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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-eighth session

**Doha, Qatar
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Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda: Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

5E. Report on the World Heritage Thematic Programmes

SUMMARY

The present document was requested by the 36th session of the World Heritage Committee (Saint-Petersburg, 2012, Decisions **36 COM 5D** and **36 COM 5E**) and presents a brief updated report on the activities of the following World Heritage Thematic Programmes and Initiatives:

- World Heritage Cities Programme, adopted in 2001;
- World Heritage Forests Programme, adopted in 2001;
- World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme, adopted in 2001;
- World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme, adopted in 2001/2012;
- 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
- Astronomy and World Heritage Initiative, adopted in 2005.

Draft Decision: 38 COM 5E, see Point II.

I. WORLD HERITAGE PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

Introduction

1. Taking into account the principal objective of the Global Strategy adopted in 1994 by the World Heritage Committee, which aims to establish a representative and balanced World Heritage List reflecting the diversity of cultural and natural sites of outstanding universal value, the Committee has recognized that there are a number of emerging issues which would benefit from a further reflection, exploration and research. Since its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001) the Committee adopted a number of thematic programmes and initiatives with a view to achieve the objectives of the Global Strategy.
2. The Thematic Programmes and Initiatives adopted by the Committee and addressed below in this working document have been implemented by the World Heritage Centre, in close collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, in view of achieving the overarching objective referred to above, and each with the specific purpose of identifying, conserving and managing under-represented types of properties addressed by the respective Programmes or Initiatives.
3. So far, each of the Thematic Programmes has produced positive results and contributed substantially to achieving the objectives for which it has been established. In many cases, they have attracted a number of relevant partners and donors and provided the States Parties and other stakeholders with relevant knowledge in their respective fields, which they could usefully apply in their heritage identification, conservation and management policies.
4. It is to be noted that the role played by Thematic Programmes and Initiatives adopted and implemented so far has been crucial in achieving the objectives of the Global Strategy. At the same time, as no sunset clause has been approved at the time of their adoption by the Committee, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies suggest that the Committee examine the results achieved by the Programmes and Initiatives and to phase out those that have already defined the framework for identification, conservation and management of World Heritage properties in the specific thematic area.
5. In the case of these Thematic Programmes, the States Parties currently have at their disposal all necessary information available on the World Heritage website and/or in printed format, to help them make appropriate decisions for the identification, conservation and management of their respective properties. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies stand ready to provide technical assistance to States Parties in the implementation of the results of the Thematic Programmes and Initiatives, bring forward nominations and enhance the state of conservation and management of inscribed properties.
6. Moreover, in light of the current financial constraints of the Organization, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies are no longer in a position to implement those Programmes and Initiatives for which no extra-budgetary resources have been made available. Therefore, Programmes for which no such funding is available should be put on hold until such time when resources become available, or should be taken over by relevant entities that can ensure their implementation, subject to approval by the World Heritage Committee. In addition, all contributions made for the coordination or oversight of thematic programmes by World Heritage Centre regular programme staff should be recovered by way of staff cost recovery charged to the relevant extra-budgetary funds.
7. At the same time, although some of the Thematic Programmes and Initiatives may have achieved their overarching objectives, they may be subject to follow-up activities,

provided that extra-budgetary funds are secured in the framework of extra-budgetary projects. The results thereof will be duly reported to the World Heritage Committee.

8. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies also note that it is important for all stakeholders to consider the overall approach to new Thematic Programmes in order to avoid overlaps between such programmes and thematic activities of the Advisory Bodies. They also suggest that a more strategic approach is warranted, notably regarding the coordinating agencies and their location.
9. States Parties are requested to support the implementation of Thematic Programmes and Initiatives through earmarked financial contributions or through in-kind support, such as hosting meetings or preparing and publishing resource manuals and other relevant documents.
10. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies therefore recommend that the Committee examine the report on the Thematic Programmes and Initiatives as well as the draft decision proposed in Section II below.

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

11. The Programme was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001).
12. 54 cities or historic city centres have been inscribed since the adoption of the Programme in 2001.
13. The Programme, since its adoption, has extensively contributed to its major objectives, namely: a) development of a theoretical framework for urban heritage conservation; and b) provision of technical assistance to States Parties for the implementation of new approaches and schemes.
14. Regarding the first objective, namely the development of a theoretical framework for urban heritage conservation, the programme has fully integrated the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape adopted by UNESCO's General Conference (November 2011). The Recommendation finds its most important application framework as a tool to strengthen UNESCO's action in the field of conservation of urban heritage, which is the most represented category on the World Heritage List.
15. Since the adoption of this Recommendation, several activities have been implemented, particularly in Asia-Pacific and the Arab States, where a regional meeting on this topic was held in December 2013 and resulted in the adoption of an Action Plan (2014-2015). The application of the Historic Urban Landscape approach has also been tested upstream of the nomination process of an urban area on the World Heritage List. The relevance of this approach has been demonstrated with regard to the full understanding of the landscape in which the attributes of the property are expressed and threats that could affect it are identified. Extra-budgetary funds from Bahrein, the Flemish Government (Belgium), France (Convention France-UNESCO, CFU) and the Netherlands have so far contributed greatly to support the Programme in terms of implementation, advocacy, training, and participation in seminars and conferences.
16. Regarding the second objective, namely providing technical assistance to States Parties for the implementation of a new approach, the World Heritage Centre has carried out activities focusing on urban conservation or capacity-building for cities, local authorities, and local governments. These activities are preparatory assistance projects for the nomination of properties on the World Heritage List; conservation or management activities; or capacity-building and training activities (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities/>). The Indian Heritage Cities Network (IHCN) was created with the support of France (CFU) to raise awareness of the importance of

urban conservation amongst decision-makers and professionals. It relies on the French experience in this field, notably through the French network of historic cities. In 2012-2013, activities have focused on strengthening the IHCN while implementing specific activities related to urban development studies or capacity-building. The network is now an independent foundation, officially recognized by UNESCO since late 2012. Details of this activity are available on the website of the IHCN (<http://www.ihcn.in/>).

17. The City of Lyon (France) hosted from 22 to 24 May 2013 an international meeting to share lessons learnt from 40 case studies on conservation and management of historic cities ("Historic Cities in Development: Keys to understanding and Taking Action", launched in 2008 by the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) on the initiative of the City of Lyon with the support of France (CFU) and the Netherlands). The theme of the meeting was "Changing Cities and Heritage Management: New Players? New Practices?". The meeting contributed to the debate on a heritage-focused approach to development by advocating the link between heritage values, urban development, and the expectation of communities. The report and the case studies are available online (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/634/>). The proceedings of the meeting are also available online (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1009/>).
18. An international World Heritage Expert Meeting on the mainstreaming in the *Operational Guidelines* of the methodological approach related to the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape was held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) from 3 to 5 September 2013. The main objectives were to identify ways to integrate the methodology and approach carried by the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape into the *Operational Guidelines* and to review related texts. The results of the meeting are available online (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1071/>). On 13 December 2013, a reflection meeting on the implementation of the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, two years after its adoption, was held at UNESCO Headquarters. The results of the meeting are available online (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/cities/>).
19. A report on the implementation of the Recommendation will be examined by the General Conference at its 38th session in 2015.
20. Extra-budgetary funds have been made available by China and by the Arab Regional Category 2 Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH Bahrain) to ensure the follow-up of the Programme during the biennium 2014-2015.

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

21. The Programme was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001).
22. Since its adoption, 22 forest sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List.
23. The World Heritage Forest Programme (WHFP) aimed to ensure that the World Heritage Convention be used to enhance forest conservation on a global scale (Decision **25 COM XVII.10**). The programme was approved following a recommendation by an expert meeting organized by the World Heritage Centre in 1998 in Berastagi, Indonesia, in cooperation with the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the Government of Indonesia. The meeting concluded that the World Heritage Convention had a key role to play in conserving the large proportion of global terrestrial biodiversity that exists in forests. The report of the meeting (available at <http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/events/documents/event-103-1.pdf>) included a list of recommendations to the World Heritage Committee as well as a list of forest sites that could be nominated by States Parties.

24. At its 30th session (Vilnius, 2006), the World Heritage Centre presented a 20-year vision, a mission and three objectives for WHFP (Document WHC-06/30.COM/12) together with performance indicators. As the Committee provided limited seed funding at the start of WHFP, the Programme has been mostly dependent on extra-budgetary resources for its implementation. The Centre has been able to raise limited resources for specific activities, but did not succeed in raising a significant amount of funding to hire a dedicated WHFP coordinator for the further development of the Programme.
25. Nevertheless, WHFP has succeeded in strengthening the leading role of the Convention in the conservation of forest biodiversity through the identification and conservation of the world's most outstanding forests. As mentioned above, 22 new World Heritage forests have been inscribed since the adoption of the Programme, including several of the priority sites that were identified at the Berastagi expert meeting. This brings the total number of World Heritage forest properties to 107, covering over 77 million hectares and spanning all biogeographic zones. The World Heritage Centre provided technical support to the nomination process of some key sites such as the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (Indonesia), the Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar) or the Sangha Trinational (Cameroun, Central African Republic, Congo).
26. Important progress was also made towards attaining the three WHFP objectives:
- (1) Assemble and disseminate information and knowledge related to World Heritage Forests and the role of the Convention in their conservation: a WHFP webpage has been developed on the World Heritage website (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/forests/>). An initial overview was published in 2007 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/21/>), documenting the results of the follow-up meeting to the Berastagi meeting, held in Nancy, France in 2005. The 2011 UN International Year of Forests, which coincided with the tenth anniversary of WHFP, provided another opportunity to evaluate the success of the Programme. These are highlighted in the publications: "Adapting to Change – The State of Conservation of World Heritage Forests in 2011" (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/30/>) and the World Heritage Review n°61 on "World Heritage Forests" (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/review/61>).
- (2) Support the integration of World Heritage properties into the broader landscape with which they are ecologically connected: WHFP has consistently promoted a landscape approach for the conservation of World Heritage forest sites and has addressed this issue in the publications mentioned above. The approach was tested in the Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative (CAWHFI, see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/cawhfi/>) and implemented in three forest landscapes in the Congo Basin. The programme resulted in the inscription of the Sangha Trinational on the World Heritage List, including a large buffer zone of concession forests.
- (3) Seek out and take advantage of opportunities to channel technical and financial support to World Heritage Forests in an effort to enhance management capabilities and to implement priority management actions: several important projects were developed and implemented to provide support to World Heritage Forest, or to improve the management of forest sites. Projects were undertaken in the Congo Basin, Madagascar, India, Brazil and Indonesia (see also http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/search_theme=18&action=list). Several World Heritage Forest have also benefitted from the Rapid Response Facility (RRF) (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/578/>).
27. Following the adoption by the Committee of the Climate Change Strategy (Decision **30 COM 7.1**), 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. A pilot project on adaptive and carbon-financed forest

management was implemented in the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra in 2009-2011. A study commissioned by the WHFP in 2012 calculated the total stock of carbon at 10.5 billion tons (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/937>), demonstrating the huge potential of World Heritage Forests for REDD+ and other schemes for the financing of ecosystem services.

28. With the support of the Dutch Funds-in-Trust and the Belgian Ministry of the Environment, the World Heritage Centre has finalized the Practical Guide to Climate Change Adaptation, designed to help natural World Heritage managers to better prepare for the impacts of climate change. The Practical Guide will be published under the World Heritage Paper Series and will be available online in mid-2014. The guide was field-tested in three World Heritage Forests in India and Kenya in 2013. In addition, two climate change adaptation capacity-building projects are currently underway in Mesoamerica and Africa.
29. With the important representation of globally significant forests on the World Heritage List, it can be concluded that the Convention has become an important instrument for global forest conservation. WHFP played a major role in achieving this goal and has made important contributions to achieving the objectives set for the programme.
30. Given the results achieved and the limited available staff and financial resources, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies consider that it is no longer necessary to maintain a dedicated thematic programme for forests and recommends the Committee to phase it out.
31. It may be noted that the ongoing work on climate change adaptation is relevant to all World Heritage properties and could be continued as part of the application of the Climate Change Policy Document (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/10046>) and the Strategy to assist States Parties in implementing appropriate management responses (<http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-393-1.doc>).

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

32. The World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001). Since 2001, 29 earthen architecture sites have been inscribed.
33. The World Heritage Earthen Architecture Programme (WHEAP) is now in its third phase, which focuses on Latin America and Central Asia (2012-2014). States Parties in these regions still need to identify steering institutions and pilot sites for the implementation of the programme. Capacity-building activities are currently underway in Tajikistan and Colombia, in partnership with the International Center for Earthen Architecture (CRAterre). A Project Document for the final phase of WHEAP activities has been elaborated and funds are currently being sought for its implementation.
34. The main recent achievements include the organisation of the International Colloquium on Conservation of World Heritage Earthen Architecture, held at UNESCO in December 2012. This two-day international event gathered a network of about 400 experts in earthen architecture conservation, including site managers, researchers and specialized institutions, to share knowledge and experiences in the conservation of World Heritage earthen architecture. At the outset, the Scientific Committee presented a set of international recommendations for the protection of earthen World Heritage. In December 2013, UNESCO published the Proceedings: *Earthen Architecture in Today's World*, as part of the UNESCO World Heritage Paper Series. In addition, two publications on the conservation of earthen architecture in Timbuktu, Mali (*Étude sur les mausolées de Tombouctou* (2014) and *Manuel pour la conservation de Tombouctou*

(2014)) have also been prepared in the framework of the “Conservation project for Africa”, thanks to generous funding from the Italian Funds-in-Trust to UNESCO. The reconstruction and/or rehabilitation of earthen architecture mosques and mausoleums that are part of the World Heritage properties in Timbuktu and Gao are also underway, thanks to funds raised for the Emergency Safeguarding Cultural Heritage in Mali.

35. UNESCO will also participate in the seminar entitled “Earthen Architecture Conservation in Archaeological Sites: New Practices and Perspectives” from 26 to 28 May 2014 in Grenoble, France, organized by CRAterre. The 12th International Conference on the Study and Conservation of Earthen Architecture “TERRA 2016” is being organised in the framework of the WHEAP Programme, and will take place in Lyon from 10 to 14 July 2016.
36. No extra-budgetary funds are available for this Thematic Programme, which can be considered to have made substantial progress towards achieving its overall objectives. It can be followed-up within the framework of extra-budgetary projects, if funding can be secured, with the assistance of Advisory Bodies and external partners.

D. The World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Programme (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabletourism>)

37. The World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme (WH+ST Programme) originally launched by the World Heritage Committee at its 25th session (Helsinki, 2001) was developed into a new programme with a corresponding Action Plan (2013-2015), which was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012).
38. The Steering Group, comprised of States Parties representatives from the UNESCO Electoral Groups (China, Germany, Lebanon, Tanzania, Slovenia and Argentina), the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies (IUCN, ICOMOS, ICCROM), and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), provides strategic direction for the Programme. A meeting of the Steering Group for the Programme took place in Paris on 14 March 2014 to set priorities for the next phase of implementation of the Programme.
39. Significant breakthroughs also occurred in terms of cooperation with other UN agencies: a MoU with the UNWTO was signed for full collaboration on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism; assistance is being provided to UNEP and UNWTO to design the post-2015 agenda for tourism and development, including the 10YFP (the global framework of action to enhance international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production in both developed and developing countries). UNEP has provided seed funding to UNESCO for its role in this important process.
40. Additional progress has been made with regard to four key objectives of the WH+ST Programme:
 - (1) Promoting broad stakeholder engagement in the planning, development and management of a sustainable tourism that follows a destination approach and focuses on empowering local communities: with the support of the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust the WH+ST Programme is partnering with UNWTO to develop a common tourism development and promotion strategy for the Silk Roads Heritage Corridor in Central Asia and China. In this framework and with the support of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a workshop was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan (October 2013) in order to put forward a roadmap for a tourism strategy for visitor management, site presentation and promotion along the Silk Road Heritage Corridors. Participating countries included Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,

Uzbekistan and China. The Roadmap for the Silk Road Heritage Corridors Tourism Strategy is available online in English: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/126863> and in Russian: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/126864>.

(2) Providing World Heritage stakeholders with the capacity and the tools to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly and sustainably, taking into account the local context and needs: the WH+ST Programme is creating a series of online How-To Guides for World Heritage site managers and other key stakeholders in the destination management field, to develop more in-depth and practical guidance on how to create concrete strategies and actions to change the way tourism is managed at World Heritage properties. The How-To Guides will be focused on the best practice approaches to sustainable economic development through tourism and will bring tourism best practice evidence together and showcase this knowledge, experience and best practice achievements.

(3) Networking, Communication and Outreach: significant effort has been put into communication and outreach for the WH+ST Programme. A communication platform called People Protecting Places is being developed for awareness-raising and sharing of information that captures and demonstrates the interest and commitment to the WH+ST Programme among all relevant stakeholders. A Forum on South-South cooperation with a focus on China and Africa will take place in Huangshan (China), in April. Sustainable tourism and World Heritage will be the feature of the upcoming World Heritage Review magazine.

(4) Integrating a sustainable tourism perspective into the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention: under the guidance of the Nordic World Heritage Foundation, the Nordic and Baltic States Parties are developing an analytical framework that provides an overall assessment and a strategy framework, which will provide guidance on developing sustainable tourism strategies for 14 pilot sites in the region. Various workshops and meetings have taken place, including the launch in Visby (Sweden) in 2010 and two others, one in Suomenlinna (Finland), and another in Karlskrona (Sweden), in 2013. A key feature of the project is examining the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention, and in particular the Periodic Reporting tool (second cycle) in terms of tourism assessment. National policies and guidelines, as well as international frameworks and criteria such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for Destinations, are also being examined.

41. The WH+ST Programme is fully financed by extra-budgetary resources. In this regard, a fundraising strategy was developed and implemented. Both bilateral and private sector donors have been approached to date. In the third quarter of 2013, UNESCO secured USD 1 million for the programme from a private sector donor (Zhongkun Group, China). A three-year Framework Agreement was established for programme coordination and activities. Additional resources have been secured from a French Foundation (Fondation IRIS) to develop capacity-building tools for World Heritage site managers, and from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust for capacity-building activities associated with the Silk Road Heritage Corridor tourism project, to be implemented jointly with UNWTO in Central Asia and China. Additional resources are being sought, including the negotiation of a USD 1 million Framework Agreement with Seabourn Cruise Line. With these resources secured, the overall coordination of the WH+ST Programme by the World Heritage Centre is ensured through at least 2015.

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

42. The programme was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005).

43. 12 properties have been inscribed since the adoption of the programme, which increased the number of properties in SIDS to 29.
44. Considering the different levels of implementation of the Convention, of institutional development, regional needs assessments and action plans, a different strategy for regional capacity-building was deployed for each of the main SIDS regions.
45. Africa: 2 national workshops were organized in Cape Verde with a focus on the Management Plan for Cidade Velha, Historic Centre of Ribeira Grande (November 2012) and in Sao Tomé & Príncipe for the development of the World Heritage Tentative List (October 2013), and a sub-regional workshop (for Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles and the Maldives in April/May 2012) resulted in the first Action Plan for the Indian Ocean SIDS.
46. Pacific: support was provided to the establishment of Tentative Lists in Polynesia, through specific training workshops at the national level for Tonga (February 2012), and the Cook Islands and Niue (March 2013). The archaeological site of Nan Madol in the Federated States of Micronesia was selected for a World Heritage nomination with a management system that takes into account traditional knowledge and site conservation practices. Two consultation meetings were held in November 2011 and March 2013, and a capacity-building workshop on developing nominations was organized in October 2012.
47. Caribbean: results-oriented training courses were 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. The first course was held in Kingston, Jamaica in June 2012 and the second training course in Antigua and Barbuda in March 2013, followed by an 8-month mentoring period, in order for participants to develop their nomination files.
48. Within the framework of the SIDS programme, 15 workshops/meetings have been organized in 2012-2013 in all SIDS regions (Atlantic and Indian Oceans, Caribbean and the Pacific), with over 300 participants.
49. 2014 has been designated by the United Nations General Assembly as the “International Year of Small Island Developing States”, with the objective of highlighting the economic, social and cultural contributions of this group of countries that remain a special case for sustainable development in view of their specific vulnerabilities. The World Heritage SIDS programme aims to continue to further contribute to the wider UN’s efforts within the context of the World Heritage Convention.
50. Major activities were implemented in 2011-2013 through the Japanese Funds-in-Trust project on “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 while relying on the World Heritage Convention. (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/662>). The programme is expecting further funding from the Japanese Funds-in-Trust, the request being examined at the time this document is being produced.

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

51. The Programme was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005).

52. 10 new marine properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List since the adoption of this Programme in 2005. The marine area covered by the Convention has since doubled.
53. The Programme has contributed to achieving several of the Strategic Objectives:
54. Credibility:
- Development of a joint IUCN-WHC project supporting identification of new marine sites in the Arctic region;
 - Establishment of a formal cooperation with the Nairobi Convention (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/967/>), in support of nomination of new World Heritage sites in the Western Indian Ocean and the potential nomination of the Mozambique Channel as the first serial/transboundary site in the region;
 - Production of a first expert report on the potential for applying the concept of Outstanding Universal Value to the High Seas.

All activities above contribute to the implementation of the 2006 World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy calling for an ecosystem approach, the 2011 Global Strategy Audit conclusions and the 2013 IUCN marine Thematic Study: Marine Natural Heritage and the World Heritage List.

55. Conservation: coordination and technical/financial support towards a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) status under International Maritime Organization regulation for (a) Tubbataha, Philippines, following two important ship groundings in early 2013 and in response to Decision **33 COM 7B.18** (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1058/>) and (b) Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania, considering the expected increase in ship traffic passing the park and its interconnection with the Wadden Sea in Germany/The Netherlands. The PSSA application for Banc d'Arguin will be the first in Africa and comes as a response to Decisions **29 COM 7B.5** and **31 COM 7B.12**. Additionally, the Programme assists with expert input to ten State of Conservation reports and the follow-up of several International Assistance dossiers. A comprehensive best practice guide is being completed in consultation with IUCN. It summarizes the current best practices in World Heritage marine properties and is a result of the knowledge/expertise the programme accumulated over the past 4.5 years through its activities toward conservation of World Heritage marine properties.
56. Capacity-building: establishment/maintenance of a functional World Heritage marine site manager community encompassing 46 properties in 35 countries. The Programme coordinates and facilitates (a) a regular and meaningful exchange of best practices and management solutions among the site managers and their teams, and (b) the positioning of the World Heritage Convention and its marine site managers network as a positive driver for change among the broader marine conservation community and the public at large (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4C5laaURFs>). The network is maintained through a bi-monthly site manager's e-newsletter with the latest updates from the community and relevant activities/events, a web-based platform, and the organization of the second global marine site managers' conference in Scandola, France, in October 2013 (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/future-marine-world-heritage-2013/>). The conference was held in conjunction with the third International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC3). All site managers were supported financially to attend IMPAC3 in order to provide access to top expertise in the field and to position World Heritage properties as models for other marine protected areas. The latest survey (October 2013) organized among site managers' network indicated that the approach is highly effective and relevant.
57. Communication: publication of 16 full-page articles on World Heritage marine properties in the International New York Times, each with a short movie for the website

of the New York Times. The Programme communicates globally and continuously on the activities developed for marine World Heritage and the results achieved (both online and in print), including through the newly developed short film aimed at general public “Les voix du futur” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UFUPHOWDUgo>), the World Heritage iPad application (<https://itunes.apple.com/fr/app/unesco-world-heritage-marine/id596139815?mt=8>), an annual e-newsletter that lists all the major activities of the Centre on marine World Heritage and the results achieved (http://whc.unesco.org/archive/websites/unesco_marine_2014_newsletter/pages/newsletter/index.html), the programme brochure that reiterates its primary goals (<http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-13-37.pdf>), the Programme’s official webpage and by posting regularly on UNESCO’s social media channels. The Programme also cooperated with a major documentary for France TV3 (Thalassa, September 2012, approximately 2 million viewers - http://www.france3.fr/emissions/thalassa/reportage-la-mer-en-reserves_17863). Additionally, the Programme has been represented through special events/other initiatives at all major international conservation conferences organized in cooperation with IUCN WCPA-marine chair. Every year, the Programme develops a special *communiqué* for World Oceans Day. An up-to-date mailing list and a photo/video footage database are maintained to ensure optimal efficiency in communication. The audience for all communication actions of the Programme represents around 50 million persons annually over the past two years.

58. The Programme is fully financed through extra-budgetary funding. The programme’s base funding is provided through the Tides of Time partnership with Jaeger-LeCoultre and the International New York Times and through the Government of Flanders (Belgium). In February 2013, a major event, including online outreach, was organized with the Programme’s principal donors in view of attracting new partners (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofwUTyTilgc>). The Programme attracted a total of USD 1,619,000 from 12 partners between January 2012 and March 2014. A total of USD 2,350,000 is currently in the final stages of negotiation and is expected to be confirmed by mid-July 2014. The programme facilitated an additional USD 76,000 from its private sector partner that was contributed directly to 3 World Heritage marine properties. The good results of fundraising efforts are an outcome of good relationships with local site managers in 35 countries. Indeed, the site managers have first-hand knowledge of threats and opportunities, which in turn allows for the consistent delivery of quality marine expertise. This is in line with the wider ocean conservation agenda and ensures the consistent quality content of all outputs, and a year-round communication on activities and outcomes. In the framework of the Programme, a MoU was established with the French Marine Protected Areas Agency and a cooperation agreement was reached with the Nairobi Convention (Western Indian Ocean). An MoU with the International Maritime Organization to facilitate protection from maritime pollution is being negotiated. MoUs are being explored with the results-oriented NGO Oceana (fisheries), the Professional Association of Diving Instructors (outreach/visibility) and Thalassa.

G. Human Evolution: Adaptations, Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS)
(<http://whc.unesco.org/en/heads/>)

59. The Programme was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008).
60. Six prehistoric properties were inscribed on the List since 2009, five nomination files are currently being prepared by States Parties.
61. During the period 2009-2013, the HEADS Programme achieved major results, raising the awareness of the importance and specificity of the earliest heritage related to Human Evolution and the origins of cultural diversity in all continents, by :

- (1) Establishing links between scientific research and integrated conservation by recognizing the scientific values of properties related to human origins;
 - (2) Operating within the framework of the Global Strategy, launched by the World Heritage Committee in 1994, to broaden the definition of World Heritage in order to better reflect the full spectrum of the world's cultural and natural sites of Outstanding Universal Value;
 - (3) Recognizing sites that are outstanding demonstrations of traces of the earliest interaction between humankind and the land, early cultural behaviour, cognitive steps and creative expressions;
 - (4) Preserving the identified properties from progressive deterioration due to their age and vulnerability through scientific analysis and the implementation of conservation plans.
62. A core interdisciplinary community of experts, involving four Scientific Committees and Working Groups, continued and strengthened their work in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre. The following activities have taken place in support of the core thematic priorities and objectives of the HEADS Action Plan (Palaeoanthropology, Human Evolution and World Heritage Convention, Archaeological Properties not well represented on the World Heritage List and Rock Art).
 63. 17 international meetings, as well as 4 side events were organized to present detailed results to the World Heritage Committee. So far, cooperation with 265 scholars was established, and a thematic web site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/head/>) was launched.
 64. The following actions, ranging from an in-depth analysis on the specificities of properties demonstrating human evolution, involving the scientific community, to practical training activities, were undertaken.
 65. Three regional and/or thematic international meetings were held over the last two years:
 - Human Origin Sites in Asia and the World Heritage Convention, held at the Jeongok Prehistory Museum, Republic of Korea from 24 to 28 September 2012. In attendance were 51 scientific experts representing 19 countries and 30 institutions (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/956/>);
 - Human Origin Sites and the World Heritage Convention in Eurasia held at the University of Tübingen from 25 February to 1 March 2013. In attendance were 28 international and national representatives from 14 countries and 22 institutions (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/998/>);
 - A meeting on the First Peopling of the Americas and the World Heritage Convention took place in the Biblioteca Palafoxiana in Puebla, Mexico from 2 to 6 September 2013 with 35 national and international experts representing over 30 universities and research centres and 12 countries (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1077/>).
 66. Five meetings of the Scientific Committee of HEADS took place, to plan and to discuss results obtained. Actions were also undertaken by the HEADS Scientific Committee on prehistoric sites throughout Africa, Asia and Europe, including:
 - Development of scientific research in order to assess the OUV and integrity of major prehistoric site clusters;
 - Swabian Jura: as a result of the HEADS meetings in Tübingen and Blaubeuren, the Heritage Office of Baden-Württemberg (Germany) produced documents for a preliminary step to be submitted to the German national evaluation committee for World Cultural Heritage that was scheduled for February 2014;

- Encouraging the inscription of sites on national Tentative Lists, such as Melka Kunture, Ethiopia, as a result of the HEADS meeting “Preparation of a Road Map to promote the inscription of African human origin sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List” held in 2011 at the National Museum of Ethiopia, in Addis Ababa; on 25 October 2013, a meeting was held in Addis Ababa to plan for the preparation the nomination file for Melka Kunture.
67. Five international meetings took place to develop the prototype of the RAWA, Rock Art World Archive. The prototype is being finalized and will be submitted to site managers by October 2015. An electronic training application is being prepared in three languages.
 68. Publications and awareness-raising: 5 issues of World Heritage Paper Series, one for each continent, were produced: World Heritage Papers 29: HEADS 1: Human Evolution: Adaptations Dispersals and Social Developments (HEADS) World Heritage Thematic Programme (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/29>); World Heritage Papers 33: HEADS 2: Human origin sites and the World Heritage Convention in Africa ; (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/33>). The following issues are in preparation: World Heritage Papers 38: HEADS 3: Human origin sites and the World Heritage Convention in Asia; World Heritage Papers 39: HEADS 4: Human origin sites and the World Heritage Convention in Eurasia; HEADS 5 (World Heritage Papers): Human origin sites and the World Heritage Convention in the Americas.
 69. Capacity-building: the HEADS programme has been closely collaborating with the European Commission Erasmus Programme and developed three intensive training projects in cooperation with the Institut de paléontologie humaine, which were organized in France between 2011 and 2013: (i) Gorges du Verdon Natural Reserve (including numerous prehistoric sites, Alpes de Haute Provence); (ii) Vézère Valley World Heritage property (Dordogne) and (iii) Tautavel *Homo heidelbergensis* site (Pyrénées Orientales). The topic of the training was “Prehistory and World Heritage at the Crossroads of Science and Conservation”. The academic consortium brought together, along with the World Heritage Centre, 7 Higher education institutions and 28 countries; each project involved around 40 students and 50 teachers or heritage professionals. Beyond training activities, the sessions helped to involve young researchers in the field of applied research for conservation and focused at the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.
 70. The HEADS Programme also established a working relationship with the PREHsea European project (Managing Prehistoric Heritage in Southeast Asia - Indonesia, Philippines, France and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre) to develop capacity-building activities on the appropriate implementation of the World Heritage Convention in inscribed properties.
 71. The HEADS Programme has progressed in its objectives and, from a World Heritage perspective, has been able to identify sites that reflect traces of the earliest interaction between humankind and the land, early cultural behaviour, cognitive steps and creative expressions.
 72. The follow-up on the Programme will be managed in the framework of extra-budgetary projects, through extra-budgetary funding secured by the UNESCO Mexico Office from the Carlos Slim Foundation, and in coordination with the Category 2 Centre on Rock Art (Spain). The outcomes of the project will be duly reported to the World Heritage Committee.

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

73. The Initiative was approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 29th session (Durban, 2005).
74. 2 sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List since the adoption of the Initiative and 3 Tentative Lists have been revised to include sites related to astronomy.
75. In conformity with the Integrated Implementation Strategy of the Thematic Initiative on Astronomy and World Heritage, presented to the Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), the World Heritage Centre ensures basic coordination and upload of relevant information on the dedicated website: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/astronomy/>. Since the last progress report in 2012, the States Parties of Austria, Brazil, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Mauritius, Mexico, the Russian Federation, the Kingdom of Thailand, Ukraine and the United States of America have designated institutions and Focal Points for this implementation within the framework of national strategies. Concerning the elaboration of a Global Thematic Study on Heritage of Science and Technology, requested by the Committee at its 36th session (Saint-Petersburg, 2012) and including studies and research on technological heritage connected with space exploration, a scoping study is being planned by the Advisory Body ICOMOS, depending on the availability of extra-budgetary funds.
76. Overall, the Initiative can be considered to have progressed in line with its main expected results. No extra-budgetary funding is currently available for this initiative. The World Heritage Centre will continue basic coordination with its strategic partners and communicate the results achieved by the Advisory Bodies and other partners, notably the International Astronomical Union (IAU), and will provide advice to States Parties as requested.

II. DRAFT DECISION

Draft Decision: 38 COM 5E

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/5E,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **32 COM 10**, **32 COM 10A**, **34 COM 5F.1**, **36 COM 5D** and **36 COM 5E**, adopted at its 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), 34th (Brasilia, 2010) and 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012) sessions respectively,*
3. *Welcomes the progress report on the implementation of the World Heritage Thematic Programmes and Initiative and thanks all States Parties, donors and other organizations for having contributed to achieving their objectives;*
4. *Acknowledges the results attained by the Forest Programme, which has achieved its key objectives, and decides to phase it out;*
5. *Takes note that the follow-up of the HEADS Programme will be ensured in the framework of extra-budgetary projects, through extra-budgetary funding secured by the UNESCO Mexico Office from the Carlos Slim Foundation, and in coordination with the*

Category 2 Centre on Rock Art (Spain) and requests that the outcomes of the projects be reported to the World Heritage Committee;

6. Also takes note of the results achieved by the Earthen Architecture Programme and the lack of extra-budgetary resources; further takes note that the programme will be pursued, provided that extra-budgetary funding can be secured, with the assistance of Advisory Bodies and external partners; and encourages stakeholders to ensure the follow-up of the Programme and continue supporting research and other activities in order to assist States Parties in identifying and protecting relevant sites;
7. Notes the results achieved in the implementation of the Astronomy and World Heritage Initiative as well as the lack of extra-budgetary funding; also notes that the World Heritage Centre will continue basic coordination with its strategic partners, communicate the results achieved by the Advisory Bodies and other partners, and will provide advice to States Parties as requested; and also encourages stakeholders to ensure the follow-up of the Initiative and continue supporting research and other activities to assist States Parties in identifying and protecting relevant sites;
8. Also requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, with the support of interested States Parties, to continue efforts to implement the activities foreseen under the remaining Thematic Programmes in 2014-2015;
9. Further encourages States Parties, international organizations and donors to contribute to the Thematic Programmes and Initiatives and further requests the World Heritage Centre to submit an updated result-based report on Thematic Programmes and Initiatives for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th session in 2016.