

The 8th Annual Coordination Meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres

**31st May - 2nd June 2023
Sejong, Republic of Korea**

Final Report



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Overview

Background Information

The Category 2 Centres related to World Heritage (C2Cs) are the organizations that contribute to the sustainable development of the World Heritage sites by enhancing conservation and management and participating in policies and programmes agreed upon by the General Assembly of States Parties to World Heritage Convention and World Heritage Committee.

In particular, the expectation of C2Cs role to provide professional knowledge and expertise to all levels of stakeholders for the protection and management of World Heritage (44COM6, 14p) that complies with UNESCO's "World Heritage Capacity-Building Strategy" framework is on the rise.

Annual coordination meetings of UNESCO Category 2 Centres and Institutes (UNESCO C2Cs) dedicated to World Heritage foster the sharing of expertise, synergy development, and exchange among the centers. These gatherings are in accordance with Resolution 17 GA 9 (UNESCO, 2009) of the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention, which initially called for the organization of the inaugural meeting. Subsequently, the UNESCO C2Cs strongly recommended the continuation of these yearly meetings. These gatherings provide a valuable platform for interaction and exchange with the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre (WHC), focusing on topics aligned with World Heritage Committee Decisions, such as the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy and Resolutions approved by the General Assembly.

Since 2010, a total of seven Annual Coordination Meetings have taken place with the aim of enhancing cooperation among C2Cs worldwide and promoting the effectiveness and unity of their endeavors through the exchange of expertise and experiences. However, following the

7th Annual Coordination Meeting in 2019, subsequent gatherings have been postponed due to the ongoing pandemic.

However, in recognition of the need for international cooperation to alleviate various threats on World Heritage sites, the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites under the auspices of UNESCO (WHIPIC) cordially volunteered to host the 8th Annual Coordination Meeting in 2023.

Thus, the 8th Annual Coordination Meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres was held between May 31st and June 2nd in Sejong, Republic of Korea on the premises of WHIPIC. The meeting was attended by representatives from the UNESCO Beijing Office ICOMOS, IUCN-ICCROM, benefiting as well from the online participation of a UNESCO World Heritage Centre representative. In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives from the following C2Cs:

- African World Heritage Fund (AWHF)
- Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH)
- International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST)
- World Heritage Institute of Training and Research-Asia and Pacific (WHITR-ap)
- Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas (IRPMZ C2C)
- World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region - Wildlife Institute of India (WII – C2C)
- Regional Heritage Management Training Centre 'Lucio Costa' (IPHAN)
- International Centre for Rock Art and the World Heritage Convention
- International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites (WHIPIC)

Objectives of the Meeting

The main objective of the 8th C2C Annual Coordination Meeting was to revitalize the collaboration among C2Cs that was disrupted by the pandemic. This meeting aimed to establish a proactive cooperation system and build a common mission for strengthening and enhancing solidarity that meets with the core principle guiding actions of UNESCO (41C/4, 4p).

In accordance with UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (41C/4), Strategic Objective 3 and Outcome 5, "Protection and promotion of the diversity of heritage and cultural expressions," the Meeting explored ways to apply an inclusive approach to the interpretation and presentation of world heritage in all activities and projects that C2Cs will undertake in the future.

The Expected Results

- Reidentify the roles and functions of C2Cs and set a common direction for future contributions to the protection of World Heritage sites.
- Establish short-term strategies for C2Cs to narrow the gap between the public and World Heritage sites that have been separated by Covid-19.
- Develop strategic roles for C2Cs in the World Heritage Committee.
- Adopt a Declaration for cooperation and solidarity among C2Cs.

Methodology of the Meeting

The two-day meeting was organized in five sessions, excluding the opening session, and was followed by a field trip to the Capital Fortifications of Hanyang, the National Museum of Korea, and the Changdeokgung Palace Complex. The first session was moderated by a representative of WHIPIC and focused on World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation, featuring four presentations, each followed by a Q&A session or discussion. The second session was conceived to function as a review of each C2Cs activities since the last Annual Coordination Meeting and to update the participants on the successes and challenges each C2C had encountered in the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The third session gave the floor to the Advisory Bodies' representatives and produced a fruitful discussion between C2C representatives and the IUCN-ICCROM and ICOMOS representatives. The fourth session had a focus on the involvement of C2Cs in the third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, whereas the fifth session concluded the meeting with a final revision of the Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation, as well as with the designation of the following meeting's organizers.

Outline of the Meeting

Opening Session

The opening session commenced with an introduction of the participants, followed by a brief welcoming remark from Ms. Suhee Chae, Director-General of WHIPIC.

Next, the participants viewed a recorded congratulatory message from Mr. Lazare Elondou Assomo, the Director of the World Heritage Centre. Mr. Assomo highlighted the significance of the current meeting for both being the first occurrence after the COVID-19 pandemic, but also for the premiere of being hosted by the Republic of Korea. Mr. Assomo noted the opportunities for the C2Cs to connect, exchange knowledge, and strengthen the capacity of C2Cs, which are made available through the Annual Coordination Meetings.

Session 1: Topic: World Heritage Interpretation and Presentation and The Role of C2Cs

The session was moderated by Ms. Shim Haeree, Head of the Education and Networking Office of WHIPIC, who also delivered a joint presentation with Ms. Sujeong Lee, Head of the Research Office of WHIPIC on the topic of World Heritage interpretation and presentation focusing on the role of WHIPIC in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Ms. Sujeong Lee displayed the evolution of the concept of heritage throughout history, noting that the current understanding of the term defines heritage as a core resource in sustainable development, and stressed a need to expand the perception of heritage as a community-centered cultural process. Ms. Sujeong Lee further presented the evolution of the concepts of interpretation and presentation and, the efforts made by WHIPIC to redefine these concepts given recently emerging needs, cited by Ms. Sujeong Lee as “the credibility of the list, sustainability, and the community”. Ms. Sujeong Lee also listed WHIPIC’s medium-term

projects in terms of research and development. She was followed by Ms. Shim who presented WHIPIC's capacity-building ongoing and future projects, both domestically and internationally.

Mr. Shahbaz Khan, the director of UNESCO Beijing Office appreciated that capacity-building programs carried out by C2Cs internationally could have a more lasting impact if they collaborated directly with UNESCO offices and with UNESCO Chairs, in terms of resources.

Mr. Ebrahim Al Khalifa, the Deputy Director of ARC-WH presented his congratulations and interest in the upcoming projects and inquired about the vision of WHIPIC regarding capacity building concerning criterion (vi). Ms. Sujeong Lee responded that WHIPIC is attempting to extend the way criterion (vi) is assessed in the dossier, and also how the physical remains can be connected with it in the case of sites associated with conflict. Ms. Shim added that one potential topic that could be tackled in the upcoming World Heritage Committee side event planned by WHIPIC could be criterion (vi).

Mr. Mario Santana Quintero emphasized the importance of "credibility", mentioning that the aspect of credibility has to be linked with the actors and the target groups (advisory bodies, state parties, the community). Mr. Santana also stressed that criterion (vi) is essentially associated with the aspect of justice and legal aspects, and raised the aspect of reconciliation. Ms. Sujeong Lee stated that WHIPIC strives to take a neutral stance in terms of judgment and have a future-oriented attitude.

Mr. Vusithemba Ndimba noted that WHIPIC's focus on youth may be helpful in order to build a human resource for the future of cultural heritage. Regarding criterion (vi) and the issue of reconciliation concerning heritage sites in areas of conflict, Mr. Ndimba suggested that they are central issues that require neutrality.

Ms. Claudia Feierabend Leal asked about the affiliations and exchanges of WHIPIC research with universities. Ms. Sujeong Lee mentioned that it is one of the future projects of WHIPIC to collaborate with universities.

Following this discussion, Ms. Leal gave a case presentation under the subtopic of values beyond OUV, such as the communities, that took precedence. In order to illustrate the issues related to the topic experienced by the C2C from Brazil, three cases were chosen: Heritage Education in the Fortification Context of Perambuco, Paraty and Ilha Grande - Culture and Biodiversity and Valong Wharf Archaeological Site, for which the representative identified two key aspects necessary for analyzing the selected cases: the multilayered nature of World Heritage, composed of narratives, meanings and the human factor on one side, and the present.

Heritage was defined as a fundamental concept underlying the concept of nation, a means to produce visibility, and a resource used in redefining and challenging values and identities. Ms. Leal continued by highlighting the importance of communities, and their impact on the Strategic Objective. The CLC representative concluded that the present meaning of a World Heritage site may be not only a resource for redefining heritage discourse proposed by WHC, but to also make an impact on the relationships with the territory.

The second case presentation was given by the representative of the International Centre for Rock Art and The World Heritage Convention, Mr. Pablo Jimenez Diaz, who presented on the topic of rock art management network promotion and fostering cooperation. Mr. Jimenez introduced rock art as a part of cultural landscapes, being both a part of natural heritage and cultural heritage, and indicated the multiple connections between rock art and the population living in the area, with intangible heritage, and how this brings about issues such as tourism management and the environment. Mr. Jimenez stressed the importance of developing tools and strengthening cooperation between stakeholders such as the communities, the local authorities, national authorities, etc. The forces quoted by Mr. Jimenez as challenges to the cultural landscape were economic development, climate change, as well as migration and rural depopulation, and massive tourism.

Mr. Jimenez then listed a series of examples of cooperation between stakeholders - national, regional, e.g. AMUFOR - Forest Municipalities Association - such as documents, and guides devised to counter these challenges. Other methods listed by the representative were heritage

and landscape integration (replanting the landscape with the original flora), fencing, signaling, and virtual guided sites, and the dissemination of information through means such as virtual exhibitions, interpretation, and dissemination centers, etc.

The third case presentation was given by Mr. Gautam Talukdar, the Scientist F and Nodal Officer of the Wildlife Institute of India. Mr. Talukdar's presentation focused on natural heritage, but it drew attention to the importance of interpretation understood as "storytelling", and to the necessity to address the needs of the audience, highlighting the existence of many types of tourists. The challenges occurring in natural heritage interpretation, as Mr. Talukdar noted, are not limited to the characteristics of the audiences, but also of the natural heritage, finally highlighting intangible challenges such as cultural connections.

The representative of WII employed three case studies to illustrate the nature of the relationship between OUVs and the local communities. The cases presented were Sundarbans National Park, the Khangchendzonga WHS, and the Keoladeo WHS, which were selected to illustrate the nature-culture linkage (i.e. religious connotations and everyday life and functions) co-occurring with other linkages that exist between the WHS and the communities.

This last presentation was followed by a discussion session.

Mr. Al Khalifa mentioned that in the case of the Arab Region, the main focus is on heritage conservation and that the main projects undertaken by ARC-WH in collaboration with Member States are related to impact assessments. Ms. Shim inquired about the possible benefits interpretation could bring to the impact assessments. Mr. Al Khalifa agreed that interpretation could play an important role in offering an alternative for developers, as well as regarding tourism. Still, however, it is currently lacking and should be explored further. Ms. Sujeong Lee expanded on the topic of impact assessments and noted the importance of attributes, on which however currently there is no consensus and the relationship between them and HIAs and EIAs.

Ms. Eugene Jo, the programme manager of ICCROM added that impact assessments have been supplemented with additional sections for values other than OUVs could be re-coded,

such as national or local values. Ms. Jo also admitted the complications brought about by the lack of definition for the attribute. Ms. Jo also highlighted the importance of interpretation as the connecting element between the OUVs, other values, communities, and management.

Mr. Talukdar illustrated the importance of interpretation for conservation with the example of the Amur falcons in the region of Nagaland, in the case of which a change of narrative helped protect a species.

Mr. Li Xin, the deputy secretary-general of WHITRAP, stressed the importance of research and networks, the conjoining of which could be achieved through technology, at a transboundary level.

Mr. Carlos Augusto Torres Pérez, the director general of IRPMZ shed light on the issues the Category 2 Centre in Zacatecas is facing, pinpointing the issue of risk management due to the characteristics of the natural environment (earthquakes, floods, etc.), and he noted that interpretation is of great importance due to the links between the identification of the values and their conservation.

Session 2: Topic: Review of C2Cs' Individual and Joint Activities (2019-2022): Difficulties and Progress in the Context of COVID-19

The session was moderated by Mr. Al Khalifa and commenced with a presentation also delivered by Mr. Al Khalifa as the representative of the C2C which had hosted the 7th Annual Coordination Meeting.

Mr. Al Khalifa briefly reviewed the background, the attendees, the objectives, the methodology and the conclusions, and the resolutions of the 7th Annual Coordination Meeting in order to refresh the participants' memories of the meeting hosted by ARC-WH in Bahrein in 2019.

Mr. Khan asked about the communication mechanism between the C2Cs since the last Coordination Meeting, to which Mr. Al Khalifa responded that it had been taking place on a

bilateral basis while specifying that in the pre-pandemic period, the C2Cs would convene twice a year, the second time on the margins of the World Heritage Committee.

Mr. Khan suggested that coordination is enhanced by the creation of a newsletter, recommending that centres with access to more resources may take this role on a permanent or rotating basis.

Following this introductory presentation, the floor was taken by the representative of the African World Heritage Fund, Mr. Ndimma, who gave a presentation about the history of The African World Heritage Fund, its mission and vision, its past activities and modus operandi, the specific challenges the African region is facing, as well as achievements and projects initiated and carried out during the 2019-2022 period. The activities performed by the AWHF, such as trainings and skill development in tentative listing and World Heritage nomination through mentorship and technical field assistance and grants brought about 3 new inscribed properties and 13 complete nomination dossiers.

Following the African World Heritage Fund, the deputy secretary general of HIST, Mr. Shaobo Liu took the floor and introduced Space Technologies for World Heritage Conservation through a review of the activities of HIST since the last Annual Meeting. In the past four years, HIST carried out several conservation projects including the UAV-based optical remote sensing survey in Bagan World Heritage Site, the monitoring land cover and environmental changes around heritage sites along Silk Roads: Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor, and an emergency monitoring, and assessment of the potential impact of the super tropical cyclone Harold on the East Rennet WHS. In addition, HIST has been monitoring natural and mixed heritage sites as part of its scientific research and its case report has been included in a 2022 report regarding big earth data released by the Chinese MOFA. Based on these researches, HIST has written and published four books, one of which is *Introduction to Space Archaeology*, the first book of its kind dedicated to reviewing space information technology applications for archaeology.

Mr. Liu also shared that HIST has organized more than 20 events during the 2019-2022 period, the HIST-IUCN side event on the margins of the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee being the most noteworthy event, with which HIST signed an MOU in 2022. In addition, HIST organized 4 training workshops for 300 site managers from 13 countries.

The next presenter was Mr. Carlos Augusto Torres Perez. Mr. Torres Perez briefly recounted the history of the Centre, acquainting the audience with the mission, objectives, and lines of action of the centre and with the parameters that define World Heritage-related issues in the subregion of Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Mr. Torres Perez then proceeded to recount the events that took place in the 2019-2022 interval. In 2019, the IRPMZ participated in 2 workshops: Basic Concepts of the Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972 and Towards a Regional Strategy for Updating and Harmonization of Tentative Lists in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. The centre received a positive evaluation for its activities since its establishment from the WHC in September 2021.

During the pandemic, the IRPMZ organized a series of online workshops using the platform #ShareOurHeritage. Finally, in the post-pandemic period, the IRPMZ presented its plans for 2023, which include strengthening cooperation between the countries in the region and their participation in the activities of the centre, as well as strengthening the connections with Centro Lucio Costa, ICCROM, and the WHC. In addition, Mr. Torres Perez presented the intention to develop a cooperation framework that aims to address capacity development needs in the region by establishing a comprehensive action plan, optimizing existing resources, and providing a multilingual capacity-building program.

The next presentation was delivered by the representative of Centro Lucio Costa C2C. Ms. Leal began her presentation by offering a short review of the centre's past activities, as well as of its structure and modus operandi. Ms. Leal proceeded with a summary of the difficulties encountered by the Brazilian centre due to internal political disturbances in the context of the

Covid pandemic, which greatly affected cultural institutions and actors. The Lucio Costa Centre's budget had been drastically reduced to zero during the 2020-2022 period, which happened alongside a decrease in the workforce. The Lucio Costa Centre had to push back its Governance and Executive Board meetings during the pandemic period, however, it did hold a workshop on Risk Management in Chile in 2022, and it offered technical assistance to representatives at the WHC Sessions in 2019 and 2021.

The centre expects a more optimistic situation for the upcoming period, as the budget has been increased. The centre also is expected to undergo its evaluation from UNESCO in the 2023-2024 period. Later in 2023 and 2024, the Centre has several capacity-building activities planned, such as workshops on the 1970 Convention, on the World Heritage Tentative List, on World Heritage Application, and risk management. In addition, the centre is performing comparative research on risk management with Brazil, Cabo Verde, and Colombia, as well as research on language diversity.

Next, Mr. Jimenez, the representative from the International Centre for Rock Art and the World Heritage Convention, delivered a presentation that showcased the centre's activities and challenges during the recent period. Mr. Jimenez began his presentation with a short introduction into the natural distribution of Spain's rock art Heritage sites, and he consequently familiarized the audience with the history of the C2C, revealing the difficulties the centre has encountered in obtaining funding from the government, a reason from which it has not been isolated from the Ministry of Culture. Another problem presented by Mr. Jimenez is the federal form of administration of Spain and the fact that the sites are commonly spread across more divisions.

Mr. Jimenez continued to present the objectives of the centre, its organizational structure, and the activities it promotes, including international exhibitions.

Following Mr. Jimenez, Mr. Li Xin, spoke about the projects and ventures of WHITRAP during the past years. Mr. Li began his presentation by explaining the organizational structure of WHITRAP and its activities. Mr. Li explained that the core activity of the centre, which is “The Global Awards for WH Education Innovative Cases”, and theme activities, such as forums, lectures, site events, online exhibitions, and publications. “The Global Awards for WH Education Innovative Cases” had been initiated during the 44th World Heritage Committee in 2021, and it aims to showcase and promote successful cases of educational programs, materials, or approaches that contribute to raising awareness and understanding of World Heritage sites and their significance.

As for the theme activities, Mr. Li listed a series of online activities that had taken place in 2022, such as the World Heritage and Urban Sustainable Development Conference, and World Heritage Cities Exhibition. Regarding its upcoming projects, WHITRAP is anticipating the 2023 World Heritage Creative Innovator Forum, which will take place in Zhengzhou.

Ms. Heba Aziz delivered the next presentation reviewing C2C activities during the 3-year hiatus. The director of ARC-WH joined the conference online and ensured the participants of the support of the Arab Regional Centre for any decision that will be taken during the Meeting. Ms. Aziz then briefly introduced the Arab Regional Center and highlighted the characteristics of the Arab region and the distribution of heritage sites in the area.

Ms. Aziz also noted that the majority of the centre’s activities consist of workshops, public events and lectures, technical and financial assistance, and conference participation. The center also is preoccupied with translating guidelines from the WHC and from the Advisory Bodies, as well as the centre’s own publications, related to which Ms. Aziz announced the recent agreement with Springer, which would ensure a better distribution.

Regarding the technical assistance project, the ARC-WH representative listed 3 rehabilitation and restoration projects in Yemen and Socotra, as well as financial assistance to Lebanon. The

centre has undergone several capacity projects in the 2020-2022 period in Yemen, Algeria, the UAE, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, focusing on risk management, conservation, preparation of Tentative lists, the nomination process, the statement of the OUV and Impact assessments, among others. The centre has also partnered with the UNESCO chair for World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Management in the Arab Region, which has several projects, including a master's programme on WH management.

The final C2C to deliver a presentation was The Wildlife Institute of India, represented by Mr. Gautam Talukdar. Mr. Talukdar proceeded to elaborate on the types of technical assistance the centre has offered during the 2020-2022 period, such as nomination dossier preparation, documentation of sites, review of nomination dossiers, the inclusion of sites in India's Tentative List 2021, and consultations on new sites. WII has also played a role in reporting and monitoring natural heritage sites, as well as offered advisory services to governments, and state parties, as well as providing inputs for the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2020, among others.

Mr. Talukdar also presented several new initiatives that the centre is planning to undertake, such as short training modules on topics such as the nomination process, climate change, stakeholder engagement, nature-culture linkages, etc, as well as a 45-day long certificate course in heritage management.

Regarding the challenges during the COVID-19 period, WII, according to Mr. Talukdar, has not suffered such a decrease in funding as was experienced by Centro Lucio Costa. However, the post-pandemic recovery is slower and may take years to normalize.

Ms. Aziz suggested that a C2C meeting on the margins of the World Heritage Committee session in Riyadh takes place and offered her support in organizing it. Ms. Aziz also suggested that these meetings become regular.

Mr. Albino Jopela expressed his support for the organization of a rotative secretariat to maintain a channel of communication, especially in view of the upcoming WHC session in Riyadh.

Mr. Gautam Talukdar suggested that we request that the World Heritage Committee endorses the Sejong Declaration.

Session 3: Topic: The World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy and the Advisory Bodies' Role

The session was moderated by Mr. Mario Santana Quintero.

Ms. Eugene Jo was invited to deliver a presentation as the representative of ICCROM and IUCN. Ms. Jo commenced the meeting by introducing the World Heritage Leadership (WHL) programme.

Ms. Jo, provided an overview of the WHL programme, highlighting its key objectives and activities. The program aims to establish leading standards for conserving sites and promoting their contribution to communities and sustainable development through engagement with World Heritage. Ms. Jo emphasized the establishment of a network of internationally recognized learning sites, including World Heritage sites demonstrating leading practice, to serve as platforms for learning and capacity building. The program also focuses on building international networks between nature and culture practitioners and institutions, connecting on-the-ground practice with leadership at various levels.

Furthermore, as mentioned by Ms. Jo, the WHL program conducts training events, exchanges, and capacity-building activities to support site managers, stakeholders, and national heritage services in diverse States Parties. It encompasses four projects: Effective management: nature, culture, and communities; Resilience; Impact assessment; and Learning networks. These projects aim to provide guidance, advice, and resource materials on conservation policies and

practices, integrating the ICCROM-led Managing Cultural World Heritage manual with the IUCN-led Managing Natural World Heritage manual. Through these initiatives, the WHL program strives to enhance the management of World Heritage sites, foster sustainable development, and facilitate international collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Mr. Ndimba raised a question about the role Advisory Bodies play in relation to the destruction of cultural property. Ms. Jo clarified that there are no specific mandates for the Advisory Bodies to act, but that an emergency response mechanism is organized together with the WHC.

Mr. Khan addressed the issues of case studies and the relationships between education and culture. Concerning the case studies data collection issue, Ms. Jo referred to ICCROM's platform PANORAMA, which allows practitioners to share their experiences, and to the platform recently launched by UNESCO, Canopy. Ms. Jo mentioned the research facilitated by ICCROM for the research team from local universities and site managers, through the Heritage Place Lab programme. Ms. Shim asked if the long-term plan of ICCROM is to allow site managers to become capacity builders in their own right, and whether ICCROM is pursuing changes at the policy level. Ms. Jo responded positively to both questions.

In his presentation, Mr. Mario Santana Quintero, Secretary General of ICOMOS, highlighted the organization's role as an advisory body to the World Heritage Committee. He expressed gratitude for the event and acknowledged the individuals involved. Mr. Santana Quintero emphasized the potential for collaboration between ICOMOS and the C2Cs represented at the meeting. He also praised the efforts of WHIPIC and its staff. Mr. Santana Quintero provided an overview of ICOMOS as a worldwide cultural heritage organization. He mentioned its mission to advise UNESCO on matters related to conserving and protecting cultural heritage sites. ICOMOS offers technical advice and expertise on World Heritage nomination, evaluation, and monitoring. It also provides guidance to site managers and local communities on best practices for heritage preservation.

Mr. Santana Quintero highlighted ICOMOS' contribution to developing ethical principles, charters, guidelines, and resolutions for the preservation of cultural heritage sites. The presentation emphasized the role of ICOMOS' scientific committees, working groups, and national committees in conducting research, developing conservation theory, guidelines, and charters, and fostering the international exchange of scientific information. Mr. Santana Quintero mentioned specific working groups, including the Climate Action Working Group, Emerging Professionals Working Group, and Our Common Dignity Working Group, which focus on climate change, supporting emerging professionals, and addressing rights issues in heritage management, respectively. Mr. Santana Quintero highlighted ICOMOS' involvement in initiatives such as heritage reconstruction, impact assessments, heritage alerts, and capacity-building workshops. He also mentioned ICOMOS' contributions to the evaluation of World Heritage nominations, participation in monitoring missions, and assessment of requests for international assistance. The presentation concluded with a mention of various training activities and other initiatives undertaken by ICOMOS. Overall, Mr. Santana Quintero emphasized ICOMOS' dedication to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, its advisory role to the World Heritage Committee, and its commitment to collaboration and capacity building in the field of heritage conservation.

Ms. Nayeon Lee asked Mr. Santana Quintero about the most advisable strategy for WHIPIC in its incipient stages of capacity building. Mr. Santana Quintero responded that cooperation with ICOMOS National Committees is very important for C2Cs.

Mr. Khan lauded the issue of the differentiated cost of individual ICOMOS memberships depending on the purchasing power of the respective country, but also raised the issue of the communication gap between the National Committees and other stakeholders; in addition, he asked if there are supplementary benefits in the membership. Mr. Santana replied that the standardization of membership requirements is a difficult task and that memberships of certain ICOMOS National Committees are disproportionate given the need.

Ms. Shim asked whether advisory bodies take a neutral stance in the case of wars and other conflicts. Mr. Santana Quintero revealed that ICOMOS is not in the capacity to take an active

role, but only to provide technical assistance, as is the case through its collaboration with the Blue Shield. However, Mr. Santana Quintero specified that the stance of ICOMOS is not neutral.

Ms. Leal asked whether C2Cs should encourage the dissemination of the knowledge learned through capacity building. Ms. Jo highlighted that the main focus of ICCROM is the training of trainers which endows them with the skills necessary to teach the content as well as the content itself. Mr. Santana Quintero noted that training sometimes may be a waste of time and resources because the institution the trained professionals belong to may not be strong enough, and he suggested that the focus should be shifted to strengthening heritage-related institutions in developing countries.

Mr. Torres Perez highlighted the importance of the role of Advisory Bodies in the Latin American and the Caribbean region, noting the contribution of ICCROM in the implementation of the national plan for strengthening capacities in Central America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. Mr. Torres Perez also mentioned the importance of C2Cs in terms of capacity building. The efforts to translate materials into Spanish were also mentioned. Ms. Jo agreed with the importance of Spanish as the biggest language group, highlighting that some materials are now produced directly in Spanish.

Mr. Jopela raised the issue present in the African region, which is the insufficiency of experts participating in the processes and activities led by the Advisory Bodies, and suggested that the C2Cs can participate in solving this issue. Ms. Jo agreed that the C2Cs can contribute to identifying the specialists, and highlighted the importance of cross-pollination between different regions, revealing that this process would be beneficial among the Advisory Bodies as well.

Mr. Al Khalifa reminded the participants of ARC-WH's capacity-building activity it had with ICOMOS and highlighted the opportunity the trainees had to become observers at ICOMOS in the future. Mr. Santana Quintero revealed that C2Cs have been instrumental in the activities of ICOMOS.

Mr. Li Xin was given the floor, and he presented a video introducing the Global Awards for World Heritage Education Innovative Cases (AWHEIC), which is a global interactive platform that emphasizes the advancement of educational models for World Heritage. It aims to serve as a comprehensive resource and guide for practitioners involved in innovating World Heritage education worldwide, facilitating effective leadership and promotion of future developments in this field. The event is directed by the National Commission of the People's Republic of China for UNESCO and co-organized by WHITRAP.

Mr. Li highlighted the importance of cooperation between C2Cs and suggested that the AWHEIC can be a first step in enhancing cooperation. Mr. Li accentuated the importance of reducing the regional imbalance in terms of access to technology and stated that WHITRAP wants to take an action in that sense. In addition, Mr. Li suggested that C2Cs engage in a common project. Mr. Li also encouraged the co-organization of a side event at the 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee.

Mr. Santana Quintero lauded the impact an award such as AWHEIC can have to stimulate innovation, as well as the practical suggestions Mr. Li shared regarding C2C cooperation. In addition, he suggested that while side events may be productive, C2Cs should also have their main events, such as the Annual Meetings.

Mr. Ndimma asked what would be the first joint project the C2Cs could initiate. Mr. Li invited the participants to make suggestions. Ms. Leal mentioned the existence of several similar awards in Brazil and suggested that C2Cs could identify regional awardees to be nominated for AWHEIC. Mr. Liu added that each C2C has its own expertise and suggested that the differences can be utilized to a mutual benefit.

Mr. Khan raised the issue of the strategic choice of partnering institutions while having in mind the resource aspect, suggesting feasibility studies that can be forwarded to funding institutions.

Mr. Talukdar manifested his support for Mr. Santana Quintero's suggestion of focusing efforts on strengthening institutions and suggested that the joint efforts of C2Cs concentrate on strengthening the C2Cs as a whole. Ms. Shim asked Mr. Li about the sustainability of the award and if it can be useful for wider audiences. Mr. Li explained that WHITRAP has a very wide network and that cooperation is sought from many fields of expertise.

Mr. Santana Quintero stressed the importance of the democratization of digital technologies, and their relevance for heritage, but mentioned that the benefits do not justify the investment in certain cases. Mr. Santana Quintero concluded the session by highlighting the importance of finding common ground, of finding ways to pool resources, and that C2Cs and the ABs can cooperate in continuous conservative efforts related to existing World Heritage sites.

Session 4: Topic: Periodic Reporting: The Involvement of UNESCO C2Cs in the Third Cycle

This session was moderated by Mr. Shabhaz Khan, Director of UNESCO MS Regional Office for East Asia. Mr. Khan gave the floor to Mr. Valentino Etowar, Periodic Reporting Coordinator at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, who joined the meeting online.

Mr. Etowar gave an overview of the statutory process of Periodic Reporting. He began his presentation by outlining the origins, objectives, and modus operandi of the Periodic Reporting process. Next, he highlighted the new aspects and characteristics added during the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, such as sustainable development, a new analytical framework, synergies with other conventions and the inclusion of positive factors affecting the property, and the inclusion of new training materials. Mr. Etowar highlighted the disparity between regions in terms of state parties, on one hand, and the number of World Heritage properties, on the other.

Mr. Etowar continued by explaining the timeline and the 5 stages of a reporting cycle: reporting, submission, regional reports, regional action plans, and implementation. Next, he listed the actors and stakeholders involved. Mr. Etowar shared the submission percentages by region, noting the possible reasons why the 100% target hadn't been reached.

Mr. Etowar gave a review of the general tendencies observed in regional action plans, such as representation and a more balanced World Heritage list, the need for Capacity Building, the establishment of networks, and a demand for action minding climate change and sustainability, as well as the inclusion of digital technologies.

Mr. Khan inquired about the availability of quantitative data and analysis. Mr. Etowar confirmed that the data concerning the region the C2Cs belong to can be made available to them in order to help their cooperation with State Parties.

Ms. Leal raised the question of synergies with other conventions and how they appeared in the Reports, as well as other factors pointed out by the State Parties. Mr. Etowar affirmed that the WHC is investigating the aspect of World Heritage sites having overlapping associations with other conventions. He also mentioned that WHC has been requesting state parties to assess negative and positive impacts on local communities.

In response to an online request, Mr. Etowar demonstrated the ways in which C2Cs can access the datasets pertaining to Periodic Reporting.

Mr. Santana Quintero asked a question regarding the use of digital technologies and monitoring, to which Mr. Etowar provided the example of the African Region Action Plan, where, for example, the use of drones was considered important. It had been formulated by the APA region as well, according to Mr. Etowar. Ms. Jo raised a question about the increase in the number of questions after the reflection period following the Second Cycle and asked whether the reflection period following the Third Cycle triggered new strategic directions. Mr. Etowar responded that the questions were pertinent despite the complications they brought

about. In addition, he mentioned that the Periodic Reporting extends to all of the five UNESCO conventions and is a subject being considered at the Secretariat.

Mr. Khan gave the floor to Mr. Al Khalifa, who proceeded to present on the topic of the involvement of ARC-WH in the Third Periodic Reporting Cycle. Mr. Al Khalifa gave a rundown of the previous two Periodic Reporting Cycles and highlighted the WHC's decision to welcome the contribution of the ARC-WH to assist in facilitating the Periodic Reporting Exercise in the Arab region. In relation to the Third Cycle, there has been an information session, four workshops, collaboration with UNESCO WHC for the preparation of the narrative report and Action plan, an online national focal point meeting, and a follow-up meeting.

Mr. Al Khalifa highlighted the three priorities identified in the Arab region: attention on the List of World Heritage in Danger; tentative lists, capacity building and cooperation in the region, and support for the implementation of the 2011 HUL Recommendation. Mr. Al Khalifa then presented the strategic objectives of the Arab region in detail.

The next presenter was Ms. Marie-Noël Tournoux, Project Director at WHITRAP, who joined the meeting online. Ms. Tournoux delivered a presentation on the involvement of WHITRAP in the 3rd Cycle of Periodic Reporting, noting that the WHC had invited C2Cs in the APA region to support the periodic reporting exercise, following which WHITRAP and HIST planned a regional focal point meeting for 2020. However, due to the pandemic, all in-person meetings were canceled, therefore in 2021, WHITRAP participated in several online training courses and workshops.

Next, Ms. Tournoux mentioned a study undertaken by WHITRAP on the topic of the state of conservation of APA sites from 2010 to 2019, including a 2021 update, which revealed the main threats and factors affecting WH sites, among which are building and development, social and cultural uses of heritage, but management issues were highlighted. Ms. Tournoux presented a list of preliminary observations and outlooks, such as the need to showcase good

practices; encourage the use of statutory instruments; translate into national languages and further research.

Representing the African region, Mr. Jopela delivered a presentation on the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting and the involvement of the African World Heritage Fund. In 2019, the AWHF was involved in a preparatory workshop, the purpose of which was to discuss the format and implementation strategy of the PR and review relevant resource materials. Later in 2019, AWHF, the African group at UNESCO, and the WHC organized a side event on the margins of the 43rd Session of the World Heritage Committee; in addition, AWHF co-organized a launching workshop for the 3rd PR Exercise in Abidjan. In 2020, a Data Analysis workshop was organized following the completion and submission of questionnaires, and a technical coordination team from AWHF participated.

In order to reflect on the preliminary outcomes of the Third Cycle, the AWHF in collaboration with regional offices, organized 4 sub-regional seminars in December 2021, and in February 2021, a final workshop presenting the results of the 3rd cycle of PR in the Africa region was organized by the UNESCO WHC in collaboration with the AWHF and UNESCO field offices.

The next presenter was Mr. Raul Eduardo Rodriguez Marquez, representing the Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas (IRPMZ C2C). Mr. Rodriguez Marquez introduced the LAC region and its particularities and recounted the first two Periodic Reporting exercises and their outcomes. Mr. Rodriguez Marquez highlighted that an important meeting within the framework of the Second PR exercises was hosted at Zacatecas in 2012.

Regarding the 3rd Cycle, it was stated that the role of IRPMZ C2C has been relevant, not only through its presence but also through its logistical, financial, and technical support. The IRPMZ participated in the Meeting with Site Managers in November 2022 as observers, which took place online. In February 2023, the IRPMZ participated in the consultation meeting with managers of World Heritage sites, and also in the Final Workshop of National Focal Points.

The main takeaways from the third Periodic Reporting Exercise have been presented as follows: in Section 1, the benefits derived from the inscription of sites on the WH List; legal frameworks; the function of World Heritage sites in the lives of communities, and the development of capacities. In Section 2, the factors with the biggest impact have been found to be management and legal frameworks. The low participation of communities was noted, and the need for financial assistance was noted, as well as for the improvement of the understanding of the World Heritage Convention.

Mr. Khan addressed a question about the differences in the results of the two sections, to which Mr. Rodriguez Marquez clarified that the first section was filled out by focal points, whereas the second was completed by site managers, which explains their difference in focus. Mr. Santana Quintero expressed his personal opinion regarding the findings in Section 2 lack of verification and suggested that more substantial research is required. In addition, Mr. Santana Quintero suggested that monitoring should be more technical and the data used is more quantitative. Mr. Al Khalifa also noted the difference between the 2 sections in the Arab region and attributed it to the difference in perspective between the focal points and site managers, and suggested that site managers are kept informed through online means.

Ms. Sujeong Lee asked how the C2Cs can contribute to periodic reporting, especially WHIPIC, through interpretation and presentation.

Ms. Tournoux stated that the power game between the local level and the state level is through management mechanisms, so the stakeholders are not necessarily the site managers. Ms. Tournoux also added that the facilitation of documentation, i.e. translation and participation at a very small scale would be very helpful.

Mr. Rodriguez Marquez opined that interpretation could be complementary, and could be an instrument that could enhance the processes of all stakeholders. He also suggested that C2Cs should be seen more as facilitators.

Mr. Al Khalifa suggested that further questions should be added to the questionnaire and recommended that successful case studies of the interpretation of heritage should be disseminated.

Mr. Ndimma commented that the fact that site managers encounter difficulties in answering their questionnaire, criticizing that it would be in their main interest, for the benefit of the site and in terms of attracting the attention of governments. Ms. Leal opined that periodic reporting is not only a means to obtain information but also a way to mobilize the participation of site managers. Mr. Jopela referred to the site managers' forum organized by ICCROM, and noted a disconnect in the State of Conservation report, adding that it is a matter of interpretation and presentation, reminding of the difference in perspective between the Focal Points and site managers. Mr. Jopela illustrated the role of interpretation by mentioning the conflict between conservation and development.

Mr. Khan concluded Session 4.

Session 5: Topic: Future Strategies for C2C Interregional Cooperation

This session was moderated by Ms. Yeo Heekyung, Head of the Strategy and Planning Office of UNESCO WHIPIC. The items on the agenda of this session were: Final Adoption of the Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation among the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres; Planning the 9th Annual Cooperation Meeting: theme, organizers, etc.

Ms. Yeo recounted the series of online meetings that preceded the Annual Coordination meeting, during which representatives of C2Cs provided WHIPIC with constructive feedback in devising the meeting agenda. The last two meetings were draft group meetings, during which the focus was on receiving and incorporating feedback from the participants.

Ms. Yeo proceeded to read the text of the Declaration.

Ms. Jo suggested that the term "rights-holders" is included in paragraph 2. Mr. Li asked to include mentions of the encouragement of common projects, in addition to "common purposes", which was added to paragraph 5 (d).

Ms. Leal raised attention to the term "voluntarily" in paragraph 4(a) because of its connotations. The term was replaced with "effectively" at the suggestion of Mr. Khan. Paragraph 4 (c) was first edited at Mr. Khan's suggestion from "through enhanced reporting mechanisms" to "for their role in enhanced reporting". Mr. Khan also suggested replacing the term "recognition" with "visibility", and "enhanced" with "dedicated". Mr. Ndimba suggested the addition of "the representatives of the Centre", while Mr. Al Khalifa suggested adding "directly" in reference to the World Heritage Committee.

Mr. Ndimba suggested that "in a timely manner" is removed from paragraph 4(d).

Mr. Khan advised that "shared goals" is replaced by "shared resources" in paragraph 5 (b), and Mr. Ndimba the change "by pooling resources".

Ms. Yeo concluded the session by announcing that the participants have agreed on the final form of the declaration, and proceeded with the final item on the agenda, the plan for the 9th Annual Coordination Meeting. Mr. Torres Pérez, the representative of IRPMZ manifested the interest of the centre to host the coordination meeting in 2025.

Conclusions and Resolutions of the Meeting

The Annual Coordination Meeting of the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres resumed after a four-year hiatus since the 7th meeting in 2019. The meeting served as a chance to reignite dialogue between Category 2 Centres and bring them together following the disruptions caused by the global pandemic.

Prior to the annual meeting, six preliminary meetings were held to identify common issues related to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. These issues were then discussed in five sessions during the annual meeting.

The most significant outcome of the meeting was the adoption of the Sejong Declaration of Understanding and Cooperation among the UNESCO World Heritage-related Category 2 Centres (Sejong Declaration). This marked the first time that all Category 2 Centres made a communal commitment.

The Sejong Declaration aims to elevate Category 2 Centres from being mere observers to key actors within the World Heritage Committee. It also aims to enhance the visibility of their contributions, which has been a topic of discussion in previous annual meetings. The Declaration seeks to establish shared objectives to ensure that all activities and strategies undertaken by Category 2 Centres are aligned.

The 8th Annual Coordination Meeting provided an excellent opportunity for existing and newly established organizations to renew their partnerships. Participants expressed anticipation for the ninth annual meeting, which is scheduled to take place in Mexico in 2025. They also look forward to other multilateral opportunities to collaborate in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

Annex 1.

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.

Annex 2. List of Participants

No.	Organisation	Participants
1	World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region	Mr. Xin LI Deputy Secretary-General
2	World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region	Ms. Marie-Noel TOURNOUX Project Director (Online)
3	African World Heritage Fund	Mr. Vusithemba NDIMA Chairperson
4	African World Heritage Fund	Mr. Albino Pereira de Jesus JOPELA Head of Programmes
5	Lucio Costa Regional Heritage Management Training Centre	Ms. Claudia Feierabend LEAL Deputy Director
6	Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas	Mr. Carlos Augusto TORRES PEREZ Director General
7	Regional World Heritage Institute in Zacatecas	Mr. Raul Eduardo RODRIGUEZ MARQUEZ Specialist
8	Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage	Ms. Heba AZIZ Director (Online)
9	Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage	Mr. Ebrahim AL KHALIFA Deputy Director

10	International Centre for Rock Art and the World Heritage Convention	Mr. Pablo JIMENEZ Head of Unit
11	International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage	Mr. Shaobo LIU Deputy Secretary General
12	Centre on World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region	Mr. Gautam TALUKDAR Scientist F and Nodal Officer
13	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Suhee CHAE Director General
14	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Mr. Jaesoon LEE Deputy Director General
15	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Heekyung YEO Head of Office
16	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Sujeong LEE Head of Office
17	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Haeree SHIM Head of Office
18	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Nayeon LEE Senior Programme Specialist
19	International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites	Ms. Madalina SOUCACU Intern
20	UNESCO Beijing Office	Mr. Shahbaz KHAN Director
21	UNESCO World Heritage Centre	Mr. Valentino ETOWAR Coordinator (Online)
22	ICOMOS	Mr. Mario SANTANA QUINTERO Secretary General

23	ICCROM-IUCN	Ms. Eugene JO Programme Manager
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Annex 3. Pictures of the Meeting























