

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD
CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Twenty-fourth session

Cairns, Australia

27 November – 2 December 2000

Information Document: Synthesis Report of the Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean, Paramaribo, Suriname, 18-20 February 2000

SUMMARY

31 experts from the region and representatives from UNESCO, IUCN, Conservation International (CI) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), as well as 21 observers participated in the meeting, which was organized by the Suriname authorities.

The participants adopted recommendations concerning on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean and in the Guyana shield region which are contained in Annex IV of this document.

Action required: The Committee may wish to take note of the report and the recommendations.

Synthesis Report of the Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean, Paramaribo, Suriname, 18 – 20 February 2000

Introduction

The Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean (Suriname) was organized by the Ministry of Education and Community Development, in close co-operation with the UNESCO National Commission, the UNESCO Regional Office (Kingston, Jamaica) and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre with financial support from the World Heritage Fund. 31 experts from the region and representatives from UNESCO, IUCN, Conservation International (CI) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), as well as 21 observers participated in the meeting (see programme and list of participants in ANNEXES I and II).

The seminar started with a *field trip to Brownsberg Nature Park* (1969) located in the Brokopondo District, 130km south of Paramaribo. The Park covers an area of 8,400 ha, which was obtained by the Foundation for Nature Preservation in Suriname (STINASU) from the Government in long-term lease. The Park is the northern out-posts for several plant and animal species. It is covered with Neotropical Rainforest and houses a wide variety of bird species and primates. More than 1,450 plant species have been collected, 138 plant species of Brownsberg showed to be rare, and 12 are endemic to the Park. The participants enjoyed the view over the Brokopondo Lake and the hike to the Leo Falls. They visited some old gold mine pits and noted that the area was formerly also used for balata bleeding.

Mr Mangal, (Minister of Education and Community Development), welcomed the participants, and underlined the importance of World Heritage to Suriname with one cultural and one natural World Heritage nomination being processed in the year 2000. He highlighted the links between nature and culture and invited the participants to a reception with a percussion group “Ala Kondre Dron Ensemble”, which represented different Surinamese cultural traditions (Amerindians, Maroons, **Javanese and Hindustani**).

Ms Strijdhartig-Culley (on behalf of *Minister Alibux of Natural Resources*) in opening the meeting, stressed the work being carried out in Suriname on the protection of nature reserves, in particular with the establishment of the Central Suriname Nature Reserve (CSNR), covering more than 10% of the country’s surface. She expressed her gratitude to a number of organizations and donors, mainly Conservation International, GEF, UNDP, UNF, WWF and UNEP and welcomed the IUCN evaluation of the CSNR being

undertaken during the week. She expressed her hope that the site be inscribed on UNESCO's prestigious World Heritage List.

Ms Rössler (UNESCO World Heritage Centre) highlighted the importance of the implementation of the Global Strategy for a balanced and representative World Heritage List for the Caribbean Region, in particular with regard to natural heritage, as only three natural sites are currently on the World Heritage List (Belize Barrier-Reef Reserve System, Morne Trois Pitons National Park in Dominica, and Desembarco del Granma National Park in Cuba). Another objective is to raise the awareness and heighten the interest among the Caribbean countries for the conservation of their natural and cultural heritage of outstanding universal value. She thanked the Suriname authorities for having organized this seminar and expressed her hopes that it would be a starting point for international collaboration in heritage protection, using the unique framework of the World Heritage Convention.

Mr Bully (UNESCO Office Kingston, Jamaica) indicated the need for "Caribbeanizing the Convention", especially with regard to the major gaps and imbalances on the World Heritage List. At present there are only 12 World Heritage sites in the Caribbean; 3 of them are natural sites and 9 cultural sites which are distributed as follows: 4 in Cuba, and 1 each in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts and Nevis and Puerto Rico of United States. This meeting could contribute to a more representative World Heritage List with the identification of potential sites from the region, to create awareness among the national institutes for cultural and natural heritage in the region about the World Heritage Convention and to strengthen links and collaboration between experts and representatives from the region.

Mr Baal (Head of the Nature Conservation Division of the Forest Service) presented nature conservation efforts in Suriname, in particular with regard to the declaration of protected areas in the country, which cover nearly 12 % of the land surface. He introduced the different protection laws and described the existing Nature Parks and Reserves. A two-track policy on the involvement of local communities living in and around nature reserves has been developed, for short-term projects and for the long-term involvement in the management planning at each protected area.

Mr Christian (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Dominica) explained the nature conservation policy of his country and that the first ideas of nominating the Morne Trois Pitons National Park date back to 1980. He highlighted the importance to involve the tourism industry and his experience with the World Tourism Council. A memorandum of understanding was also signed with Green Globe. He expressed his satisfaction with the inscription in 1997 of Morne Trois Pitons National Park as the first natural site in the Eastern Caribbean, which contributed to national pride about Dominica's heritage.

Ms Bain (Caribbean Conservation Association, Barbados) expressed her regrets via fax for not being able to attend the meeting and noted that the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) remains the oldest regional organization dedicated to the preservation

and protection of the environment and the conservation of cultural heritage. She indicated her interest in collaborating in the identification of potential World Heritage sites in the region and stressed the CCA support to UNESCO and possible future co-operation.

Ms Jarvis (UNESCO National Commission, Guyana) presented the potential World Heritage site of Kaieteur Falls. The falls are higher than the Niagara Falls and legislation was issued to enlarge the area nominated. The site contains unique plant associations and 30% of the plant taxa are endemic to the Guyana plateau region. The site has also a potential for ecotourism. A review of the cultural heritage of Guyana is currently being undertaken and a number of potential sites were identified which are included in the revised tentative list of the country.

Mr Malone (Conservation International) reviewed the “hotspots” project, which covers 60% of the world’s biodiversity in only 2% of the terrestrial ecosystems. The Guyana shield is among the interesting ecosystems as the core area of the shield includes unique features, such as the tepuis in Venezuela (already on the World Heritage List with Canaima National Park). The nominated site of the Central Suriname Nature Reserve is located in the Guyana shield and its protection is a major effort, involving multilateral and national agencies. A major achievement is the establishment of a Trust Fund as endowment fund with US\$ 18,5 million to manage the Reserve. Representatives from the NGOs, the Government, and the local communities including indigenous chiefs are involved in the management.

Mr Thorsell (IUCN) underlined that natural heritage legislations was passed in Tobago and St. Vincent as early as 1765, that however these two countries have not yet ratified the Convention. He referred to a study project of the European Union, which indicates 640 protected areas in the region in 1997. However, only a few sites, which are of outstanding universal value, can obtain World Heritage status. He presented the thematic studies carried out by IUCN, e.g. on wetlands and marine areas, forest protected areas and human use of World Heritage natural sites. Reviewing these and a number of publications (e.g. Putting Biodiversity on the Map, Priority Areas for Global Conservation) he presented a review of potential sites in the Caribbean region, which States Parties may wish to consider:

Suriname:	Central Suriname Nature Reserve
Guyana:	Roraima (extension of Canaima National Park) Kaieteur Falls
Cuba:	Alejandro de Humboldt National Park Zapata National Park Jardines de la Reina
Bahamas	Andros Islands/Barrier Reef
Jamaica:	Cockpit Blue Mountains

He underlined that such a review would not automatically lead to the inscription of a site, as a thorough evaluation is being carried out for each nomination as required in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. There are the following quality indicators for the IUCN assessment: distinctiveness, integrity, naturalness, dependency and diversity. In conclusion, he pointed out that small island states are difficult cases, as very few remote areas remain, which would comply with the World Heritage criteria; that the greatest possibilities lie in the marine environment and marine protected areas; that considering the history of human occupation of land and sea there may be a potential for the cultural landscape category and that States Parties be encouraged to develop national protected area systems within an overall heritage strategy.

Mr Hunfeld (STINASU) reviewed potential natural heritage sites in Suriname, which may be added to the tentative list. He presented the Galibi Reserve, crucial for the protection of marine turtles and their reproduction in the coastal zone, and the Sipaliwini Nature Reserve, an important Savanna Refuge, containing the Blue Poison Dart Frog, endemic to this forest area.

The participants discussed the identification of potential natural areas for the World Heritage List during a working group, reviewing in particular possible transboundary co-operation for both the Guyana shield and marine protected areas, the slow implementation of the Convention, possible partners for future collaboration and actions to be developed. The recommendations of the working group, as adopted by all participants are included in ANNEX IV of this report. The meeting also noted that a conference on Sustainable Tourism is to be organized by Conservation International in April 2000 focussing on the **Historic Inner City of Paramaribo, the Central Suriname Nature Reserve and the Upper Suriname River Basin.**

A small working group was held on the nomination of the Historic Inner City of Paramaribo, which was deferred by the twenty-third session of the World Heritage Bureau (July, 1999). The group focussed on the follow-up actions undertaken by the authorities to the recommendations by the Bureau.

Ms Rössler (UNESCO World Heritage Centre) presented with slides and case studies the development of the Global Strategy with regard to the cultural landscapes concept and the links between cultural and natural heritage, which may be important to the Caribbean region. Consideration of cultural values within natural areas should be given and taken into account in management planning processes. This could be particularly relevant with regard to living cultural landscapes and cultural traditions, e.g. the Amerindians in the Amazon.

Mr Healy (Suriname) illustrated a hundred years of Maroon architectural ornamentation and its close links between social structures, architecture and the environment. The roots of many traditions (weaving, games, paintings etc.) can be traced back to African coastal areas (e.g. Ghana). He made a plea for protecting such traditions within the concept of cultural landscapes and that consideration may be given to this concept by Government

authorities. Each of the ethnic groups in Suriname has preserved its culture, language identity, and religion.

Mr Sijlbing (Tourism Foundation Suriname) pointed out that “no park is an island” and that all protected areas are connected with their surroundings through ecological, economic and cultural links. Partnerships with local NGOs in a sustainable tourism development can be fruitful and attention should be given to social carrying capacities. Local communities could benefit from tourism through outsourced services, local products (‘agro-tourism’), and new potentials, such as cooking of tradition dishes, local medicine or language classes.

Mr Fokké (Ministry of Education and Community Development) on behalf of the organizers thanked the international and local participants for their contributions to the seminar.

The representatives of UNESCO, *Mr Bully*, *Ms Rössler* and *Mr Schulze*, thanked the organizers for their efforts and the Suriname Government for hosting the meeting. They confirmed that UNESCO would be at the disposal of all Governments and States Parties to the Convention to implement the recommendations. They assured the participants that the results of this Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean be disseminated widely. *Ms Jarvis* (Guyana), on behalf of the participants, thanked the authorities for having hosted the seminar in this region.

Mr Trustfull (Ministry of Education and Community Development) in closing the session underlined the importance of the recommendations of the meeting for his Government, in particular concerning awareness raising, involvement of local people and training. He reiterated his commitment to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Suriname.

ANNEX I

Programme of the Seminar

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTORATE OF CULTURE

van Rooseveltkade no. 3
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WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION
SEMINAR ON NATURAL WORLD HERITAGE IN THE CARIBBEAN
18 – 20 February 2000
PLAZA HOTEL- Domineestraat
Paramaribo - Suriname

FRI. 18 FEBRUARY 2000

07.00 - 18.00: Visit to the Brownsberg Natural Park

20.30 - 22.00: Reception by the Minister of Education & Cultural event

SAT. 19 FEBRUARY 2000

08.30 - 09.00: *REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS*

1. **OPENING SESSION:**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. John Pawiroredjo

09.00 - 09.10: Welcome by the Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. L.A.E. Alibux

09.15 - 09.30: The World Heritage Convention: Ms. Rossler, UNESCO World
Heritage Centre

09.30 - 09.45: Importance of the World Heritage Convention for the Caribbean,
Mr. Alwin Bully (Sub-regional Cultural Advisor UNESCO)

09.45 - 10.00: Natural Heritage in Suriname: Representative of the Ministry of
Natural Resources

10.00 – 10.30: Coffee break

2. WORKING SESSION:

Case studies on natural and potential natural World Heritage sites in the Caribbean

Chairperson: Mr. Alwin Bully

2.1 Natural World Heritage sites in the Caribbean: case studies and implications of World Heritage inscriptions

- 10.30 – 11.00: Belize Barrier Reef (site manager -UNDP project or Ms. Janet Gibson,Belize Coastal Zone Management Authority)
- 11.00 - 11.30: Morne Trois Pitons National Park (site manager: Mr. Arlington James)
- 11.30 - 12.00: Tourism potential at natural World Heritage sites: the case of Dominica (Colmore Christian)
- 12.00 - 13.00: Questions & discussion
- 13.00 - 14.00: Lunch

Chairperson: Mr. Ferdinand Baal

2.2 Identification of sites and preparation of nominations

- 14.00 - 14.30: World Heritage nominations from Cuba (Mr. Antonio Porera Puga, Director National Parks, Cuba)
- 14.30 - 15.00: Kaieteur Falls: a potential World Heritage site in Guyana (Mrs. Carmen Jarvis, Secretary-General of the Guyana National Commission for UNESCO)
- 15.00 - 15.30: the Central Suriname Nature Reserve (Conservation International-Suriname)
- 15.30 - 16.00: Coffee break

Chairperson: Mr. Ferdinand Baal

2.3 Potential World Heritage sites in the Caribbean

- 16.00 - 16.30: Potential marine sites in the Caribbean: International co-operation projects (National Park Service Washington or UNDP Belize)
- 16.30 - 17.00: Potential natural sites in the Caribbean (IUCN, Mr. Jim Thorsell)
- 17.00 - 17.30: Potential natural sites in Suriname (STINASU, Mr. Harrold Sijlbing)
- 17.30 - 18.30: Questions and discussion

SUN. 20 FEBRUARY 2000

09.00 - 09.30: *REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS*

3. WORKING SESSION: *on Nature and Culture*

Chairperson: Mr. Chris Healy

09.30 - 10.00: New perspectives in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (Ms. M. Rossler, UNESCO World Heritage Centre)
10.00 - 10.30: Vallee de Vinales: a potential World Heritage cultural landscape in Cuba (Mr. Antonio Perera Puga, Director National Parks, Cuba)
10.30 - 11.00: Coffee break
11.00 - 11.30: Linking Nature and Culture in Suriname (STINASU, Mr. Harrold Sijlbing)
11.30 - 12.30: Discussion
12.30 - 14.00: Lunch

4. Closing Session:

Chairperson: Mr. Stan Malone

14.00 – 15.00: Conclusion and recommendations of the meeting
15.00 – 16.00: Closing remarks by the Minister of Education and Community Development, Mr. R.V. Mangal

ANNEX II

List of Participants for the International Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean Paramaribo-Suriname, 18 - 20 February 2000
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1. International Participants

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Ms Bain

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3. Host Country Participants

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J. van Glaanenweygel
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3.2 Organizers

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3.3 Other participants and observers

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Ceuppens
STVS

Wong Chung
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C. McLeod
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R. Ramidjan
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V.H. Feisie
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M. Schmeltz
Ultimate purpose (Consultancy Buro)

E. Nortan
Natin Student (forestry)

ANNEX III

Films presented at the seminar

- World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1999)
- World Heritage in Young Hands (UNESCO 1999)
- Inscription ceremony for Morne Trois Pitons National Park, Dominica (1998)
- Galibi Nature Reserve (Suriname 1999)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Seminar on Natural Heritage in the Caribbean, Suriname, 18 –20 February 2000

The participants of the Seminar on natural heritage in the Caribbean make the following recommendations to the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau, the Caribbean countries, UNESCO and other organizations as appropriate:

The participants recommend that:

Awareness building

- Member States of UNESCO in the Caribbean region, who have not yet done so, be encouraged to ratify the World Heritage Convention;
- National awareness be raised about natural heritage, cultural landscapes and traditions - making full use of the media and the World Heritage Education Kit “World Heritage in Young Hands”;
- A publication on natural heritage in the Caribbean be produced with funding from the World Heritage Fund (CCA, IUCN, UNESCO);

Policy

- States Parties be encouraged to develop and establish national heritage legislation;
- States Parties prepare national inventories, national sites and other types of recognition of their heritage and formulate appropriate national policies/strategies;
- regional organizations (e.g. Caribbean Conservation Association - CCA) be encouraged to become more active in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
- UNESCO assist in sharing information on donors and to encourage them to consider funding for projects at (potential) World Heritage sites;

Capacity building and training

- training workshops for the preparation of natural nominations be organized to enhance professional skills;
- training seminars on the identification of cultural landscapes in the Caribbean be held, wherever possible within on-going activities and programmes;
- a specific workshop on the co-operation concerning protected areas with Guyana, Suriname and French Guyana be organized, taking into account the ecosystems of the Guyana shield (Colombia, Brazil and Venezuela should be invited as observers);
- institutional and human capacity be strengthened in order to ensure effective enforcement of legislation;
- incentives to attract and retain personnel in protected areas management be provided, such as the provision of the necessary facilities and equipment in protected areas;
- Caribbean island states be encouraged to share their experiences and expertise and UNESCO be asked to facilitate this; in particular, a review of marine

protected areas be carried out and the preparation of joint/transboundary nominations be encouraged;

Management

- A framework for the involvement of local communities in management planning be developed (as required under the Biodiversity Convention);
- Local communities benefit from sustainable development (including tourism, cultural practices etc.) at sites;
- An integrated approach towards tourism and tourism planning be encouraged, making full use of inter-sectorial linkages and taking into account community development and joint facility schemes with local communities;
- Intra- and interregional twinning arrangements/schemes to share experiences and skills be prepared (e.g. guidelines for nature tourism and environmental interpretation);