowledge for improving understanding, conservation and management in this heritage category, as well as identification of possible nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List. Similarly, this category shares with the other priority categories the challenge of identifying appropriate management mechanisms and tools.

Archaeological Heritage

Archaeological remains in the region are also facing a series of challenges, from conservation to multidisciplinary management, and in particular issues related to tourism and large infrastructural endeavours. Furthermore, archaeological remains can be a particularly vulnerable category of heritage when are not of a monumental nature, because of the lack of recognition of its importance. Several World Heritage sites lack established general-planning tools to allow decision making. Therefore, the development of National Conservation Plans (or international, depending on the sites) has been requested through multidisciplinary criteria.

V. ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: Strengthen the CREDIBILITY of the World Heritage List					
Expected outcome:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention • Strengthening of the States Parties' involvement in processes of the World Heritage Convention • Update and harmonisation of the Tentative Lists in order to contribute to the Global Strategy 					
Actions	Led by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Reinforce implementation of the World Heritage Convention					
1.1.1- Develop education and outreach strategies at regional, sub-regional and national levels in relation to duties and benefits under the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage concepts	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.2- Review the legislative and institutional frameworks and policies to determinate their effectiveness and appropriateness for cultural and natural heritage conservation and management, and for their improvement and harmonisation with the other national laws of each State Party	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.3- Develop/update tools in order to integrate World Heritage conservation into larger political and development agendas at the State Party and international levels.	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.4- Improve inter-institutional and inter-sectorial cooperation and involve non-governmental organizations and community organizations in heritage conservation and management.	SP	WHC			
1.1.5- Promote the World Heritage Convention as a tool for respecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region	SP WHC AB C2C UFO				
Action 2: Improve participation of the LAC region in the processes of the World Heritage Convention					
1.2.1- Promote the establishment and functioning of mechanisms for greater internal coordination and collaboration on conservation and management of the World Heritage, in accordance with the specific conditions of each State Party.	SP				
1.2.2- Promote effective coordination and communication between focal points and related agencies of each State Party to assure active participation in World Heritage programs	WHC	SP UFO			
Action 3: Update and harmonize tentative lists and improve nomination processes					
1.3.1- Complete and update national inventories and Tentative Lists to duly attain a larger representation of categories and types of properties	SP	WHC AB			

1.3.2- Promote regional cooperation and integration through trans-boundary and serial properties for greater understanding of the significance and authenticity of properties and for revitalising relationships that contribute to their sustainability.	SP	WHC AB			
1.3.3- Identify gaps in the region for the development of thematic studies and comparative studies	WHC AB	C2C			
1.3.4- Implement regional and sub-regional workshops for the harmonization of tentative lists	SP WHC AB	C2C			
1.3.5- Prioritize nominations of properties in under-represented categories that contribute to a balanced representation of the cultural and natural diversity of the region	SP				

Objective 2: Ensure the effective CONSERVATION of World Heritage properties

Expected outcome:

- **World Heritage sites as examples of the best practices and methodological approaches.**
- **Improvement and implementation of the legal frameworks and management systems**
- **Definition of clear property boundaries and buffer zones**
- **Consolidation of existing properties through the development, review and implementation of management plans for the LAC region, ensuring that arrangements for the maintenance of the OUV are in place.**
- **Sustainable development as part of the management of World Heritage properties**

Actions	Led by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
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Action 1: Improve conservation and management of World Heritage properties

2.1.1- Implement regional training workshops on disaster risk management for World Heritage	WHC AB C2C	SP			
2.1.2- Finalize the review of boundaries and establishment of buffer zones and regulatory measures for properties in the region	WHC SP				
2.1.3- Develop a database of the properties in the region including cartographic data, and make it available on the website platform	WHC SP				
2.1.4- Promote the integration of World Heritage management at the different levels of planning	SP	AB			
2.1.5- Improve management plans and systems, including specific provisions for the protection of the OUV and key indicators for monitoring	SP	AB C2C			
2.1.6- Develop/update tools for integrating sustainable development in the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP WHC AB	C2C			
2.1.7- Develop/ update tools to assure the integration of sustainable tourism in the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP WHC				

	AB				
Action 2: Recognize the role of World Heritage as models for best practices in conservation and management					
2.2.1- Promote networking among heritage professionals in order to exchange lessons learned	WHC SP C2C	AB			
2.2.2- Encourage the participation of the sciences and technology in heritage conservation	SP				
2.2.3- Identify, analyse, systematize and disseminate the best practices in conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage.	AB C2C	WHC SP			
Action 3: Improve of management arrangements					
2.3.1- Strengthen existing financial mechanisms and tools and generate and explore new forms of financing for sustainable heritage conservation and management	SP				
2.3.2- Develop agreements and promote cooperation amongst diverse government agencies, site commissions and universities for the implementation of management plans	SP				
2.3.3- Strengthen the capacity in human resources in order to improve heritage conservation and management practices	SP C2C	AB WHC			
Objective 3: Promote the development of effective CAPACITY BUILDING in the States Parties					
Expected outcome:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a regional strategy for strengthening capacity building on World Heritage conservation and management • Consolidation of the category 2 centers (C2C) as a regional reference • Establishment of databases in the regional languages as a basic tool to enhance conservation and management capacities in the region • Improvement of the existing networks for World Heritage • Increase in collaboration between national and international organisations • Integration of Capacity Building programme tools into the mechanisms of national cultural institutions. 					
Actions	Led by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Organise and develop information about conservation and management of World Heritage properties in the region					
3.1.1- Ensure the translation of guidance materials into Spanish, Portuguese, French and English	SP WHC AB C2C				
3.1.2- Maintain up-to-date information on key issues related to World Heritage conservation and management	SP WHC AB C2C				
3.1.3- Development of online modules to strength capacity building in World Heritage management and	AB	WHC			

conservation	C2C				
Action 2. Develop a capacity building strategy					
3.2.1- Develop sub-regional capacity building programmes	C2C SP	WHC AB			
3.2.2- Identify existing institutions, facilities, expertise and networks involved in capacity building for heritage conservation and management	SP C2C	AB WHC			
Action 3. Strengthen institutional capacity for heritage conservation					
3.3.1- Organise exchanges, conferences and field visits related to World Heritage for decision-makers	SP C2C	WHC AB			
3.3.2- Systematize existing information about the benefits of World Heritage conservation to support the decision-making process	SP C2C	WHC AB			
3.3.3- Develop pilot twinning project for site managers	SP	C2C			
Action 4: Promote the diffusion of knowledge related to World Heritage					
3.4.1- Develop courses, workshops and other training activities according to the needs of the Region	AB C2C	UFO SP			
3.4.2.- Strengthen and stimulate the role of Category 2 Centres and other training centres in capacity building	WHC AB SP	C2C UFO			
3.4.3.- Promote research on management and conservation and the identification of academic centres offering programmes on heritage	SP	C2C			
Objective 4: Increase public awareness, involvement and support to World Heritage through COMMUNICATION					
Expected outcome:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadened access to information about World Heritage • Improvement of participatory communication through appropriate national mechanisms to enhance collaboration amongst national and private institutions. • Creation/consolidation of regional heritage networks for sharing the best practices regarding communication. • Collaboration between relevant organisations at a national and international level and institutions responsible for conservation of heritage • Involvement of academic and research institutions in the communication, conservation and development of World Heritage 					
Actions	Led by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Develop strategies for communication related to heritage through appropriate mechanisms that enhance collaboration among national and private institutions					

4.1.1- Promote dialogue among national, regional, and local agencies and organisations, UNESCO and Advisory bodies.	SP	C2C UFO, WHC AB			
4.1.2- Strengthen communication about the properties' OUV and the importance of boundaries and buffer zones	SP	WHC C2C			
4.1.3- Compile and disseminate the best national practices in conservation and management of heritage	SP C2C	WHC			
4.1.4- Encourage the participation of academia in World Heritage conservation and promote the dissemination of research results	SP C2C	WHC			
4.1.5- Develop awareness-raising and outreach activities for targeted ages and socio-cultural groups, particularly youth, and coordinate them with the existing UNESCO education network (ASP, World Heritage in Young Hands...)	SP UFO	WHC			
4.1.6- Involve different media (conventional, traditional and new media) in raising awareness and outreach about World Heritage	SP	WHC			
Action 2: Create/consolidate regional heritage networks to enhance information sharing					
4.2.1- Promote periodic regional meetings and workshops for sharing experiences and ideas	WHC C2C SP	AB			
4.2.2- Encourage the exchange of information through networks, twinnings, workshops, and electronic platforms	WHC C2C	SP AB			
Objective 5: Enhance the role of COMMUNITIES in the identification and management of World Heritage.					
Expected outcome:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples in the management and conservation of World Heritage properties • Development of sustainable opportunities for local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples to benefit from World Heritage • Promotion of World Heritage social appropriation 					
Actions	Led by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Involve local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples in all processes of conservation and management of World Heritage properties					
5.1.1- Promote dialogue between the various stakeholders involved in World Heritage management and conservation	SP	UFO			
5.1.2- Develop management models focusing on successful community participation that ensures the sustainable conservation of the World Heritage and the protection of the interest of local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples	SP	WHC AB C2C			
5.1.3- Ensure the involvement of local communities in addressing the impacts of development	SP	WHC			

		AB C2C UFO			
5.1.4- Promote strategic partnerships among the communities involved, the different levels of government, the private sector and other agents of civil society to generate funding that will benefit communities and contribute to the conservation of heritage	SP	WHC			
Action 2: Develop sustainable opportunities for local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples to ensure that they benefit from development activities in the sites					
5.2.1- Create mechanisms and instruments to ensure the participation of involved local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples in the sharing of costs and benefits from the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP	WHC			
5.2.2- Promote actions to provide improved information and greater understanding to local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples concerning their rights and their duties in relation to the World Heritage Convention	SP	WHC C2C			

SP=States Parties

WHC=World Heritage Centre

AB=Advisory Bodies

C2C= Category II Centres

UFO= UNESCO Field Office

*The original Spanish version is available in <http://whc.unesco.org/en/lac/>