

Main objectives of the project and foreseen contribution requirements from participants

MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

Providing a complex guidance tool, with a special focus on wind turbine projects, could serve as a resource for States Parties to prevent conservation issues in World Heritage properties (both cultural, natural and mixed sites) and identify ways in which renewable energy initiatives and World Heritage protection could go hand in hand.

The proposed guidance tool aims to assist developing national strategies (in relation to the protection of World Heritage values) for the evaluation process of these project proposals, and enhance developing national strategies for World Heritage site management in general.

The guidance tool aims to provide directions on:

- how to identify the attributes of a World Heritage property that convey the Outstanding Universal Value – OUV (that are relevant for renewable energy projects), and are also essential to be taken into account in planning applications, and in the preparation of Heritage Impact Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments; it could also facilitate understanding the visual, social-functional and structural integrity of properties;
- how to develop an adequate management system which includes requirements and guidance for wind farm construction projects;
- how to produce a systematic ‘zoning map’ for identifying sensitive areas within the World Heritage properties, their buffer zones and beyond (also considering culturally significant visual aspects, key views, viewpoints, panoramas, silhouettes and other factors related to the OUV of each WH property, but which are not confined to the boundaries of the property and its buffer zone);
- how to prepare visual impact studies;

- how to prepare ‘view policies’ or ‘skyline policies’ (based on the systematic visual mapping);
- how to consider and avoid cumulative impacts;
- when and how to consider the creation or modification of a buffer zone for a World Heritage property, and how to improve the state of conservation of a property in general (also based on the systematic visual mapping).
- how to tangibly contribute to the implementation and interlinkage of the Sustainable Development Goals 7, 13, and 11.4.

THE GUIDANCE TOOL IS EXPECTED

1. To strengthen the state of conservation of World Heritage by providing a specially focused guidance tool to State Parties which enhances the protection of their OUV;
2. To raise awareness about the importance of a deeper understanding of the OUV of the World Heritage properties and the attributes that convey the OUV, in order to develop adequate management systems;
3. To facilitate planning in general, and the preparation of more suitable and complex Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and other relevant documents for State Parties, by providing a technical guidance tool to assess and mitigate the possible negative impact of wind farm projects.
4. To enhance capacity building for State Parties by providing a complex toolkit that will help understanding the complexity and possible importance of visual integrity of World Heritage properties, especially related to their broader settings.

The development of an online Guidance Tool for the installation of renewable energy transition projects within or near World Heritage properties

PLANNED ACTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR CONTRIBUTION OF THE STATE PARTIES

The World Heritage Centre wishes to organize and hold three meetings during the project period jointly with interested State Parties. These focused workshops would be essential for the planned guidance tool to become visible and really useful for the State Parties of the World Heritage Convention.

- 1. An initial kick-off meeting**, with the possibility to share challenges, issues, good or bad case studies that State Parties have in relation to installation of renewable energy infrastructure within or near World Heritage properties (hosted by one of the State Parties from the Europe and North America region of the WH Convention);
- 2. Intermediate discussion** with experts involved in the development of the guidance tool (organized by the WHC at UNESCO HQ);
- 3. A final event** for launching the guidance tool and providing a capacity building workshop in relation to the guidance tool for State Parties (hosted by one of the State Parties from the Europe and North America region of the WH Convention).

We would like to invite from the State Parties the relevant stakeholders on the national level to participate in the project: site managers, National Focal Points for World Heritage, people working in public administration related to heritage management, firms in the energy industry that are

commissioned to produce impact assessments, etc. It is up to the State Parties to identify and decide who their relevant stakeholders are. We also intend to involve representatives of the wind energy sector in the project.

Contribution to the project would mean an active participation, especially at the first and third meeting. Nevertheless, experts from State Parties that are willing to be involved directly in the development of the guidance tool will be welcome to join the second, foreseeably technical meeting as well.

We also wish to invite State Parties to share with the World Heritage Centre relevant documents (or summary of these documents), policies, strategies, case studies (with good or bad examples) that are in relation to renewable energy projects.

The draft guidance tool will be circulated among the participants of the project, and they will be invited to send feedback and comment on the document before its finalization.

With regard to the limited budget for developing this tool, we are inviting State Parties to host the kick-off discussion and the final workshop. In any case, State Parties are kindly requested to cover the costs of their own representatives in relation to their participation in the project (travel, accommodation, etc.).

We are looking forward to collaborating with you!

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

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