

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED...

As an individual, you can help in many ways. Developing an awareness of the importance of World Heritage is the first step towards becoming an active participant in the preservation process. By teaching our children the unique and irreplaceable value of this legacy, we will help future generations learn how important it is to care for their heritage.

### GET INFORMED

There are several ways to get informed about World Heritage:

**World Heritage Web site** (<http://whc.unesco.org>), contains information, news, resources and archives on World Heritage sites and States Parties. Log on regularly to read about new sites, preservation efforts, the history of the Convention, sites in danger, publications available, and more.

**World Heritage** is a quarterly magazine, published in English, French and Spanish, which contains feature articles and news about World Heritage sites accompanied by stunning photographs and detailed maps.

**World Heritage Newsletter**, a free, 4-page, bi-monthly report in English and French on the latest events and activities linked to the preservation of World Heritage.

For subscription information, contact the World Heritage Centre.

### EDUCATE

The **Young People's World Heritage Education Project** unites educators, teachers, curriculum developers, heritage experts and others from the local to the international level. It heightens awareness of the importance of the World Heritage Convention among young people and aims to provide them with knowledge, skills and commitment to become involved in World Heritage conservation. An educational resource kit for teachers, **World Heritage in Young Hands**, is produced in co-operation with the UNESCO Associates Schools Project Network and includes student activities and photographs of World Heritage sites from all regions of the world. <http://whc.unesco.org/education>

### VISIT RESPONSIBLY

World Heritage sites attract tourists, but increased tourism always carries the risk of harming the very attributes that led to the sites' inscription on the World Heritage List. Through **sustainable tourism**, visitors can enjoy discovering World Heritage destinations and learn about their natural, cultural and historical characteristics while respecting the environment and the local culture. In addition to building environmental awareness and conserving local ecosystems, sustainable tourism can also help to generate income and employment for local communities.

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteering is a hands-on way to help safeguard and raise awareness about World Heritage. Opportunities exist at most World Heritage sites for conservation experts as well as anyone interested in helping out.

### BECOME A PARTNER

Partnerships help support activities associated with safeguarding our World Heritage for future generations. Today, more and more sites are preserved thanks to partnerships developed with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, local and regional authorities, research institutions, the media and the private sector.

## UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE

Established in 1992, the World Heritage Centre is the focal point and co-ordinator within UNESCO for all matters related to World Heritage. Ensuring the day-to-day management of the Convention, the Centre organizes the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau, provides advice to States Parties in the preparation of site nominations, organizes international assistance from the World Heritage Fund upon request, and co-ordinates both the reporting on the condition of sites and the emergency action undertaken when a site is threatened. The Centre also organizes technical seminars and workshops, updates the World Heritage List, database and web site, develops teaching materials to raise awareness among young people of the need for heritage preservation, and keeps the public informed of World Heritage issues.

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## DONATIONS TO THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND

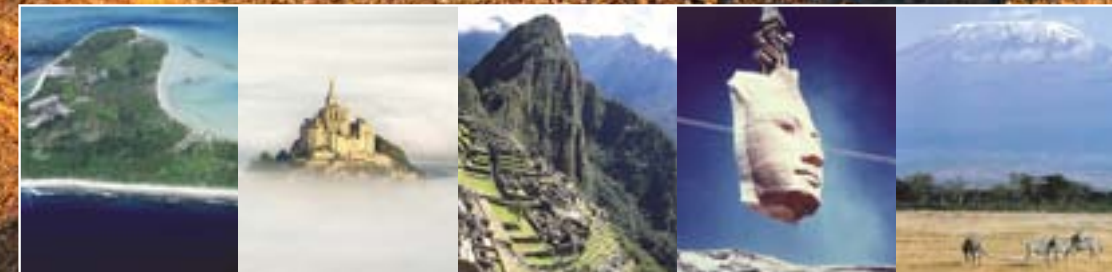
Donations help support the conservation of World Heritage sites.

Donations in USD should be made to:  
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Donations in EUR should be made to:  
UNESCO A/C N° 30003-03301-00037291909-97  
SOCIETE GENERALE  
Paris Seine Amont  
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SWIFT code : SOGEFRPPAFS

Please clearly indicate on bank transfers that it is a contribution to the "World Heritage Fund".

## Our World Heritage



COVER Background : Grand Canyon NP (USA) From left to right : Great Barrier Reef (Australia), Mont-Saint-Michel (France), Machu Picchu (Peru), Abu Simbel (Egypt), Kilimanjaro NP (United Rep. of Tanzania).  
INTERIOR Background : Yakushima (Japan). From left to right : Los Glaciares (Argentina), Völklingen Ironworks (Germany), Angkor (Cambodia), Tanum (Sweden), Rapa Nui NP (Chile), Bandiagara/Land of the Dogons (Mali), El Vizcaino (Mexico), Oualata (Mauritania), Fez (Morocco), Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (Philippines), Taj Mahal (India), Kahuzi-Biega NP (Dem. Rep. of the Congo), Venice (Italy).

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific  
and Cultural Organization



The World Heritage emblem symbolises the interdependence of the world's natural and cultural diversity. While the central square represents the results of human skill and inspiration, the circle celebrates the gifts of nature. The emblem is round, like the world, a symbol of global protection for the heritage of all humankind.

## WHAT IS THE WORLD HERITAGE ?

For over thirty years, UNESCO has been working with countries around the world to identify World Heritage sites and ensure their safekeeping for future generations. Places as unique and diverse as the wilds of East Africa's Serengeti, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and the Baroque cathedrals of Latin America make up our world's heritage. Over 750 cultural, natural and mixed sites have been inscribed on the **World Heritage List**. Their splendour enriches our lives and illustrates the diversity of our planet and its inhabitants. They are ours to share, to cherish and to respect. And their disappearance would be an irreparable loss to humanity.

Now more than ever, our World Heritage is our shared heritage.

## THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

The *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, an international agreement adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972, was founded on the premise that certain places on Earth are of **outstanding universal value** and as such should form part of the common heritage of humankind. The nations or **States Parties** that adhere to the Convention (177 as of March 2004) have become part of an international community, united in a common mission to identify and safeguard our world's most outstanding natural and cultural heritage. Whilst fully respecting the national sovereignty, and without prejudice to property

rights provided by national legislation, the States Parties to the Convention recognize that the protection of the World Heritage is the duty of the international community as a whole.

The Convention is profoundly original in that it links together in a single document the concept of **nature conservation and the preservation of cultural sites**. Cultural identity is strongly related to the natural environment in which it develops. Just as the creative works of humankind are often inspired by the beauty of their natural surroundings, some of the most spectacular natural sites bear

the imprint of thousands of years of human activity. In order to ensure that the World Heritage List reflects the diversity of the world's outstanding cultural and natural sites, a **Global Strategy for a Balanced and Representative World Heritage List** was adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 1994. It encourages the nomination of sites in underrepresented parts of the world and especially in categories which are not yet fully represented on the List.

Inscription on the World Heritage List is only a first step towards safeguarding these sites for future generations. **Management and preservation** efforts are an ongoing

process, which involves local communities as well as site managers and national authorities.

When the very characteristics for which a site was originally inscribed on the World Heritage List are threatened, inscription on the **List of World Heritage in Danger** can be a powerful tool for conservation. It calls the world's attention to sites endangered by natural conditions or human activity such as: armed conflict and war, earthquakes and other natural disasters, pollution, poaching, or unplanned construction, and mobilizes international resources for emergency preservation measures.

## THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND

The **World Heritage Fund** provides about US\$3.5 million annually to support activities planned by States Parties. It includes contributions from the States Parties and private donations.

The **World Heritage Committee** allocates funds, priority being given to the most threatened sites. **International assistance** from the Fund can support requests falling under five categories:

- **Preparatory assistance:** to prepare tentative lists, nominations of properties, conservation project proposals or management plans;
- **Training assistance:** to support group training activities, mainly for personnel working on World Heritage sites (individual scholarships can not be funded);
- **Technical co-operation:** to provide expertise and material support for management plans and various conservation activities;
- **Emergency assistance:** to enable urgent action to repair damage caused by adverse human activity or natural disasters;
- **Promotional and educational assistance:** to raise awareness and develop educational materials.



## HOW DOES A SITE BECOME WORLD HERITAGE ? THE PROCESS AND ITS ACTORS

### States Parties

A country becomes a State Party by signing the World Heritage Convention and pledging to protect its cultural and natural heritage.

The State Party prepares a tentative list (an inventory of sites within its borders considered to be of outstanding universal value) from which it can nominate sites for inscription on the World Heritage List.

The State Party submits the nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre along with a plan detailing how the site is managed and protected.

### UNESCO World Heritage Centre

The World Heritage Centre offers assistance to States Parties in preparing nominations, advising them on the proper format and necessary maps and documentation. Once the completed nomination files are received, the Centre reviews them to check if they are complete, and then transmits them to the appropriate advisory bodies for evaluation.

The Centre maintains the official archive of all nominations in electronic and paper versions for research purposes.

### Advisory Bodies

Technical input on the nominations comes from three advisory bodies. Two of them are non-governmental organizations, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), which provide the World Heritage Committee with evaluations of the cultural and natural sites nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List. The third advisory body is the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), an inter-governmental organization which provides the Committee with expert advice on conservation of cultural sites, as well as on training activities.

### World Heritage Committee

The intergovernmental World Heritage Committee consists of twenty-one members who are elected for terms up to six years by the General Assembly of States Parties at their biennial meeting.

Once a year, the Committee decides which sites to inscribe on the World Heritage List, or asks the States Parties for further information.

The Committee also examines reports on the state of conservation of inscribed sites and makes all other decisions needed to implement the Convention.

### Preservation

Inscription on the World Heritage List is a catalyst to raising awareness about heritage preservation on the part of governments and citizens alike. Heightened awareness, in turn, leads to greater consideration and a general rise in the level of protection and conservation afforded to heritage sites. Regular reporting on the state of conservation of inscribed sites and technical missions, when necessary, ensure the upkeep of their outstanding qualities.