

A Policy Compendium for the World Heritage Convention

World Heritage Policy Compendium Online Tool

Concept Note

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World Heritage Centre
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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World
Heritage
Convention

The World Heritage Policy Compendium (2015-2019)

The proposed activities are presented in the framework of the ongoing development of a compendium of policy for the *World Heritage Convention*, a project that was approved by the World Heritage Committee with Decision **40 COM 12**. The initial project received funding from the Australian government via a Funds in Trust mechanism at UNESCO.

The current proposal is for additional activities related to the development of a **World Heritage Policy Compendium Online**, which goes beyond the scope of the current project framework and has the specific aims of **ensuring that the compendium is a user-friendly and easily accessible tool and reaches a broad target audience**. This proposal has been developed further to large public consultations with States Parties and other key World Heritage stakeholders, which saw a large majority (97%) endorse the option of having the Policy Compendium as an online tool.



The **Policy Compendium** (previously referred to as ‘Policy Guidelines’) project should be considered within the overall context of the reflection undertaken since 2011 on the future of the 1972 *Convention*. The objective of this reflection is to strengthen the worldwide implementation of the *Convention*, including through the revision of working procedures and statutory documents such as the *Operational Guidelines*.

The **Policy Compendium** aims to provide States Parties with a consolidated source of policy decisions made under the *Convention*, thereby encouraging best practice heritage conservation policies in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*.

The **Policy Compendium** responds to the need of States Parties for readily accessible information on adopted policies, which should guide States Parties in establishing adequate mechanisms within their legislation and heritage protection mechanisms.

At its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011), the World Heritage Committee decided to “establish a four-year cycle for updating the Operational Guidelines and that the Operational Guidelines should be restricted to operational guidance, and a new document, ‘Policy Guidelines’, be developed as a means to capture the range of policies that the Committee and the General Assembly adopt” (Decision **35 COM 12B**).

Further to a request by the Committee for the preparation of a scoping document (Decision **37 COM 13**), and the securing of funding from Australia in early 2015 through a Funds-in-Trust mechanism at UNESCO, the Scoping Study, including a proposed method and timeline, was approved by the World Heritage Committee with Decision **40 COM 12**.

In line with the approach proposed in the Scoping Study, in 2017 the World Heritage Centre assembled existing policies and convened a geographically representative and gender-balanced Expert Group ‘**The Policy Compendium Expert Working Group**’ comprised of natural and cultural heritage professionals to review of these policies. The Expert Group carried out an extensive review and finalised a the draft Policy Compendium, together with a Progress Report on the activities carried out, for presentation to the World Heritage Committee in 2018.

A **key recommendation of the Expert Group** with regard to the presentation of the Policy Compendium was that **both an online tool and a document format** would be the optimal solution.

This was reflected in the online consultations carried out by the World Heritage Centre (February – March 2018) in order to gather feedback and comments on the draft Policy Compendium from key World Heritage stakeholders. **The results of the consultation demonstrated that 97% of respondents endorsed the proposal for the Policy Compendium to be developed as an online tool.**

At its 42nd session in Manama, Bahrain, the Committee examined the draft Policy Compendium and, noting the recommendation for the development of the Policy Compendium as an online tool, requested that the World Heritage Centre **continue to explore the feasibility of this option and called upon States Parties to provide extra-budgetary funds to finance this initiative.**

The World Heritage Committee “[...] *takes note of the recommendation for the development of the Policy Compendium as an online tool and furthermore requests that the World Heritage Centre continue to explore the feasibility of this option and calls upon States Parties to provide extra-budgetary funds to finance this initiative.*

Decision **42 COM 11**

The World Heritage Policy Compendium will contribute to:

Strengthening the worldwide implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*, in particular through the revision of working procedures and statutory documents by ensuring that the final product of the World Heritage Policy Compendium is a relevant, comprehensive and strategic tool of the highest possible quality.

Advancing the achievement of the five strategic objectives of the World Heritage Convention - Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building, Communication, Communities
- The activities will ensure that the final product contributes to these objectives and has been produced with due consideration to a wide variety of perspectives, regional concerns, and that it incorporates all policy elements relative to different types of heritage

Activities

- 1. The World Heritage Policy Compendium Online:** The development of an online tool for the Policy Compendium by a consultant or company specializing in web application development based on an agreed brief and the content contained within the draft Policy Compendium document.
- 2. Stakeholder consultation - online tool:** Conducting further inclusive consultations with key stakeholders and testing of the online tool with a user group and peer review.
- 3. Coordination of input - online tool:** Coordinating input into the online tool input from the Policy Compendium Expert Working Group.
- 4. Promotion and outreach - online tool:** Communications and promotional activities to reach the broadest possible target audience for the **World Heritage Policy Compendium Online**.

Stakeholders Involved (Development)

- The World Heritage Centre/Web Application Developer
- Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee
- Global Heritage and Conservation Experts
- UNESCO Chairs
- Representatives of Category 2 Centres

Within the framework of the development of a Policy Compendium to the World Heritage Convention, the **World Heritage Policy Compendium Online** will function as an **easily accessible and user-friendly** reference tool to be used in decision-making by the **World Heritage Committee**, the **Secretariat**, **Advisory Bodies** and **World Heritage professionals** globally, the key focus audience of the compendium will be **States Parties to the World Heritage Convention**. **National governments** will benefit from readily accessible information on adopted policies, thereby facilitating the establishment of adequate mechanisms within their legislation and heritage protection mechanisms.

Other target audiences for the Policy Compendium Online will include other **UNESCO Conventions and Programmes**, **UNESCO Field Offices**, **students and researchers**, **heritage and conservation experts**, **NGOs and Environmental Groups**.

Furthermore, as a guidance tool, the Policy Compendium will contribute to the management by the States Parties of **World Heritage properties** when addressing, for example, such key challenges as **disaster risk preparedness**, **climate change**, **human rights**, etc. Its aim is to help States Parties to establish adequate mechanisms within their legislation and heritage protection systems.

The online format would provide **greater accessibility** and **enhance usability**. It is viewed as the most appropriate means to present World Heritage policies in a structured way and reflect the overlapping nature of many policies, which touch on many themes or subcategories according to the current index proposed. The tool will thus highlight the relationships between policies and thematic areas, provide chronological context to policy and facilitate the sorting and referencing of policy.

The Policy Compendium should aim to:

- ✓ Provide a consolidated source of policy decisions made under the Convention;
- ✓ Improve decision-making by the World Heritage Committee and States Parties for the better implementation of the World Heritage Convention and for the conservation, management and protection of World Heritage properties in the future;
- ✓ Improve understanding by States Parties so they can better address the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of cultural and natural heritage through the implementation of the Convention, as well as preparation of nomination files;
- ✓ Assist States Parties in reviewing their policies, legal systems, institutional infrastructure and governance mechanisms related to management of World Heritage properties;
- ✓ Promote capacity building of States Parties for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention including stronger awareness on environmental, social and economic challenges to World Heritage conservation.

Timeframe and Scope

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The development of the Policy Compendium is based on the two-phased approach outlined in the Scoping Study. Phase 1 culminated in the examination of the draft Policy Compendium by the World Heritage Committee in 2018, and Phase 2 is foreseen to run until September 2019.

Phase 2 (May 2018 – September 2019)

2: In the second phase, the draft Policy Compendium will be further elaborated by the Secretariat, checking for consistency between individual policies and also with the Operational Guidelines, and making suggestions for streamlining the texts of the policies. These proposals will be reviewed by the group of experts to ensure that the changes improve consistency and usability but do not introduce alterations to the substance.

The development of the **World Heritage Policy Compendium Online** is foreseen according to the following timeframe (October 2018 – June 2019)

- Selection of Web Application Developer (October 2018)
- Preliminary Analysis on the development of an online tool for the Policy Compendium (October-November 2018)
- Review by Expert Group (December 2018 – January 2019)
- Testing (February 2019)
- Consultations with key Stakeholders (February 2019 – March 2019)
- Finalization and launch (March – June 2019)

Provisional Budget

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An estimated overall Extra budgetary funding of 90,000 USD needed for the implementation of the project.

- **Activity 1. The Policy Compendium Online** - development, testing, content management – **45,000 USD**
- **Activity 2. Stakeholder consultation - online tool + Activity 3. Coordination of input - online tool** – **15,000 USD**
- **Activity 4. Promotion and outreach - online tool** – **10,000 USD**
- **Overall coordination of the activities by the World Heritage Centre (WHC/PSM)** – **20,000 USD**

Contact Details

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