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CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION  
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

BUREAU OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Eighteenth session

Phuket, Thailand

9-10 December 1994

**Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda: Revision of the Operational Guidelines**

The Bureau is requested to examine the draft proposals for revision of the Operational Guidelines and to make recommendations to the World Heritage Committee on the following items:

- A. CRITERIA FOR THE INCLUSION OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST
- B. MONITORING AND REPORTING
- C. TIMETABLE FOR THE PROCESSING OF NOMINATIONS
- D. DEADLINE FOR PRESENTATION OF REQUESTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BUREAU

**A. CRITERIA FOR THE INCLUSION OF CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST**

**A.1. BACKGROUND**

To encourage inscription on the World Heritage List of types of properties not yet or scarcely inscribed, the expert group which was convened from 20 to 22 June 1994 by the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, recommended to the World Heritage Committee, as a seventh point, the following modifications in the wording of the cultural criteria (i), (ii) and (iii) (paragraph 24 of the Operational Guidelines).

For criterion (v) the experts finally agreed that it was not necessary to modify this criterion, the deletion of the word disappeared in criterion (iii) being sufficient to ensure the inclusion of living cultures. Furthermore, the present version of criterion (v) would now be complementary to the new criterion (iii) in drawing particular attention to cultural heritages threatened in the near future.

For criterion (vi) the experts recommended to the Committee that a less restrictive interpretation be made. The experts also felt that the present wording of this criterion is justified with its reiteration and emphasis on the need for an "outstanding universal significance" inasmuch as this criterion refers, more than the five others, to a much more subjective appreciation and therefore far more liable to different interpretations. (See Working Document WHC-94/CONF.003/15 and Information Document WHC-94/CONF.003/INF.6 for the full background to these proposals.)

As regards to Section b) (i) of paragraph 24 which deals with the 'test of authenticity', the Bureau and the Committee are informed that the Conference on Authenticity in relation to the World Heritage Convention (Nara, Japan, 1-6 November 1994) might lead to proposals to revise this section of the Operational Guidelines.

**A.2. PROPOSED REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

It is proposed to revise paragraph 24 as follows:

**24.** A monument, group of buildings or site - as defined above - which is nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List will be considered to be of outstanding universal value for the purpose of the Convention when the Committee finds that it meets one or more of the following criteria and the test of authenticity. Each property nominated should therefore:

- (a) (i) represent a masterpiece of **human** creative genius; or  
[replace in the French version **de l'homme** by **humain** and, in the English version, delete **a unique artistic achievement** so that it corresponds with the French, and delete **the** and insert **human**];
- (ii) have **borne witness to a great exchange of influences**,

over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscape design; or

[replace **exerted great influence** by **borne witness to a great exchange of influences** so as to reflect better the interaction of cultures, instead of the present formulation, which suggests that cultural influences occur in one direction only];

- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilization or cultural tradition; or

[remove **which has disappeared**, since this excludes living cultures;

- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural ensemble or landscape which illustrates  
(a) significant stage(s) in human history; or

- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; or

- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance (the Committee considers that this criterion should justify inclusion in the List only in exceptional circumstances or in conjunction with other criteria);

and

- (b) (i) meet the test of authenticity in design, material, workmanship or setting and in the case of cultural landscapes their distinctive character and components (the Committee stressed that reconstruction is only acceptable if it is carried out on the basis of complete and detailed documentation on the original and to no extent on conjecture).

- (ii) have adequate legal and/or traditional protection and management mechanisms to ensure the conservation of the nominated cultural property or cultural landscapes. The existence of protective legislation at the national, provincial or municipal level or well-established traditional protection and/or adequate management mechanisms is therefore essential and must be stated clearly on the nomination form. Assurances of the effective implementation of these laws and/or management mechanisms are also expected. Furthermore, in order to preserve the integrity of cultural sites, particularly those open to large numbers of visitors, the State Party concerned should be able to provide

evidence of suitable administrative arrangements to cover the management of the property, its conservation and its accessibility to the public.

## **B. MONITORING AND REPORTING**

### **B.1. BACKGROUND**

The World Heritage Committee at its seventeenth session, and the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee at its eighteenth session, requested the Secretariat to develop detailed proposals for the methodology of systematic monitoring and reporting, and to prepare a draft text on the matter for inclusion in the Operational Guidelines. Detailed considerations on the different types of monitoring, the need for a systematic approach to observing and reporting on the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, as well as the proposed strategy for the promotion and implementation of adequate monitoring and reporting mechanisms, have been endorsed by the eighteenth session of the Bureau and are presented in Working Document WHC-94/CONF.003/6, Section A.

The following text is proposed for inclusion in the Operational Guidelines to elaborate one of the main functions of the Committee as described in par. 3.(ii): "monitor the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List".

### **B.2. PROPOSED REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

B.2.1. It is proposed to insert the following text as Section II of the Operational Guidelines:

#### **II. MONITORING THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF PROPERTIES INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST**

*xx. One of the essential functions of the Committee is to monitor the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and to take action thereupon. In the following, a distinction will be made between systematic and reactive monitoring.*

##### **a) Systematic monitoring and reporting**

*xx Systematic monitoring and reporting is the continuous process of observing the conditions of World Heritage sites with periodic reporting on its state of conservation.*

*The objectives of systematic monitoring and reporting are:*

*World Heritage site: Improved site management, advanced*

planning, reduction of emergency and ad-hoc interventions, and reduction of costs through preventive conservation.

**State Party:** Improved World Heritage policies, advanced planning, improved site management and preventive conservation.

**Region:** Regional cooperation, regional World Heritage policies and activities better targeted to the specific needs of the region.

**Committee/Secretariat:** Better understanding of the conditions of the sites and of the needs on the site, national and regional levels. Improved policy and decision making. Reduced reactive monitoring.

**xx** It is the prime responsibility of the States Parties to put in place on-site monitoring arrangements as an integral component of day-to-day conservation and management of the sites. States Parties should do so in close collaboration with the site managers or the agency with management authority. It is necessary that every year the conditions of the site be recorded by the site manager or the agency with management authority.

**xx** The States Parties are invited to submit to the World Heritage Centre, every five years, a report on the state of conservation of the World Heritage sites on their territories. Whilst fully respecting the sovereignty of the States Parties, independent professional advice should be involved in this periodic reporting.

**xx** To facilitate the work of the Committee and its Secretariat and to achieve greater regionalization and decentralization of World Heritage work, these reports will be examined separately by region as determined by the Committee. The World Heritage Centre will synthesize the national reports by regions. In doing so, full use will be made of the available expertise of the advisory bodies and other organizations.

**xx** The Committee will decide for which regions state of conservation reports should be presented to its forthcoming sessions.

**xx** The Secretariat will take the necessary measures for adequate World Heritage information collection and management, making full use, to the extent possible, of the information/documentation services of the advisory bodies and others.

**b) Reactive monitoring**

**xx** Reactive monitoring is the reporting by the World Heritage Centre, other sectors of UNESCO and the advisory bodies to the Bureau and the Committee on the state of conservation of specific

*World Heritage sites that are under threat. Ad hoc reports and impact studies are necessary each time exceptional circumstances occur or work is undertaken which may have an effect on the state of conservation of the site. Reactive monitoring is foreseen in the procedures for the eventual deletion of properties from the World Heritage List as set out in paras. 50-58. It is also foreseen in reference to properties inscribed, or to be inscribed, on the List of World Heritage in Danger as set out in paras. 75-82.*

B.2.2. With the introduction of the above section on systematic monitoring, the following paragraph should be deleted:

[Delete:

57. In this connection, the Committee recommends that States Parties co-operate with IUCN which has been asked by the Committee to continue monitoring on its behalf the progress of work undertaken for the preservation of natural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.]

## C. TIMETABLE FOR THE PROCESSING OF NOMINATIONS

### C.1. BACKGROUND

The ever increasing number of nominations and the improved evaluation procedures are demanding more and more time and professional inputs from the advisory bodies and the Secretariat. The receipt and preliminary examination of the nomination dossiers and the identification of the experts for site evaluations coincide under the present timetable with the heavy workload of the preparations for the sessions of the Committee and its Bureau in December of each year. To facilitate the work of the Secretariat and the advisory bodies and to enable them to better plan their work and to prepare the necessary documents well in advance of the sessions of the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau, it is proposed to revise the timetable for the processing of nominations.

In para. 66 of Section I.H ('Procedure and timetable for the processing of nominations') it is indicated that States Parties should submit nominations before **1 October**, that the Secretariat transmits the nomination dossiers to the advisory bodies by **1 November** and that the States Parties should submit complementary information, if requested by the Bureau, by **1 November**.

It is proposed to bring all these deadlines forward as follows:

### C.2. PROPOSED REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Section I.H., para. 66 to be revised as follows:

" (...)

[delete: '1 October'; insert: '1 July']

Deadline for receipt by the Secretariat of nominations to be considered by the Committee the following year.

[delete: 'By 1 November'; insert: 'By 15 September']

The Secretariat:

- (1) registers each nomination and thoroughly verifies its contents and accompanying documentation. In the case of incomplete nominations, the Secretariat must immediately request the missing information from the States Parties.
- (2) Transmit nominations, provided they are complete, to the appropriate international non-governmental organization (ICOMOS, IUCN or both), which:

immediately examines each nomination to ascertain those cases in which additional information is required and takes the necessary steps, in co-operation with the Secretariat, to obtain the complementary data, and

(...)

#### July-November

The report of the Bureau is transmitted by the Secretariat as soon as possible to all States Parties members of the Committee, as well as to all States Parties concerned. The Secretariat endeavours to obtain from the States Parties concerned the additional information requested on the properties under category (c) above and transmits this information to ICOMOS, IUCN and the States members of the Committee. If requested information is not obtained by [delete: '1 November', insert: '1 October'], the nomination will not be eligible for review by the Committee at its regular session in the same year.

(...)."

**D. DEADLINE FOR PRESENTATION OF REQUESTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BUREAU**

**D.1. BACKGROUND**

To facilitate the work of the Secretariat and the advisory bodies and to enable them to prepare the necessary documents well in advance of the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee, it is proposed to revise paragraph 96 of Section II.A. ('Different forms of assistance available under the World Heritage Fund') which stipulates that large-scale technical cooperation requests should be submitted to the Secretariat as early as possible each year and that those received before 31 August will be dealt with by the Committee the same year.

Over the last years, it has become practice that a great number of requests which are to be approved and/or examined by the Bureau, are being submitted shortly before the Bureau sessions. It is proposed to introduce strict deadlines for the submission of all requests for technical cooperation, with the exception of requests for emergency assistance, at 1 May and 1 October respectively for examination at the following session of the Bureau.

**D.2. PROPOSED REVISION OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

Section III.A., insert after para. 101 the following:

*xx All requests for international assistance, with the exception of requests for emergency assistance, which are to be examined by the Bureau, should be submitted before 1 May and 1 October respectively for consideration by the following session of the Bureau.*