Evolution of decision-making procedures of the World Heritage Convention

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Expert Meeting on decision-making procedures of the World Heritage Convention
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This presentation

- Statutory organs
- Overview of previous reforms
- Evolution of specific Issues:
  - 1. Strategic direction and accountability
  - 2. Strategic policy issues
  - 3. Cycle of meetings
  - 4. Preparatory discussions: sub-committees
  - 5. Venue of meetings
  - 6. Order and time-limit of speakers
  - 7. Participation by natural/cultural heritage experts
  - 8. Rate of examination of new nominations
  - 9. Documentation
World Heritage Convention (1972)

General Assembly of States Parties
World Heritage Committee

Implementation

ICROM
ICOMOS
IUCN

UNESCO
World Heritage Centre
Statutory Organs

General Assembly of States Parties
187 members

World Heritage Committee
21 members

ICCCROM
ICOMOS
IUCN

UNESCO
World Heritage Centre
### Previous Reforms of decision-making processes

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<td><strong>1979 Michel Parent report on Principles and Criteria for inclusion on the World Heritage List</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Operational Guidelines modified 5 times</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1992: Strategic Orientations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1992: Cultural Landscapes concept</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1994: Global Strategy for representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1996-1997: Audit</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1999-2000: Implementation Task Force</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1999-2000: Working Group on representativity</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1999-2005: New Operational Guidelines</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2002: Budapest Declaration</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2006-2007: Audit</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2008- present: Future of the Convention</strong></td>
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1. Strategic Direction and Accountability

• 1992: Strategic Goals and Objectives
• 1996: Centre proposed strategic review
• 1999-2000: Implementation Task Force
• 2002: Budapest Declaration

Q: recommend development of Strategic Direction and Accountability Framework?
Q: which statutory organ is responsible?
2. Strategic Policy Issues

• 1997: Audit « raise level of debate to policy issues »
• 2000: Implementation TF and 2 Bureaus « ensure adequate time for strategic policy discussions ».
  • Note: Cairns (2000) Committee is silent
• 2007: Christchurch session lists issues in need of policy discussion and recommends agenda of General Assembly of States Parties
• 2008: Quebec session opens « Trends in conservation »

Q: what is best way to discuss strategic policy issues?
Q: which statutory organ is accountable?
3. Cycle of meetings

- 1977-2000:
  - spring Bureau; fall/winter Bureau and Committee
- 1997 Audit: raises time issue and suggests biennial meetings
- 2000-2001:
  - cancels one Bureau and limits role of other Bureau (implementation Budapest (2002))
  - approves new cycle spring Bureau and Committee session
  - unintended consequences

Q: does current cycle provides maximum efficiency and effectiveness for the Committee’s work?
Q: should some form of intermediary preparatory meeting be re-instated?
Q: Should the cycle be speeded up (two meetings a year) or slowed down (meetings every two-three years)?
4. Preparatory discussions: sub-committees

- 1992 Strategic Orientations: permanent working groups « to improve the functioning of the Committee » (monitoring, IA, budget, OG revisions)
- 1997 Audit: use sub-committee mechanism to facilitate efficiency; follow EB model
- 2000 Implementation Task Force: recommends sub-committees for time-management and substantive discussion at plenary
- 2001: Director WHC suggests using existing ad hoc bodies as per Rules of Procedure

Q: how could preparatory work be carried out to lighten the workload of the Committee?
Q: should formal working groups or sub-committees be established, on what subjects, and what timing?
5. Venue of meetings

- 1997 Audit:
  - meetings outside Paris costly
  - rotate every two years in conjunction with GASP
- 2000 Implementation TF:
  - rotate every two years in conjunction with GASP

Q: whether to recommend rotation of Committee meeting venues on basis of cost effectiveness
6. Order and time-limit of speakers

- 1980s-1990s: smaller number of participants
- 2000: time management a backdrop to reform agenda
- 2006: time limits introduced (timer and bell)
- Recent practice: repeated interventions by members and advocacy

Q: is there a need to formalize the order and time-limit of speakers?
Q: should States Parties respond to questions during discussions of their nominations or only once at the end, following specific questions formulated by Chair?
Q: should Observers have the right to speak?
7. Participation by natural/cultural experts at Committee

- Convention: article 9.3
- Shift over time
- Chart showing 75%-25%
- M’Bow quote

Q: whether there is a way to encourage greater substantive participation by cultural/natural heritage experts in Committee sessions
8. Rate of examination of new nominations

- 1978: 2 per SP
- 1988-1990s: « SPs to consider whether their cultural heritage is already well represented on the List and if so to slow down voluntarily”
- 1997: 58 nominations
- 1999: 70 nominations
- 2000: 80 nominations
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<td>TF (2000)</td>
<td>40 new nominations</td>
<td>45 new nominations</td>
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<td>1 per SP</td>
<td>2 per SP (1 natural)</td>
<td>2 per SP (without restriction)</td>
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<td>Plus referrals and deferrals</td>
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Q: is current ceiling manageable?
Q: is goal of equitable representation being met?
During nominations …
9. Consistency, volume and timeliness of documentation

- 1997 Audit: voluminous, duplication, confusing, needs streamlining
- 2000 Implementation TF: distribution 6 weeks prior to meeting
- Continuing issues:
  - consistency of language and content
  - timeliness
  - volume

Q: are there recommendations to improve consistency, volume and timeliness of documentation?
Conclusion

- Convention has mobilized a global movement

- Global heritage community counts on leadership of Committee to set standards and strategic direction for heritage conservation activities

- To be credible, Committee needs time to address the big-picture strategic questions

- To improve efficiency, effectiveness and transparency, Committee needs to resolve these long-standing issues
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www.patrimoinebati.umontreal.ca