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# World Heritage

# 37 COM

**WHC-13/37.COM/9**

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Thirty-seventh session**

**Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

**16 – 27 June 2013**

**Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda: Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List: Progress report on the upstream processes**

**9. Progress report on the upstream processes**

## **SUMMARY**

At its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), the World Heritage Committee decided to initiate a process of reflection on the future of the *World Heritage Convention*.

In this framework, the Committee, recognising the challenges that exist in the process for nominating a property to the World Heritage List, proposed an in-depth reflection on the Upstream Process. The aim of this reflection was to find options for improving and strengthening the current nomination process. In 2011, the Committee through Decision **35 COM 12C** took note of the selection of 10 pilot projects to explore creative approaches and new forms of guidance that might be provided to States Parties in considering nominations before their preparation.

The present document focuses on the progress made on each of the 10 pilot projects since the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee to implement Decision **36 COM 12C**.

**Draft Decision: 37 COM 9**, see Point III.

## I BACKGROUND

1. At its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010), the World Heritage Committee, in part III of Decision **34 COM 13**, encouraged the World Heritage Centre to “*follow up on the approaches and recommendations of the Phuket expert meeting*” on ‘Upstream processes for Nominations’. In particular, the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre “*in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies and other relevant organizations, to invite one or two States Parties from each of the UNESCO regional groups to undertake, on an experimental basis, voluntary pilot projects related to identifying options and preparing dossiers for nomination*”.
2. Following the selection by the UNESCO Regional Groups of 2 pilot projects for each region (except for Electoral Group I -Western Europe and North America- which refrained from making any proposal), at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011), the World Heritage Committee, as part of Decision **35 COM 12C**, welcoming “all the actions undertaken to improve the processes and practices prior to consideration by the World Heritage Committee of a nomination (the ‘upstream processes’)”, took note “of the pilot projects that have been chosen to implement this experimental approach”. The Committee also took note of a phased feasibility study for each one of the 10 pilot projects.
3. In order to implement phase I of the pilot projects, each State Party concerned was asked to select a focal point for the project and to identify options to cover the costs to undertake the necessary actions. These costs could be met through a variety of ways: the State Party itself could bear the whole or part of the costs; it could raise the required funds from donors or funding agencies; or it could put forward a Preparatory Assistance request under the World Heritage Fund. This document details project by project the progress made since the last session of the World Heritage Committee. The first achievement of one of the 10 selected pilot projects, which led to the recommendation for inscription for the Namib Sand Sea, in Namibia, for consideration by the 37th session of the Committee has to be noted.
4. It is important to emphasize that the inclusion of a project for this experimental approach does not imply that the sites concerned would necessarily be inscribed on the World Heritage List. The main aim of the experimental Upstream Process is to reduce the number of properties that experience significant problems during the nomination process. Therefore, the objective of the pilot projects is to explore creative approaches and new forms of guidance that might be provided to State Parties in considering nominations before their preparation, as well as in relation to the nomination process.
5. Besides the selected pilot projects, the utility of an upstream support in the preparation of the nomination, prior to its official submission and the subsequent full evaluation is by now widely recognized and its principles are increasingly applied throughout the World Heritage system. Assistance and advice in the preparation of nominations by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre should be noted in a progressing number of cases. The Advisory Bodies suggested an upstream support in some of their recommendations for deferral or referral over the last two session. Experts of the Advisory Bodies are more and more participating in meetings on the preparation of nominations along with the Secretariat. The most recent examples of this kind of activity are the “World Heritage Nominations Training Programme for English-speaking African sub-Saharan States Parties”, held in Mbale, Uganda, in October 2012 and the 5-day course “Caribbean Training Course in the Preparation of Nomination Dossiers for World Heritage”, held in Antigua in March 2013. Also, the World Heritage Centre played a key role in the coordination of the six States Parties (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) involved in the serial transnational nomination of the Qhapaq Nan, Andean Road System (a nomination that will be examined by the Committee at its 38th

session in 2014). Finally, it is worth noting that the Centre is providing assistance and advice to States Parties in the preparation of nominations for some years. Over the last cycles of submissions, the number of draft nominations is increasing each year (by the 30 September 2012 deadline, 34 draft nominations were submitted for review by the Centre).

6. While these are positive examples of advisory support and intervention, it must be noted that, however, in order to be really effective, the upstream support should ideally intervene at an earlier stage in the process, more precisely at the moment of the revision of the States Parties Tentative Lists.

## II PROGRESS MADE ON THE SELECTED PILOT PROJECTS

7. Pilot Project on the **South Namib Erg**, Namibia  
Following the support provided by IUCN and the World Heritage Centre since 2011, in partnership with the African World Heritage Fund, and the successful complete submission made on 1 February 2012, the nomination dossier will be examined by the Committee at its 37th session, in 2013. IUCN has recommended the site for inscription, making it the first pilot project which could be successful if the Committee decides for its inscription. IUCN notes that the upstream process was extremely helpful, but that the positive recommendation has nevertheless involved a number of issues being raised and resolved during the evaluation of the nomination. The strong and consistent commitment of the State Party throughout the process should be noted as the central reason for the successful result of this process.
8. Pilot Project on **Kano City Walls**, Nigeria  
The chance of providing assistance for this project is still not progressing due to lack of funds to enable the Advisory Body's intervention. Therefore, no direct contact between the State Party and the relevant Advisory Body occurred on this project so far. However, both the World Heritage Centre and its partner, the African World Heritage Fund, will continue encouraging the State Party to advance with this project, submit an international assistance request, and involve ICOMOS as soon as possible.
9. Pilot Project on **Pella (Tabaqt FahI)**, Jordan  
The State Party has indicated the name of its focal point, however, no direct contact between the State Party and the relevant Advisory Body, ICOMOS, has occurred on this project so far. Jordan has submitted to the World Heritage Centre a progress report which is currently being examined by ICOMOS. Along with this report, the State Party has indicated an amount to be used for the planning of the mission for the first phase of the project. Additional sources of funding for the remainder of the project have not been indicated. A request for additional information will shortly be addressed to the State Party as well as a proposal for a mission by the end of 2013.
10. Pilot Project on the **Rock Drawings in the region of Hail**, Saudi Arabia  
As for the other pilot project selected in the same region, following two letters sent by World Heritage Centre, Saudi Arabia provided the name of a focal point, but did not indicate a possible source of funding to undertake the first phase of upstream support. However, the State Party and the relevant Advisory Body agreed to have an expert mission carried out from 10 to 17 April 2013 for this first phase. The mission report is still being reviewed and should be submitted soon to the World Heritage Centre for transmission to the State Party.
11. Pilot Project on the **Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes**, Philippines  
While waiting for the approval of the extra-budgetary funding from the Korean Funds-in-Trust (obtained early April 2013) consultations with the Advisory Bodies have been held

to decide on the methodology to assist the Philippine authorities with this nomination. Taking into consideration the past problems with the nomination and the apparent shifts in the choice of criteria proposed by the State Party, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre have decided to focus on capacity building, as a first step to ensuring that the management of the possible future property is adequate and sustainable. This will also provide the necessary time to identify the adequate scope and criteria of the nomination.

12. Pilot Project on **Male Hukuru Miskiy**, Maldives

Thanks to the International Assistance, the Department of Heritage of the Maldives undertook a Desk Study of 51 mosques of the Maldives. From these, 6 mosques were identified for a possible serial nomination: The Maldives updated its Tentative List accordingly on 1 February 2013. The Maldives submitted a 2nd Phase of the IAR for finalization of the nomination dossier in January 2013. However, as ICOMOS and the State Party have up to now not been in direct contact as foreseen in the upstream process, the 2nd request was deferred to the 2014 cycle, pending further cooperation between the State Party and the Advisory Body. The World Heritage Centre obtained extra-budgetary funding from Korean Funds-in-Trust in early April 2013 for continued assistance to the Maldives in the preparation of this pilot project, including organizing an ICOMOS advisory scoping mission, among others. These activities are intended to facilitate more proactive dialogue between the State Party, ICOMOS, and the World Heritage Centre.

13. Pilot Project on the **Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region**, Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

A project document for the second phase of the pilot project entitled "Towards strengthened governance of the shared transboundary natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region" was elaborated in close cooperation between the Advisory Bodies, national authorities and the World Heritage Centre and submitted to the European Union for review in November 2012. A series of meetings were organized in the end of 2012 in Tirana between stakeholders from Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the European Union to finalise the Project Document and to discuss the next steps for the preparation of the second phase of the project. The final approval of the project by the European Union is expected in autumn 2013 for an immediate launch of the project. The Advisory Bodies and the national authorities in consultation with the World Heritage Centre currently work towards the development of detailed work plans and project activities.

14. Pilot Project on the **Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination**, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Montenegro and Serbia

The States Parties prepared an International Assistance request for the preparation of the Comparative Analysis as a first milestone in the nomination process. The International Assistance Panel recommended the revision of the International Assistance request for the next evaluation cycle in 2014 and underlined the limited funding available for preparatory assistance in the current period. The 3rd Dinaric Karst meeting took place 11 April 2013 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, during which the Focal Points of the pilot project and a representative of IUCN met and discussed the next steps for harmonised Tentative List submission and scheduled a next meeting in autumn 2013 in view of the submission on the Tentative List before 1 February 2014 and further planning of the project.

15. Pilot Project on the **Grenadine Island Group**, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Following the joint mission to advise on Phase One of the Pilot Project, undertaken from 24 June to 1 July 2012 by experts recommended by ICOMOS and IUCN, an interim

report was prepared. According to ICOMOS, there seems to be a basis for further work towards a cultural landscape nomination. In addition, IUCN noted that the site could be potentially nominated under criterion (vii), but this is not certain and it needs further analysis. The case for other natural criteria is less clear, but that is because necessary detailed comparative work would need to be done on geological and biodiversity values. Even if this does not support for natural criteria, it might be useful to support the case for a nomination as a cultural landscape. ICOMOS and IUCN agreed that “*the State Parties should be given all necessary*” assistance to be able to take this nomination process to the next step in setting out the outline of a nomination, which could be considered for its potential Outstanding Universal Value, before further support could be considered for the development of a full nomination under Phase 2 of the Upstream Process. The Advisory Bodies consider that there would also be a need to strengthen protection and management capacity, and the availability of sustainable and adequate finance for this. Advisory Bodies recommend to undertake a screening report on natural criteria (ix) and (x) by IUCN, to prepare a second stage feasibility study by a consultant/consultants contracted via ICOMOS and/or IUCN and to prepare in consultation with the States Parties an outline proposal for a possible nomination. The availability of resources for further stages of work is a key consideration.

16. Pilot Project on the **Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Fray Bentos**, Uruguay  
Following the approval of an International Assistance request in December 2012, a dialogue between ICOMOS and the State Party was established and an ICOMOS expert visited the site. The expert had meetings with national and local authorities, but, at the time of preparation of this document, his report has not been made available yet.

### III DRAFT DECISION

#### **Draft Decision: 37 COM 9**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC-13/37.COM/9,*
2. *Recalling Decision **34 COM 13.III** adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010), Decision **35 COM 12C** at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011) and Decision **36 COM 12C** at its 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012);*
3. *Welcomes all the actions undertaken to improve the processes and practices prior to consideration by the World Heritage Committee of a nomination (the ‘upstream processes’) and commends the States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre for the pilot projects in which progress was made;*
4. *Also commends the State Party of Namibia for having successfully achieved the pilot project concerning the Namib Sand Sea;*
5. *Urges the States Parties concerned that have not yet done so, to fully collaborate providing technical and financial support to implement the required actions to make progress with the pilot projects and encourages them to seek assistance from the World Heritage Centre to identify opportunities to secure resources to progress the project, if necessary;*
6. *Calls upon the international community to provide technical and financial support to assist the States Parties concerned in the implementation of their pilot projects which were not able to identify adequate resources;*
7. *Requests the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre to report on the progress in implementing the pilot projects for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th session, in 2014.*