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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

Forty-third session

Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan

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

9A. Upstream Process

SUMMARY

Further to Decision **42 COM 9A**, this document presents a report on the implementation of the Upstream Process requests, including the pilot projects, since the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee. It also includes the list of Upstream Process requests received by the 31 March 2019 deadline.

Draft Decision: 43 COM 9A, see Point IV.

I. BACKGROUND

1. At its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), the World Heritage Committee launched a process of reflection on the future of the *World Heritage Convention*. In this framework, the Committee, aware of the challenges that exist in the process for nominating a site to the World Heritage List, proposed an initiative entitled Upstream Processes. The aim was to find options for improving and strengthening the current nomination process.
2. In 2010, by Decision **34 COM 13**, the World Heritage Committee 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”. The UNESCO Electoral Groups subsequently selected two pilot projects per region, except Group I – Western Europe and North America – which refrained from making any proposal.
3. In 2011, by Decision **35 COM 12C**, the World Heritage Committee welcomed “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 took note “of the pilot projects that have been chosen to implement this experimental approach”. Following Decision **40 COM 9A**, the experimental phase of this process could be considered concluded. In this regard, and out of the 10 pilot projects originally selected, 3 eventually resulted in an inscription on the World Heritage List: South Namib Erg (Namibia), Rock Drawings in the Hail region (Saudi Arabia) and Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Fray Bentos (Uruguay); 2 were phased out: Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) and Gadara (Modern Um Qeis or Qays) (Jordan); and 5 were reported as advancing at a different pace. This document details project by project the progress made concerning the latter since the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee (Manama, 2018).
4. It is important to emphasize that the application of the Upstream Process approach does not imply that a site concerned would ultimately be inscribed on the World Heritage List. The main aim of the Upstream Process is to reduce the number of sites that experience significant problems during the nomination process, and to avoid significant investment in financial and human resources where the proposed sites do not demonstrate potential for justifying Outstanding Universal Value, and, where appropriate, to guide such sites to alternative means of international recognition.
5. In 2015, at its 39th session, the World Heritage Committee included the Upstream Process in the text of the *Operational Guidelines*, thereby recognizing that the Upstream Process had extended far beyond the pilot projects and had become a mainstream process considered beneficial to many States Parties.
6. At its 41st session (Krakow, 2017), the Committee adopted Decision **41 COM 9A** which could be considered as a turning point in the establishment of the Upstream Process as a statutory procedure. Through this decision, the Committee addressed several fundamental issues from a procedural point of view, including the adoption of the Upstream Process request format. As a means of ensuring a fairer and more equitable use of the human and financial resources available while respecting the priorities that have been set by the Committee, it also established a timeline for receiving requests for upstream advice, to be sent to the World Heritage Centre, with two deadlines per year:

31 March and 31 October. In the same decision the Committee decided to give priority to requests for the preparation or revision of Tentative Lists, to Least Developed Countries, Low-Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States, followed by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the *Operational Guidelines*. Finally, recognizing the limited available capacity, including time and resources, of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and on the basis of the experience acquired so far in providing upstream advice, the Committee decided that, on a trial basis, a maximum of 10 new Upstream Process requests would be processed per year.

7. In 2018, the Committee, in its Decision **42 COM 9A**, approved a revised definition of the Upstream Process proposed by the Ad-Hoc Working Group and requested the Secretariat to integrate it in the *Operational Guidelines* in the framework of their revision at the 43rd session in 2019.
8. Following Decisions **41 COM 9A** and **42 COM 9A**, the Secretariat integrated the revised definition of the Upstream Process, as well the Upstream Process request format (new Annex 15 of the *Operational Guidelines*), in the revised *Operational Guidelines* (Document WHC/19/43.COM/11A).
9. It is noteworthy that, in the context of the online consultation survey on the reflection concerning the nomination process launched by the Secretariat between November and December 2018 (see Annex 1 of Document WHC/19/43.COM/8), the replies showed that the reflection should look at the nomination process in a holistic way while clearly indicating that the Upstream Process is one of the most relevant areas on which the reform should focus and is overwhelmingly believed to be a valuable tool towards achieving the goals of the Global Strategy.

II. PROGRESS MADE ON THE UPSTREAM PROCESS REQUESTS

A. Selected Pilot Projects

10. Pilot project on **Ancient Kano City Walls and Associated Sites**, Nigeria
Because of the persisting situation of insecurity in the region, no progress has been reported since the last session of the Committee.
11. Pilot Project on the **Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes**, Philippines
No further progress has been reported since the last session of the Committee.
12. Pilot project on **Coral Stone Mosques of the Maldives**, Maldives
The 3rd phase of the International Assistance Request was submitted by the State Party of the Maldives on 27 November 2018 for inclusion in the 2019 cycle. The International Assistance Panel of 6 February 2019 recommended that the request be revised and resubmitted for a future cycle (e.g. in 2020) in order to: (a) review the methodology, especially by entrusting the preparation of the file to a national expert, with support from an international expert who is not an ICOMOS expert; (b) extend the timeframe for research and documentation; (c) delineate boundaries for component sites and buffer zones; (d) devise ways of protecting the setting of sites; (e) carry out research into appropriate conservation approaches, and (f) identify resources to allow this work to be undertaken for the development of the nomination dossier and management plan.
13. Pilot project on the **Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region**, Albania and North Macedonia
Following the submission in February 2018 of the nomination file for the extension of the existing mixed World Heritage property "Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid

region” (North Macedonia), the final project activities have concluded in June 2018. The closure activities mainly supported (a) profiling the transboundary area and (b) the finalization of the waste awareness campaign. These activities ensured the achievement of all expected project outputs. The Pilot Project has effectively reached its expected results and the final narrative and financial reports have been shared with the donor. A presentation of the project results to the donor and beneficiaries, including a discussion on a potential phase two, is foreseen in June 2019 (more detailed information: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/lake-ohrid-region>). This pilot project can now be considered concluded.

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

The final international experts’ report on the activities carried out under the Upstream Process was provided in November 2017, following a workshop led by international experts, a field visit, a tutored research and consultations on the update of national inventories. The two State Parties are now working on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report, in the framework of their own joint activities in the field of heritage.

B. Requests received by the 31 March 2018 deadline

15. By Decision **41 COM 9A** the Committee outlined several modalities and procedures concerning the Upstream Process, related more specifically to requests for support, such as establishment of a format and deadline for submission of requests, number of requests to be processed on an annual basis, prioritization etc. 16 Upstream Process requests were received by the first deadline (31 March 2018) and were presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018). Unlike the nomination process which is regulated by a set of well-defined procedures, modalities and formats, this is not yet the case for the Upstream Process, due to the fact that it is a relatively new process, is applied on a voluntary basis and may concern different hypotheses, depending on the requirements and expectations of the respective States Parties, availability and type of financing etc. Therefore, after the selection of requests is endorsed by the Committee, the way support will be delivered may differ from one case to another. The mechanisms and modalities of responses to requests will certainly have to be refined and improved in the forthcoming years, based on practice and the lessons learnt. The Advisory Bodies fully support the importance of strengthening the Upstream Process to bring forward high quality nominations and are making every effort to service the increasing demand for upstream support.

16. The requests received in 2018 have progressed in different ways. For some requests, support has been given and their implementation is well advanced. The request of Peru concerning the revision of its Tentative List is one of these cases. In the framework of the overall methodology for the preparation and/or revision of a Tentative List developed by the Advisory Bodies together with the World Heritage Centre, and with funds received from the International Assistance, a workshop took place in Lima in December 2018 with the participation of ICOMOS and IUCN experts. The State Party is now implementing the next steps, namely work on the elaboration of the Tentative List by the national technical team, before its subsequent validation by the relevant stakeholders and final submission to the World Heritage Centre. The request of Honduras concerning the establishment of a Tentative List is also under implementation with similar modalities as the request of Peru. A workshop is foreseen to take place in August 2019.

17. For all other requests, the Advisory Bodies have already assessed the scope of support requested in terms of expertise, desk studies and/or site visits, workshops etc. The

budget proposals for these requests are being finalized and most of the respective States Parties have been contacted by the Advisory Bodies.

18. Finally, the assessment of the scope and budget for responses to requests with a lower level of priority is still in a preliminary phase. It is to be recalled that at the 42nd session it was agreed, exceptionally, that the 6 requests beyond the threshold of 10, will also be processed, but with a lower level of priority, i.e. once the priority ones have been addressed.
19. It is important to note that the definition of the Upstream Process, as approved by the Committee in its Decision **42 COM 9A**, states that "... the "Upstream Process" comprises advice, consultation and analysis that occurs prior to the preparation of a nomination and...". Therefore, once a draft or an official nomination dossier for a site is submitted by a State Party, the Upstream Process request for this site is automatically cancelled. This is the case for the request of Brazil concerning the *Lençóis Maranhenses* National Park, for which a draft was received in October 2018, followed by the official nomination file on 2 January 2019 (see Document WHC/19/43.COM/INF.8B3). It also applies to the request of the Dominican Republic with regard to the nomination of the Historical and Archaeological Site of La Isabela, for which a draft was received in September 2018, followed by the official nomination file on 1 February 2019 (see Document WHC/19/43.COM/INF.8B3).

III. NEW UPSTREAM PROCESS REQUESTS RECEIVED

20. As the number of requests received by the 31 March 2018 deadline had exceeded the cap of 10 new Upstream Process requests per year set in Decision **41 COM 9A** and due to the limited available capacity of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, the Committee, at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018), decided to only retain the 31 March 2019 deadline for receiving upstream requests (Decision **42 COM 9A**).
21. By the 31 March 2019 deadline, the World Heritage Centre received 24 new Upstream Process requests (see Annex I of this document). In terms of regional breakdown, 7 of these requests are from Europe and North America, 6 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 6 from Asia-Pacific, 4 from Africa and 1 from the Arab States region. As to the criteria of eligibility for receiving financial support, 7 requests are from Least Developed Countries, 1 from a Lower Middle Income Country, 10 from Upper Middle Income Countries and 6 from High Income Countries. Three of the requests are from Small Island Developing States.
22. The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies would like to note with satisfaction that fifteen (62.5%) of the new requests concern the revision of Tentative Lists. This number shows that States Parties are effectively undertaking the Upstream Process, by seeking advice from the earliest stage in the nomination process. It is also positive, in the light of the Global Strategy, that the list of requests includes 7 States Parties with up to three properties on the World Heritage List.
23. On the basis of the combination of all criteria outlined above, the World Heritage Centre established a list, in order of priority. Despite the fact that the number of requests received exceeds the cap of 10 new Upstream Process requests per year set in Decision **41 COM 9A**, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies agreed once again to make an effort in trying to accommodate all of the requests within the limits of time and resources at least in screening requests and advising on appropriate approaches and

methodologies. Also, given the number of requests received, it is suggested to set the next deadline for receiving Upstream Process requests at 31 March 2020.

24. A special budget line in the World Heritage Fund dedicated to financing Upstream Process requests is proposed for the 2020-2021 biennium. Its amount is US\$ 100,000 (see Document WHC/19/43.COM/14).
25. It is to be noted that, in accordance with the established standard procedure of the Advisory Bodies, the advice to be provided in the framework of each Upstream Process request is reviewed and endorsed by the respective Advisory Bodies' Panels. Therefore, this entails a slightly longer timeline, depending on the Panel schedule.
26. Moreover, the Upstream Process should also be used as a longer-term opportunity for States Parties to build capacity and provide on the job training for heritage experts, site managers and professionals in the field of conservation. In this regard, the work of the programme on nominations in Africa, implemented by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) in partnership with the Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre, should be noted, in particular the courses on the preparation of nominations, gathering professionals of the region. Provided that funds are made available, the Secretariat is exploring the possibility of organizing similar kind of courses in other regions and sub-regions where this activity may support the needs of States Parties.

IV. DRAFT DECISION

Draft Decision: 43 COM 9A

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/9A,*
2. *Recalling Decisions 34 COM 13.III, 35 COM 12C, 36 COM 12C, 37 COM 9, 38 COM 9A, 39 COM 11, 40 COM 9A, 41 COM 9A and 42 COM 9A, adopted at its 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011), 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012), 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016), 41st (Krakow, 2017) and 42nd (Manama, 2018) sessions respectively,*
3. *Also recalling the integration of the Upstream Process in Paragraphs 71 and 122 of the Operational Guidelines,*
4. *Reiterates that, in order to be most effective, upstream support should take place at an early stage, preferably at the moment of preparation or revision of States Parties' Tentative Lists;*
5. *Welcomes the advice, consultation and analysis undertaken to improve processes and practices prior to the development of nominations for consideration by the World Heritage Committee, commends the States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for the pilot projects that registered progress and takes note of the conclusion of the pilot project on the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region, Albania and North Macedonia;*
6. *Also takes note of the progress made regarding the 2018 Upstream Process requests;*
7. *Further takes note of the Upstream Process requests received by the 31 March 2019 deadline and also commends the States Parties for having submitted these requests;*

8. *Recognizing the limited available capacity, including time and resources, of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and on the basis of the experience acquired so far in providing upstream support, takes note furthermore of the willingness of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to process all requests received in the best timely manner possible and, given that the number of requests received exceeds the set up cap of ten new Upstream Process requests per year, and decides to set the next deadline for receiving Upstream Process requests and to review and prioritize them at 31 March 2020;*
9. *Bearing in mind that the Upstream Process is an activity which is not fully budgeted, invites States Parties to consider financially contributing to the implementation of requests received from Least Developed Countries, Low-Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States;*
10. *Requests the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, to present a progress report on the remaining pilot projects as well as on the support offered to Upstream Process requests received, for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 44th session in 2020.*

List of Upstream Process requests received by 31 March 2019

24 Upstream Process requests were received following the requested format and are presented here in the order of priority. The prioritization was made on the basis of Decision **41 COM 9A**, paragraphs 11 and 12:

11. Also decides that the Upstream Process requests will be reviewed and prioritized twice a year with deadlines for submission to the World Heritage Centre on 31 March and 31 October through giving priority for preparation or revision of Tentative Lists, to Least Developed Countries, Low-Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States, followed by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the Operational Guidelines;
12. In order to ensure a fairer and more equitable use of the resources available, whether in terms of funding or in terms of staff, further decides to apply the prioritization system established by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the Operational Guidelines in conjunction with the criteria of eligibility for receiving financial support for the provision of upstream advice;

Region	State Party	Type of economy	C / N	TL / NOM	Request complete as of 31/03/2019	Type of activity / site
AFR	Guinea	LDC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
AFR	Togo	LDC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
APA	Cambodia	LDC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
APA	Lao People's Democratic Republic	LDC	C/N	TL	YES	Inclusion of "Tropical forest of the Annamite Montains" and "Menhirs of San Kong Phan"
APA	Nepal	LDC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
AFR	Nigeria	LMIC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
LAC	Jamaica	UMIC+ SIDS	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
LAC	St. Kitts and Nevis	HIC + SIDS	C	TL	YES	Revision
EUR/NA	Armenia	UMIC	C/N	TL + NOM	YES	Revision of TL + nominations of Zorats Karer, Metsamor, The Areni Cave, Ughtasar Petroglyphs and Yerevan Brandy Company "Ararat"
LAC	Colombia	UMIC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
EUR/NA	Serbia	UMIC	C	TL	YES	Revision of 3 sites already on the TL since 2010: Smederevo Fortress,

						Fortified Manasija Monastery and Negotinske Pivnice
ARB	Jordan	UMIC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
EUR/NA	Malta	HIC	C/N	TL	YES	Revision
APA	Republic of Korea	HIC	C	TL	YES	Inclusion of the Properties of Catholicism in the Naepo Region in Chungchengnam-do
AFR	Mali	LDC	C	NOM	YES	Sites historiques et Paysages Culturels du Manden (<i>on TL since 2018</i>)
APA	Nepal	LDC	C	NOM	YES	Tilaurakot, ancient Kapilavastu (<i>on TL since 1996</i>)
EUR/NA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	UMIC	N	NOM	YES	Vjetrenica Cave (<i>on TL since 2004</i>)
APA	Thailand	UMIC	C	NOM	YES	Songkhla Old Town: Multicultural Settlements on Indo-Pacific Landbridge (not on the TL)
EUR/NA	Germany and United States of America	HIC	C	NOM	YES	Moravian Church Settlements [as an extension to Christiansfeld, a Moravian Church Settlement (Denmark)] (<i>on the TL of the USA since 2017, not on the TL of Germany</i>)
EUR/NA	Germany	HIC	C	NOM	YES	The Heritage of Transporter Bridges (<i>not on TL</i>)
EUR/NA	Austria	HIC	C	NOM	YES	Otto Wagner Hospital Steinhof Vienna (<i>not on TL</i>)
LAC	Brazil	UMIC	N	NOM	YES	National Park of Lençois Maranhenses (<i>on TL since 2017</i>)
LAC	Mexico	UMIC	C	NOM	YES	Franciscan Ensemble of the Monastery and Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption, Tlaxcala (as an extension and renomination of the Earliest 16th-Century Monasteries on the Slopes of Popocatepetl) (<i>on TL since 2018</i>)
LAC	Grenada and St. Vincent & The Grenadines	UMIC+ SIDS	N	NOM	NO	Grenadine Island Chain (<i>on TL since 2013</i>)

C = cultural heritage N = natural heritage TL = Tentative List NOM = nomination file	AFR = Africa APA = Asia-Pacific ARB = Arab States EUR/NA = Europe & North America LAC = Latin America & the Caribbean	LDC = Least Developed Country LIE = Low Income Economy LMIC = Lower Middle Income Country SIDS = Small Island Developing State UMIC = Upper Middle Income Country HIC = High Income Country
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