



General Conference

39th Session, Paris, 2017

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
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منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

Report

39 C/REP/19

8 August 2017

English and French only

REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE ON ITS ACTIVITIES

OUTLINE

Source: Article 29.3 of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage stipulates that “the Committee shall submit a report on its activities at each of the ordinary sessions of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization”.

Background: The Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the World Heritage Committee) was established under Article 8 of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference at its 17th session on 16 November 1972.

Purpose: This document presents the report concerning the main activities and Decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 20th session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention held from 18 to 20 November 2015. This document is a summary of Document WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A that was presented to the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee (Krakow, July 2017) and updated accordingly after the session and that is available at the following address:
<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>



Introduction

1. This document is intended to provide the UNESCO General Conference with information regarding the main activities and decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee since the 20th General Assembly of States Parties (18-20 November 2015) in the implementation of the *Convention*. The main activities and decisions of the World Heritage Committee have been grouped according to its Strategic Objectives.

II. Information on statutory meetings

Current number of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*

2. As of May 2017, there are 193 States Parties to the *Convention*¹. Since the 20th General Assembly in 2015, South Sudan and Timor-Leste have ratified the *Convention*.

Current members of the World Heritage Committee

3. **21 members:** Angola, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Cuba, Finland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Tunisia, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Zimbabwe.

4. Terms of office are: until the **end of the 39th session of the General Conference (2017):** Croatia, Finland, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Turkey, Viet Nam. Until the **end of the 40th session of the General Conference (2019):** Angola, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Cuba, Indonesia, Kuwait, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe.

Composition of the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee since July 2015

5. 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2015-July 2016), Chairperson H.E Ambassador Ms Lale Ülker (Turkey), Vice-Chairpersons Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland, United Republic of Tanzania and Ms Eugene Jo (Republic of Korea) as Rapporteur.

6. 41st session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2015-July 2016), Chairperson: Professor Jacek PURCHLA (Poland), Vice-Chairpersons: Angola, Kuwait, Portugal, Peru, Republic of Korea and Mr Muhammad Juma (United Republic of Tanzania) as Rapporteur.

7. 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee (July 2017-July 2018). The Committee at its 41st session decided to hold its 12th Extraordinary session during the 21st session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in November 2017 and also decided to prolong the mandate of its Bureau (composition indicated in para. 5 above) until its 12th Extraordinary session.

8. For the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Istanbul/UNESCO, July/October 2016) 32 working documents and 15 information documents (WHC/16/40.COM) were prepared.

9. For the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee (Krakow, July 2017) 32 Working and 15 INF documents (WHC/17/41.COM) were prepared.

10. In total, 94 documents were prepared, out of which 64 working documents and 30 Information documents.

¹ The list of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* is available at the following web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/>

III. Information related to the Implementation of Strategic Objectives

(a) Strengthening the credibility of the World Heritage List

11. Since the 20th General Assembly (2015), 42 properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List. Twenty-one properties (12 cultural, six natural and three mixed) were inscribed during the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 21 properties (18 cultural, three natural) were inscribed at the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee (Krakow, 2017). The detailed breakdown by region and categories can be found in document WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A.Rev (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>)

12. The total number of properties on the World Heritage List as of July 2017 is 1073 (832 cultural, 206 natural and 35 mixed).² These properties are located in 167 States Parties (i.e. 26 States Parties have no property inscribed on the World Heritage List). One hundred and seventy-six States Parties have submitted Tentative Lists of properties they may decide to nominate in future years.

13. The total number of properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger as of July 2017 is 54 (38 cultural and 16 natural).³

14. At the 40th and the 41st sessions of the World Heritage Committee, 86% (12 out of 14) and 87% (14 out of 16) of the Advisory Bodies recommendations for referral, deferral and non-inscription of nominations to be examined by the Committee at the respective sessions have not been taken into consideration by the Committee. For example, at the 41st session one site recommended for referral and seven sites recommended for deferral were inscribed, one site recommended for deferral was referred, four sites recommended for non-inscription (i.e. with no Outstanding Universal Value identified) became “referrals” and one site recommended for non-inscription became a “deferral”. For the purpose of these statistics, nominations recommended by the Advisory Bodies for inscription (13 out of the 27 nominations examined) are not included, as it is assumed that the Committee inscribes all sites which are recommended for inscription by the Advisory Bodies.

15. In addition, International, inter-regional and regional meetings as well as workshops have been organized for the implementation of the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List. Details of all these activities are available in Document WHC/17/41.COM/5A (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/157720>)

(b) Ensuring the effective conservation of World Heritage properties

State of conservation reports of World Heritage properties examined by the Committee since the 20th General Assembly (2015)

16. A total of **156** State of conservation reports, including **48** reports of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, were examined during the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016). A total of **154** State of conservation reports, including **55** reports of properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, were examined during the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee (Krakow, 2017). The detailed breakdown by region can be found in Document WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A.Rev (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>)

Approved International Assistance (IA) from the World Heritage Fund since the 20th General Assembly (2015)

17. A total amount of US \$769,677 has been approved since 2015. Detailed breakdown by region can be found in Document WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A.Rev (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>)

² The World Heritage List is available on the web at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

³ The list of World Heritage in Danger is available on the web at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/danger/>

Periodic reporting

18. Progress reports on the Periodic Reporting Reflection (2015-2017), and the follow-up reports to the second cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise for all regions were presented to both the 40th session (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and the 41st session (Krakow, 2017) of the World Heritage Committee.

Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism

18. As per Decision **31 COM 5.2**, the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism is a constant cooperative process with the State Party concerned. At its 40th session (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 41st session (Krakow, 2017), the Committee decided to continue to apply the Reinforced Monitoring Mechanism to 11 properties. The list of these properties can be found in Document WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A.Rev (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>)

(c) Promoting the development of effective capacity-building in States Parties

Capacity-building strategy

19. Over the past biennium, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in close cooperation with States Parties and category 2 centres, have undertaken a number of activities which contributed directly to the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy, adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session (Paris, 2011). These included programmes aimed at strengthening regional and national institutions responsible for heritage protection, training initiatives targeting professionals and youth and the development of new guidance materials.

Education activities

20. A number of international and regional World Heritage Youth Fora were organized by the World Heritage Centre or with the Centre's assistance to develop educational activities, including by the host countries of the last two sessions of the Committee (Turkey and Poland).

21. The World Heritage Volunteers 2016 and 2017 campaigns carried out numerous camps on several World Heritage properties and sites on the Tentative Lists around the world involving a large participation of local organizations and mobilizing youth.

22. A detailed inventory of the activities mentioned above and others education activities can be found in documents WHC-16/40.COM/5A (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/141690>), WHC/17/41.COM/5A (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/157720>) and WHC/17/41.COM/INF.5A.Rev (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/159618>)

(d) Increasing public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through communication

Awareness-raising

23. In 2016, the World Heritage website (<http://whc.unesco.org>) received an average of 36,446 visits per day. Traffic to the World Heritage website has increased by 5%, from 12,623,553 visits in 2014 to 13,339,480 in 2016. The visits to the World Heritage website represent 40% of the total visits to the UNESCO webpage, demonstrating high global interest in World Heritage.

24. Five e-newsletters "World Heritage Information" were sent in 2016 and 2017 in French and English to 21,600 World Heritage Centre website subscribers.

25. Articles and interviews on World Heritage have been published in response to requests by numerous national and international well-known media.

Publications

26. Between 2015 and 2017, 170,000 **World Heritage Maps** were produced and disseminated in English, French and Spanish in partnership with Turkey and Poland as well as National Geographic.

27. Five new publications were issued in the **World Heritage Papers Series** (Nos. 41 to 45). Details on these publications can be found at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/>

28. Six issues of the quarterly magazine **World Heritage** (issues 78 to 83) were published between February 2016 and April 2017. The Review exists also as an i-app for iPad, Android and Kindle Fire tablets.

29. The **World Heritage Resource Manual Series** continues with translations in Arabic, Portuguese, Polish, Chinese and German in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies. Translations have been supported by the National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), Brazil, the National Heritage Board of Poland, ICOMOS China, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of China, the China State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the German National Commission for UNESCO, ICCROM-ATHAR, and the category 2 centres in Bahrein (ARC-WH) and Brazil (Centro Lúcio Costa).

Bilateral Agreements with States Parties and Partnerships

30. In 2016-2017, bilateral agreements were concluded or continued with 17 States Parties and the European Commission.

31. In the period 2015-2017, the World Heritage Centre has established and/or extended **17 partnerships with private sector companies, foundations, and NGOs**, all of which are managed in close consultation with UNESCO's Bureau of Strategic Planning (BSP). Inventories of on-going and envisaged partnerships with the private sector and foundations were presented to the Committee in documents WHC-16/40.COM/5A (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/141690>) and WHC-17/41.COM/5A (<http://whc.unesco.org/document/157720>)