

The Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation among the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres

1. We recognize that the World Heritage Category 2 Centres are institutions that contribute towards strengthening sustainable development through the conservation and protection of World Heritage properties within the framework of the World Heritage Convention and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. We also recognize that the World Heritage Category 2 Centres are key actors in the implementation of UNESCO's *World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy* to ensure that stakeholders and rights-holders at all levels have relevant expertise to conserve and manage World Heritage.
3. We recognize that all heritages are to be interpreted and presented based on the understanding of its natural and cultural components in a multifaceted and inclusive manner reflecting diverse identities and experiences in various regions of the world.
4. We will strive to achieve the following common objectives:
 - a. Provide capacity-building programmes to stakeholders at all levels including local communities as key actors, so that they can participate effectively in the conservation and management of World Heritage sites.
 - b. Understand the regional characteristics and recognize difficulties of conserving and managing World Heritage in each region, and seek solutions suitable for regional situations.
 - c. Improve the visibility of the contribution of Category 2 Centres to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, e.g. through dedicated reporting by the representative of the Centres directly to the World Heritage Committee.

d. Strengthen and develop the expertise of the Category 2 Centres and get involved in World Heritage working processes.

5. We will cooperate to achieve our common objectives as follows:

a. Taking advantage of the geographical locations of Category 2 Centres around the world, we will collaborate on implementing the Regional Capacity Building Strategy and its Action Plans produced as a result of the Periodic Reporting of World Heritage.

b. Explore the possibility of implementing joint capacity building activities at a multilateral level by pooling resources of the respective Centres.

c. In order to strengthen the capabilities of Category 2 Centres, annual seminars of Category 2 Centres shall be held to share best practices, knowledge, and expertise through hybrid and in-person modalities, and personnel exchanges between institutions shall be conducted if necessary.

d. Each Category 2 Centre, to the extent of its possibilities, will make its capacities available to the other Category 2 Centres, in terms of support, to strengthen the cooperation between Category 2 Centres and achieve common objectives, e.g. through joint projects in all regions.

e. We will encourage the partners to join our efforts to identify World Heritage in cooperation with the World Heritage Committee Advisory Bodies, and to support the conservation and management of World Heritage with State Parties, and other stakeholders, such as site managers, decision-makers and local communities.

6. We support the common objectives at the 8th Annual Meeting of the World Heritage Category 2 Centres in 2023, and we commit to working on strengthening the cooperation between the World Heritage Category 2 Centres to carry out the declaration in the future.