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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-sixth session

Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation
24 June – 6 July 2012

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda: Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

5D. Report on the World Heritage Thematic Programmes

SUMMARY

The present document was requested by the 34th session of the World Heritage Committee (Brasilia, 2010, Decision **34 COM 5F**) and briefly presents an updated report on the activities of the following World Heritage Thematic Programmes and Initiative:

- World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme, adopted in 2001,
- World Heritage Cities Programme, adopted in 2001,
- World Heritage Forests Programme, adopted in 2001,
- Small Island Developing States Programme, adopted in 2005,
- World Heritage Marine Programme, adopted in 2005,
- World Heritage Thematic Programme on Prehistory, adopted in 2008 and re-named as Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS), and the
- Astronomy and World Heritage Initiative, adopted in 2005.

Concerning the World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme, adopted in 2001, please see document WHC-12/36.COM/5E.

Draft Decision: 36 COM 5D, See Point III.

I. WORLD HERITAGE PROGRAMMES

A. World Heritage Cities Programme (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities/>)

1. On 10 November 2011 UNESCO's General Conference adopted the new Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, six years after the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention adopted a Resolution (Resolution 15GA/7 of October 2005) that called for the elaboration of a new international standard-setting instrument that would be based on the recognition and guidance of investment in and development of historic cities, while at the same time honouring the inherited values embedded in their spatial and social structures.
2. Prior to the adoption of the new Recommendation, the World Heritage Centre organized, with financial support of the Flemish Government, three training workshops on the concept and implementation of the Historic Urban Landscape for local authorities in the World Heritage-designated cities on the Swahili Coast in East Africa, being the Island of Mozambique (from 11 to 15 July 2011), Lamu, Kenya (from 8 to 12 August 2011), Stone Town, Zanzibar (Tanzania, from 15 to 19 August 2011). With capacity-building and scientific research as main components of this project, cooperation was established with three universities that have a longstanding cooperation with the World Heritage Centre, being Eindhoven University of Technology (The Netherlands), the University of Minnesota (USA), and the University of Pretoria (South Africa). These universities teamed up with local institutes and universities on the Swahili Coast in the implementation of identified follow-up activities.
3. The Historic Urban Landscape approach proved to be of critical importance in all three cases, as it facilitated putting the manifold conservation activities that had been undertaken recently, as well as in the more distant past, into a clear and hierarchical structure. This facilitated the identification of gaps and overlaps as part of an assessment into the various needs and wishes regarding the conservation, management and development of the historic cities, which could then be prioritized according to urgency and availability of resources (human, technical and financial).

B. World Heritage Forest Programme (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/forests/>)

4. To mark the 2011 International Year of Forests, the World Heritage Centre invited experts in the field of climate change, protected areas and forests, to provide their insights on how World Heritage forests could best be prepared to deal with projected climate change impacts in the coming decades. The articles focusing on a variety of practical issues (including case studies) were published along with the latest set of indicators on the state of conservation of World Heritage Forests. These can be found in the World Heritage Paper Series Number 30: "Adapting to Change – The State of Conservation of World Heritage Forests in 2011" <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/30/>.
5. The World Heritage Centre also sought to define the comparative advantage of World Heritage Forests in engaging with REDD+ (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation), a global effort related to paying for forest related carbon sequestration. The Centre participated in the Global Symposium on Ecosystem and Landscape-Level Approaches to Sustainability (Spain, March 2011), during which a side meeting was held with experts on forest and climate change, to identify the best way forward. This was further explored during a dedicated 2 day international technical meeting held in Paris (September 2011), in cooperation with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB). The final output was a clear way forward for both World Heritage forest sites and forest Biosphere Reserves in regards to climate change.

6. With the support from the Dutch Funds-in-Trust and the Belgian Ministry of the Environment, the World Heritage Centre has finalized the draft toolkit designed to help World Heritage forest managers better prepare for climate change impacts. The toolkit is designed to help managers better understand climate change scenarios, how these may affect their site's Outstanding Universal Value, and what management strategies to undertake to adapt to these impacts. These are to be field tested and results will serve to improve the toolkit for a final publication and roll-out in 2012. The guidelines will support REDD+ pilot projects focusing on developing a business case for integrating World Heritage forest sites and Biosphere Reserves into the broader landscape - to be carried out in 2012.
7. Beyond these specific activities, the World Heritage Forest programme continues to provide support for World Heritage Forest related work at the Centre, such as advice to transnational nomination efforts, exchanges with Council of Europe, and support to Centre regional units in monitoring and reporting on the State of Conservation of World Heritage forest sites.

C. World Heritage Programme for Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
(<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/42/>)

8. In August 2011 the Japanese Government approved the project "Capacity Building to Support the Conservation of World Heritage Sites and Enhance Sustainable Development of Local Communities in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)" aiming to increase the sustainable development potential of local authorities and communities in SIDS through a wise use of cultural and natural resources. Using the 1972 World Heritage Convention as a vehicle, sub-regional capacity building programmes have been developed for Pacific and African SIDS, while the existing capacity building programme for the Caribbean, the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme (CCBP) approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2004, will be strengthened with pilot project activities (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/662>).
9. For each of the main SIDS regions, i.e. Africa, Pacific and Caribbean, a different strategy for regional capacity-building will be deployed, due to different levels of implementation of the World Heritage Convention, institutional development, regional needs assessments and action plans. For African SIDS: 2 national workshops (in Cape Verde, and Sao Tomé & Príncipe) and one sub-regional workshop (for the Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles together, in which the Maldives should participate) will be organized to identify and address the specific needs through training sessions focused on certain topics (Tentative List preparation, nomination process, comparative analyses, local economic development).
10. For Pacific SIDS: support to the establishment of Tentative Lists in Polynesia, through specific training workshops at the national level for the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, and Tuvalu each. The archaeological site of Nan Madol in the Federated States of Micronesia has been selected for a World Heritage nomination with management planning, taking into account traditional knowledge and site conservation practices.
11. For Caribbean SIDS: a results-oriented training course will be organized to strengthen professional capacities in preparing nomination dossiers and increase the number and quality of nominations of cultural and natural heritage sites, with a focus on Slave Route Sites of Memory across the Caribbean (as per Decision **33 COM 5B**).

D. World Heritage Marine Programme (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-programme>)

12. Credibility: Identification of major marine gaps (by region and ecosystem type) on World Heritage List through application of "Marine ecoregions of the World" bio-classification system. Activity in response to 2011 Global Strategy Audit conclusions

and in the absence of the IUCN Thematic Study for marine World Heritage (expected June 2012); Pilot project in Indian Ocean (focus on 8 African countries) towards supporting State Parties for nominations of marine sites in more ecologically sound manner, consistent with latest ocean science, the 2011 Global Strategy Audit asked to move away from country-by-country approach, and the 2006 World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy for using an ecosystem approach; Development of innovative project proposal to apply the concept of Outstanding Universal Value in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in response to the 5th recommendation of the 2011 Global Strategy Audit.

13. Conservation and Capacity building: Development of roadmap for capacity building, based on threats and management gaps analysis of 45 marine World Heritage sites; Development of improved guidance for marine World Heritage sites, focused on improved integration of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in management systems; Training in El Vizcaino and Gulf of California serial site (Mexico) to establish management system for improving conservation of OUV; Working meetings toward obtaining PSSA status for Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (Philippines) and Banc d'Arguin (Mauritania);
14. Communication: Publication of World Heritage Paper Series 'Navigating the future of marine World Heritage' (available in English, French, Spanish), Publication of World Heritage Paper Series Regional assessment of potential marine World Heritage in the Indian Ocean (focus: 8 African countries); Monthly publication of one marine World Heritage site in International Herald Tribune (focus on site managers community); Organization of 2 side events during international conferences to build visibility for the Convention among marine conservation community; Development of annual newsletter for marine World Heritage and distribution of latest marine World Heritage publications on UN Ocean Day (8 June)
15. Communities: Organization of first global marine World Heritage site managers conference (December 2010, Hawaii, USA). Preparations underway for second one in September 2013; Establishment of a website for marine World Heritage site managers network to facilitate exchange on best practice in response to Decision 35 COM 12D.7
16. Fundraising and partnerships: Extension Tides of Time partnership until 2014 (amount: euro 400,000); Establishment Flanders Funds in Trust until October 2012 (amount: USD 400,000) extension possible and in progress, Fund raising from 10 partners for organization of marine World Heritage site managers conference (amount: about- USD 100,000); Establishment of MoU with US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); Establishment of MoU with French Marine Protected Area Agency; Establishment of partnership with German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (2012-2013).

E. World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP)
(<http://whc.unesco.org/en/earthen-architecture/>)

17. The World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) is about to conclude its first regional phase focusing on Africa and the Arab States. The main achievements of this phase include the implementation of: the Conservation Project for Africa (530,000 USD, Italy FIT) with a range of activities addressing the different levels of conservation and management at prominent World Heritage sites like Lalibela (Ethiopia), Timbuktu and Djenné (Mali). The latter has served as a hub to show case experiments, foster debates and raise awareness of the advantages of earthen architecture conservation. It hosted workshops for site managers and local tourist-guides, urban regulations were developed and further studies are pending. A culminating realization was the rehabilitation and revitalization of the town's Youth House, where the refurbishment of an important community centre allowed demonstrating the potential of earthen

architecture to provide modern living standards with all electric and sanitary equipment required for this public centre. Another highlight is the development of the teaching material in cooperation with the two regional training institutions - EPA (School for African Heritage, Benin) and CHDA (Centre for Heritage Development, Kenya), which may be used in the other regions in the course of the WHEAP. Finally, preparations for an international colloquium on earthen architecture and the work of Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy, on 17 and 18 December 2012 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, are underway.

18. The France-UNESCO Cooperation Agreement increased its financial support by 13,000 EUR for the finalization of the Inventory of earthen sites inscribed in the World Heritage List. The results will be distributed at the International Conference on earthen architecture conservation Terra2012 in Lima, Peru. In 2009, UNESCO launched a 2-years project for the safeguarding of New Gurna Village (Egypt) funded by UNESCO through the Special account for the Safeguarding of the Cultural Heritage of Egypt (1,000,000 US\$). In 2010, a first Scientific Committee meeting was held in Luxor, Egypt, presenting the results of the physical survey. In 2011, the project launched emergency stabilization works for the most damaged buildings, identified short term actions for the protection of the site, and finalized the master plan; the project has been suspended owing to political changes in the country.

F. Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS)
[\(http://whc.unesco.org/en/heads/\)](http://whc.unesco.org/en/heads/)

19. During the initial implementation phase of the Action Plan of HEADS, June 2010- May 2012, science has remained an underpinning agent in the development of the Programme, informing applied research activities, applications of ICTs, evaluations of credibility, conservation methodologies and multidisciplinary cooperation between institutions. The evaluation of the critical early stages of human development necessitates the collaboration of a range of disciplines, each of which has its own distinctive contribution to make. A close collaboration between the World Heritage Committee, researchers, representatives of the States Parties, Advisory Bodies, specialized institutions and research centres has enriched a strategy of cooperation and implementation of the HEADS Action Plan in support of the future recognition, conservation and research of these vulnerable sites in relation to World Heritage. HEADS is financed by the Spanish Funds-in-Trust for World Heritage.
20. A core interdisciplinary community of experts involving three Scientific Committees and Working Groups continued and strengthened their work in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre. Subsequent to the approval by the World Heritage Committee of Decision **34 COM 5F.1**, the following activities have taken place in support of the core thematic priorities and objectives of the HEADS Action Plan: Human Evolution, Early Archaeological Properties and Rock Art.
21. **Human Evolution:** The Intensive Programme 'Prehistory at the Cross-roads of Science and Conservation' was launched in 2010 following cooperation between UNESCO and six European scientific institutions and a two-year grant from the Erasmus Agency of the European Commission. The HEADS Programme's participation supports a greater international priority and resonance for students, and opportunities for further learning and cooperation. This programme is coordinated by the Museum national d'histoire naturelle (Paris) in collaboration with the Centre. Annual workshops were held 2011-2012
<http://www.mnhn.fr/museum/foffice/science/science/Enseignement/rubmobint/ssmobint.xsp>). An International Meeting, African Human Origin Sites and the World Heritage Convention, National Museum of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was held 8 to 11 February 2011 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/721/>). 55 participants from 11 countries attended. The Scientific Committee Meeting, HEADS Scientific Working

Group, was held in Tübingen, Germany, 6 to 7 May 2011. The meeting supported the national authorities in the preliminary preparations of the submission of Swabian Jura Caves to the Tentative List of Germany.

22. Future opportunities for cooperation in the framework of HEADS and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Smithsonian Institution and the UNESCO Culture Sector have been identified, with particular reference to conservation issues at human evolution sites, working with mapping World Heritage properties related to human evolution, and supporting touring exhibitions and fellowship initiatives. During a WHC mission in August 2011 the HEADS Programme identified subjects to foster cooperation with Georgetown University (USA). International Meeting of the HEADS Scientific Working Group, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 27 to 28 February 2012. The meeting brought together the Scientific Working Group of HEADS to discuss the advancement of the Action Plan on HEADS, technical considerations for the planned meeting on Human Origin Sites in Eurasia to be held in the Republic of Korea in 2012, the side event presentation of the HEADS Programme at the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee, as well as related activities in the context of celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention.
23. **Early Archaeological Properties:** International Meeting, Megalithic Sites and the World Heritage Convention, Antequera - Malaga, Spain, 20 to 24 September 2011. 40 participants from 8 countries attended the meeting, organized and financed by UNESCO WHC, the Spanish Funds-in-Trust, Junta de Andalucía and the Ministry of Culture of Spain (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/767/>).
24. **Rock Art:** World Rock Art Archive Working Group, Rock Art Research Institute (RARI), University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17 to 19 November 2010 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/688>). World Rock Art Archive Metadata Model, UNESCO Headquarters, 22 December 2010. International Workshop, Preparation of the Management Plan of Tchitundo-Hulu Rock Art Site, Virei, Angola, 14 to 23 March 2011. World Rock Art Archive Working Group, Tanum, Sweden, 13 to 15 April 2011. International Meeting, Iberoamerican Youth Forum on Rock Art, Museum of Altamira, Spain, June 2011. The Forum aimed to establish a participation of youth dialogue in the formulation of educational material in aid of the protection of rock art World Heritage properties in 14 LAC countries. HEADS technically and financially supported the realization of a feasibility study in May 2011 to establish a Category 2 Centre for Rock Art in Spain. At its 36th session in November 2011, the UNESCO General Conference approved Spain's proposal to establish an International Centre for Rock Art and the World Heritage Convention as a Category 2 Centre under the auspices of UNESCO (36 C/Resolution 15). The Centre will operate as an autonomous entity led by the Ministry of Culture and supported by several leading Spanish academic and higher education institutions. World Rock Art Archive - CSIC, UNESCO Headquarters, 7 to 8 March 2012.
25. **Communications:** International Meeting, Sangiran Museum Inauguration and International Conference, Solo, 14 to 18 December 2011. A Webpage of the Programme accessed through the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's Web Portal was launched in April 2012, providing information on the Programme, including meetings, publications, cooperation with institutions, crosslinks, interviews with experts, and a repository of researchers, institutions and related documentation. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/heads/>
26. **Publications:** Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS), World Heritage Papers series, was published in June 2011. The publication provides a comprehensive resource and reference material, and includes five scientific contributions from international experts, the objectives and outcomes of the Programme to date, and the conclusions of meetings.

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/29/>. Printed communication material of the HEADS Programme, including a brochure and a poster exhibition, was produced and supported several meetings throughout 2011.

27. Under preparation are: International Congress, Archaeology and Rock Art, La Paz, Bolivia, 25 to 29 June 2012. The HEADS Programme will be discussed as part of a roundtable discussion on Rock Art and the Tentative List for World Heritage in Latin America and the Antilles. International Conference, 21st International Radiocarbon Conference, UNESCO Headquarters, 9 to 13 July 2012. In collaboration with the UNESCO Science Sector, the HEADS Programme will participate in two sessions: 'Radiocarbon and the Palaeolithic', and 'Radiocarbon and Archaeology of the Americas and Oceania: Improving Chronologies and Theoretical Insights'. International Conference, Human Origin Sites and the World Heritage Convention in Asia, Jeongok Prehistory Museum, Republic of Korea, 24 to 28 September 2012. International Meeting, Human Origin Sites and the World Heritage Convention in the Americas January 2013. Taking a broad regional focus of North America and Latin America, the meeting will bring together national authorities, site managers and international experts to participate in discussions in support of establishing strategies of cooperation and actions to ensure the future recognition, conservation and research of sites related to first human populations in the Americas. The National Historic and Artistic Heritage Institute (IPHAN), Brazil, have expressed interest in hosting the meeting in collaboration with the University of São Paulo. International Meeting, Neolithic Settlements and the World Heritage Convention, dates tbc. The meeting will offer a platform of current theoretical debate and research on these sites, and the opportunity to evaluate the credibility the context of the World Heritage Convention. The national authorities of Malaysia have showed interest in hosting the meeting. Preparations for a World Rock Art archive are currently in development. In view of developing the prototype of the special data infrastructure, two meetings have taken place in 2012: Paris, March 2012, and Madrid, May 2012.
28. Four monographic issues are currently under preparation and will be published online in 2012-2013: (a) Human Origin Sites in Africa and the World Heritage Convention, World Heritage Papers series, HEADS 2; (b) Archaeological sites of the Chinchorro Cultures, in cooperation with the Consejo de Monumentos Nacionales and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile; (c) Archaeological Spheres of Delta of Diquis, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture of Costa Rica; and (d) World Report on Rock Art, by Prof. Emmanuel Anati. The publications will be available on the HEADS webpage in late 2012.

II. WORLD HERITAGE INITIATIVES

A. Astronomy and World Heritage Initiative (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/astronomy/>)

29. The Thematic Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage", launched in 2003 within the framework of the Global Strategy, is implemented by the World Heritage Centre in coordination with the Advisory Bodies, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) and international experts, in accordance with the Committee's Decisions adopted respectively at its 28th (Suzhou, 2004), 29th (Durban, 2005), 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), 34th (Brasilia, 2010) and 35th (UNESCO, 2011) sessions. This Initiative aims to promote, in particular, nominations that recognize and celebrate achievements in science and technology.
30. In 2010-2011, the network of partners was reinforced, international efforts to recognize astronomical heritage were coordinated and a new transnational project "Route of European Observatories" was initiated by the French authorities. The International Astronomical Union (IAU) Working Group on Astronomy and World Heritage created

within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and IAU is fully operational. Taking into account the Thematic Study on astronomical heritage and recommendations of the International expert workshop “World Heritage: Science and technology” (London, 2008), a thematic proposal on Space Technological Heritage concerning the technological and scientific sites connected with space exploration was developed by an expert Working Group established during the International Conference on astronomical heritage organized by the Russian Federation (Kazan, August 2009). The development of new partnerships with Space Agencies, such as the Russian Space Agency (Roskosmos), European Space Agency (ESA) and scientific organizations, such as the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) is under discussion.

31. Taking into account the UN General Assembly Resolution that designated 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, the Starlight Foundation (Institute of Astrophysics of the Canary Islands, Spain), as initiator of the “Starlight Reserve Concept”, developed in collaboration with UNESCO (Fuerteventura, March 2009), proposes a new scientific tourism product in relation to the World Heritage properties. The product will feature a “Starlight Destination” certification which includes requirements concerning the limitation of light pollution with a special emphasis on energy efficiency and the fight against climate change has been developed in cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Knowledge Network and has been introduced in selected Biosphere Reserves and other protected areas.
32. On 9 February 2012, the Russian Federation offered to host a side-event at the Pulkovo Observatory in St. Petersburg in order to present the achievements of the Thematic Initiative “Astronomy and World Heritage” during the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee. The Russian authorities also submitted a proposal to extend the Thematic Initiative “Astronomy and World Heritage” to a new Thematic Programme on Heritage of Science and Technology. On 14 February 2012, the French National Commission for UNESCO informed the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee about the “Paris Declaration on astronomical heritage” adopted by the participants during the International Seminar “Protection of Heritage of Astronomy” (Paris, September 2011.). The letter highlighted that an extension of the Initiative to a Programme on Heritage of Science and Technology related to space exploration could be envisaged, as well as a Global Thematic Study on the subject. The World Heritage Centre informed the International Expert Meeting on Criterion (vi) held in Warsaw in March 2012 of these proposals.

III. DRAFT DECISION

Draft Decision: 36 COM 5D

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-12/36.COM/5D,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **32 COM 10**, **32 COM 10A** and **34 COM 5F.1** adopted at its 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), and 34th (Brasilia, 2010) sessions respectively;*
3. *Welcomes the progress report made on the implementation of the World Heritage Thematic Programmes;*

4. Requests the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, and with the support of interested States Parties to continue its efforts to implement the activities foreseen under each of these programmes in 2012-2013;
5. Expresses its appreciation to the Government of Spain for its financial commitment and support given by other States Parties to the programme Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS) and encourages the development of the Category 2 Centre for Rock Art in Spain to enhance fruitful international cooperation in rock art research, conservation and management;
6. Further requests States Parties, site managers and research institutions in the Africa Region to strengthen collaboration in support of human evolution-related research, conservation and awareness-raising activities and in pursuance to the activities which have taken place in the framework of HEADS in the Region;
7. Also welcomes financial and technical support provided by States Parties and the International Astronomical Union for Thematic Initiative "Astronomy and World Heritage", since 2003 and also encourages cooperation between the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, specialized agencies and relevant interdisciplinary scientific initiatives towards the elaboration of a Global Thematic Study on Heritage of Science and Technology, including studies and research on technological heritage connected with space exploration;
8. Further encourages States Parties, international organizations and other donors to contribute to the thematic programmes and initiative and also requests an updated report on Thematic Programmes to the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session in 2014.