

**Conclusions and recommendations of the International Seminar /
Network Meeting of Site Managers of World Heritage Properties**

Living Religious World Heritage:

Participatory Management and Sustainable Use

Kyiv 31st October – 1st November 2018

The International Seminar and first Network Meeting of Site Managers of World Heritage Properties on *Living Religious World Heritage: Participatory Management and Sustainable Use* meeting in Kyiv, Ukraine, from 31st October – 1st November 2018,

Recalling the principles and guidance set out in the World Heritage Convention, its Operational Guidelines and other relevant documents, remembering particularly the 2010 Kyiv Statement on the Role of Religious Communities in the Management of World Heritage Properties, as well as the conclusions of the Expert Meetings held in Paris, France, 2016, Nakom Phanon, Thailand, 2017, and Yerevan, Armenia, 2018 organized within the framework of the UNESCO initiative on World Heritage of religious interest, and also of the cross-thematic meeting on Religious Heritage and Astronomy at Gran Canaria, 2018,

Thanking the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine and the National Kyiv Perchersk Historical and Cultural Preserve for their generous hospitality in hosting and the excellent organization of the meeting;

We, the participants of the International Seminar “*Living Religious World Heritage: Participatory Management and Sustainable Use*” (Kyiv, Ukraine, 2018):

Agreeing that

World Heritage properties of living religious interest are used by religious communities, whether they are religious institutions or monastic organisations, and other social groups;

Management of World Heritage properties of religious interest by religious communities tends to be resilient;

Local religious communities are often not adequately involved, because living religious values have often not been identified and governance issues have not been adequately taken into consideration in the management systems or plans of World Heritage properties of religious interest, including the decisions to nominate World Heritage properties;

Global unsustainable trends, including climate change, are creating new challenges to the conservation of World Heritage properties of religious interest;

Increasing intensity of use of living religious sites, including cultural and religious tourism, is a trend which creates challenges for conservation and preservation of tangible and intangible heritage;

Growing secularization in some countries creates challenges for adapting relationships between religious and political organisations and for visitor use management, heritage interpretation, etc;

Noting that

Acknowledgement of and securing the role and involvement of local including religious communities is key to the long term conservation of World Heritage properties of religious interest;

Management by religious communities alone does not always guarantee the conservation of the integrity of World Heritage properties of religious interest or sufficient investment in conservation, and that involvement of state conservation agencies in a spirit of dialogue and mutual cooperation is necessary;

No natural case studies have been included in any of the Expert Meetings, and this lack needs to be remedied in the future;

The creation of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum in 2017 is a good example for other networks of Site Managers;

Recommend that

1. Protection and sustainable use of the attributes of Outstanding Universal Value and associated sacred values of each World Heritage property of religious interest should be central to their management;
2. Living spiritual, historico-cultural and natural values should all be fully protected in cultural, natural and mixed World Heritage properties;
3. The legitimate rights of religious communities of living religious World Heritage properties should be secured;
4. The full involvement of relevant religious custodians and representatives of local communities in decision making about World Heritage properties should be encouraged;
5. The processes for such decision making, including those related to higher level and national level policies, should be defined;
6. Governance should be regularly monitored and evaluated, including the implementation of relevant legislation and policies, when appropriate;
7. Mechanisms for transparency, accountability and public participation in monitoring and evaluating governance and management processes and their results should be implemented;
8. Development of substantive and balanced relationships between natural and cultural heritage agencies, religious and local communities, at all relevant levels, is essential;
9. Best practices to promote Free, Prior and Informed consent and involvement in the establishment, expansion, governance and management of World Heritage properties of religious interest should be identified;
10. Governmental involvement in the management of World Heritage properties of religious interest with the consent and voluntary participation of religious communities and custodians should be ensured;
11. The cultural identity of religious communities, in particular regarding natural and cultural resource management and conservation of World Heritage properties, should be strengthened;

12. Regular information exchange and dialogue among site managers, rights-holders and stakeholders on governance issues should be encouraged;
13. Conservation authorities, religious communities, site managers and other stakeholders and rights holders, including local communities, should agree on the main objectives of the management system and/ or management plan of each World Heritage property of religious interest;
14. The main objectives of the management system and/or management plan of World Heritage properties of religious interest should be to maintain the Outstanding Universal Value of each property, to facilitate the sustainable access and the wellbeing of faithful and visitors, and to maintain site integrity, especially in relation to the spiritual functionality of the property;
15. Study of the property's integral cultural/ natural/ spiritual resources and their relationships, which define the requirements for preservation of its Outstanding Universal Value, should be an integral part of the management system or management plan of each World Heritage property of religious interest;
16. Challenges in the governance, management and use of World Heritage properties of religious interest, such as issues of coexistence of communities, as well as management / co-management issues, including management of pilgrims and visitors, must be carefully addressed in the management system and/ or management plan of each World Heritage property of religious interest;
17. A network of Site Managers in charge of World Heritage properties of religious interest should be established, as part of the global network. Consideration should be given to setting up networks for World Heritage properties of religious interest of particular types (eg monasteries, places of worship in urban areas and natural sacred areas);
18. A common language and understanding of terminology and concepts should be developed between conservation authorities, religious communities and site managers so that there is common understanding of the objectives of the management and sustainable use of World Heritage properties of religious interest to underpin effective collaboration between all interested parties;

Case studies

19. The case study approach, begun in 2016 in the Mediterranean and South-Eastern Europe sub-region, should be extended to other regions of the world, and to faiths other than Christianity to inform all concerned parties on the specificities of World Heritage properties of religious interest in each region;
20. States parties in each region should be invited to complete the questionnaire pioneered in the Mediterranean and South-Eastern Europe sub-region;
21. Existing case studies of religious and sacred properties of relevance to PRI-SM should be collected (e.g. from the Delos initiative by IUCN, University of Tsukuba);

Cross-thematic approach

22. Recognising the demonstration of the value of a cross-thematic approach provided by the Gran Canaria meeting on Astronomy and World Heritage of religious interest, appropriate opportunities for cross-thematic working should be identified and followed up;

Capacity development and training

23. Experience should be shared among similar sites including those of different faiths;
24. Religious and other community members responsible for heritage conservation would benefit from appropriate training, while the awareness of religious customs and practices as well as associative and sacred values should be raised among heritage experts;
25. Training should be provided to promote integrated management for World Heritage properties of religious interest, using the resources of the Advisory Bodies;

The General Guidance Document

26. Guidance to the managers of World Heritage properties of religious interest should be based on the agreed objectives, involving Site Managers, religious communities, local communities, and conservation authorities, as much as possible.
27. The Steering Group of the PRI-SM initiative is encouraged to develop an updated version of the 2016 draft as soon as possible, taking account of the outcomes of the various expert meetings since 2016.
28. Appropriate points from the general recommendations of this meeting should be included in the guidance document;

Next steps and follow up activities

29. The proposal by the Georgian authorities to organize an International Conference on Living Religious Heritage in Urban Context during 2019 is strongly supported.
30. To ensure a truly global approach to the initiative on World Heritage properties of religious interest, States parties in regions and sub-regions which have not yet had an expert meeting (eg Africa, Arab region, Latin America and the Caribbean, Nordic/Baltic/North America countries) should be vigorously encouraged to host such meetings;
31. States parties should be encouraged to invite representatives of religious communities and Site Managers to future meetings;
32. Representation of natural World Heritage properties, and the participation of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on World Heritage in future Expert Meetings should be encouraged.