



**unesco**

World Heritage Convention

**45 COM**

WHC/23/45.COM/6

Paris, 4 July 2023

Original: English

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION  
OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**Extended forty-fifth session  
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
10 – 25 September 2023**

**Item 6 of the Provisional Agenda:**

**Follow-up to the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy and Progress report on the World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres**

**Summary**

In Decision **44 COM 6**, the World Heritage Committee requested the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM to submit a progress report on the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS) for examination at its 45th session. The Committee also requested the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM, in cooperation with IUCN and ICOMOS, to submit an independent results-based evaluation of the outcomes of the WHCBS, for examination at its 45th session, subject to the availability of sufficient funding. This document includes a progress report covering a period from August 2021 to May 2023, updates on the activities of the category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO related to World Heritage, and a synthetic summary of the evaluation process of the WHCBS. The full evaluation report can be found at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/capacity-building/>.

***Draft Decision: 45 COM 6, see point IV.***

## **I. FOLLOW UP TO THE CAPACITY- BUILDING STRATEGY**

1. The World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS) was approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 35th session (UNESCO, 2011) (Decision **35 COM 9B**). The Strategy was developed by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in collaboration with ICCROM, IUCN, ICOMOS and other capacity-building partners, such as category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO in various regions of the world. This work was made possible through contributions from the World Heritage Fund and the Swiss Government, which also provided professional expertise.

### **A. Implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS)**

2. Since the adoption of the WHCBS, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and capacity-building partners have been working to implement capacity-building activities at both the regional and international levels to address the needs of heritage practitioners, institutions and other networks and communities. Reinforcement of the capacity-building pillar of the Convention continues to be a priority to equip States Parties with the relevant expertise to protect and manage their properties and ensure a representative, credible and balanced World Heritage List. The central importance of the capacity-building programmes in the implementation of UNESCO's cultural Conventions has also been underscored by the 2017 UNESCO IOS Evaluations. Despite an uneven picture across the cultural Conventions, many States Parties have integrated key provisions into national legislations, policies and strategic frameworks including, in some instances, cross-cutting domains of importance for sustainable development.
3. The UNESCO World Heritage Centre has developed a dedicated webpage Capacity Building for World Heritage (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/capacity-building/>), which aims to support States Parties in developing capacity-building activities by sharing the work done by the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other stakeholders on the capacity-building activities, tools and good practice examples. The webpage actively promotes capacity-building as a core strategic activity, and the resources provided aim to encourage and assist States Parties in introducing and implementing capacity-building policies and regulations for World Heritage and providing training at all levels. This webpage will be regularly updated by the World Heritage Centre, using inputs to be submitted by all capacity-building partners.
4. UNESCO Chairs are a long-standing part of the WHCBS and continue to function in their capacity as providers of capacity building for World Heritage. Current reporting on World Heritage-related UNESCO Chairs can be found on the dedicated online platform for the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme (<https://www.unesco.org/en/unitwin>) and on the World Heritage Centre's webpages dedicated to specific programmes. An audit of the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks Programme was undertaken in January 2021, resulting in the development of new guidelines (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375481.locale=en>).
5. ICCROM continues to update information on regular training opportunities for World Heritage and cultural heritage conservation in general as well as meetings, seminars, workshops, and other events and activities related to heritage conservation. This information is made available on the ICCROM website and social media. These sources also contain significant information on conservation issues as well as educational and job opportunities in conservation. A set of the capacity-building activities that are implemented by ICCROM are presented below. Other activities can also be found in Documents WHC/23/45.COM/5A and 5B.
6. ICCROM started the Heritage Recovery Programme in Mosul (Iraq), organized in collaboration with UNESCO and the University of Mosul, with the financial support of the

Government of the United Arab Emirates and the European Union. This two-year programme was designed to strengthen the skills of local heritage professionals and craftspeople through training and hands-on technical practice. It is composed of two parallel tracks of capacity-building activities that started in 2022 and will finish in August 2023:

- a) Track 1: “Building capacity for professional development”, which aims to train young building professionals who have a background in architecture and civil engineering. The first cycle of trainees finished their course in January 2023, and the second cycle is ongoing;
- b) Track 2: “Building and upgrading crafts revival”, in the spirit of “building back better”, which will give craft workers the opportunity to enhance their skills while contributing to restoration efforts, taking into consideration affordability and the on-site situation. Seventy-nine craftspeople successfully completed the training on traditional and modern carpentry, blacksmithing, stone masonry and alabaster work.

To ensure sustainability, the programme will establish links with the building industry to ensure the availability of traditional materials.

7. Regarding the physical conservation of built heritage, an online course on “Investigation, preservation and management of Archaeological Sites” took place from 31 August to 30 September 2021. A second online course on “Conservation and Management of wooden built heritage” took place from 1 to 30 September 2022. Both courses were jointly organized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan (Bunkacho), the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), ICCROM, and the National Research Institute for Cultural Properties (Tokyo and Nara), in cooperation with the Japanese Association for Conservation of Architectural Monuments (JACAM), the Japan Consortium for International Cooperation on Cultural Heritage (JCIC-Heritage) under the auspices of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, the Nara Prefectural Government and the Nara City Government.
8. Two online courses on Disaster Risk Management of Cultural Heritage were organised by Ritsumeikan University and ICCROM from 22 August to 9 October 2021, and from 18 August to 13 October 2022. The 20th International Course on Wood Conservation Technology (ICWCT) was also jointly organised online by the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (Riksantikvaren), the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and ICCROM, and took place from 13 February to 7 April 2022.

## **B. World Heritage Leadership Programme**

9. The ICCROM/IUCN World Heritage Leadership Programme (WHLP) aims to build the skills of practitioners working through the World Heritage Convention and considers the full range of conservation practices, so that ‘World Heritage’ can provide leadership to achieve innovation and excellence within the conservation sector. The WHLP integrates nature and culture from the outset, focusing on areas where World Heritage has the most compelling potential to address pressing challenges, such as climate change and impacts from development. Detailed information on the implementation of the WHLP can be found in ICCROM’s website (<https://www.iccrom.org/programmes/world-heritage-leadership-whl>) and in Document WHC/23/45.COM/5B.
10. The Programme is a partnership between ICCROM and IUCN, working in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS, and it is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, which has been renewed for an additional 6 years (2023-2028) following a mid-term evaluation of the programme conducted in 2020. The Cultural Heritage Administration of the Republic of Korea (CHA) has also extended their contribution for supporting international “People Nature Culture” (PNC) courses for an

additional 5 years, and Switzerland, through the Federal Office for Environment, continues to support individual Programme activities on the Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0. Other capacity-building partners, such as universities and category 2 centres, are also collaborating on specific activities of the programme or allied activities.

11. Core and long-term activities include the revision of the World Heritage management manuals and the creation of a web-based learning platform. The programme operates on four modules: Effective management, Resilience, Impact Assessment, and Learning Networks. Key outputs for the period covered in this report include:

a) Effective Management

- i) Development of the “Integrated Manual for Managing World Heritage” (provisional title) that promotes the Heritage Place Approach for improving management and conservation of *World Heritage and the Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0* (EOH 2.0), a management effectiveness assessment toolkit. The two resources create the baseline for management and provide a practical toolkit that can be applied to both cultural and natural World Heritage as an evaluation tool and can lead to robust management planning for World Heritage properties. The publications will be released soon and are being actively used as the main resource for World Heritage management courses. An online World Heritage Knowledge Platform is being developed and will host the content of the World Heritage management-related resources.
- ii) Various editions of the People Nature Culture World Heritage management course have been delivered at international, regional and national levels, both online and in-person. A two-month online international course (August-October 2021), a one-month online Spanish-language course for the Latin America and the Caribbean region (February 2022), a two-week in-person international course in the Republic of Korea (August 2022), two-week online international courses in English (February 2023) and Spanish (April 2023) were implemented with the support of the Cultural Heritage Administration of the Republic of Korea (CHA), in collaboration with the Korea National University of Cultural Heritage (KNUCH) and the Latin America and Caribbean Unit of the World Heritage Centre. A People Nature Culture Forum took place in October 2022 in Suwon (Republic of Korea) to evaluate the results and impacts of the PNC courses and advance discussions on the services and benefits of World Heritage. A three-phased activity entitled “Improving Management Effectiveness in African World Heritage properties” took place from December 2021 to April 2022 in collaboration with the Africa Unit of World Heritage Centre. An online course on World Heritage with a focus on China (January 2022), an EOH 2.0 workshop with Robben Island (South Africa) in January 2023, and a World Heritage management capacity-building course in Germany (January 2023) have been implemented. An international online course will take place in June 2023, and a ‘training of trainers’ course for World Heritage management will take place in October 2023 in Georgetown (Malaysia), and national workshops are planned in Saudi Arabia (October 2023) and China (November 2023).

b) Resilience

- i) Development of the revised resource manual on “Managing Disaster Risks for Building Resilience of World Heritage” (provisional title).
- ii) A series of in-person workshops were held in Bahrain (July 2022, March 2023), and online courses on World Heritage Risk Management and Climate Change in the Arab Region are planned for the Arab Region in collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH)

(<https://www.iccrom.org/courses/capacity-building-world-heritage-risk-management-arab-region>) (December 2023).

c) Impact Assessment

- i) The *Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context* was published in July 2022 (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidance-toolkit-impact-assessments/>) as a joint effort of UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN.
- ii) Various international and national editions of the Impact Assessment courses have been delivered. The biennial course on impact assessment was jointly delivered with the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research-Asia and Pacific (WHITR-AP) in November 2021 in an online modality, and again in May 2023 as a ‘training of trainers’ course for the Asia-Pacific region. A number of online and in-person workshops have been organised, including a 3-day online national workshop on impact assessments for Slovenia (December 2021); an online workshop for the Arab States Region (December 2021), organised with the World Heritage Centre, ICOMOS and thanks to funding from the Government of the Netherlands; online and in-person national workshops for Norway (March and May 2022); a ‘training of trainers’ workshop for the Arab States region, organised together with ARC-WH (October 2022); and an in-person course for Saudi Arabia with ARC-WH (November 2022). A workshop on conducting impact assessments for renewable energy development was convened together with the World Heritage Centre at UNESCO Headquarters in March 2023.

d) Learning Networks

- i) Diverse nature-culture management case studies are continuously added to the PANORAMA Platform, coordinated jointly by ICOMOS, IUCN and ICCROM, to promote innovative solutions for managing heritage places (see <https://panorama.solutions/en/portal/panorama-nature-culture>).
- ii) Hosted by the Government of China and co-organized with the World Heritage Centre, the 4th Site Managers Forum took place in conjunction with the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (Fuzhou/Online, 2021) on the theme of “World Heritage governance – Being prepared to manage and change continuity”. The Forum produced a Site Managers’ statement that emphasized the need for inclusive, transparent, and equitable governance arrangements, recognizing the discrepancies between international, national and local heritage values and designations, and the need for relevant capacity building, guidance and resources to be developed (see <https://whc.unesco.org/en/whsmf2021>). The 5th edition of the World Heritage Site Managers’ Forum is planned for 10-15 September 2023 and will be hosted by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in conjunction with the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee (Riyadh, 2023).
- iii) The *Heritage Place Lab* was launched in May 2021 and focused on strengthening networks across research and site management in the context of the World Heritage Convention. Researchers and site managers teamed up as Research-Practice Teams and participated in the Heritage Place Lab Pilot Phase consisting of incubator online workshops to develop practice-based research agendas for World Heritage properties. The outputs will be published as a Special Issue in the Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development (Emerald) by June 2023, an ICCROM publication sharing the research-practice model and the eight practice-led research agendas, and eight PANORAMA Nature-Culture solutions.

12. The World Heritage Leadership Forum that marked the finalization of Phase 1 and setting the foundation of a renewed Phase 2 (2023-2028), was held in Bergen, Norway, from 21 to 22 September 2022. The Forum commemorated the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention and the signing of the Phase 2 Agreement for World Heritage Leadership. The event reflected on how capacity building has contributed to the first 50 years of implementation of the World Heritage Convention and how to strengthen it in the future.

### C. Regional and Thematic Capacity-Building Initiatives

13. As part of the WHCBS, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies, Category 2 Centres and interested States Parties have also been working on the development and implementation of regional capacity-building strategies:
  - a) In the **Asia and the Pacific** region, capacity-building activities were developed and implemented by the World Heritage Centre at the national and regional levels, in close cooperation with UNESCO Field Offices, Category 2 Centres, the Advisories Bodies and other relevant partners. Details on these activities can be found below as well as in Documents WHC/23/45.COM/5A and WHC/23/45.COM/10A.
  - b) A new global project funded by Japan, entitled 'Post COVID-19 World Heritage Site Management: Integration of Conservation, Tourism and Local Livelihood Strategies at World Heritage Sites', supports selected properties, including the Trang An Landscape Complex (Viet Nam), Maya site of Copan (Honduras), and Cidade Velha (Cabo Verde). It aims at testing innovative approaches to improve models for sustainable livelihoods of local communities.
  - c) A new partnership agreement with the Felissimo Corporation (Japan) on World Heritage, Communities and Creativity, provides further assistance to countries in Asia and Africa by stimulating innovative opportunities for World Heritage communities to design World Heritage signature products and sustainable tourism offers through knowledge transfer and community involvement (associations, cooperatives, ethnic groups, youth). The two abovementioned initiatives also strongly rely on the mechanism of south-south cooperation and mutual learning.
  - d) All on-going International Assistance activities demonstrate a strong emphasis on capacity building by associating national experts in the process of implementing technical programmes on World Heritage properties.
  - e) Large-scale operational projects (e.g., the Cultural Landscape and Archaeological Remains of the Bamiyan Valley in Afghanistan, Angkor in Cambodia), and constant support to international coordinating frameworks such as the International Coordination Committee for Angkor and the International Advisory Committee for Uzbekistan with strong segments on capacity development of national experts.
  - f) With financial support from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, the [UNESCO Competence Framework for Cultural Heritage Management](#) was published in October 2021 by the UNESCO Office in Bangkok. The Competence Framework was piloted at two heritage properties: the Megalithic Jar Sites in Xiengkhuang - Plain of Jars (Lao PDR, July-September 2021), and at the Chiang Mai site (on the Tentative List of Thailand, May-November 2021). These activities aimed to strengthen capacities for World Heritage site management in Asia and enhance technical and management capacity among professional staff.
  - g) An online Masterclass on World Heritage and Sustainable Development was organised in Bangladesh in May 2021. Professionals in Uzbekistan and other States Parties in Central Asia also benefitted from training workshops in 2021 to address specific conservation issues relating to cultural and natural heritage.

- h) A special edition of a webinar series was organized from 10-18 November 2021 to mark the 10th anniversary of the 2011 *UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape*. This webinar series concluded in the adoption of a 75-point Action Plan, to be considered by India and South Asia for adoption by the historic cities to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11 (making cities resilient, green and sustainable).
- i) The Permanent Delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) for UNESCO and the National Authority for Protection of Cultural Heritage (NAPCH) under the Ministry of Culture, in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and an international expert, organized capacity-building activities to harmonize heritage conservation and local development, with a focus on sustainable management of buffer zones. Two workshops were organized in Kaesong City (2-5 November 2021 for the World Heritage properties 'Complex of Koguryo Tombs' and 'Historic Monuments and Sites in Kaesong') and in Kosong County (10-13 November 2021 for 'Mt. Kungang' on the Tentative List) respectively. Education materials were developed by national and international experts, including an interactive multi-media material "World Heritage Protection and Buffer Zone" produced by NAPCH for awareness-raising among the wider public.
- j) In the framework of the UNESCO/Republic of Korea Funds-in-Trust project "Support for the Silk Roads World Heritage Nomination(s) (Phase II)", a capacity-building workshop on the Silk Roads: Ferghana-Syrdarya Corridor serial transnational World Heritage nomination was organized in February 2022, emphasizing the role of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) process in managing risks for the Silk Roads heritage sites conservation.
- k) In the **Latin America and the Caribbean** region, several workshops and capacity-building activities were organised to reinforce the capacities of site managers, National Focal Points and other key stakeholders with regards to the management of sustainable tourism and conservation for World Heritage properties, and for the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the region (see Documents WHC/23/45.COM/5A and WHC/23/45.COM/10D).
- l) In the framework of the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust project "SIDS Capacity-Building: Safeguarding Heritage in the Caribbean through Developing Sustainable Tourism Strategies", an online workshop took place on 23-30 November 2021, organized by the World Heritage Centre and the UNESCO Offices in Kingston and Havana, in cooperation with the University of the West Indies and the Barbados National Commission for UNESCO.
- m) A workshop on "Neighbourhoods of Guanajuato and their cultural heritage" was launched in May 2021, in the framework of the programme "Creating a local World Heritage management system in Guanajuato" and in collaboration with the University of Guanajuato and the Guanajuato Institute of Architects (Mexico).
- n) In the **Europe and North America** region, capacity-building initiatives implemented by the World Heritage Centre continued to focus on HIAs, particularly in the context of the renewable energy transition, with the support of France and the Netherlands. The publication *World Heritage and Wind Energy Planning: Protecting Visual Integrity in the Context of Energy Transition—Innovative Practices from Four European Countries* was released in English and French in February 2022, with a view to strengthening the methodological and analytical validity of impact studies conducted by States Parties, particularly regarding the visual impact of wind farms near World Heritage properties. In parallel, thanks to the support of the Government of the Netherlands, the online tool '*Guidance for Wind Energy Projects in a World Heritage Context*' for handling wind energy projects within

World Heritage properties, their buffer zones and/or in their vicinity to avoid or mitigate impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of properties was finalised and launched in March 2023. A first introduction to the tool was organised on 22-23 March 2023, in the framework of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise. It also provided an opportunity to explain the links and complementarities of this tool with the [Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context](#) that was developed in parallel.

- o) For the **Africa** region, the World Heritage Centre organised numerous trainings and workshops to strengthen the capacity of States Parties, particularly in relation to effective management, conservation and development of nomination dossiers as well as the removal of properties in the region from the List of World Heritage in Danger. The trainings also focused on improving the management effectiveness of World Heritage sites and harnessing good practices for promoting socio-economic development and Heritage conservation. Details on these activities can be found in Document WHC/23/45.COM/5A. Amongst those activities, the following eight capacity-building initiatives were organised by the Africa Unit of the World Heritage Centre:
- i) The “Improving Management Effectiveness of World Heritage in Africa” initiative was developed by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with ICCROM, to which 86 participants from 25 countries participated, with the support of Japan, Switzerland and China. A total of 28 participants from six countries were involved in carrying out a management effectiveness assessment for developing their management plans.
  - ii) A capacity-building programme for the nomination of World Heritage sites in the region is supported by Japan. A training workshop was organized in Eswatini from 31 January to 4 February 2022, focusing on the understanding of the World Heritage Convention, followed by a needs assessment and the elaboration of an implementation roadmap. In addition, a workshop was organised in November 2022 between experts from South Africa and Eswatini to look at the feasibility and challenges of developing the extension of the [Barberton Makhonjwa Mountains](#) (South Africa). A roadmap was developed to support the Eswatini to start the process to develop a dossier. Further support to nomination of natural sites in the Africa region has been provided by the UNESCO/Flanders Funds-in-Trust (FUT) in 2020-2022.
  - iii) A capacity-building programme for the development and review of Tentative Lists in Africa continues since 2021, thanks to the generous support of Japan and the Sultanate of Oman. Three countries with no Tentative List (Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe and Somalia) have started the process. In November 2022, a workshop was organised in Sao Tome and Principe, which submitted its List in January 2023. Experts from Somalia were taken to Kenya for training to develop the first Tentative List of Somalia in November 2022. In addition, Liberia submitted its revised Tentative List in January 2023.
  - iv) As part of the project “Post COVID-19 World Heritage Site Management: Integration of Conservation, Tourism and Local Livelihood Strategies at World Heritage Sites”, generously supported by the Government of Japan, a set of activities will identify and promote local businesses contributing to enhancing the conservation, interpretation and awareness of heritage values and attributes of the Cidade Velha World Heritage site (Cabo Verde). This project will reinforce the use of digital tools to conserve and promote the heritage site while providing educating and building capacities for sustainable tourism and project management through ITCs and e-marketing



innovative solutions. Overall, these objectives will aim to help populations in the World Heritage property and its buffer zone to generate income and improve their livelihoods.

- v) The implementation of a project on the Desired state of conservation for the removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCR) began in February 2022, as part of the support provided to the State Party of Mali under the World Heritage Fund for the development of the DSOOCR for three properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger. Initial training and ongoing remote assistance are provided by CRAterre (Grenoble/France), with a national expert supporting the process in the field. Furthermore, in June 2022 site managers from seven countries were trained to develop DSOOCR, namely RDC, Senegal, Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée, Niger, and RCA. This subregional workshop was organized in cooperation with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF). In June 2023, a second subregional workshop will be organised in Senegal with the support of the Norway Fund to train site managers from Cote d'Ivoire/Guinée, Niger, Senegal and Mali. A strategy for the Africa region on DSOOCRs was prepared with the support of the Government of Norway.
- vi) A pan-African world heritage site managers network (ASMN) has been established thanks to the support of the Government of China, and aims at providing a platform for experience-sharing and peer-learning among African site managers to strengthen their capacities for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa. An interim committee was established and developed the official Charter of the ASMN. The Network was officially launched on 5 May 2022. In December 2022, the Standing Committee, composed of 15 site managers from the five subregions was elected and its first meeting held online. Subsequent meetings were held in April 2023. With financial support from France, the Permanent Committee is preparing an Action Plan of activities to be carried out until December 2024.
- vii) The World Heritage Centre has initiated a pilot mentorship programme for African Heritage professionals (2021-2024), implemented in close collaboration with the AWHF and the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS, ICCROM, IUCN). The target is to train and increase the number of African heritage practitioners involved in the implementation of World Heritage Convention activities, such as missions. Since December 2022, 20 African mentees from the following countries have already been enrolled: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Another 20 mentees will be trained by 10 mentors starting in June 2023.
- viii) Finally, the World Heritage Centre conducted a mapping of African institutions of higher learning and universities in Africa to better understand the current situation in terms of the availability of curricula and educational programmes that offer vocational paths and career perspectives for heritage in the region, in view of supporting the establishment of a network of these institutions and research hubs for heritage training in Africa.
- p) The activity "Training of Tour Guides for the Heritage of Comoros" was organized on 1-2 September 2021, within the framework of the World Heritage Programme of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), funded by the UNESCO/Netherlands Fund-in-Trust. It aimed to raise awareness about the heritage values of the Historic Sultanates of Comoros among local tour guides and highlighted the UNESCO

Guidance for Sustainable Tourism Practices in order to better preserve, protect and manage the flow of visitors to Comoros.

- q) Extensive training and capacity-building workshops were carried out by the UNESCO Regional Field Offices in the Africa region to strengthen the capacities of States Parties with regard to the sustainable management of World Heritage properties, the preparation of nomination dossiers, the update of Tentative Lists, the removal of properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger, the development of Disaster Risk Management, involving mainly Youth and local communities, and the follow-up to the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise in the Africa region. Some examples include:
- i) A workshop on the applications of new technologies in ecological monitoring and surveillance systems of World Heritage sites/biosphere reserves in Burkina, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Niger;
  - ii) A workshop on entrepreneurship at World Heritage properties in Africa, held in Gabon from May to June 2022;
  - iii) Two sub-regional capacity-building workshops on sustainable tourism for the Southern Africa region, organized on 17 and 26 November 2021. The outcomes of this activity informed the development of a flagship programme on sustainable tourism for Southern Africa.
- r) In the **Arab States** region, capacity-building activities were developed and implemented by the World Heritage Centre in cooperation with UNESCO Field Offices, the Advisory Bodies and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), as a follow-up to the implementation of the Action Plan for the Arab States (2021-2027) adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/Online, 2021). Capacity building activities that were undertaken have mainly focused on supporting States Parties in:
- i) The elaboration of the DSOCR, and developing and implementing corrective measures: several online meetings were organized in collaboration with ICOMOS for the properties of Hatra (Iraq), Archaeological site of Leptis Magna (Libya), Crac des Chevaliers and Qal'at Salah El-Dine and Site of Palmyra (Syria);
  - ii) Drafting retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (rSOUV), defining attributes, clarifying boundaries, and monitoring for effective protection and management of World Heritage sites: an online capacity building session was organized in collaboration with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab States - Cluster Office for Egypt and Sudan, and, online workshops on the Reactive Monitoring process, state of conservation reporting, and the preparation of rSOUVs were organized in collaboration with ICOMOS for World Heritage properties in Iraq;
  - iii) Elaborating HIAs: a regional online workshop in applying Impact Assessments to both natural and cultural World Heritage properties for the Arab States took place in December 2021, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, and the participation of 33 representatives from 13 states from the region. Another workshop was organized from 22 to 24 August 2022 in Cairo, Egypt, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Egypt and ICOMOS. Both workshops were supported through the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust (NFIT);
  - iv) The integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites: a regional online training workshop on 'World Heritage Site Management: Addressing the Various Dimensions of Sustainable Development in Conservation and Management Approaches' was organized

from 24 to 27 October 2022. The workshop focused on: Sustainable Development; the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscapes; 'Managing Disaster Risks at World Heritage Sites, and Climate Change and World Heritage.

- s) The **Natural Heritage** Unit has been working on projects funded by the UNESCO/Flanders Funds-in-Trust (FUT), the Government of Sweden and the Government of Australia to strengthen the resilience of natural World Heritage properties in developing countries by building capacity on climate adaptation and risk preparedness, as well as developing a sustainable financing portfolio. As part of the FUT project, online training modules were developed and piloted at two African natural World Heritage properties – Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe/Zambia) and Salonga National Park (Democratic Republic of Congo). The training modules covered background information on climate change resilience and adaptation, World Heritage policies and implications of climate change, identifying values and assessing property condition, and assessing OUV vulnerability. This activity is continued in phase 2, with funding from the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust, to expand the training programme to a group of site managers from additional natural World Heritage properties and support them in developing site-specific climate change adaptation plans.

- t) The **World Heritage Cities Programme** of the World Heritage Centre, together with the Advisory Bodies, organized a number of different capacity building activities, particularly in the framework of the 10th Anniversary of the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL).

Regional workshops across all regions were organized leading up to the major event with the objective of peer-to-peer learning to build capacities of World Heritage site managers and experts in all regions of the world in the implementation of the HUL Recommendation as a tool for managing urban heritage.

- u) The **World Heritage Marine Programme** organized several capacity-building activities for marine managers, mainly through the sharing of expertise, lessons learnt and best practices for an enhanced management of marine sites. These include training on the use of environmental DNA for biodiversity monitoring, how to deal with invasive species, how debt-for-nature swaps can finance conservation, and coral bleaching preparedness. As part of the Resilient Reefs Initiative, four pilot properties have strengthened their capacities on how to embed resilience in their climate adaptation strategies. Lessons learned from the Resilient Reefs Initiative are regularly being shared with the other World Heritage marine sites. These activities are supported by the French Biodiversity Agency, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, and the Government of Flanders (Kingdom of Belgium) (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/marine-managers/>).

## II. PROGRESS REPORT ON WORLD HERITAGE-RELATED ACTIVITIES OF CATEGORY 2 CENTRES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UNESCO

14. Detailed progress reports on all activities carried out by the Category 2 Centres under the auspices of UNESCO can be found at <http://whc.unesco.org/en/category2centres/>. The reports include a table indicating programmes and activities that are implemented or planned within the framework of the WHCBS.
15. The **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)** undertook activities in consonance with the WHCBS, including World Heritage-themed webinars on the occasion of the World Heritage Convention's 50th anniversary. In collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, the World Heritage Centre's role in programmes like the inaugural Heritage Place Lab (HPL), anniversary seminars of the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)

and participation in Heritage City Lab discussions, boosted the synergy between natural and cultural sectors, as did its hosting of a session on Nature-Culture Linkages at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in collaboration with Tsukuba University (Japan). WII-C2C facilitated and coordinated the successful submission of Questionnaires for all World Heritage properties of India as part of the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting in the Asia-Pacific region. With the addition of two natural sites to India's Tentative List, ongoing consultations to review other sites for addition to India's Tentative List and World Heritage List, programmes on naturalist skill development, officers and teachers' training on World Heritage, and the graduation of the first batch of Masters Course on Heritage Conservation and Management, WII-C2C has been contributing to improved understanding and implementation of heritage mandates.

16. The **World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITR-AP)** continued its contribution to the World Heritage Committee and its support to the State Parties. In collaboration with the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, WHITR-AP assisted in the organization of the side event on 'World Heritage Education Towards a Sustainable Future' on 17 July 2021 during the extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee (Fuzhou/Online, 2021). An International Forum on 'World Heritage Education Innovative Cases' followed-up on 13 December 2022. WHITR-AP assisted with the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise, through the analysis of the Questionnaires and development of the draft Framework Action Plan. It also participated in review workshops for the Pacific Regional World Heritage Action Plan Priorities (2021-2025). It attended the Interim Committee Meeting of African Site Managers Network on 22-23 November 2021, and contributed to the Regional Consultations on UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education on 13-14 February 2023; the Evaluation of the WHCBS; and the UN-Habitat Arena - World Urban Forum 11th Session, held on 23-30 June 2022.
17. WHITR-AP continues to strengthen its regional role in the conservation and management of World Heritage through its HeritAP network activities (2021 Heritage Asia-Pacific (HeritAP) Webinar on Conserving the Hearts of Asia: Rural Heritage in 18-19 November 2021) and by starting the WHITRAP Shanghai World Heritage Dialogues thematic webinars series, launched on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (six were organized in partnership with CAUP Tongji University).
18. Two other major related events were organized with CAUP, the International conference on World Heritage and Urban-Rural Sustainable Development: Resilience and Innovation based on Humanity held on 15-16 November 2022; the Academic Forum on 50th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention: Change, Dialogue and Sustainable Development on 25-27 November 2022.
19. In addition, capacity building activities were held with partners at different levels, the WHITR-AP-ICCROM online training on Impact Assessment for World Heritage on 1-9 November 2021; NCCA-WHITR-AP Online Training on Impact Assessments for World Heritage in Philippines on May-June 2022; NCCH – WHITR-AP Online Capacity Building and Technical Assistance on Management for World Heritage in Mongolia on 18-21 October 2022; the Asia-Pacific Training on Conservation and Restoration Techniques of Ancient Buildings for Advanced Talents, 16-18 December 2022; Joint Workshop on Cultural Heritage Conservation in Fuzhou China, July-August 2022; Community-based Monitoring of the Grand Canal China; series activities of World Heritage Education for Young People.
20. WHITR-AP provided technical assistance to States Parties, such as for the impact assessment study of the Great Wall, China; the Sino-Uzbekistan Project on Cultural Tourism Cooperation and Development; visitor experience of and value identification for sites on the Tentative List in China (Sanxingdui, Southern Yue State, Huangguoshu); Technical Review of the Management Planning for the West Lake, Jiuzhai Valley (China),

the Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain, Orkhon Valley, Petroglyphic Complexes (Mongolia); Research on the Potential of Transboundary Nomination around China (2022); Technical Guidelines on the Nomination, Conservation and Management of Fossil Natural Heritage; Research on the Traditional Village Protection and Industry Transformation Strategy (Suzhou China);

21. The **International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST)** continues its mission to develop and promote space-technology applications on the identification, conservation, monitoring and management of World Heritage sites. In 2021, HIST conducted the risk assessment of the Badaling section of the Great Wall and Acropolis in partnership with Harokopio University of Athens and monitored the environmental conditions of Jiuzhaigou Natural World Heritage (China) and the climate change impact for the habitat suitability of Asian elephants and the altitudinal belts of the Tianshan Mountain (China). Meanwhile, HIST organized two training workshops aimed at strengthening capacities of States Parties to better conserve natural and cultural heritage, as follows:
  - a) On 19 October 2021, HIST collaborated with the China-Pakistan Joint Research Centre on Earth Sciences (CPJRC) as well as two institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences to host an International Training Course on Satellite Receiving Station and Remote Sensing Application to cultural and natural heritage conservation and other fields.
  - b) In December 2021-January 2022, HIST partnered with Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) to conduct a training on 'Remote Sensing Data Processing and Applications', which included lessons on airborne and spaceborne remote sensing for archaeology.
22. The **International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO (WHIPIC)**, whose establishment was approved at the 40th session of the UNESCO General Conference in 2019, with the official entry into force of its Agreement in November 2022, has implemented significant projects to raise awareness on heritage interpretation and has launched heritage interpretation programmes in the fields of capacity-building, research, and international cooperation.
23. WHIPIC has offered a capacity-building programme by organising the Online Lecture Series on Understanding World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation. It also hosted six Webinar Series in 2021 under the title "World Heritage, Multiple Memories," where 24 international experts discussed solutions for dissonant heritage.
24. WHIPIC published 'A Review and Annotated Bibliography on Heritage Interpretation and Presentation' in late 2021.
25. WHIPIC began cooperating with Our World Heritage (OWH) in 2021, a global initiative which encourages the civil society's participation in activities pertaining to the Convention. WHIPIC has been involved under the two themes, 'Heritage Places and Memory' and 'Information Technology'. During the project, 26 global cases of Sites of Memory or heritage in dissonance were collected in cooperation with the OWH team. During its period of the Preparatory Office, WHIPIC also worked on its official establishment, and it completed the administrative procedure at the national level in January 2022.
26. For the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, WHIPIC held the '2022 WHIPIC Online Lecture and Webinar Series' from 25 August to 3 November 2022. There were five sessions prepared under the theme 'Bridging the Gap: 50 Years of the World Heritage Convention'.
27. WHIPIC held the '2022 World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation International Forum' from 15-16 November 2022 under two themes: 'World Heritage for Sustainable

Development’ and the ‘Concept and Definition of World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation’.

28. The initial Governing Board Meeting of WHIPIC was held on 31 May 2023. WHIPIC also hosted the **8th Coordination Meeting of Category 2 Centres on World Heritage** from 31 May to 2 June 2023 in Sejong, Republic of Korea. On this occasion, the nine category 2 centres pledged to strengthen their ties and collaboration and adopted the ***Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation among UNESCO Category 2 World Heritage Centres***. The text of this declaration can be consulted at the following address: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/documents/200277/> and is linked on the category 2 centres’ page on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre’s website (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/category2centres>).
29. Since the last session of the Committee, the **African World Heritage Fund (AWHF)** undertook a number of activities that reflect its three operational objectives:
  - a) Contribute to a better representation of African properties on the World Heritage List:
    - Upstream support for four nomination dossiers at an advanced stage of completion (Cameroon, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia). Three of these nomination projects were submitted to the World Heritage Centre in January 2022;
    - Anglophone Regional World Heritage Nomination Training Course organised in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania (2-14 December 2021) to work on seven nomination projects in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania, including a transnational project by Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania;
    - Francophone World Heritage Nomination Training Course organised in Kribi, Cameroon (5-17 May 2022) to work on ten Nomination projects in Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Senegal and Tunisia.
    - Virtual Tentative Listing workshop (20-21 September 2021), an in-person Regional Tentative Listing Workshop in Kigali, Rwanda (28 November – 3 December 2021); Online Workshop for the Validation of the Tentative List of Gabon (20 January 2022), after which the updated Tentative List for Gabon was successfully submitted to the World Heritage Centre;
    - The University of Cape Town, in partnership with AWHF, UNESCO and University College London, hosted the online “International Symposium on the Modern Heritage of Africa” (22-24 September 2021) to notably raise awareness about and address the challenges of the modern heritage of Africa (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGjWY9NzBvw> and the resulting Cape Town Document).
    - The 8th Francophone Regional Course for the Preparation of Nominations for the World Heritage List organized in Kribi, Cameroon (5-17 May 2022) brought together more than 22 participants from 8 countries.
  - b) Contribute to improving the management and conservation of World Heritage Properties in Africa:
    - Five Conservation Grants projects were finalised at Koutammakou (Togo), Mosi-Oa-Tunya/Victoria Falls (Zambia and Zimbabwe) Twyfelfontein (Namibia), Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (Uganda) and Historical Graves of the Necropolis of the Tomb of Askia in Gao (Mali) World Heritage sites for 2021-2022. For 2022-2023, four Conservation Grants were awarded for Côte d’Ivoire, Niger, Cape Verde and Tanzania. Through the Moses Mapesa Educational Research Grant, the AWHF supported the research of

young academics in the field of World Heritage in Africa in 2022-2023, for two Doctoral and two Masters research projects at World Heritage sites in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, and the Seychelles;

- The Professional Immersion Fellowship, designed to facilitate the engagement of heritage scholars and practitioners in field projects to improve the state of conservation of World Heritage properties in Africa, supported the restoration of the damaged traditional walled town of Konso Cultural Landscape (Ethiopia) and the conservation and management of rock art sites in Sehlabathebe National Park (Lesotho);
  - The IUCN-AWHF Programme in West and Central Africa supported the evaluation of management effectiveness of the Ounianga Lakes (Chad) and Saloum Delta (Senegal) through the Enhancing our Heritage toolkit and organised training session for six agents and four eco-guards of the Djoudj Park (Senegal) for the monitoring of birds and their habitats.
  - The AWHF and ICOMOS organised a bilingual workshop on 'Strengthening Capacities of World Heritage Professionals' in Africa hosted in the South African side of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park (23-28 May 2022). Gathering 20 professionals from 13 States Parties, the project helped to broaden the network of African heritage professionals capable of contributing to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Africa;
- c) Include World Heritage properties in Sustainable Growth for Local Communities:
- Virtual workshop on "World Heritage and Sustainable Development in Africa: Implementing the UNESCO 2015 Policy" (6-8 September 2021). Case studies will be published online, which will complete the first volume published in December 2020;
  - Regional Workshop on Entrepreneurship at World Heritage Sites at Shakawe and Tsodilo Hills, Botswana (2-11 December 2021). Three business proposals were developed and are currently being finalised ahead of a pilot implementation phase;
  - AWHF and ICCROM organised the African World Heritage Young Leaders Workshop in Cape Town, South Africa (20–25 May 2022), gathering 28 participants from 15 countries. A "Youth Declaration on the World Heritage Convention in Africa: The next 50" was adopted;
  - AWHF joined forces with Climate Heritage Network (CHN) members to assess the utility of the Climate Vulnerability Index (CVI) in protecting sites. The CVI Africa project has provided foundational training to six African heritage professionals, using both remote learning techniques and hands-on workshops at two World Heritage properties in Tanzania and Nigeria.
30. The final procedures for the finalisation of the updated agreement for the **Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas (RWHIZ)** are underway in order to reinforce the activities of this institution as a Category 2 Centre focused on capacity-building activities for the sub-regions of Central America and the Caribbean.
31. In close collaboration with the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the Category 2 Centre in Zacatecas organized several capacity-building workshops in 2021 in the framework of the sub-regional PAMAC. A workshop on Sustainable Tourism and World Heritage was held online on 2-3 August 2021 to discuss the challenges of World Heritage in the region to face the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impacts on communities. An International Workshop on Risk management for World Heritage properties was organized jointly by the World Heritage Centre, ICCROM, the

National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), the UNESCO Office in Mexico and the Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas on 2-3 September 2021. In collaboration with ICCROM, RWHIZ organized from 13-23 February and from 19-26 April 2023, an online course on 'World Heritage Management: People Nature Culture'. A series of subregional meetings were organized from 20-24 February in Central America, 6-9 March in the Caribbean, and on 28 March 2023 in Mexico, to present the 2023 Work Plan, further involve the States Parties in the activities of the Category 2 Centres and better understand the interests, priorities and particularities of each country with regards to their heritage. A Conference Cycle '50th Anniversary of the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage' was also organised from 23 May to 13 December 2023.

32. During the 8th Coordination Meeting of Category 2 Centres on World Heritage (Sejong, Republic of Korea, 2023), the Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas expressed its intention to host the 9th Coordination Meeting in 2025.
33. The Brazilian government formally requested UNESCO, by a letter of 4 April 2023, to renew the agreement for the **Lucio Costa Institute** in Rio de Janeiro that was signed on 13 June 2018 and entered into force on 30 August 2018. In accordance with the Strategy for Category 2 Institutes and Centres under the auspices of UNESCO (40/C Resolution 79), the process of evaluation prior to the renewal has therefore been launched.
34. The **Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH)**, based in Bahrain, has been implementing several activities in close cooperation with the World Heritage Centre, on the mechanisms of the Convention at large (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates), the elaboration of nominations proposals (Algeria, Yemen), the development of management plans (Algeria, Tunisia) and on sustainable tourism measures (Jordan).
35. Following an assistance request submitted by the National Institute for Heritage (INP) in Tunisia, ARC-WH organised a training workshop for the preparation of State of Conservation Reports and Impact Assessment studies from 7-13 September 2021.
36. A regional workshop on geophysics analysis in heritage conservation was organized on 10-14 October 2021, with the collaboration of the World Monument Fund (WMF).
37. On 20-21 December 2021, a training workshop was held regarding the World Heritage Convention and the Statement of the OUV of the natural components of the World Heritage property "The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities" (Iraq).
38. ARC-WH has also pursued fostering synergies between the World Heritage Convention and the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage, by organizing an international expert meeting from 21-23 March 2022. Following the recommendations of this meeting, the Arab Regional Course for Capacity Building in the Field of Marine Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage was launched from 26 February to 9 March 2023, in cooperation with the Heritage Commission in Saudi Arabia and the UNESCO Chair for Underwater Cultural Heritage located in Alexandria University.
39. Technical and financial assistance was provided to Lebanon in the framework of UNESCO's LiBeirut Initiative to assess the cultural significance of the damaged area and its surroundings.
40. In November 2022, ARC-WH completed and supervised two projects in the Walled City of Shibam, a Restoration Program for Damaged Buildings and the Rehabilitation of the Market, through the funding of ALIPH. The projects were implemented by the General Organisation for the Preservation of Historic Cities in Yemen (Branch of Shibam Hadhramaut) (GOPHCY-SHIBAM), with assistance from local Yemeni partners.



41. From 27 to 30 March 2022, ARC-WH, in collaboration with the Heritage Commission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, organised a training workshop on 'The Mechanisms and Concepts of the World Heritage Convention' in Bahrain. Under the World Heritage Leadership Programme (WHLP), it jointly organised a capacity-building workshop for Saudi heritage professionals held at the World Heritage property 'Rock Art in the Hail Region of Saudi Arabia' from 20 to 24 November 2022.
42. From 24 to 28 July 2022, under the WHLP, it organised a regional Capacity Building Workshop on World Heritage Risk Management in the Arab Region in Bahrain.
43. In cooperation with the WHLP and the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment, ARC-WH organised an online training workshop for Arab experts and professionals from 17 to 19 October 2022: "Impact assessment: in the context of World Heritage sites".
44. From 29 January to 2 February 2023 was organised a workshop on 'Strengthening Capacities of World Heritage Professionals for Cultural and Natural Sites in the Arab Region', in Aswan, Egypt, in collaboration with ICOMOS, IUCN, WHC, AWHF and the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The aim was to establish a network of Arab experts that will be able to assist Arab countries, Advisory Bodies, and other institutions in effectively implementing the World Heritage Convention.
45. From 5 to 9 March 2023, ARC-WH, in cooperation with ICCROM, launched the 'Climate Action for World Heritage: Advanced Workshop on Risk Management in World Heritage Sites in the Arab States Region', which is part of the capacity-building programme of Arab experts in the field of risk management leadership in the region.
46. From 11 to 17 March 2023, ARC-WH provided logistical support to UNESCO for the implementation of the First Workshop on Digital Documentation for World Heritage in the Arab region. The workshop was implemented by UNESCO in collaboration with the UNESCO chair for World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism management in the Arab Region, as part of UNESCO's Dive into Heritage project funded by the Ministry of Culture of Saudi Arabia.
47. In celebration of the 10th anniversary of ARC-WH, from 25-29 September 2022, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, was organised a series of activities during the World Heritage Days event to mark the special occasion.
48. ARC-WH launched the 'My Heritage Competition' under the Arab Youth for Heritage initiative that invited Arab youth to create short films of World Heritage sites they lived in or lived close to. Five winners were selected and were brought to Bahrain to showcase their winning films at the World Heritage Days celebration in September 2022.
49. ARC-WH also implemented the activity "Mitigation of hurricane impacts on endemic and threatened plants of Socotra Archipelago" in Yemen, supported by the World Heritage Fund, and other projects at the property for the restoration of the mangroves, and to promote traditional land management practices as a means of mitigating climate change impacts.
50. ARC-WH has also pursued awareness raising, through an international conference on Integrated Reconstruction and Post-Trauma Impact on Communities and Socio-Economic Aspects of Recovery in November 2021, that resulted in a publication.
51. The second edition of the book *World Heritage of the Arab Countries* was published, in addition to two reports: the TABE'A Report III (Nature-Culture linkages, Conflict and Climate Change Impacts on Natural Heritage in the Arab Region) (<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49845>), and the report "Exploring Cultural Heritage of the Arab Region: Potential offered for a more balanced World Heritage List" (<https://www.arcwh.org/news/exploring-cultural-heritage-of-the-arab-region-potential-offered-for-a-more-balanced-world-heritage-list>).

52. A study on “Conservation and Development Opportunities of Urban Heritage in the Arab States” was published in Arabic in 2022.
53. The World Heritage Education Programme, through its diverse range of activities and initiatives is supporting the capacities of the State Parties in furthering heritage education and awareness among youth globally. In this regard, action camp projects continue to be implemented under the World Heritage Volunteers Initiative at World Heritage sites globally, including concrete awareness-raising and hands-on activities at the sites carried out by young volunteers, local communities, organizations and institutions. In a concerted effort to incorporate World Heritage into early education curricula, the Programme continues to provide support to States Parties (through their NatComs) towards adapting educational resource kits into national and regional languages. The programme also launched the update of the “Kit: World Heritage in Young Hands”, first developed in 1998, and currently existing in 40 national language versions as the flagship educational resource on World Heritage for secondary school teachers. The update aims to revise and reshape the content of the Kit to reflect the evolution of the World Heritage Convention, to include policy developments from the past decades, as well as to align the Kit to the UNESCO Open Access Policy so as to aid the schoolteachers in comprehensive curriculum development towards World Heritage.

### III. EVALUATION OF THE WHCBS AND WAY FORWARD

54. Since the adoption of the WHCBS, the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies and other capacity-building partners have been working closely on the implementation of capacity-building activities. They have done so at the international, regional and local/site levels, aiming to address the challenges and meet the needs of World Heritage practitioners, institutions (including decision and policy makers) and other networks and communities, including civil society at large. The reinforcement of the capacity-building pillar of the Convention continues to be a priority to equip States Parties and all partners, including World Heritage site managers, with the relevant expertise to protect and manage their cultural, natural and mixed World Heritage properties. This also ensures that the World Heritage List can be representative, credible and balanced, while also reinforcing the credibility of the Convention as a whole.
55. As the WHCBS reached its 10-year anniversary in 2021, the World Heritage Committee requested, in Decision **43 COM 6** (Baku, 2019), a results-based evaluation of the implementation of the WHCBS, in consultation with category 2 centres and other capacity-building partners, for examination in 2021. It also requested a review of the progress and outcomes of the WHCBS, based on the above-mentioned evaluation, for examination by the World Heritage Committee in 2022. The Committee further invited States Parties to contribute the extra-budgetary funding required for this evaluation process.
56. By 2021, however, no extra-budgetary funding had been received for this evaluation exercise, and it was therefore not possible to present the evaluation to the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session (Fuzhou/online, 2021). As a result, the Committee, in Decision **44 COM 6**, considered ‘reallocating USD 30,000 as seed money from the World Heritage Fund under item 14 of the agenda to initiate the evaluation and the creation of a new WHCBS’. The Committee also noted with appreciation the financial support offered by Saudi Arabia through an earmarked voluntary contribution to the World Heritage Fund to conduct the Independent Evaluation of the implementation of the WHCBS, and reiterated its invitation to States Parties to contribute financial resources for the updating of the WHCBS through earmarked contributions to the World Heritage Fund or by providing extra-budgetary support to the World Heritage Centre for this purpose.

57. Thanks to this financial support, which was made available to UNESCO in February 2022, the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM, in cooperation with IUCN and ICOMOS, were able to launch an open bidding process for an independent evaluator. As a result, UNESCO was able to contract an independent evaluation firm, the E.C.O. Institute for Ecology (Austria), to carry out the evaluation of the WHCBS, in line with the World Heritage Committee's requests. The evaluation was conducted from May 2022 to April 2023 and the full evaluation report is available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/capacity-building/>.
58. The evaluation process involved a total of 22 in-depth interviews, including with many capacity-building partners, along with a desk review of the background and key outcomes of the WHCBS since 2011.
59. Close consultation with an Evaluation Reference Group, composed of interested Committee members and States Parties and other key capacity-building actors, ensured that inputs from the main actors and beneficiaries of capacity building were considered during the independent evaluation process and informed the guidelines for the upcoming revision of the WHCBS. The draft final outcomes of the evaluation were shared with the Reference Group ahead of a meeting held on 30 March 2023, during which the Evaluators presented the outcomes of their work, and participants had an opportunity to provide feedback ahead of the finalisation of the evaluation report.
60. The World Heritage Centre invited interested States Parties to provide feedback in writing after this meeting, which was also taken into account for the finalisation of the report.
61. The evaluation highlighted the success of the WHCBS in providing an effective framework to develop actions and programmes that strengthen the capacities of practitioners, institutions, communities and networks in charge of the conservation and management of World Heritage. It did so notably by integrating the paradigm shifts into statutory processes and policies, establishing structured approaches for enhanced outreach and targeted delivery activities through the World Heritage Leadership Programme, further engaging with the Category 2 Centres, strengthening cooperation and streamlining the WHCBS into UNESCO's programmes through impactful activities.
62. The evaluation also highlighted the challenges and limits of the WHCBS, the full and effective implementation of which was notably hindered by a lack of achievable milestones and indicators and of an overarching concept for capacity building. The WHCBS also lacked financial and human resources for its implementation and coordination at the international level and structured processes.
63. Based on these results and conclusions, the Evaluators formulated a series of recommendations to guide the upcoming revision of the WHCBS, which can be found in their evaluation report at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/capacity-building/>. In summary, the recommendations are as follows:
  - a) **Process for the development of the new WHCBS:** it is recommended to establish a global task force led by WHC, with ICCROM as the lead advisor, to establish regional working groups. These should be led by the regional units of the WHC and identify priority themes and needs, based on the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, in addition to validation by regional stakeholders.
  - b) **Clear understanding of capacity building:** it is recommended to define capacity building as the ability to manage and coordinate an "evidence-based policy cycle", whereby stakeholders engage in an evidence-based process to identify solutions for jointly perceived challenges, test the solutions, and transfer them into shared policies, norms and standards.

- c) **Theory of Change:** it is recommended to establish enhanced coordination and management at the level of WHC to leverage existing and future flagship initiatives for capacity building at individual, organizational and system levels.
  - d) **Target groups for capacity building:** it is recommended to define multipliers, change agents, decision makers, influential bodies and networks as direct target groups for a new WHCBS. The indirect target groups shall be practitioners, administrations, and communities at the level of States parties and sites.
  - e) **Vision:** it is recommended that the vision of a new WHCBS should focus on “change agents using World Heritage as learning sites for policy solutions addressing jointly experienced challenges in achieving the SDGs.”
  - f) **Mission:** it is recommended that the new WHCBS directly contribute to the 5Cs, e.g. by “promoting the development of effective capacity-building measures for the understanding and implementation of the World Heritage Convention and related instruments.”
  - g) **Expected results:** In line with the theory of change, vision and mission for a new WHCBS, it is recommended to include the following key results:
    - i) Guidance for the implementation of policy priorities made available for practitioners and States Parties;
    - ii) Effective coordination established for testing and continuous improvement of guidelines, norms and standards;
    - iii) Content, products, and providers made available to target groups in line with needs and policy priorities.
  - h) **Costs and financing:** it is recommended to elaborate a dedicated budget with estimated costs for the implementation of the WHCBS. This shall be used to demonstrate the funding gap and raise long-term, core funding through the World Heritage Fund and UNESCO’s budgets; medium-term funding through programme- and project-based funding; as well as short-term funding for strategic interventions.
  - i) **Collaboration with programmes and projects:** it is recommended to develop a portfolio of strategic projects and programmes at global, regional, and national levels contributing to the implementation of the WHCBS.
  - j) **Collaboration with category 2 centres and other capacity-building providers:** it is recommended to strengthen the mandate of category 2 centres and other key partners with strong networks in each region as strategic partners (i.e., change agents) for the implementation of the WHCBS.
  - k) **Planning, monitoring and reporting:** it is recommended to use the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting as a valuable information source on capacity needs, priority themes and baselines while ensuring that essential elements for project cycle management are established.
64. In view of the timeline for the present and following sessions, it is recommended that a progress report on the participatory process for the development of a revised WHCBS be presented at the 46th session and that the final draft of the revised Strategy be presented for adoption at the 47th session of the World Heritage Committee, subject to the availability of sufficient funding.

## IV. DRAFT DECISION

### **Draft Decision: 45 COM 6**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/23/45.COM/6,
2. Recalling Decisions **43 COM 6** and **44 COM 6**, adopted at its 43rd (Baku, 2019) and extended 44th (Fuzhou/online, 2021) sessions respectively,
3. Commends the progress made by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the Advisory Bodies, the States Parties, the category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO related to World Heritage, as well as the UNESCO Chairs with the implementation of the World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy (WHCBS), and notably the efforts to maintain and adapt capacity-building activities during the global COVID-19 pandemic;
4. Takes note of the progress made with the implementation of the regional and thematic capacity-building strategies and initiatives, especially the Strategy for World Heritage in Africa to implement the UNESCO Global Priority Africa (Flagship Programme 3: Fostering Cultural Heritage and Capacity development), and calls upon States Parties and all concerned partners and stakeholders, including the Advisory Bodies (ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN), to support and follow up on the implementation of the strategies and initiatives developed for each regional and thematic area;
5. Thanks the Governments of Norway, the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Switzerland for the continued financial support they extended to the WHCBS and the World Heritage Leadership Programme, also thanks the Governments of the People's Republic of China, Japan, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, France and the Sultanate of Oman for supporting World Heritage capacity-building activities, notably in the Africa region, and encourages States Parties and other stakeholders to continue supporting the implementation of the WHCBS by providing financial support and/or reinforcing the human resources of the institutions involved;
6. Recalls that category 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs have the mandate of contributing to the implementation of the Organization's strategic priorities, programmes and global development agendas, notably through capacity building, welcomes the progress made by category 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs in the field of World Heritage, and encourages States Parties to make full use of the services and resources that category 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs provide, in a spirit of international cooperation;
7. Commends the organisation of the 8th Coordination Meeting of the World Heritage-related category 2 centres, hosted by the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (Republic of Korea), takes note of the "Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation among UNESCO Category 2 World Heritage Centres" adopted on this occasion, and notes with thanks that the Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas (Mexico) has expressed its intention to organise the 9th edition of the Coordination Meeting;
8. Expresses again its gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for providing the financial support required to carry out the independent evaluation of the WHCBS;
9. Takes note of the independent evaluation of the WHCBS, initiated through cooperation between UNESCO, ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS and carried out by the E.C.O. Institute for Ecology, and endorses its conclusions and recommendations;
10. Welcomes the involvement of an Evaluation Reference Group composed of interested Committee members, States Parties and other key capacity-building actors in the

evaluation of the WHCBS and the development of guidelines for the planned update of this Strategy, and thanks the numerous States Parties that actively participated in the evaluation process at the site, national and (sub-)regional levels;

11. Invites all States Parties to provide dedicated voluntary contributions under the World Heritage Fund and/or extra-budgetary support to the World Heritage Centre for capacity building, since the Evaluation has further demonstrated the need to enhance capacity building and highlighted the lack of dedicated funding for capacity-building activities under the World Heritage Fund thus far;
12. Reiterates its appeal to States Parties to contribute financial resources for the update of the WHCBS through earmarked contributions to the World Heritage Fund or by providing extra-budgetary support to the World Heritage Centre for this purpose;
13. Requests the World Heritage Centre, in cooperation with ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS, to develop a new World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy for the decade 2025-2035, including clear priorities, strategic objectives, expected outputs and outcomes, relying on the outcomes of the independent evaluation of the WHCBS and the guidelines developed by the Evaluators for this purpose, and taking into account the results of the Periodic Reporting process, to be presented for review at its 47th session, if funding allows;
14. Finally requests the World Heritage Centre and ICCROM to submit a progress report on the World Heritage-related capacity building activities and the revision of the WHCBS, for examination at its 46th session.