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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE  
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE  
Nineteenth session

Berlin, Germany

4-9 December 1995

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Progress report on the  
implementation of the Global Strategy and Thematic Studies

A) Cultural heritage

- 1) Global Strategy Meeting for African Cultural Heritage  
of the World Heritage Convention (Harare, Zimbabwe,  
11-13 October 1995)

During its sixteenth session in Santa Fe (United States of  
America, in 1992, the Committee had reiterated its wish to  
establish a well-balanced and fully representative List of the  
different cultures of the world.

To this end, the Centre and ICOMOS had organized, 20 to 22 June  
1994, an expert meeting attended by representatives from the  
different regions of the world and disciplines concerned.

These experts emphasized that, at the present time, the List  
presented a major imbalance. Europe, Christianity, "monumental"  
architecture and historic periods are very much over-represented,  
to the notable disadvantage of archaeological and technological  
heritage, of non-European cultures and, in a more general manner,  
of all living cultures, especially those of "traditional"  
societies.

They more specifically emphasized that the cultural heritage of  
Africa is, in particular, very under-represented on the List (17  
properties inscribed in eight States Parties out of 28), in spite  
of its tremendous archaeological, technological, architectural,  
spiritual wealth, its ways of occupying and using land and space,  
its exchange network system for merchandise and ideas, etc...

After having warmly adopted the recommendations of the experts  
and in order to help remedy this lacune, the Committee, at its  
eighteenth session in 1994, requested the Centre and ICOMOS to

organize a first meeting in Africa in autumn 1995 with international high-level scientific experts and with States parties and other States of the region. This meeting should be considered as a first step for a Global Strategy over several years to improve the representative nature of the List.

Following consultations with university professors and scientific researchers (specialists on Africa and on the Convention), and after having convened an expert committee of international repute on 9 June to initiate this project, the Centre and ICOMOS organized in Harare (Zimbabwe) from 11 to 13 October last, in close cooperation with the national authorities of the Monuments and Museums (NMMZ), a first global strategy meeting to help define and identify the types of African cultural properties likely to be the subject of proposals for inscription of the List. This meeting convened about 35 African experts from central and southern Africa (South Africa, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe) to discuss the question of eligibility for possible inscription on the List of numerous types of cultural heritage (archaeological heritage, traditional knowledge and technological heritage, spiritual heritage, human settlements, cultural itineraries and exchange routes), representing the history of the life of African societies.

Additional information will be provided to the Committee in December.

## **2) Thematic Studies**

Based on the decision of the sixteenth session of the World Heritage Committee to include cultural landscapes in the World Heritage list and the "Action Plan for Cultural Landscapes" adopted by the seventeenth session of the World Heritage Committee, two regional thematic studies were carried out in 1995:

- "Regional Thematic Study Meeting on Asian Rice Culture and its Terraced Landscapes" (Philippines 28 March to 4 April 1995)
- "Identifying and Assessing World Heritage Cultural Landscapes (Associative Landscapes" (Australia 26 to 28 April 1995)

The detailed reports of these two meetings can be found in Information Documents INF.8 and INF.9.

The Committee may wish to take note of the thematic and regional study meetings carried out to guide the World Heritage Committee in reviewing future nominations. Furthermore, the publication of the Expert Meeting on Cultural Landscapes of Outstanding Universal Value (Schorfheide/Germany, October 1993) will be available from the publishing house (Fischer Verlag) in December 1995.

### 3) **Projects for 1996**

i) **Global Strategy:** A second regional meeting for global strategy will be organized with ICOMOS in 1996, following an evaluation of the results of the Harare meeting. This second meeting could concern the cultural heritage of Sudano-Sahelian Africa and the Horn (eastern).

ii) **Thematic studies:**

- The Centre will continue to cooperate with ICOMOS in the pursuit of reflections already undertaken and the publication of their first results concerning industrial heritage and blue-collar/ouvrieres cities as well as 20th century architecture.
- Furthermore, a small specialist meeting for a preparatory regional study on *European cultural landscapes* will be held in cooperation with the advisory bodies and other NGOs on 21 April 1996 in Vienna (Austria). The Centre is working in close cooperation with the European Council and is participating in a hearing on the "European Convention on Landscapes" on 8 November 1995 held at the Council in Strasbourg (France).

### B) **Natural Heritage**

Based on the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee at its eighteenth session concerning a global strategy for natural heritage the Centre in cooperation with IUCN organized two meetings with relevant groups on a strategy for geological and fossil sites for a representative World Heritage List. The first meeting on 13 June 1995 at UNESCO Headquarters included representatives of the International Union for Geological Sciences (IUGS), the Earth Heritage Conservation Group ("Malvern Group"), the UNESCO Earth Sciences Division (SC/GEO), IUCN and the Centre. A major success was the discussion on a proposed separate "Earth Heritage Convention", which was prevented. The group agreed to advise the Centre, IUCN and the Committee on the selection criteria and methods of outstanding geological/fossil sites.

A second meeting was held at UNESCO Headquarters on 25 September 1995 in order to prepare the special session on "Geological sites for the World Heritage List", to be organized at the International Geological Congress at Beijing (4-14 August 1996). A background paper will be prepared by IUGS to be distributed to invited specialist participating in the session, and an information document will be provided for the twentieth session of the World Heritage Committee.