



Improving the Effectiveness of the World Heritage Reactive Monitoring Process

Budget Proposed
US\$ 100,000

Duration
1.5 year

Beneficiary
Global

Category
Conservation



© OUR PLACE / Ishrat Khana Mausoleum



The Reactive Monitoring process established under the World Heritage Convention is one of the most comprehensive systems of monitoring ever developed under an international legal instrument in conservation. However, some of the key stakeholders involved in its implementation do not always fully understand this process and its multifaceted associated procedures. The objective of the following project is to strengthen the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by improving the effectiveness and the understanding of its Reactive Monitoring process, including the benefits of the inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger.



Context

By being Parties to the **1972 World Heritage Convention**, 193 countries have already recognized that the sites located on their national territory, and which are inscribed on the World Heritage List, constitute a world heritage “for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate”.

Reactive Monitoring is defined as being the reporting to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of specific sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and which are **under threat**. To this end, reports are prepared by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS and IUCN). States Parties can also ensure the **accuracy of those reports**, inter alia by submitting their own reports within the statutory deadlines, early information on any development or restoration project, by providing sufficient and relevant information during missions, etc.

Since 1979, **over 3.300 reports** on the state of conservation of 536 World Heritage properties have been examined by the World Heritage Committee. On average, **150 properties** are monitored yearly through the Reactive Monitoring process, including those inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.



Objectives

1. Strengthening the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by improving the effectiveness and the understanding of its Reactive Monitoring process. The current lack of understanding hampers the proper implementation of the decisions adopted by the World Heritage Committee at site-level and have a negative impact on the state of conservation of the properties these decisions are deemed to protect.

2. Demonstrating the benefits of the inscription of natural and cultural properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger to overcome the negative perceptions of this List, highlighting the importance of the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value, which justified their World Heritage status.



In addition, a selection of **relevant case studies** shall complement the activity to illustrate the various issues identified, in terms of **success stories, good practices** but also in terms of difficulties.



Relevance

During its 40th session (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), the World Heritage Committee highlighted that the Reactive Monitoring process is **a key indicator of the effectiveness of the Convention itself** and that it provided a unique global overview of the state of conservation of natural and cultural heritage. It was however stressed that its content and its procedures were not always clear for all key actors and that there was now **a need for an evaluation of the effectiveness of this process**.

Committee members highlighted that the List of World Heritage in Danger was often perceived by many actors as a “degrading list” and decided that it was high time **to reverse this negative perception** and to highlight the benefits of such ‘in-Danger’ listing (Decision 40 COM 7).

The World Heritage Centre being the Secretariat of the World Heritage Convention, it is the **best positioned** to undertake such evaluation of one of the most crucial processes of this Convention.



Outcomes & Beneficiaries

- 1. Clear guidelines** on the purpose of the Reactive Monitoring process and its organization will be proposed, accompanied by **a set of recommendations addressed to the various stakeholders** of the Convention to further streamline the process and the procedures, and improve both their effectiveness and wide understanding.
- 2.** The evaluation will also provide a better understanding of benefits of the inscription of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Appropriate information material will be developed both to better communicate on the Reactive Monitoring process and its procedures with **all key actors**, especially decision-makers, national focal points, site-managers, local communities and the civil society, and to overcome the current negative perceptions of the List of World Heritage in Danger.



Budget

An estimated overall funding of US\$ 100,000 is needed for the implementation of this activity.

These funds will cover consultants fees (for both natural heritage and cultural heritage), travel and accommodation expenses, communications, joint report production, as well as translation in the two official languages of the Convention, design and printing of the appropriate information material.



Timeline

The following timeline for the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Reactive Monitoring process can be envisaged.

- Month 1 to month 10: Data gathering and interviews with key actors, as needed - Report writing
- Month 11 to month 14: Preparation of the appropriate information material and documents
- Month 15/16: Presentation of the report and side-event to launch the information material

It is to be noted that ideally, the presentation of the report at the end of the process should intervene during a session of the World Heritage Committee (which takes place each year in June/July).





Visibility

A communication & visibility plan will be developed in consultation with the donor(s), including (but not limited to) the options below:

Visibility material		Placement / Event	Outreach	Audience
Article on the World Heritage Centre's website Homepage	Logo	WHC website: whc.unesco.org	Public	Statistics for 2016: 13,340,000 visits 9,735,000 unique visitors 41,650,000 pageviews
Reports to the World Heritage Committee	Logo	World Heritage Committee session	WH Committee members, Observers, NGOs, site-managers, press	Approx. 2,000 participants from 193 countries
Side-event	Logo + speech			
Article in the World Heritage Review	Logo	"World Heritage Review" Magazine and "World Heritage Information"	Public	Approx. 20,000 targeted subscribers



Contacts

Petya Totcharova

Chief

Policy and Statutory Meetings Unit

World Heritage Centre

p.totcharova@unesco.org

Richard Veillon

Project Officer

Policy and Statutory Meetings Unit

World Heritage Centre

r.veillon@unesco.org