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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
15 – 25 June 2014**

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

9A. 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.

This document presents issues related to the Upstream Process in general as well the progress made on each of the 10 pilot projects since the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee, further to Decision **37 COM 9**.

Draft Decision: 38 COM 9A, see Point IV.

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”. In order to implement the first phase 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.
3. 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.

II. PROGRESS MADE ON THE SELECTED PILOT PROJECTS

4. Pilot project on the **South Namib Erg**, Namibia
This project was successfully terminated as Namib Sand Sea was inscribed on the World Heritage List under criteria: (vii)(viii)(ix)(x) at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee. The active support of IUCN and the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) in this upstream project as well as the strong commitment of the State Party throughout the process were instrumental in the success of this process.
5. Pilot project on **Kano City Walls**, Nigeria
Between 2010 and 2012, the State Party undertook various actions to advance the nomination process for Kano City Walls, including stakeholders meetings, conservation and rehabilitation projects as well as activities for documentation and presentation. At this time there was no dialogue with ICOMOS on the robustness of a potential nomination, as envisaged in the first phase of the Upstream Process. Unfortunately in 2010 the demolition of oldest remaining gate in the city walls, Kofar Na Isa, for road widening negatively impacted on the authenticity of the overall walls. This prompted a serious

reflection and the State Party is currently planning an international conference in 2014 on Kano's historic urban landscape, including the city walls and gates. It is reported that this could provide an opportunity to consider the rebuilding of the demolished gate and the revival of a nomination project that focuses not just on the walls but on the wider Kano Historic City. ICOMOS considers that before further work is undertaken on developing a nomination, it is essential that the robustness of a case for a Kano Historic City nomination is considered. ICOMOS suggests that the State Party might wish to invite an ICOMOS Advisory Mission to review the outcome of the proposed conference and advise on the potential scope and feasibility of a nomination. The World Heritage Centre will continue to encourage the State Party to submit an international assistance request to support the first feasibility stage of the Upstream Process and necessary dialogue with ICOMOS.

6. Pilot project on **Pella (Tabaqt FahI)**, Jordan

In December 2013, ICOMOS provided its evaluation of the progress report submitted by the responsible Jordanian authorities to the World Heritage Centre on Pella (Tabaqt FahI). ICOMOS considers that based on the current archaeological evidences at the site, the proposed attributes do not reflect a unique or exceptional character. This may appear in the future through new discoveries. ICOMOS therefore recommended that another site be selected for future nomination. ICOMOS also analyzed Jordan's Tentative List and concluded that the site of Gadara would have the potential for a future nomination. The site of Jerash, which was examined by the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee in 1995, would also have such a potential although it seems that the State Party was not in a position to implement the recommendations of the Bureau at that time. In March 2014, the State Party informed the World Heritage Centre of its decision to follow ICOMOS's advice and selected Gadara (Modern Um Qeis) instead of Pella as a pilot project.

7. Pilot project on the **Rock Drawings in the region of Hail**, Saudi Arabia

In May 2013, ICOMOS submitted the report on its advisory mission to the site, carried out from 10 to 17 April 2013. The mission concluded that the property has a good potential for a serial nomination (two components) but recommended that a series of issues be addressed prior to the preparation of the nomination file: the preparation of a detailed comparative analysis, the utilization of the results of this analysis to define more clearly the attributes which would carry the potential Outstanding Universal Value and the definition of adequate boundaries on the basis of mapping the key attributes. Based on these outcomes and recommendations, the State Party prepared a draft nomination file which it submitted to the World Heritage Centre in early October 2013. It then prepared the final dossier and submitted it in January 2014. The dossier has been deemed complete and should be examined by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session in 2015.

8. Pilot Project on the **Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes**, Philippines

In early 2013, UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies decided to focus the Upstream Processes on capacity building, in consideration of issues that the nomination experienced in its first submission. As such, the World Heritage Centre set up a UNESCO/Korean Funds-in-Trust project to support the development of the nomination dossier: at present, the World Heritage Centre and the State Party are organizing an advisory mission of two experts from IUCN and ICOMOS to provide the State Party with advice and capacity building on the preparation of nomination dossiers, as well as to assist them in identifying the appropriate scope and criteria for the nomination. The mission is expected to be carried out in April 2014. In parallel, the project also supports the consolidation of research on Batanes and the compilation of maps, legislation, and other documents on the management of Batanes, which will be used in the nomination of the Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes to the World Heritage List.

9. Pilot project on **Male Hukuru Miskiy**, Maldives

After completing a first phase financed under International Assistance resulting in an updated Tentative List in February 2013, a second phase was deferred, after learning that ICOMOS and the State Party had not yet had direct contact. To ensure the level of exchange between UNESCO, Advisory Bodies, and the State Party envisioned in the Upstream Process, the World Heritage Centre arranged an extra-budgetary project of the UNESCO/Korean Funds-in-Trust to facilitate consultation between the parties. Phone consultation meetings with the Maldives authorities determined the need for an increased time scale for the complex, serial nomination, and an ICOMOS letter followed, further to which the State Party agreed to accept the proposed longer timeframe. This has since permitted an in-person meeting with ICOMOS, which took place in October 2013 at UNESCO New Delhi and established the goal of 1 February 2016 for submission of the serial nomination dossier, thus allowing for more time for historical research and development of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. Since December 2013, with the Korean Funds-in-Trust project, Maldives has established a team to work on the analyses of the serial sites, a sub-regional expert has begun training of Maldives authorities and experts in documentation, comparative analysis, and nomination preparation. An ICOMOS-UNESCO advisory mission has been scheduled for August 2014 to review the draft comparative analysis and Outstanding Universal Value. The State Party remains eager to cooperate, but they need to further enhance their communication with ICOMOS.

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

The project "Towards strengthened governance of the shared transboundary natural and cultural heritage of the Lake Ohrid Region" to implement the second phase of the pilot project was approved by the European Union for funding. The signature of the EU/UNESCO agreement is awaited in March/April 2014 for an immediate launch of the project. The 3-years project is estimated at approximately USD 2.4 million. Project components include transboundary cooperation, profiling of the transboundary area, capacity building for integrated management and pilot actions concerning the waste water and solid waste. The project addresses a number of issues identified during the April 2012 mission which took place in the first phase of the pilot project. The Ministry of Environment of Albania has confirmed national co-financing of 10% (approx. USD 240,000) to the pilot project in the framework of a Funds-in-Trust.

11. Pilot project on the **Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination**, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia

The States Parties continued to work on a common text for the Tentative List which was discussed among the Focal Points during the Fourth Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination meeting in Slovenia in October 2013. A further meeting was held in Slovenia to discuss the finalisation of the Letter of Intent for Cooperation of the States Parties. The State Party of Albania has also expressed interest to join this transboundary serial nomination project and has been invited to sign the Letter of Intent for Cooperation as soon as finalised. The Fifth Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination meeting is scheduled to take place in June 2014 in Croatia.

12. Pilot project on the **Grenadines Islands Group**, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

First phase of the pilot project was satisfactorily completed thanks to the international assistance provided by the World Heritage Fund. Following ICOMOS and IUCN recommendations, it is envisaged to support the States Parties to be able to take this nomination process to the next step in setting out the outline of a nomination. A second stage feasibility study by a consultant/consultants contracted via ICOMOS and/or IUCN to prepare in consultation with the States Parties an outline proposal for a possible

nomination is being considered, before a future development of a full nomination under the second phase of the Upstream Process. A request for preparatory assistance for the second phase of the project will be developed in close coordination with the States Parties.

13. Pilot project on the **Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Fray Bentos**, Uruguay
Following the support provided by ICOMOS and the World Heritage Centre since 2010 and the successful submission made on 1 February 2014, the nomination dossier has been considered complete by the Secretariat in view of its evaluation and further submission to the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session, in 2015. The Upstream Process was considered very helpful both by the Advisory Bodies and the State Party. The State Party has demonstrated a strong and consistent commitment throughout the process which is reflected in the successful result of this process and the timely submission of the nomination.

III. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

14. It must be noted that while the selected pilot projects are positive examples of advisory support and intervention, in order to be really effective, the upstream support, as originally foreseen, should ideally intervene at an earlier stage in the process, more precisely at the moment of the revision of the States Parties Tentative Lists.
15. Furthermore, besides the officially recognized pilot projects, the utility of upstream support in the preparation of nominations, prior to their 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 an increasing number of cases. The Advisory Bodies suggested an upstream support in some of their recommendations for deferral or referral of nominations over the last three sessions. A number of States Parties, which have secured the necessary funding, have already invited such missions. In view of the financial implications of Advisory missions and advisory services and of the need to improve the access of all States Parties to the services of the Advisory Bodies, the issue of funding of advisory missions is addressed in Document 14/38.COM/12, with regard to advisory missions both on nominations and on state of conservation issues. A relevant decision is proposed, addressing also the need for a thorough review and definition of the nature, role and funding of Advisory missions in the *Operational Guidelines*.
16. An important issue impacting the effectiveness of the advisory support on nominations is related to the very short timeline, as the current schedule for evaluation of nominations (16 months since submission to examination) does not allow for enough time for dialogue and meaningful exchange between the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies. It is to be noted that the period between the latest deadline for submission of additional information, which might be requested by the Advisory Bodies in the framework of the evaluation, and the preparation of the Advisory Bodies evaluation report including the recommendation, is only a few days. If the evaluation period is extended by another twelve months, a more reasonable time for dialogue between the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies can be ensured. This would also undoubtedly reduce the number of problematic cases concerning nominations to be examined at the World Heritage Committee sessions, with a direct result on the duration of the Committee's session (see also Documents 14/38.COM/5C and 14/38.COM/5F).

IV. DRAFT DECISION

Draft Decision: 38 COM 9A

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC-14/38.COM/9A,
2. Recalling Decision **34 COM 13.III** adopted at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010), Decision **35 COM 12C** at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011), Decision **36 COM 12C** at its 36th session (Saint Petersburg, 2012) and Decision **37 COM 9** at its 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013);
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 Namibia for the inscription on the World Heritage List of the Namib Sand Sea at the 37th session (Phnom Penh, 2013), Saudi Arabia for the submission of the nomination on the Rock Drawings in the region of Hail, and Uruguay for the submission of the Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Fray Bentos;
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 39th session, in 2015;
8. Also requests the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to draft a proposal in view of including the Upstream Process in the Operational Guidelines, including the option of extending the evaluation process by twelve months, to allow for improved and constructive dialogue between stakeholders, in the light of the outcomes of the Director General's meeting "World Heritage Convention: Thinking ahead", for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session, in 2015.