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# World Heritage

# 35 COM

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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-fifth session

Paris, UNESCO Headquarters  
19-29 June 2011

**Item 7.1 of the Provisional Agenda: Recommendations of the International  
Expert Meeting on World Heritage and Buffer Zones**

## SUMMARY

An International Expert Meeting on World Heritage and Buffer Zones took place in Davos, Switzerland in 2008. The recommendations were presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008). The Committee requested only a partial implementation.

This document reiterates the main conclusions and recommendations of the meeting and the subsequent follow-up including the publication of the proceedings.

The Committee at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010) requested the inclusion of this item in the agenda at its 35th session.

**Draft Decision: 35 COM 7.1, see Point II.**

## **I. Report of the International Expert Meeting on World Heritage and Buffer Zones**

### **A Introduction**

1. The International Expert Meeting on World Heritage and Buffer Zones took place from 11 to 14 March 2008 in Davos, Switzerland, hosted by the Swiss authorities. The meeting was attended by 35 participants and experts from 16 countries, as well as by Representatives of IUCN, ICOMOS, ICCROM, the Ramsar Convention, and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

### **B. Results of the meeting**

2. The meeting made a number of specific recommendations and also recognised that buffer zones provide an important mechanism to share the benefits of World Heritage designation with local communities and stakeholders, and that this should attract greater emphasis.
3. The meeting recommended a number of follow-up actions to be taken, including:
  - Further definition of concepts and terms, including a lexicon of terms,
  - Capacity building,
  - Revisions to the text of the *Operational Guidelines*.

### **C. Decisions of the Committee**

4. The Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008) took note of the rich reflection based on case studies from World Heritage properties, background papers from the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, the Ramsar Convention Secretariat and the MAB programme. The full report of the meeting is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/32COM/documents/>.
5. The World Heritage Committee in its Decision **32 COM 7.1** requested the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to use the terms “property” and “buffer zone” in all documents, and to stop using the term “core zone”. It also requested the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to prepare draft revisions to the *Operational Guidelines*, taking account of the Committee’s debate on the results of the International Expert Meeting on World Heritage and Buffer Zones for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session in 2009.
6. The Committee at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009) requested the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies to develop a Glossary of Terms as well as proposed revisions to the *Operational Guidelines* (Decision **33 COM 7C**).

### **D. Follow-up**

7. The Swiss authorities together with the World Heritage Centre prepared the publication of the expert meeting in the World Heritage paper series as “World Heritage and Buffer Zones” (Number 25) which was broadly disseminated both in hardcopy and electronically. It is available at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/25/>; the publication also includes a preliminary glossary of terms.
8. Furthermore, suggestions and recommendations from the meeting were taken into account by the working group on the *Operational Guidelines*, which met during the 34th

session of the World Heritage Committee and continued with a meeting at UNESCO Headquarters in November 2010 (see WHC-11/35.COM/13).

9. The Committee at its 34th session (Brasilia, 2010) decided to include the item on the agenda of its 35th session.

## II. Draft Decision

### **Draft Decision 35 COM 7.1**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. Having examined Document WHC-11/35.COM/7.1,
2. Recalling Decisions **30 COM 9**, **32 COM 7.1**, **33 COM 7C** and **34 COM 19** adopted at its 30th (Vilnius, 2006), 32nd (Quebec City, 2008), 33rd (Seville, 2009) and 34th (Brasilia 2010) sessions respectively, and the provisions for buffer zones established in the *Operational Guidelines*;
3. Notes the progress made with the wide range of issues relevant to World Heritage and buffer zones including the publication on “World Heritage and Buffer Zones” (World Heritage Papers 25), and considerations within discussions on “World Heritage and sustainable development”;
4. Further notes that threats originating outside the World Heritage properties and beyond buffer zones may have adverse impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of properties and therefore encourages States Parties, together with the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, to take into account the recommendations of the « International Expert Meeting on Buffer zones » (Davos, Switzerland 2008) as provided in the detailed report of the meeting and its publication.