
SECOND CYCLE OF PERIODIC REPORTING FOR EUROPE

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

Forty-eight out of the 49 European States Parties to the World Heritage Convention responded to the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire. Responses were submitted for all 422 WH properties in Europe. 40 properties are natural, nine are mixed (together 12% of the total) and the rest cultural. This note summarises the principal outcomes from the Periodic Report. Section I of the Questionnaire reported on States Parties' general response to the requirements of the World Heritage Convention. Section II deals with individual properties. This summary outlines the main responses and does not attempt to summarise the answers to all questions. It views the European situation overall as differences between the four sub-regions do not seem to be significant

SECTION I

1. INVENTORIES

Most States Parties have inventories which they regard as adequate for both cultural and natural heritage. These inventories are mostly at national level but can also be at regional or local level. Inventories are generally thought adequate to capture the full diversity of their heritage. The use of inventories for Tentative Lists is variable.

2. NOMINATIONS INCLUDING TENTATIVE LISTS

All countries except two have Tentative Lists. Most States Parties have revised their Tentative Lists recently or intend to do so in the next six years. Most States Parties intend to continue to make nominations. National Commissions are more involved in the nomination process in CESEE than in the rest of Europe. Having World Heritage properties was seen as conferring honour and prestige as well as, in many cases, strengthening protection.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES FOR CONSERVATION

All countries have legislation to protect natural and cultural heritage, though a minority say that it is not adequate. Many countries consider that enforcement of the legal framework could be strengthened. There was clearly room for improvement in giving heritage a function in the life of the community.

There was effective cooperation between natural and cultural heritage services in over a third of States Parties. Cooperation with other parts of government was less effective. More than three-quarters of States Parties said that their heritage services were at least adequate.

4. FINANCIAL STATUS AND HUMAN RESOURCES

A wide range of funding sources was identified. The World Heritage Fund was significant in CESEE and EU funding was clearly important throughout much of Europe. Around 15% of states said that their funding was inadequate, though only around 6% said that human resources were insufficient. All States Parties thought that human resources could be further improved.

5. EDUCATION & RESEARCH

Very few countries had specific research programmes for World Heritage. Most countries did training on an *ad hoc* basis. Relatively few had full education programmes and less had strategies in place and in operation for raising awareness among stakeholders. Overall, general awareness of World Heritage was not good except for a few involved groups and this is an area where improvement is essential.

6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Most countries belonged to a number of other heritage Conventions, including Council of Europe instruments as well as those of UNESCO. Most took part in international activities of which the most popular was attending international training course or seminars. Other international activity was common in most countries and around half of States Parties had WH properties twinned with others in other States Parties.

SECTION II

7. STATE OF OUV

Draft retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value have been agreed or are under review for nearly all properties in Europe. Overall OUV is being maintained. Two cultural sites, one of which is on the Danger List, report that OUV is seriously impacted. Less than 10 % of cultural sites report that OUV is impacted, but addressed by effective management actions. Of the natural sites, OUV has been impacted in five cases.

Authenticity and integrity of cultural properties are preserved as well. Authenticity is reported as seriously compromised in a few (9) sites across all sub-regions. Integrity has a slightly larger number of cultural sites (22), reporting serious impacts without a specific category or type of property being dominant. Of the natural sites, seven have compromised integrity.

There is no general trend of which sites or which sub-regions report an impact on OUV/authenticity and integrity; the level of self-assessment is different.

Very few sites have answered the optional question about attributes

8. BOUNDARIES AND BUFFER ZONES

Boundaries are in general adequate to maintain OUV.

20 cultural properties sites lack a buffer zone even if it is needed. Very few cultural (6) sites report that buffer zone boundaries are inadequate; half of these have been subject to SOC reports.

The delimitation of both boundaries and buffer zones among local residents and communities is not clear. Many planned buffer zones or buffer zone extensions are meant to include the setting and landscape context of the site.

9. FACTORS

CULTURAL

a. Positive

The comments have highlighted the need for more questions for positive factors. Visitor and tourism related factors are the most cited with ritual/spiritual/associative uses followed by interpretative and visitation facilities management activities. Improved management is seen as a high positive factor.

b. Negative

Current negative factors are related to three main issues; impacts from tourism/visitor/recreation, transportation infrastructure and humidity / water with water related areas more frequent in the Mediterranean and CESEE.

Potential negative factors are similar, but humidity/ water is ranked highest together with ecological or geological events.

NATURAL

a. Positive

The most cited positive factors are society's valuing of heritage, management actions, the current impacts of tourism, identity/ social cohesion and change in the local population and community, and ritual/ spiritual/ religious and associative use.

b. Negative

The most common current negative factors are illegal activities, tourism/ visitors / recreation/transport infrastructure use, fire, solid waste and invasive terrestrial species (particularly common in island overseas territories).

Potential negative factors are most commonly visitor accommodation infrastructure, temperature change and other climate change.

10. PROTECTION AND LEGISLATION - EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Six cultural sites report a major deficiency in the legal framework. These properties have also been subject to SOC reports. Excellent capacity to enforce legislation / regulation is considered highest in the Western Europe sub-region (60 %) and lowest in the Nordic Baltic sub-region (25%). Management systems improvement is seen as a positive factor. The majority of sites (60%) have a fully adequate management plan, and (16 % -20 sites) lack a management plan. The implementation of both legislative and management measures is facing difficulties mostly due to lack of human resources /financial restrictions.

11. PRIORITY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Current significant threats to cultural properties which have an increasing trend include housing, impacts from environmental threats (wind, temperature) , renewable energy and changes in identity and traditional lifestyle. Sites report also that these are mainly from outside the property and consequently not within site management authority and they should be addressed on a national level.

12. MONITORING

Lack of effective monitoring mechanisms is a shared concern. Very few sites have reported indicators.

13. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Comments mention the need for financial sources to be diversified. Tourism is generally not considered to contribute to site management, one factor being that sites do not have economic authority.