

## Submission Form

At its 35th session (UNESCO Paris, 2011), the World Heritage Committee (Decision 35COM12D.7) “requested the World Heritage Centre, with the support of the Advisory Bodies, **to develop, for further consideration the proposal** contained in Document WHC-11/35.COM/12D [...] and to further **explore ways of recognising and rewarding best practice through a one-off initiative** at the closing event of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (November 2012, Japan)...”.

States Parties to the World Heritage Convention are invited to participate in this initiative by proposing World Heritage properties in their country that they regard as an example of successful management and sustainable development.

In order to be eligible the site has to apply with the following criteria:

- The suggested site must be a property inscribed on the World Heritage List;
- Successful management and sustainable development has to be clearly demonstrated;
- Best practices are considered those that are tried, tested and applied in different situations and in a wider context;
- An overall good performance on all headings mentioned in the submission form, with an exemplary performance in at least one of the areas;
- An outstanding example of innovative management in dealing with one or more management challenges / issues that could offer lessons to other sites.

Each State Party may propose a maximum of two properties, preferably relating to one cultural and one natural site.

This form contains 9 topics for demonstrating best management practice – it is not necessary to comply with all of them but it would be appreciated if you could provide a comprehensive response to as many topics as possible. In your responses to the question, please provide all facts and figures to substantiate the answers, and describe the before and after situation of implementing the best practice intervention. The objective is to illustrate clearly why the example can qualify as a best practice and can be used as a source of inspiration for other World Heritage properties.

The topics are based on questions dealt with in the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.

**Recognizing and rewarding best practice in management of World Heritage properties**

State Party: South Africa

Title proposed World Heritage property: Fossil Hominid Sites of Sterkfontein, Swartkrans and environs also known as the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site (COH WHS) (part of the serially listed Fossil Hominid Sites of South Africa). For purposes of this document the property is referred to the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site (COH WHS)

Brief description of the property: [you may use the Brief description provided through <http://whc.unesco.org>]

The Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site (listed in 1999) is a serially listed site which together with the Makapan Valley and Taung (listed in 2005) form the Fossil Hominid sites of South Africa. Collectively these sites provide the most conclusive, not the oldest, fossilised evidence that Africa is the Cradle of Humankind, the place where the umbilical cord of our ancestors lies buried. The COH WHS is home to the famous Mrs Ples, Little Foot and Australopithecus sediba (Karabo). This submission is made on behalf of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site as this was the first of the serially listed sites and therefore the one with the most significant knowledge and experience to share. The site is 52 000ha in extent, all of this located on private land, has fourteen excavated fossil sites and over 200 unexplored caves. It is anticipated that this site will yield many significant fossil finds into the future.

***Australopithecus sediba (or Karabo)***



***Mrs Ples***



***Little Foot in situ***



**Please answer the questions below demonstrating the successful management and sustainable development of the World Heritage property and why it is an example of a best practice.**

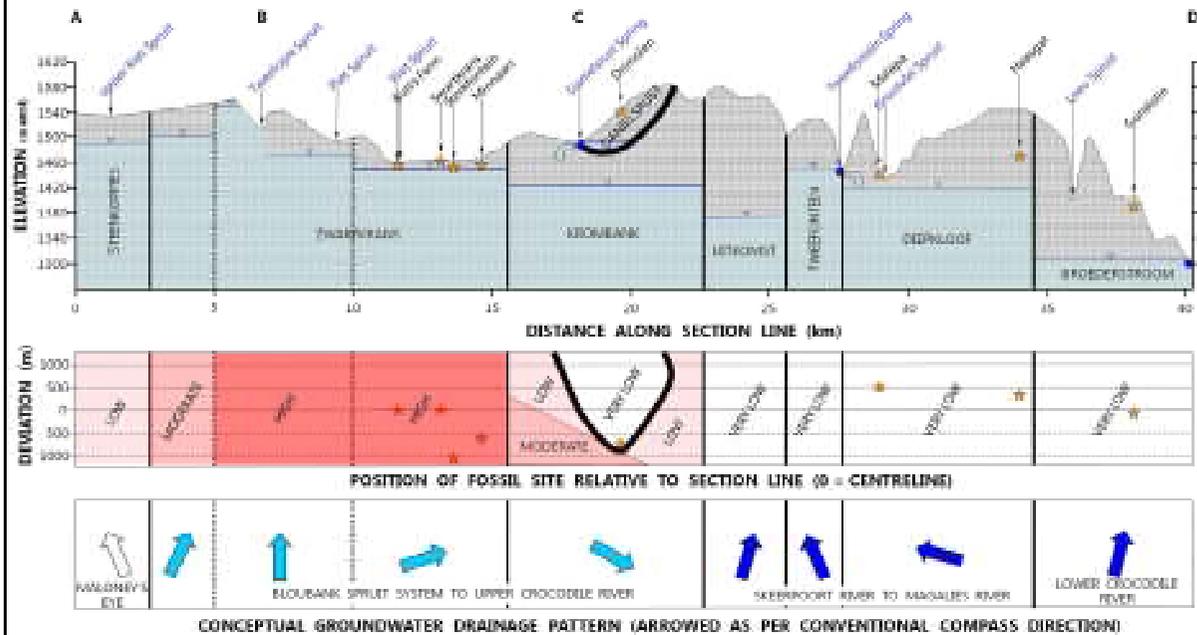
<p><b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b></p>	<p><b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b></p>
<p><b>1. Conservation:</b></p> <p><i>What innovative management practices or strategies are being applied in order to ensure the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property (e.g. better resource management, restoration and rehabilitation, addressing various man-made or natural threats and challenges, etc.)?</i></p>	<p>The site was listed in December 1999 and has achieved much in twelve years. It is important to understand that the Property is being progressively developed using a detailed masterplan as its basis. The Masterplan detailed implementation plans for a) integrated conservation and environmental management; b) tourism and infrastructure development c) marketing d) monitoring and evaluation e) management information systems f) management model and g) socioeconomic impact and financial modelling. The Site Managers see their primary roles as protection, preservation, interpretation and promotion of the OUV of the site. The challenging aspect of this property is that all the individual properties that make up the Heritage Site are privately owned. Any work on the site needs to be negotiated and carefully managed. Co-operative governance is also a hallmark of the work of the Site Managers.</p> <p><b><u>1.1. Protection and Preservation of the Property</u></b></p> <p>From a protection and preservation perspective, in addition to the excavated fossils sites, the Property is a cultural landscape which contains a quarter of the world's sensitive Karst systems (a system of underground caves), rare Bankenveld grasslands and several red data and medicinal plant species. Key threats to the site exist in the form of contamination of the surface and groundwater system and encroaching developments. In order to protect and preserve the site, initial focus has been on the development of individual management plans and landowner agreements for each of the fourteen excavated fossil sites.</p>

<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p><b>a) Surface and Groundwater Resources</b></p> <p>Management of the surface and groundwater in the COH WHS is critical to protecting and preserving the sensitive Karst system. A detailed surface and groundwater study has been concluded to understand point sources of contamination and a detailed monitoring plan is currently being implemented. In addition to the water related data, this study has also provided the team with a hydrovulnerability status for each of the fourteen excavated sites as illustrated in the diagrams below. In short, the vulnerability of a fossil site is affected by two factors, the first is proximity to point sources acid mine drainage and the second is proximity to the groundwater tables.</p>

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:

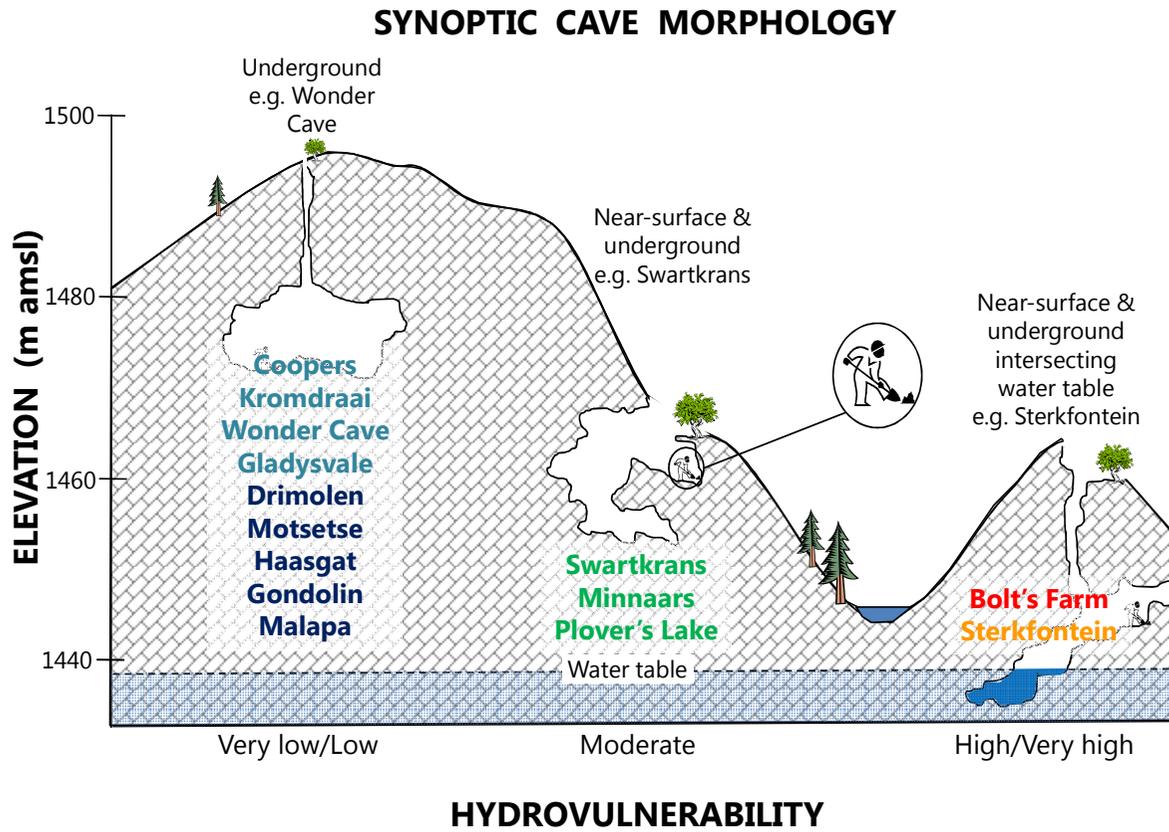
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## LONGITUDINAL X-SECTION (SW-NE) THROUGH THE DOLOMITIC STRATA

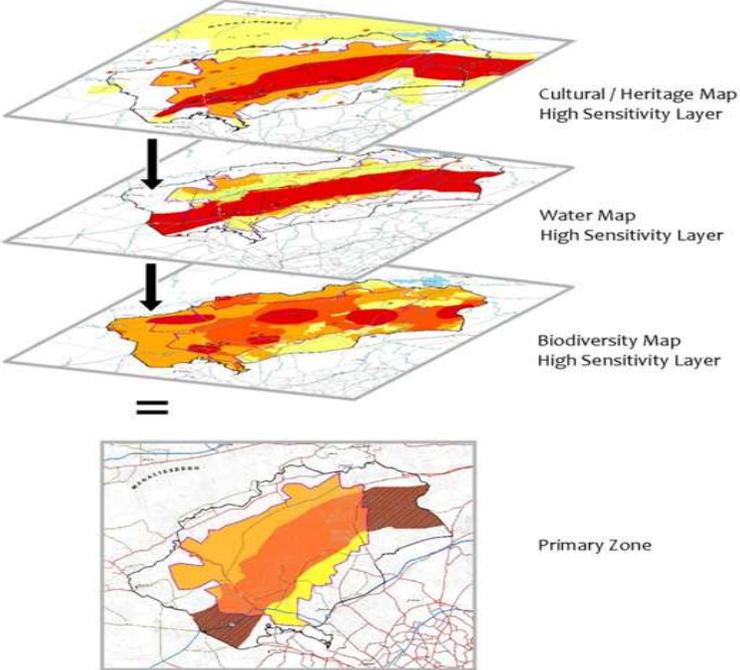


Topics for demonstrating best management practice:

Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:



<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p>Only one of the fourteen fossil sites, Bolts Farm ranks as very high vulnerability as it is meets both criteria. Sterkfontein rates as high but only as a precautionary measure as it is in close proximity to the groundwater table, although the water table would need to rise 20 metres in order to reach the height of the lowest fossil find, if this were the case the entire valley would be flooded, a highly unlikely event. A detailed stakeholder engagement and public relations plan is currently also being rolled out to share the information from the study (which includes 20 years of historical water monitoring data) with stakeholders. A risk management strategy, particularly for AMD, is currently in development.</p> <p><b>b) Environmental Management Plans</b></p> <p>During the review and updating of the Integrated Management Plan, it became evident that development pressure primarily from the surrounding urban areas necessitated a new approach towards the management of privately owned property. In an attempt to better manage the development pressures, a detailed Environmental Management Framework (EMF) for the area has also been completed. The EMF will form the basis for all development application decisions made by the various levels (tiers) of government each with its own mandate regarding land use management. This EMF process and document provides a very clear guideline on what types of development are allowed in different sensitivity zones. In the early stages of the EMF process, it was recognised that environmental sensitivities needed to be integrated into a format that consolidated extensive volumes of data. The integrated dataset needed to retain the context, enable relatively simple interpretation and interrogation and facilitate decision-making. As the authorities (tiers of government) within the COH WHS have different decision-making needs, data access had to be guaranteed in order to ensure support for and application of the GIS tool. Sensitivity maps were prepared to provide a spatial representation of the possible desired state of the COH WHS and proposed buffer zone. These maps, which comprise several spatial layers, have a hierarchy of importance based on their sensitivity. This hierarchy is as follows 1)</p>

<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p>Cultural-heritage sensitivity; 2) Water sensitivity; 3) Biodiversity sensitivity; and 4) Visual sensitivity. Over the next few years, through an extensive public participation process the EMF will also form the basis of site specific Regulations which will govern the site. The diagrams contained below visually represent the concept of GIS layering in order to confirm the boundary and buffer zones.</p>  <p>The diagram illustrates the process of GIS layering to determine buffer zones. It consists of three stacked maps, each representing a different sensitivity layer:     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Cultural / Heritage Map High Sensitivity Layer:</b> The top map shows high sensitivity areas in red and orange.</li> <li><b>Water Map High Sensitivity Layer:</b> The middle map shows high sensitivity areas in red and orange, primarily along water bodies.</li> <li><b>Biodiversity Map High Sensitivity Layer:</b> The bottom map shows high sensitivity areas in red and orange, primarily in natural areas.</li> </ul>     Arrows point from each of these three maps down to a final map labeled <b>Primary Zone</b>, which is the result of the layering process. An equals sign (=) is placed between the three maps and the final Primary Zone map.</p>

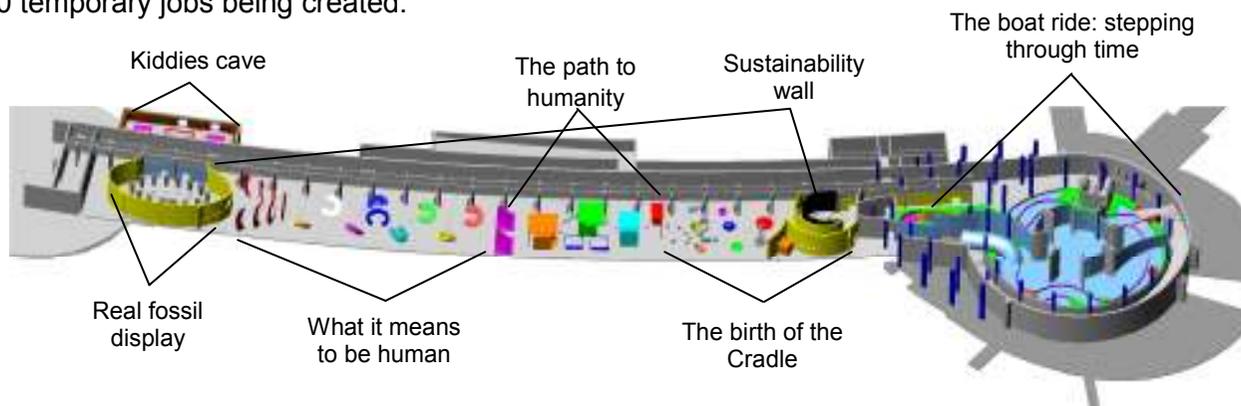
<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p>The COH WHS has also begun, in terms of South African legislation for Protected Areas, issuing permits for development activity in the area as an independent regulatory authority. This form of permitting is independent of that issued by the Environmental Authority and Local Authorities and has the impact of preventing undesirable development in the area. The COH WHS is the first South African World Heritage Site to apply this legislation in this way.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> In order to ensure buy-in for the surface and ground water work and the EMF, the steering committee which consisted of all government stakeholders jointly managed the work delivery, from the process of drafting the Terms of Reference, adjudicating and awarding the work and ensuring all project deliverables met the requirements of the terms of reference. An extensive public participation process was undertaken in the finalisation of this work.</p> <p><b>c) Research</b></p> <p>Extensive Tourism demand, supply and investment research has been completed for the Property. Tourism has been defined as the key driver of the economy in the area and this research has been important in informing both government and to some extent private sector spending in the area. The research is also vital in demonstrating the economic value of conservation and heritage goods and services which in turn help to secure budgets for further protection and preservation work. Research completed in 2010 indicated the estimated wage bill from tourism related establishments in the COH WHS totals R 228.1 million annually and that R 148.3 million of this is spent in a 10km radius from the tourism establishments. In 2004 constant price, Gauteng's 2009 GDP was estimated at R 579 289 million, while COH WHS tourism related expenditure is R 2 658 million. The total estimated GDP contribution from the COH WHS is R 2 362 million or 0.59%. COH WHS consumption activity is estimated at R 1.58 billion with direct employment amounting to 10 484 and indirect employment to 11 226. The COH WHS is making a real contribution to job creation and economic growth. When such tangible benefits of being a world heritage site can be demonstrated, public support and ownership for the world heritage site can be secured.</p>

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**1.2. Interpretation of heritage value**

In order to share the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site with the World, the Maropeng (meaning the place where we once lived) and Sterkfontein Caves Interpretation Centre Complex was developed through a public private partnership (PPP) model. Government investment in this totalled R 163 million, the PPP model enables government to transfer significant risk to a private partner. In the instance of Maropeng and Sterkfontein, the private partner designed, built and operates these facilities on a ten year concession contract. In return for this, the private partner pays government a 7.5 % concession fee (a percentage of profits annually). This money is paid to the COH WHS Trust, a special purpose vehicle established to receive and disburse funds for ongoing scientific research and community projects. Both visitor centres were opened in 2005 and Maropeng won awards for the design of the building before it had been completely built. In 2011, Maropeng and Sterkfontein collectively hosted just over 240 000 visitors, visitor numbers continue to grow year on year. During the construction of Maropeng 600 permanent and 1 200 temporary jobs were created through construction of ICC. Construction of roads resulted in 600 temporary jobs being created.



Architectural drawing of Maropeng

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:

Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:



“Maropeng under construction”

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:

Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:



Entrance and Exit to Maropeng Visitor Centre post

**Maropeng has the following Education and conferencing:**

- 80 seater facility in the exhibition area
- 120 beds learners accommodation
- 500 seater conferencing and events facility
- 5000 seater outdoor amphitheatres

**Hotel and Restaurants:**

- 45 bed luxury boutique hotel
- 3 Restaurants
- Viewing deck

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	<p>Additionally, in the early years, the COH WHS spent considerable effort in developing creative teaching and learning materials, an education officer was hired for this specific purpose. This work found expression in the educational material at the Maropeng and Sterkfontein Visitor centres. Currently a programme of school visits for disadvantaged schools is jointly funded by COH WHS and Department of Education. The COH WHS team does not directly manage scientific research on the site but has a collaborative partnership with the University of the Witwatersrand; the University is a Partner in the PPP arrangements around the Sterkfontein and Maropeng Visitor Centres. The COH WHS also supports scientific research through the provision of funding for fossil site infrastructure, scientific research and showcasing of scientific research like the recent live broadcast of the <i>Australopithecus</i> Sediba find. In addition to the tourism and fossil site infrastructure, the team has also managed the upgrade of roads, traffic calming measures and tourism signage in order to support increased tourism to the area.</p> <p><b><u>1.4. Promotion</u></b></p> <p>The COH WHS enjoys high levels of political support demonstrated by the opening of the Maropeng Visitor Centre in 2005 by the then State President Thabo Mbeki and the recent <i>Australopithecus</i> sediba find being announced in 2010 by the Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe. Some of the innovative promotion strategies was to take delegations through to the construction site of the Maropeng visitor centre, as they walked through the partially constructed centre they were told the story of the COH WHS and asked to imagine the completed visitor centre, a strategy that was successful at getting people to love the Maropeng Visitor Centre even before it was completed. Through the Department of International Relations there is a co-ordinated programme where visiting Head of State (time permitting) travels to the COH WHS Maropeng Visitor Centre and leaves a footprint and message for humanity. This idea was initiated with the visit of the then President Thabo Mbeki and former Secretary General of the United Nations Mr Kofi Annan to the COH WHS during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.</p>

<p>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</p>	<p>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</p>
	<div data-bbox="488 389 1550 900" data-label="Image"> </div> <div data-bbox="495 906 2136 1027" data-label="Text"> <p><i>“For Africa and the world, may this home of our earliest ancestors inspire us as we continue the journey of humanity towards a better life for all, and the affirmation of the common destiny of the human family”</i> <b>President Thabo Mbeki</b> on the occasion of the visit of Heads of State to the Cradle of Humankind during WSSD, 2002</p> </div> <div data-bbox="488 1091 2143 1276" data-label="Text"> <p>Science alone does not create a destination. A significant volume of other marketing and public relations have contributed to the ongoing evolution of the site. There is targeted attendance at international tourism exhibitions including visits to the World Travel Market in London and the International Tourism Bourse in Berlin as well as a targeted attendance at domestic tourism events and exhibitions. The exhibition at COP 17 in December 2011 drew crowds of visitors. There is a clear and targeted marketing and communications strategy.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="488 1327 2143 1362" data-label="Text"> <p>The success of the marketing, communications and event work can be seen in the impressive Advertising Value Equivalent</p> </div>

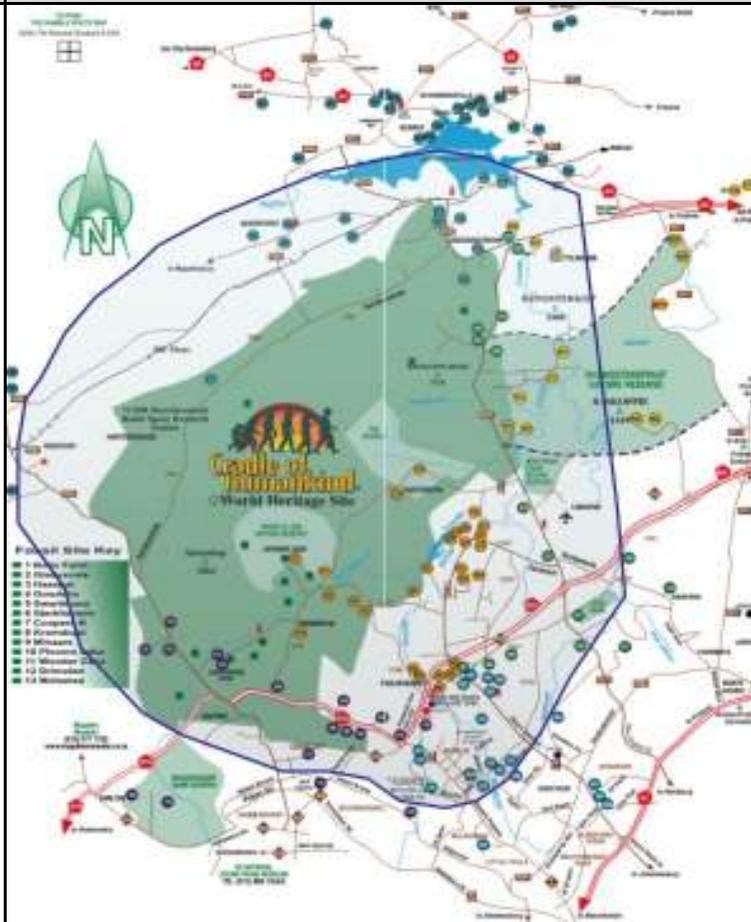
<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p>(AVE) figures, a measure of the value of advertising generated by the marketing and communication work. The AVE for the COH WHS for 2010 was in excess of R 61 million which represents a 55.84% increase on the previous year's AVE figures which was R 34 million which far exceeds the level of increase which could be expected in the broader economy.</p> <p>Additionally the COH WHS team continues to be ambassadors of their brand by supporting South African sites on the tentative list in the development of their nomination dossiers. The COH WHS team has also been instrumental in establishing the South African Site Managers Forum. The purpose of the forum is to enhance the management of world heritage sites in South Africa through the experience gained and lessons learned from other sites. The forum is committed to encouraging and facilitating the development of technical expertise and confidence amongst the World Heritage Site Managers. As one of the first agenda items, the COH WHS team has volunteered and drafted the terms of reference for the forum and the UNESCO Periodic Report for South African World Heritage Sites.</p> <p>The input above demonstrates the broader conceptualisation of conservation and the multifaceted implementation programme for this property. These all come together in the three factors ensuring that the OUV of the site is properly managed. The World Heritage Convention Act provides a legal framework for the development and implementation of an integrated site management plan (IMP) that is applicable over the entire site. The management plan provides the management direction which is updated every year in business plans and work plans. The whole IMP is reviewed every five years which is a statutory requirement. The third factor is an ongoing public consultation programme that is designed to align government policies with the aims and aspirations of stakeholders, especially those who own property, with the management objectives of the site.</p>

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<p><b>2. Local People:</b></p> <p><i>What exemplary practices are you using in order to effectively address the needs of local stakeholders within the management system for the property, and enable their full and active participation?</i></p>	<p>This is a key area of work that will always benefit from further effort. The COH WHS team has established a number of consultation mechanisms to ensure that stakeholders are aware of issues and/or activities that take place within the heritage site. The COH WHS team has developed an extensive stakeholder engagement and co-operative governance framework. This document defines the range of stakeholders as well as the nature and frequency of our engagements with each group. This document was developed in order to maximise impact through better co-ordination. In order to institutionalise agreements and ensure continuity, formal Memorandums of understanding, where applicable, have been signed with various partners. Contained below is an extract from the co-operative governance document which illustrates the detailed and systematic plan for engagements with each of our stakeholders. There is a similar section in the plan for each different group of stakeholders which includes the public and private sector.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="692 772 1807 1318"> <thead> <tr> <th>Stakeholder</th> <th>Scope of engagement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Landowners</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use and development authorizations</li> <li>Interested and affected parties in development plans</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Occupiers (people residing on land with implicit consent of the landowner)</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use and development authorizations.</li> <li>Interested and affected parties in development plans</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Resident associations</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job creation and poverty alleviation</li> <li>Tenure security and housing programmes</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tourism business owners</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation of local residents regarding development plans and projects</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Investors, particularly tourism business investors</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism research</li> <li>Tourism development</li> <li>Tourism destination marketing</li> <li>Grading of tourism establishments</li> <li>Destination brand marketing</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environmental and conservation NGO's and CBO's</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in expansion and development of new tourism product offering</li> <li>Participation and investment in Public Private Partnerships</li> </ul> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>University of the Witwatersrand</td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of MOU (agreement)</li> <li>Management of the COH WHS PPP concession contract</li> <li>Collaboration in the announcement of scientific finds</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Stakeholder	Scope of engagement	Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use and development authorizations</li> <li>Interested and affected parties in development plans</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul>	Occupiers (people residing on land with implicit consent of the landowner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use and development authorizations.</li> <li>Interested and affected parties in development plans</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul>	Resident associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job creation and poverty alleviation</li> <li>Tenure security and housing programmes</li> <li>General public briefings</li> </ul>	Tourism business owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representation of local residents regarding development plans and projects</li> </ul>	Investors, particularly tourism business investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tourism research</li> <li>Tourism development</li> <li>Tourism destination marketing</li> <li>Grading of tourism establishments</li> <li>Destination brand marketing</li> </ul>	Environmental and conservation NGO's and CBO's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in expansion and development of new tourism product offering</li> <li>Participation and investment in Public Private Partnerships</li> </ul>	University of the Witwatersrand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of MOU (agreement)</li> <li>Management of the COH WHS PPP concession contract</li> <li>Collaboration in the announcement of scientific finds</li> </ul>
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	<p>As a government project, one of the key roles of the COH WHS has also been to create jobs and grow the economy. A key piece of strategic research that was completed in 2010 was the Socio- Economic Impact Assessment. Amongst a multiplicity of valuable information, this work has estimated that the total estimated GDP contribution from the COH WHS is R 2 362 million or 0.59%. COH WHS consumption activity is estimated at R 1.58 billion with direct employment amounting to 10 484 and indirect employment to 11 226. This provides irrefutable proof that the COH WHS continues to contribute to economic development and job creation as tourism is a very powerful economic driver.</p>

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“An important note is that the marketing and tourism material relates to a Tourism catchment area (blue border) which is larger than demarcated COH WHS (dark green border), as tourist and the economic benefits they bring do not follow geographic boundaries”

<b>Topics for demonstrating best management practice:</b>	<b>Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:</b>
	<p>The tourism products in the COH WHS area grew from 64 in 1999 to over 400 in 2011. Although it is not possible to provide a causal link between this growth and the listing of the Property as a World Heritage Site, it is plausible that the listing of the site and the resultant government spend has largely been responsible for this growth.</p> <p>As indicated earlier, the entire property is on privately owned land. Individual management agreements are signed with landowners on whose properties excavated sites are found. Quarterly meetings are held with these landowners and scientists and this is treated as very important special interest group.</p> <p>Specific projects have been put in place to involve local communities, like the community policing forum. The Management Authority has a community benefits unit specifically set up to plan and execute programmes to promote community participation and upliftment. There are also expanded public works programmes which aim to train and employ local community members. The COH WHS team actively makes use of these national programmes to stimulate the local economy.</p> <p>Bilateral meetings with the relevant local authorities in order to align regional planning initiatives with those of the Heritage Site. In addition to this there are open public meetings that are held twice a year when the public/stakeholders can provide feedback to the management authority on various tourism and infrastructure issues and projects that are taking place in the area. It is also at these forums that the project team provides feedback to the community on various projects that we are involved with.</p> <p>Policies are also in place that ensures preferential treatment is granted to tenderers that promote Black Economic Empowerment. In such cases companies must show that they are correctly structured in terms of the countries laws in this regard. All companies and businesses are encouraged to employ their staff from local communities living in the project area. The Private Public Partnership with Maropeng was set up in this way. Local community members have been trained as site guides and the restaurant, conferencing facilities and hotel services comprises of locally trained men and women from the area and employs over 100 people on a fulltime basis.</p>

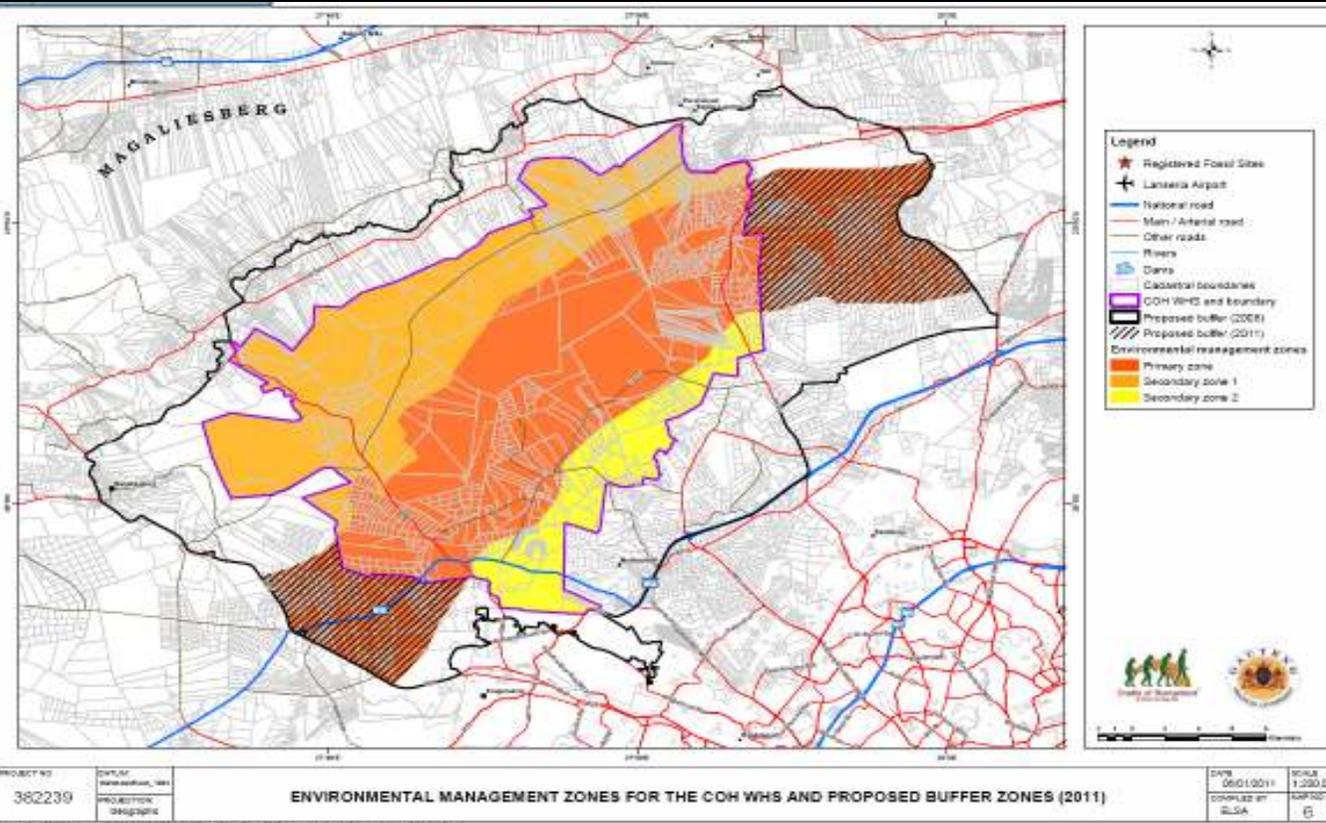
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	<p>Another example is the employment of 200 Tourism Safety Monitors who act as tourism ambassadors while at the same time assist in combating crime in the area. This is a job creation and skills development initiative and addresses the issue of crime at the same time. This is partnership project between the COH WHS and the National Department of Tourism.</p> <p>There are also various skills development initiatives and small business development initiatives undertaken by the COH WHS. Annually the COH WHS Maropeng Visitor Centre is open on National Heritage Day and provides free access to disadvantaged communities. The COH WHS Trust has been set up as a special purpose vehicle to receive, raise and disburse funds for the purpose of continued scientific research and community projects.</p>
<p><b>3. Legal framework:</b></p> <p><i>What special measures have you taken to ensure that the legal framework for the World Heritage site is effective in maintaining the OUV of the property?</i></p>	<p>South Africa is fortunate to have exceptional legislation. The World Heritage Convention Act, Act 49 of 1999 provides the legal framework for the management of World Heritage Sites. This is effectively domestication of the World Heritage Convention. This legislation must be read in conjunction with the National Environmental Management Act, the Biodiversity Act and the Protected Areas Act. These Acts and the regulations (...for the proper administration of special nature reserves, national parks and world heritage sites [regulation number GNR 1061, 28 October 2005]), provides an adequate legal framework for the management of the site.</p> <p>However, the COH WHS has for the last three years, in terms of South African legislation for Protected Areas, been issuing permissions for development activity in the area as an independent regulatory authority. This form of permitting is independent of that issued by the Environmental Authority and Local Authorities and has the impact of preventing undesirable development in the area. This requirement is additional to the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment and Heritage Impact Assessment and the COH WHS is the first World Heritage Site in South Africa to use this legislation. Additionally, specific regulations for the COH WHS are being developed. Once these have been promulgated, there will be a greater degree of Management control over the property and a clear indication to the broader surrounding area of the status and quality of the COH WHS.</p>

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	<p>The development of the EMF (detailed under Response 1) also allows for a co-ordinated management of development pressures within the broader area. This document although not legally binding provides additional guidelines in terms of the National Environmental Management Act. This document when read in conjunction with the Integrated Management Plan, does provide additional protection for the site.</p> <p>Capacity for compliance and enforcement remains a challenge however. In an attempt to address this, there is also a memorandum of understanding between the COH WHS and different organs of state which have the legal mandate to manage Environmental matters, specifically environmental impact assessments and compliance and enforcement activities against transgressors, to manage these specific areas of work collaboratively. Monthly meetings as well as issues specific meetings are held between these organs of state and the COH WHS to systematically follow up on and resolve all matters. It should be noted that the COH WHS team has only a small component dedicated to environmental and palaeontological management. It is this unit's responsibility to coordinate the implementation of the law in collaboration with the above institutions. Again, the co-operative governance relationships that are built are invaluable in managing the site holistically.</p>
<p><b>4. Boundaries:</b></p> <p><i>What innovative ways of dealing with the boundaries of the property, including for management of the buffer zone do you have in place, to effectively to</i></p>	<p>Most of the development pressures on the site come from outside the boundaries of the originally demarcated site. The original submission to UNESCO also did not include a buffer zone. It was therefore important to review the information at the time of listing and update where required through the EMF process. Minor changes need to be effected to the boundary to ensure that it follows cadastral lines, currently the boundary cuts across properties resulting in uncertainty by landowners regarding the position of the boundary, in an exaggerated example of the current boundary, part of a single property might fall within the demarcated WHS and the other part outside of it!</p> <p>In the early stages of the EMF process, it was recognised that environmental sensitivities needed to be integrated into a format that consolidated extensive volumes of data. The integrated dataset needed to retain the context, enable relatively simple interpretation and interrogation and facilitate decision-making. As the authorities within the World Heritage Property have different decision-making needs, data access had to be guaranteed in order to ensure support for and application of the GIS</p>

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<i>manage the site and protect its OUV?</i>	<p>tool. Sensitivity maps were prepared to provide a spatial representation of the possible desired state of the COH WHS and proposed buffer zone e. These maps, which comprise several spatial layers, have a hierarchy of importance based on their sensitivity. This hierarchy is as follows 1) Cultural-heritage sensitivity; 2) Water sensitivity; 3) Biodiversity sensitivity; and 4) Visual sensitivity. The visual sensitivity layer was probably the most innovative way in which to protect the sense of place of the cultural landscape. It included a detailed study of the view shed, skyline and visual impact which allowed for a nuanced approach to dealing with developments within the area. The application of sensitivity layers ensures that the OUV of the site is easily understood visually and indicates that within the original nomination dossier boundaries, the OUV of the site and the buffer zone are adequately incorporated with minor additions to the buffer zones (one to the south west and the other to the north east) is required. There are very clear land use guidelines for each of the designated zones as defined by using the sensitivity layers. These proposed minor modifications to the boundary will be submitted shortly to the World Heritage Centre for consideration of the Committee.</p>

Topics for demonstrating best management practice:

Please indicate in this column why your World Heritage property is a best practice in relation to the topic:



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	<p>Further, the COH WHS team is collaborating with the local authorities and other provincial authorities to ensure that the Spatial Development Plans take these sensitive areas into account when development applications are considered. The management of activities in these areas greatly affects site integrity in terms of pollution prevention and the visibility of structures may be visually intrusive. Apart from being affected by development the buffer may also contain undiscovered but valuable fossil remains.</p> <p>An additional challenge in management for the site is that 10% of the site falls within a different Provincial boundary. There is a memorandum of understanding between the two Provinces that outlines that one Province will take responsibility for managing the entire site. Care is taken to ensure that there are consistent land use guidelines used for the entire site.</p>
<p><b>5. Sustainable finance:</b></p> <p><i>What effective strategies have you developed and implemented to assure adequate and sustainable financial resources for implementing the management measures required to maintain the site's OUV?</i></p>	<p>The Cradle of Humankind has always enjoyed significant political buy-in and support. As a consequence, adequate financial support has been provided by the State. The second source of funding is derived from the PPP related to the Maropeng and Sterkfontein Visitor Centres. As outlined earlier, the concessionaire, designed, built and operates these facilities and in turn pays government a 7.5% of profit concession fee. These visitor centres at Maropeng and Sterkfontein are therefore established as tourism businesses providing accommodation, conferencing, interpretation and education services at the Maropeng facility. The risk of running these activities is thus shifted to the private sector. Profits from these operations would then be directed back into the management of these facilities as well as into the COH WHS Trust. Funds in the trust will be used for the promotion of the paleo-sciences and for community development projects. The idea around investment in strategic economic infrastructure by the COH WHS project was to leverage private sector investment in the area and this has been successful as the tourism products have grown from 64 in 1999 (at the time of listing) to over 400 in 2011. The COH WHS also has a dedicated fundraising team whose task it is to raise private sector funding. The COH WHS team has also been successful in leveraging funding from other government Departments through systematic advocacy; a case in point is the implementation of the tourism safety monitors programme described elsewhere in which own budget was R 2 million and support budget from the Department of Tourism was R 12 million.</p>

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<p><b>6. Staffing training and development:</b></p> <p><i>What approaches and strategies have you developed and implemented to assure that the human resources are adequate to manage the World Heritage property?</i></p>	<p>The recruitment criteria for staff that work at the COH WHS is fairly onerous, as a consequence most staff are in possession of postgraduate degrees. The organisational culture supports further education and training of staff and has a dedicated bursary budget as well as a training budget. As a government institution there are formal training to programmes that must be attended by staff. Apart from standard government courses that are compulsory officials are encouraged to attend courses in project, financial, personal and risk management. The organisation has also embarked on the implementation of an Enterprise Management System in order to utilise best practice project management principles and make communication and reporting easier. In addition to formal training, staff are involved in on the job training and constantly exposed to areas of work which are not strictly within their job descriptions. The organisation believes in a matrix management system and staff is offered opportunities to engage in areas of work for which they are particularly skilled or have an interest in learning. The COH WHS staff willingly shares their experiences with other World Heritage Sites and tourism organisations. There was a dedicated programme of staff seminars and tourism product exposure trips.</p> <p>As mentioned earlier there are policies in place that ensure local community members who are employed by other institutions and the private sector are involved in training programmes funded by the COH WHS.</p>
<p><b>7. Sustainable development:</b></p> <p><i>What are the effective mechanisms in place to ensure that resource use permitted in and around the World Heritage site is</i></p>	<p>The National Environmental Management Act provides the legal framework, together with the Protected Areas Act and its regulations (The regulations for the proper administration of Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites) is used to guide development in the area. In this regard the COH WHS Team works closely with organs of state to coordinate spatial plans and to regulate development applications that may impact either positively or negatively on the site.</p> <p>All Palaeontological excavation, or any other scientific study, requires a permit from either the Management Authority and the South African Heritage Resources Agency, or both. These permits also detail how the fossils will be curated. The State remains the owner of these priceless treasures. Where national heritage sites (fossil sites that are registered) the COH WHS have signed agreements and management plans with the landowners and SAHRA to ensure that each site is managed</p>

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<i>sustainable and does not impact negatively on OUV?</i>	<p>according to best practice guidelines.</p> <p>The best defence in preventing negative impact on the OUV has been the extensive promotion of the site and the relationships that have been created with the community of the COH WHS as the Site Managers are alerted by stakeholders to any activities on site that might have a negative impact. Ironically the fact that all of the COH WHS is located on privately owned does to a large extent protect the resources in the property.</p>
<p><b>8. Education and interpretation programmes:</b></p> <p><i>How do the education, interpretation and awareness programmes you have developed and implemented significantly enhance the understanding of OUV of the site among stakeholders?</i></p>	<p>In the first three years of being listed, significant work was done to develop educational and public awareness information. These were in the main circulated to schools. With the opening of the visitor information centres at Sterkfontein and Maropeng, the purpose of education and interpretation of the heritage values was served by the interactive exhibition centre whose concept is one of edutainment. The displays at both centres went through an intensive vetting process by a panel of Scientists to ensure that the scientific story was correctly told. The upgrading of the exhibitions in the visitor centre is currently being completed and will take into consideration the school curriculum and how best the exhibits can support and act as a resource for both teacher and learner. The museums also cater for the specialised visitor with a deeper interest in the human evolution story and the important role that Africa has played in this.</p> <p>The COH WHS further supports education particularly through the sponsorship of school visits to the Interpretation Centre Complex for disadvantaged schools. The target is 1000 new learners per year sponsored to the visitor centres in the COH WHS. A well coordinated programme exists at both Sterkfontein Caves and Maropeng which are frequented by large numbers of adults and school groups. The COH WHS also supports other initiatives such as sponsoring senior citizens, physically challenged youth and other groups to visit the sites and interpretation facilities in the project area.</p> <p>There are numerous other private venues and programmes that advertise environmental education programmes in the COH WHS. The MA advises that all programmes in the Heritage Site should conform to the regulations and guidelines of the relevant Sector Education Training Authority (SETA), in this case the Tourism and Hospitality Education Training Authority (THETA) to ensure a well managed visitor experience.</p>

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<p><b>9. Tourism and interpretation:</b></p> <p><i>What innovative plans have you designed and successfully implemented to ensure that visitor management does not negatively impact on the maintenance of the property's OUV?</i></p>	<p>The main visitor centre (Maropeng) in the COH WHS was built outside of the core area of the site in order to better manage tourism numbers to the site. Only two of the fourteen excavated fossil sites are open to the public. Visitor management is undertaken at Sterkfontein and Maropeng by the Concessionaire on behalf of the COH WHS. Best practice guidelines are adequately addressed in the concession contract which outlines the tourism and interpretation responsibilities of the concessionaire so that visits to sensitive sites like Sterkfontein Caves are regulated and does not exceed the annual thresholds. A fossil preparatory laboratory was built at Sterkfontein which can afford the visitor to see (first hand scientists) at work. There is also a student accommodation facility built at Maropeng (the main visitor centre) which caters for large school groups.</p> <p>As mentioned above, there are other education programmes run in the World Heritage Site but these are managed through private sector initiatives. All operators must be permitted by the Management Authority. Mechanisms to better control these operators are currently under review. In addition to private operators many of the scientists take tour groups to their own specific excavation sites. In this way they are able to raise additional funding for their research.</p>

**Additional comments:**

Requests for additional information or supporting documents can be made to Ms Shamilla Chettiar at [shamilla.chettiar@gauteng.gov.za](mailto:shamilla.chettiar@gauteng.gov.za) or +27 82 564 0399.

**Brief description/ summary of the best practice, including a statement on how it can be useful for other sites (max.600 words)**

The COH WHS is fortunate to enjoy high levels of political support and therefore budget allocations and operates within an environment that has clear legal protection mechanisms. Combined with this there are three other factors to which success can be attributed. Firstly, the COH WHS has been successful in protecting, preserving, interpreting and promoting the OUV of the Property primarily because an extensive master planning exercise was undertaken shortly after the listing of the site. The power of planning cannot be overemphasised. The plan took two years to develop and involved extensive public participation. This detailed blueprint has allowed for progressive and planned implementation of strategic land use, roads and bulk infrastructure development, tourism infrastructure development and marketing, a clear framework for environmental decision making and environmental best practice and monitoring and evaluation. The watchword through the master planning exercise was "balance". The vision from the master planning exercise remains relevant today "to achieve an acceptable balance in the World Heritage Site between the conservation of cultural and natural resources, access, education, and scientific research, the interests of those living and working in the area, and its use for the economic and social benefit of the population at large, within the framework of the World Heritage Convention." Secondly the COH WHS has been successful at winning hearts and minds. The Property has always had a dedicated and passionate team who have been carefully and deliberately selected for their skill and commitment. The team has a diversified set of skills such as research, tourism development, environmental and conservation management, public participation, infrastructure planning and implementation, management of Public Private Partnerships, marketing, events and fund-raising. This team has been successful at lobbying and advocacy through a strong focus on delivery. The completion of two visitor centres only five years after being listed is a significant and visible achievement which speaks for itself. The Maropeng Visitor Centre is now an iconic destination. The COH WHS as an organisation also has exceptional internal management and documentation management systems. Thirdly and most importantly, the COH WHS has demonstrated the value of building relationships and partnerships, it was clear that COH WHS team by itself would not be able to achieve all the goals set out in the master plan and from the outset there has been a deliberate strategy to create strategic relationships and partnerships to ensure that this site is protected for future generations of the world. Our partnerships with the University of the Witwatersrand, landowners, scientists, communities and other organs of State have required continued maintenance of relationships without which it would be impossible to do our work. It has been enormously valuable not to be directly responsible for managing scientific research on the site but to rather have the overall responsibility for development and management of the site. While the systems that we have in place might not always be perfect our

commitment to improvement keeps us motivated. In nutshell the messages that other sites can benefit from is 1) plan properly, 2) win hearts and minds 3) invest in your teams 4) invest in relationships with key stakeholders 5) strive for balance between conservation and social and economic benefits 6) delivery wins political support.

**Finally, please provide us, if possible, with up to ten images of the concerned World Heritage property that can be used free of rights in UNESCO publications (commercial and/or non-commercial), and on the UNESCO website. Please provide the name of the photographer and the caption along with the images (he/she will be credited for any use of the images).**

**See accompanying file.**