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# World Heritage

# 40 COM

**WHC/16/40.COM/5C**

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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

**Fortieth session**

**Istanbul, Turkey  
10 - 20 July 2016**

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

#### **5C. *World Heritage Convention* and Sustainable Development**

##### **SUMMARY**

Further to Decision **39 COM 5D** (Bonn, 2015) by which the World Heritage Committee endorsed the "Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the *World Heritage Convention*", the General Assembly of the States Parties adopted at its 20th session (UNESCO, 2015) the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy (WHSDP).

By Resolution **20 GA 13**, the General Assembly invited the World Heritage Centre and States Parties to continue engagement through an ongoing consultation process involving all stakeholders to enrich it. The General Assembly further invited the World Heritage Centre to provide an update on progress made to the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee.

This Document presents the progress made in the dissemination and implementation of the Policy Document in conformity with Decision **39 COM 5D** and **20 GA 13**.

**Draft Decision: 40 COM 5C, see Point III.**

## I. BACKGROUND

1. By Decision **39 COM 5D**, the World Heritage Committee endorsed the “Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the *World Heritage Convention*” and requested the World Heritage Centre, in consultation with the Advisory Bodies, to revise it by, notably, incorporating views expressed at the 39th session and other comments received from States Parties. The Committee set up provisions to the dissemination and to the implementation of the Draft Policy, once adopted by the 20th General Assembly, to which it transmitted it for examination.
2. By Resolution **20 GA 13**, the General Assembly of the States Parties noted the debate that took place on this matter at the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee (Bonn, 2015), the comments expressed by the States Parties on the draft Document through a broad consultation process, as well as the main outcomes of UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and adopted the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy (WH-SDP) (the text of the Policy can be found at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/20ga/>). The General Assembly invited the World Heritage Centre and States Parties to continue engagement through an ongoing consultation process involving all stakeholders to enrich it and invited the World Heritage Centre to provide an update on progress made to the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee.
3. The adoption of the WH-SDP represents an innovation in the history of the *World Heritage Convention* as it brings it into line with larger sustainable development policy frameworks of UNESCO and the United Nations. The implementation of the WH-SDP will harness the potential of World Heritage to contribute to sustainable development across all its dimensions and will ensure that the conservation and management of World Heritage properties are aligned with overall sustainable development objectives. In the process, it is acknowledged that the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties should not be compromised.
4. The WH-SDP provides guidance for States Parties to mainstream sustainable development principles in their national processes related to World Heritage in full respect of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties. It has been noted throughout the process that to be effective the policy should be interpreted and implemented in ways that are fully consistent with the primary goal of the *World Heritage Convention* as outlined by its Article 4, i.e. the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage<sup>1</sup>.

## II. FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

5. Further to Decision **39 COM 5D** and Resolution **20 GA 13**, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies initiated follow-up activities, as requested by the Committee and the General Assembly, aiming at ensuring the effective integration of the sustainable development perspective into the implementation processes of the *Convention*.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 4 of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage: “Each State Party to this Convention recognizes that the duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage referred to in Articles 1 and 2 and situated on its territory, belongs primarily to that State” [...].

### **Operational Guidelines**

6. In conformity with Resolution **20 GA 13**, relevant changes to the *Operational Guidelines* to translate the principles of the WH-SDP into operational procedures, will be proposed by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in consultation with the States Parties and relevant stakeholders, once a clear framework is established with the adoption of Policy Guidelines, which are currently under preparation. A scoping study concerning the Policy Guidelines will be examined at the 40th session (see Working Document *WHC/16/40.COM/12*).
7. In this regard, it is to be noted that at its 39th session (Bonn, 2015), the World Heritage Committee revised the *Operational Guidelines* and has already included, among others, a reference to local communities and indigenous peoples in paragraphs 40 and 123, and in particular to their involvement in the conservation and management of a World Heritage property and in the nomination process.

### **Development of indicators**

8. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) has taken an active part in the elaboration and follow-up to the indicators adopted by the UN Statistical Commission to monitor the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In March 2016, indicator 11.4.1, related to “Target: 11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”, was revised as follows: “Total expenditure (public and private) per capita spent on the preservation, protection and conservation of all cultural and natural heritage, by type of heritage (cultural, natural, mixed, World Heritage sites), level of government (national, regional, and local/municipal), type of expenditure (operating expenditure/investment) and type of private funding (donations in kind, private non-profit sector, sponsorship).”
9. Although this indicator is intended to cover all natural and cultural heritage, it is suggested that it include data related to World Heritage statistics. This indicator, as several other indicators, still requires methodological work. Furthermore, the data is not yet collected at a global level. UIS is planning to convene an expert meeting on Cultural Heritage Statistics in September 2016 to launch the development of a data collection instrument for global cultural heritage statistics, and seek to develop the necessary methodology. A discussion on indicators for natural heritage took also place at the meeting of the 7 Biodiversity-related Conventions (Geneva, February 2016).
10. The indicators list will undergo further UN consultations processes, leading to the UN General Assembly in 2016. Both IUCN and ICOMOS are also actively engaged in this work and have further views on viable indicators that may be considered.

### **Capacity-Building**

11. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies are actively mainstreaming the WH-SDP in capacity-building activities. The Advisory Bodies are also planning the development of a multi-year programme to update and merge the World Heritage Resource Manuals related to the management of natural and cultural heritage sites to take into consideration the new WH-SDP sustainable development policy, once progress is achieved. The Advisory Bodies have also been leading a significant programme related to the role of rights-based approaches within the *World Heritage Convention*. Matters concerning sustainable development and World Heritage will also feature extensively in the agenda of the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Activities related to the WH-SDP will be presented at side-events at 40th session of

the World Heritage Committee. Relevant information is also included in the reports of the Advisory Bodies (*Document WHC/16/40.COM/5B*).

### **Dissemination and mainstreaming**

12. The WH-SDP is published on the World Heritage Centre website and has been disseminated amongst all UNESCO Member States.
13. The Culture Sector held the first Coordination meeting of Category 2 Centres and Institutes and UNESCO Chairs/UNITWIN Networks related to culture, on 14 December 2015, at UNESCO Headquarters, where the WH-SDP was presented and discussed.
14. A travelling exhibition entitled “African World Heritage: a pathway for development”, was displayed on the railings of UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 12 to 31 May 2016 and disseminated worldwide in digital format. It highlighted the importance of African heritage for the continent’s sustainable development and the key role of local communities in the conservation of World Heritage sites, through various themes, such as sustainable cities, protection of the environment and biodiversity, cultural diversity, culture of peace, women’s role in heritage conservation, mobilization of young people in heritage safeguarding.
15. Furthermore, the World Heritage Centre organized or took part in several international and regional meetings that addressed the main dimensions of sustainable development as follows:

#### a) Inclusive social development

- The Eighth Session of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Geneva, Switzerland, 20-24 July 2015) on the theme “Respecting, consulting and involving indigenous peoples and local communities”, emphasized that the recognition of the rights and the full involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities in World Heritage processes is a requirement for achieving sustainable development and social equity.
- The workshop entitled “Understanding Rights Practices in the World Heritage System” organized by the Global Science Policy Dialogue (Caux, Switzerland, 18-19 January 2016), which presented best practices and regional human rights implementation mechanisms in the work of the United Nations and recommended the adoption of comprehensive legislative frameworks, approaches and policies on indigenous-related issues such as benefits-sharing, participation, livelihoods and culture, within the *World Heritage Convention’s* monitoring mechanisms and policies.
- The first Thematic Expert Consultation Meeting on Sustainable Management of World Heritage properties of Religious Interest with focus on South-Eastern and Mediterranean Europe (UNESCO Headquarters, 16-18 February 2016), organised by the World Heritage Centre, where it was recommended that the Initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest provide a platform for establishing approaches towards the implementation of the WH-PSD, and that special reference be given to developing indicators for the WH-PSD, highlighting the role of properties of religious interest for understanding cultural diversity, traditional knowledge and governance systems.

b) Environmental sustainability, and Inclusive Economic Development

- A number of events and initiatives were organised leading up to and during UNFCCC COP21, increasing visibility and mobilizing support to help natural and cultural World Heritage sites cope with climate change and to illustrate how they represent both an asset to be protected, and a resource to strengthen the ability of communities and their properties to resist, absorb, and recover from the effects of climate change<sup>2</sup>.
- An international meeting entitled “The Management of Natural Heritage in Support of Sustainable Development: An Institutional Challenge in the Arab States” organised by the World Heritage Centre (21 December 2015, UNESCO Headquarters), which recommended the need to sensitize and mobilize decision-makers and local communities through the development of empirical data, management and protection tools and the links between environmental protection, economic benefits and jobs creation, as well as the promotion of sustainable development knowledge in the education curricula.
- A workshop on “Synergies among the Biodiversity-related conventions”, held at the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, from 8-11 February 2016, that the World Heritage Centre and members of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee took part in, to achieve common and coordinated goals related to environmental sustainability.
- An International Conference entitled “Cultural Heritage and Development Initiatives - A challenge or a contribution to sustainability?” (Rome, Italy, 25-27 May 2016) organised by the UNESCO Office in Kabul, the Government of Afghanistan and the World Bank, that showcased the contribution of cultural heritage to the three dimensions of sustainable development, as advocated in the WH-SDP. The conference raised awareness amongst the international and local communities, including development agencies and the private sector, of the importance of protecting cultural heritage in the context of development initiatives, especially in post-conflict/least-development countries, and on how cultural heritage protection can play a key role for inclusive social and economic development at the national level. The Conference shared experiences and best practices for promoting the inclusion of cultural heritage protection in the planning phase of new development initiatives, as key contribution to environmental sustainability.
- An international conference entitled “Safeguarding African World Heritage as a Driver of Sustainable Development” organised by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, in Arusha (Tanzania) from 31 May to 3 June 2016. The Conference, in line with the objectives of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the WH-SDP, and with the African Union’s ‘Agenda 2063: the Africa We Want’, addressed the challenges of safeguarding World Heritage in the Africa Region in light of fast-paced development, and advocated for the mainstreaming of the WH-SDP into regional and national policies.

16. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies are also engaged in several field activities that address the main dimensions of sustainable development as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> For details see Document WHC/16/40.COM/5A.

- The UNESCO Japanese Funds-in-Trust project entitled ‘Strengthening the Conservation and Management of Lumbini, the Birthplace of the Lord Buddha, World Heritage Property’ (Nepal), launched in 2011 to support the conservation and management of the property, adopts a holistic approach that links preservation imperatives with development requirements, whereas support is provided to national authorities to take a proactive and sustainable approach in relation with ever-growing private sector initiatives.
- In partnership with the UNDP Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme, the World Heritage Centre continues its long-standing efforts to engage local communities in stewardship of World Heritage through the Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation (COMPACT) initiative<sup>3</sup>, with current projects underway to implement COMPACT at W National Park (Niger) and Maloti-Drakensberg Park (Lesotho/South Africa).
- A regional training workshop to strengthen the role of local communities in the management and conservation of World Heritage sites in the Arab States, at Banc d’Arguin National Park (PNBA) organised by the World Heritage Centre in Mauritania (27-29 March 2016). Based on the WH-SDP, the workshop focussed on strengthening the participation of local communities in the management, promotion and protection of cultural and natural properties in a sustainable development perspective, and the reinforcement measures to increase the economic benefits of local communities.
- The World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the International Committee of Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System, in launching in mid-2016 a two-year trans-national project entitled “Support to the reinforcement of the participative management structure of the Qhapaq Ñan, Andean Road System” involving six States Parties of the 1972 *Convention* (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru), which foresees sustainable and community-based tourism activities, and the elaboration of policies and operational activities that support the social and economic development of local communities.
- The implementation since May 2014 of the Project entitled ‘World Heritage, Sustainable Development and Community Involvement’ with initiatives in Bangladesh and Pakistan to revitalise income-generating crafts in local communities through activities related to World Heritage conservation within two World Heritage properties: the ‘Ruins of the Buddhist Vihara at Paharpur’ (Bangladesh) and the ‘Historical Monuments at Makli, Thatta’ (Pakistan). The project, which is implemented in co-operation with the Sindh government and the Heritage Foundation in Pakistan, includes the development of local capacities in conservation techniques, and income generation for the communities of ceramic artisans living in and around the property and targets some of the most underprivileged members of the society.
- “The second phase of the Pilot Upstream process “Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region” (Albania / former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), launched in September 2014 in support to the extension of this mixed World Heritage property located in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the Albanian part of the Lake Ohrid region, integrates a sustainable development perspective in all project activities, in particular with regards to the establishment of an integrated and collaborative management

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<sup>3</sup> For details, see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/40/>

system for the entire Lake Ohrid region. A Draft Strategy Document for Sustainable Development opportunities for the Albanian part of the Lake Ohrid region has been elaborated taking into account the WH-SDP, through a wide consultation process among the local, regional and national stakeholders.

### **Contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

17. The World Heritage Centre, through the World Heritage Cities Thematic Programme, takes parts in UNESCO's contribution to support Members States' implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: "Make Cities and Human Settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable". In this framework, the UNESCO Global Report on Culture and Sustainable Urban Development, which will be presented to Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), in October 2016 (Quito, Ecuador), is intended as a contribution to the common UN action towards the development of the New Urban Agenda and the implementation of SDG 11.
18. The Report will allow, for the first time, consolidate strategic analyses of the situations, trends, threats and existing opportunities in the different regional contexts in view of fostering the role of culture for sustainable urban development; it will propose a reflection and recommendation on managing change in cities, building on the role of cultural heritage as a lever for sustainable development, with the aim to support communities, planners and legislators involved in conservation policies and heritage focused urban development.
19. ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN have all been actively involved in the consultations that led to the adoption of SDGs in relation to their overall programmes and not only, or principally, related to World Heritage. In the case of IUCN, the relevant position papers are included on its website<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup>[http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/global\\_policy/gpu\\_our\\_work/sustainable\\_development\\_goals/](http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/global_policy/gpu_our_work/sustainable_development_goals/)

### III. DRAFT DECISION

#### **Draft Decision: 40 COM 5C**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/16/40.COM/5C,
2. Recalling Decisions **36 COM 5C**, **38 COM 5D**, and **39 COM 5D**, adopted respectively at its 36th (Saint Petersburg, 2012), 38th (Doha, 2014) and 39th (Bonn, 2015) sessions, as well as Resolution **20 GA 13**, adopted by the General Assembly at its 20th session (UNESCO, 2015),
3. Welcomes the adoption of the “Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention” by the 20th General Assembly of States Parties (UNESCO, 2015);
4. Reiterates the need to achieve appropriate balance and integration between the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives;
5. Takes note of the follow-up activities and the progress made by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies in disseminating and mainstreaming the policy into operational activities, as requested by Decision **39 COM 5D** and Resolution **20 GA 13**;
6. Also takes note of the active participation of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies in supporting Members States in the implementation of SDG 11 and Target 11.4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and of the further work anticipated on developing indicators in this regard;
7. Calls upon States Parties to ensure that sustainable development principles are mainstreamed into their national processes related to World Heritage, in full respect of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties;
8. Decides to inscribe an agenda item concerning World Heritage and Sustainable Development at its 41st session in 2017 and requests the World Heritage Centre to present a progress report in this regard.