



Regional Workshop on World Heritage in Pacific Island Countries

Tanoa Hotel, Nadi, Fiji 1 - 3 November 2023

Outcomes Report



1. Workshop overview

Background

The UNESCO World Heritage Convention is highly relevant to the large island environments, ocean spaces and customary land and sea tenures of the region, linking culture, people, communities, and nature together in values and management. However, Pacific Island countries are underrepresented on the World Heritage List. This is not because they do not have globally significant natural and cultural heritage places, but primarily because of the limited funding and technical expertise in those nations to accurately document and manage their natural and cultural heritage. Pacific Island countries are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and the increasing demand for natural resources, and their unique heritage is at risk without suitable protection and adaptation measures.

There are clear intersections between the implementation of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework target to protect 30% of the world's land and ocean by 2030 (the 30x30 target). Places inscribed on the World Heritage List are protected under the national legislation of the respective State Party in which they each reside, so the listing of new World Heritage properties increases the number and percentage of globally protected areas. World Heritage designation also helps to draw global attention to threats to these properties, such as climate change and biodiversity loss.

To promote and support implementation of the Convention in the Pacific Island Countries, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in partnership with the Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) hosted a regional workshop for Pacific Island countries in Nadi, Fiji, in November 2023. A primary focus of the workshop was to explore the issues the Island states face in progressing their World Heritage ambitions. The workshop provided information to participants specifically designed to help them navigate the World Heritage processes including the developing of Tentative Lists and World Heritage nominations, to encourage robust nominations that will increase representation of the region on the World Heritage List.

The workshop was in line with the recommendations of the Regional Work Plan for World Heritage for the Pacific 2021-2025 and the Regional Framework Action Plan that was endorsed at the Extended 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee that was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 10 to 25 September 2023.

It was intended that workshop participants would:

- expand their knowledge about World Heritage processes, regional experiences and assistance options
- review their specific needs and determine how they could realistically progress, short to mid-term actions at national level with a specific focus on reviewing existing and potential Tentative Lists
- be invigorated about the potential of World Heritage and appreciate that they are part of a positive momentum phase for World Heritage in the region.

The workshop consisted of a series of technical and information presentations interspersed by floor and panel discussions and participatory group work discussions. All Pacific States Parties were able to send one if not two representatives to the workshop. No representatives from the Pacific territories were able to attend, although were invited to attend in person or online.

The responsibilities for planning, coordinating, facilitating and financing the workshop were shared between the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in partnership with the DCCEEW, personnel from the World Heritage Centre in Paris, and a small professional support team. The inputs obtained through the workshop have informed the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

Key workshop conclusions

The issues, needs, challenges, and opportunities relating to World Heritage in the Pacific region have been uniformly and comprehensively described in current (and previous) plans and reports¹ dealing with World Heritage, and further expressed and reinforced by participant contributions to the November 2023 WH regional workshop in Nadi, Fiji.

Similar issues, challenges and opportunities were raised by participants in the Workshop. These are summarised below under the key areas of funding; regional coordination; awareness; national coordination; regional level leadership; community; World Heritage processes; capacity development; regional discourse and networking; and national legislative frameworks.

Funding

- Funding for World Heritage is a very small percentage of national budgets of all PICs.
- Substantial additional funding is required by PIC State Parties if the WH Convention is to succeed in the Pacific region.
- There are many sources of funding available that may support aspects of World Heritage – through UNESCO, Governments which support the Pacific, international funding instruments and donors and research institutions.
- There are examples of best practice for sustainable financing of the management of World Heritage sites with useful lessons from the Rock Islands Southern Lagoon in Palau and PIPA in Kiribati.
- A range of regional agencies (the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) [inc. the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program SPREP, the Pacific Community SPC, the Pacific Tourism Association SPTO, the University of the South Pacific USP], the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) and the larger regional NGOs, can be important partners in accessing funding to support specific work associated with the development of World Heritage nominations and the management of World Heritage properties. The Pacific territories vis a vis their parent country may also be a source of support.
- PICs are not always familiar with wider funding sources that may support WH initiatives, including through the World Heritage Fund. They may also have limited capacity and skills to develop effective funding applications, and/or to establish effective connections with potential partners who can access funding.

Regional coordination

- The PICs share similar challenges and issues in implementing the World Heritage Convention and a region-wide lack of capacity and skills to address these challenges. A regional coordination point is required to effectively and proactively support PICs and/or mobilise actions to increase regional engagement in WH and the representation of the region on the WH List.
- A model for regional coordination similar to that of the Pacific Heritage Hub² (currently largely inactive) was consistently raised by PIC representatives as appropriate and fundamental to supporting them with

¹ World Heritage Work Plan (2021-2025) for the Pacific Region (November 2021); Natural World Heritage in Oceania Progress and Prospects, Final Report (June 2022); Action Plan (2023–2030) for the Asia and the Pacific Region (September 2023)

² The Pacific Heritage Hub was established in 2012 as a UNESCO World Heritage facility by and for Pacific States Parties. The idea for the establishment of PHH came from the UNESCO World Heritage Workshop of the Pacific States Parties (2011) which identified information sharing and capacity building as critical needs in the implementation of the 1972 World Heritage Convention in the region. PHH was officially launched in February 2013, hosted by The University of the South Pacific and is housed at the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies, at the School of Pacific Arts, Communication and Education (SPACE).

PHH serves the 16 UNESCO member states in the Pacific and six (6) additional states and territories including French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Wallis & Futuna. As part of UNESCO World Heritage Network, membership also includes United Kingdom, Chile and Ecuador. The PHH member

those aspects of World Heritage that are beyond their specific national areas of direct control and responsibility, as well as their capability.

- It appears unlikely, at least in the short term, that one of the CROP agencies or larger regional NGOs such as IUCN is willing to take on the mantle as a (or co-agency arrangement) for World Heritage, or have the targeted resources to do so, although they have potential to act as important partners to a nominated coordination point.
- The UNESCO Office for the Pacific States is a logical, official and active coordination point for World Heritage in the PICs. However, while currently performing this role well, the World Heritage Convention is just one of a suite of Conventions and initiatives for which the Office has responsibilities and the office is not nearly able to facilitate effective progress on the WH Convention across the region. There is no dedicated staff position within the Office for World Heritage in the region.
- The UNESCO National Commission in each of the PICs could play a more effective role to facilitate regional impetus for WH at the national level.

Awareness

The need expressed for ‘awareness’ relating to WH covers many elements, notably enhanced understanding of:

- the overall natural/cultural/mixed heritage values of potential World Heritage sites in the Pacific region including the interconnectedness of natural and cultural values that links culture, people, communities, and nature together and is expressed in values and protected by management of World Heritage sites.
- The range of existing plans in place to support regional and national decisions concerning World Heritage
- the WH Convention overall and in particular the concept of Outstanding Universal Value.
- what the development of a WH nomination entails, including stakeholder engagement and consent
- the ongoing management and monitoring responsibilities for sites on the World Heritage List
- the implications and the potential benefits of having a site inscribed on the WH List for communities and nationally
- how to access existing and new guidance and analysis reports for WH at regional and national levels, to support the development of funding submissions and provide well-considered, structured guidance on the selection and implementation of actions
- the steps and obligations involved in WH processes including Tentative List preparation and the development of WH nominations and WH property management
- UNESCO - its mandate, roles and responsibilities in relation to World Heritage
- the types of external support (capacity development, funding, technical expertise) that may be available to progress WH initiatives through UNESCO and other means.

states comprise those served by the UNESCO Apia office: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Tokelau (Associate Member). The PHH has not been particularly active for a number of years however, a Professional Certificate in Heritage Management offered for the first time in 2019 is a cohort-based programme developed in response to the regional call for improved and increased capacity building for Heritage Management.

National level coordination

In the PICs, the need to progress World Heritage at the national level is complicated in the context of intragovernmental relationships, notably a shortfall in effective collaboration between various Government departments and ministries which may have responsibility for, or an interest in the protection and conservation of heritage places:

- Across the region it is common for multiple government departments and ministries to have responsibilities for cultural heritage, natural heritage, ecosystem protection, education and arts – any of which may include a responsibility for overseeing national implementation of the WH Convention; development and review of Tentative Lists; development of WH nominations; and management of WH properties. Additionally, a UNESCO National Commission may sit with any of the above, or other, departmental locations.
- These entities may operate under distinct legislative mandates, which can create demarcations and conflicting priorities for heritage protection which may limit the ease of collaboration on WH.
- There may be a lack in effective divisional relationships, information sharing and reporting which hampers the exchange of crucial data and expertise and resources that is essential for a WH nomination and management of a WH site.
- Formal, regular and effective channels of communication and interaction between individuals at representative and operative levels in national government agencies who deal with WH matters (for example Convention focal points, heritage officers, lead Ministry supervisory positions, environment/conservation officers, museum staff, municipal staff, or site managers) are needed to ensure effective sharing and reporting of important incoming WH related information beyond the initial recipient.
- Siloed information and limited cross-functional collaboration within government prevent a unified and coordinated effort in addressing the multifaceted challenges associated with World Heritage.

Regional leadership

- From 2004 - 2007, Aotearoa/NZ was a member of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee and regional leadership on WH was effectively orchestrated by the Paramount Chief Tumu te Heuheu Tukino [Aotearoa/NZ] (Chair of UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2007). Following this, from 2008 – 2011, Australia was a member of the Committee with a specific mandate to support the PICs in their WH initiatives. Over this period, the Pacific region achieved relative progress on WH.
- Currently there is no regional (PICs, Australia, Aotearoa/NZ) representation on the World Heritage Committee and no current COM member with an overt/specific mandate to support PICs. As a result, the Pacific region receives reduced visibility, funding, understanding and prioritisation in the WH arena. However, Japan and Republic of Korea are both currently on the Committee (Japan from 2021-2025 and Korea from 2023-2027) and could be considered representatives from the Pacific region and do provide some specific support to some PICs.
- An opportunity has been identified with the possible inclusion of a well-prepared briefing paper / concept note articulating the importance, challenges and opportunities relating to heritage/World Heritage in the region on the agenda of the 2024 Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) meeting. This idea is based on the corollary experience of the way the need to act to limit the impact of invasive species across the region gained high level support, agency and programmatic attention and subsequent funding injections as a result of the issues being discussed on the agenda of the PIF.

- Although the relevant CROP agencies and IUCN have mandates to encourage their greater attention to WH matters, their involvement to date has been limited to support roles as needs and opportunities occur rather than as consistently leading the initiation of broad action.
- The model of a 'heritage hub' as a heritage coordination mechanism is appropriate for the fostering regional leadership, advocacy and partnerships, as was the intention of the former Pacific Heritage Hub at USP.

Community

- A first principle of any process involving WH is to effectively engage and inform local communities, and where possible to support their leadership in all stages of the WH process: tentative listing, nomination, inscription, management and monitoring, and ensuring full participation of women, youth, aged and those with disability. It is essential that realistic expectations are established about what WH can, and cannot achieve at the community level.
- Communities associated with potential or existing WH property must be effectively involved and engaged in all activities at all stages.
- WH must deliver tangible benefits for local communities and expectations about WH must be realistic and clearly communicated, at all stages of the WH process. The FPIC³ of Indigenous communities is required for a WH nomination to progress
- Communicating the correct information to communities hosting World Heritage properties and those with potential WH properties is of paramount importance. This involves not only disseminating facts about the sites but also creating a dialogue that considers local values, perspectives, concerns, and aspirations.
- Deploying cultural protocols in stakeholder consultations can facilitate effective communication. Understanding the "how" of communication within the community context is essential for building trust and ensuring that information is received and interpreted appropriately. Providing information in local languages assist communities to understand and engage. Communicating World Heritage values and objectives within the community is best done locally and within local context. External facilitators would not be useful (local teams know best how to navigate this work).
- Providing training and capacity-building initiatives for local stakeholders, including community leaders, government officials, and educators, and inclusive of all demographic sectors, can empower them to play an active role in communicating World Heritage values and objectives within their communities.

World Heritage processes

- The processes for States Parties ratification of the WH Convention, community engagement, Tentative List development and submission, WH property nominations, property plans and management, and monitoring and Convention reporting, are diverse, comprehensive and unique to each country, community and site, and can be extremely demanding on resources, funds, skills and consultation efforts.
- Experience has shown that the WH processes often take long periods of time (even many years) to conclude in the affirmative, or otherwise.
- For a World Heritage nomination, the bar for justifying the Outstanding Universal Value of the site and how it meets the relevant WH criteria is high given that the values of WH properties are considered to be

³ The requirement for Free Prior and Informed Consent is detailed in Paragraphs 64 and 123 of the Operational Guidelines to the World Heritage Convention

so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.

- There is much practical knowledge to be shared by those who have had firsthand, on ground experience with the many aspects of WH processes within and outside the region and by those within UNESCO and Advisory Bodies⁴ who can inform on these processes. There is significant support available from UNESCO such as through technical assistance and in relation to “Upstream Processes”.

Capacity development

- There is limited capacity in the specific skill sets required for WH at regional, national and local levels.
- There are many tool kits, detailed guides, manuals, and case studies concerning WH. These may be useful as a first reference point although they may not always be entirely relevant to the Pacific context.
- Capacity development (training opportunities) tend to be opportunistic, rather than embedded in a structured, well targeted long-term programme that closely suits the needs of officers working in Pacific governments or independent heritage professionals.
- There is a need to develop modularised training packages, online resources and manuals that specifically address regional and national skills needs for the Pacific context.
- Government personnel with roles associated with WH, undergo changeovers regularly so investment in skills development tends to leave with that person, with replacing personnel requiring similar training over again.
- Direct in person mentoring support has proved to be an effective, targeted way of assisting WH process at national level.
- There is a depth of experience available within the region from those who have had first-hand experiences with many aspects of WH issues, processes and solutions and they can and should pass on their knowledge and guidance to others.
- Some key areas for capacity development include: increasing knowledge of the WH Convention; awareness raising techniques; community engagement; developing Tentative Lists and nominations; developing management plans and addressing management issues; project management; funding submissions; monitoring and reporting; legislative development processes; sustainable financing; and tourism opportunities.
- Targeted use of regional ‘experts’ in World Heritage and closely allied environmental and cultural planning professions has proved an effective way of enhancing the quality of workshops, site opportunity analysis, action plan development, consultation, information provision, capacity development, specific property management work, and in progressing Tentative List formulation and nomination dossiers.

⁴ International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)

Regional Discourse and Networking

The need for ongoing regional dialogue and networks among workshop participants and a wider group of heritage practitioners, emerged from the workshop as vital. Concerted efforts are needed to sustain ongoing discourse and collaborative initiatives. Key considerations include:

- Establishment and strengthening formalized networking structures among workshop participants and the wider practitioner body, ensuring ongoing information exchange, collaborative endeavours, and collective problem-solving.
- A social media platform for exchange of information and support was identified as something that can be done immediately.
- Development of mechanisms for the dissemination of information, research findings, and best practices amongst participating nations, fostering a shared knowledge base and enhancing collective capabilities.
- Strategic planning and coordination of periodic regional events, such as conferences or workshops, to sustain the momentum of dialogue and collaboration, providing a platform for shared experiences and lessons learned.
- Exploration of opportunities for resource pooling across multiple PICs, such as joint training and mentorship activities, to optimize collective capabilities to address common challenges and advance shared objectives for WH.
- The Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation and Protected Areas PIRT Nature / Culture working group has been established to help emphasise draw together the nature culture interface and is an important development. However, it is represented primarily by individuals with a focus on cultural heritage values rather than on natural heritage values.
- The Overseas Territories of the Pacific, and Hawaii, and Australia and New Zealand, are not under the mandate of the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States, but may be informally aligned with the PICs and should be included in regional networking and knowledge sharing as they have much to offer in terms of experiences with WH.
- World Heritage in the Pacific region should be clearly linked with other important relevant frameworks, such as the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy and the Pacific Regional Cultural Strategy.
- World Heritage needs to be integrated into the UN Framework documents and clearly indicated as priority areas for action linking across pillars related to environment, economic and social development.

National legislative frameworks

- World Heritage Tentative listing submissions and property nominations require evidence of adequate legal protection.
- Most PICs currently lack legal frameworks specifically tailored to the assessment and safeguarding of natural and cultural heritage sites. For instance, Papua New Guinea relies on the National Protected Areas' Policy, a comprehensive policy directive overseeing natural resource conservation, within which the protection of World Heritage Sites is positioned as a key element.
- Fiji has developed broad-based Cultural Heritage legislation and
- Presently, the legislation awaits translation into the local Itaukei language, indicative of a commitment to linguistic accessibility. Provisions for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage within standalone

legislations is underscored by considerations of ownership and local engagement through law. Establishing distinct legal frameworks is pivotal in cultivating a sense of responsibility and active participation at the community level. Concurrently, discourse has arisen regarding the operationalization of the Heritage Act, with a specific focus on the formulation of enforcement strategies and the determination of punitive fines.

- Some other PICs have cultural heritage legislation. Micronesian nations have Historic Preservation Offices and legislation following US model.
- The existence of national legislation generally comes with budgeting mandates to enact the legislation and has potential to initiate cross government collaboration structures.

Recommendations at regional level

The following recommendations are derived from the conclusions outlined above and present high priority actions to be implemented over the next 2 years. The recommendations focus on critical actions that are required to underpin and solidify progress in the implementation of WH in the region.

The extent to which the following recommendations can be implemented is reliant on:

- the funding available to, or that can be facilitated by, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States and UNESCO World Heritage Centre for implementation of the Convention in PICs
- the level of general support that can be provided to States Parties via the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre for implementation of the Convention in PICs
- other funding streams and source of general support
- the level of priority, capacity and attention given to WH actions by the Pacific Island State Parties

World Heritage Coordination

To effectively address the many of Key Conclusions of the Workshop and the following specific recommendations **the critical first step is the creation of a dedicated, properly resourced, regional coordinating point for World Heritage.** Such a coordination point could serve as a link with other agencies and collaborative bodies such as SPC and SPREP.

Aside from recommendations for national action by individual States Parties, such as inter-government coordination, legislative and policy frameworks, WH property management, community engagement protocols, the critical priority needed actions are best initiated, facilitated and pursued at a regional level through **the creation of a dedicated regional WH focal point position which will provide the fundamental platform on which a sustainable regional WH program can progress.**

Without such a designated WH focal point position, limited and variable progress on WH may be made at regional and national level, however any appreciable headway is likely to occur very slowly.

To ensure a coordinated approach to numerous critical actions for World Heritage in the Pacific, **the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States in Apia, Samoa is the appropriate host organisation for a dedicated position of regional World Heritage coordinator.** Embedding this position in the UNESCO office will facilitate information sharing and transfer between States Parties, UNESCO and other international and regional heritage organisation and foster coordination with UNESCO's broader heritage related activities in the region.

A critical assumption in realising this position is the potential for improved funding for World Heritage in the Pacific in the 2024/25 UNESCO biennial allocation;

It is recommended that:

- a budget allocation be identified in the 2024/25 biennial allocation (or via appropriate Funds in Trust) for the recruitment of a full-time World Heritage Coordinator position based at the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States or alternative solutions (probably budget dependant) to be considered through: UNESCO and other available traineeship programmes, collaboration with the UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN (university twinning and networking scheme) Networks⁵. Collaboration can be explored with existing Category 2 Centres (C2C) such as WHITR-AP in China⁶ and the C2C in Korea established in 2022: UNESCO. In 2022, the Republic of Korea launched the International Centre for the Interpretation and Presentation of World Heritage Sites - UNESCO World Heritage Centre
- The World Heritage Coordinator position is accompanied by a robust operational budget
- Any person appointed to such a position must have a good appreciation of the unique cultural, organisational and geographic circumstances that States Parties operate within.
- Possible tasks for such a position could include:
 - provide a first point advice and support contact for World Heritage for Pacific Island countries
 - encourage a step wise approach to action planning with national WH personnel, and based on the structured recommendations proposed in the World Heritage Work Plan (2021-2025) for the Pacific Region (November 2021); Natural World Heritage in Oceania Progress and Prospects, Final Report (June 2022); Action Plan (2023–2030) for the Asia and the Pacific Region (September 2023)
 - establishing and maintaining a practitioner networking mechanism and ensure States Parties, CROP agencies, and working groups with roles associated with World Heritage, and specialist practitioners, are aware of relevant plans, information sources, guides, a master regional contact points list, WH processes, funding sources and opportunities, and relevant updates
 - maintain working relationships and facilitate partnerships with relevant CROP agencies and regional working groups
 - convene periodic online forums and interactive face to face knowledge sharing events (every 1 - 2 years)
 - provide specific support in response to PIC requests such as assistance with funding proposal writing, the development of tentative lists, or, coordinating specialist support to assist such work
 - mobilise specific specialist support for targeted needs in PICs, or the region
 - facilitating participation in WH capacity development opportunities

⁵ A network of universities around the world supports UNESCO's work in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication, to help address pressing challenges and contribute to the development of their societies.

⁶ The WHITR-AP is a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO with the mission to strengthen implementation of World Heritage Convention in the Asia and the Pacific region, by building the capacity of all those professionals and bodies involved with World Heritage site inscription, protection, conservation and management in the Asia and the Pacific region, through training, research, the dissemination of information and network building.

- initiate development of tailored capacity building modules designed for Pacific contexts
- coordinate with UNESCO National Commissions (NatComs) and encourage them to play an active role in WH (and potentially an initiation of an assessment of Pacific NatComs by UNESCO to understand their challenges and strengthen their roles for World Heritage)
- findings of the assessment will help guide UNESCO Pacific Office and partners in providing the support for strengthening the national commissions as well as strengthen National Commissions.
- undertake preparatory concept note work and engaging suitable emissaries, to elevate heritage/World Heritage to the attention of the PIF in 2024, potentially in collaboration with SPTO and other CROP agencies, with the ultimate production of a regional Heritage (including WH) Communique
- initiate joint funding and advocacy partnerships with Australia, NZ, USA and other interested countries including consideration of future regional representation of the WH Committee
- initiate a feasibility assessment for a stand-alone regional World Heritage coordination model, as a long term sustainable mechanism within or external to the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States

Establishing a Heritage / World Heritage profile at the Pacific Islands Forum PIF

To build an elevated level of awareness, funding potential and momentum for progressing Heritage / World Heritage at the regional level, it is recommended that:

- the UNESCO Office for Pacific States:
 - initiates the development of a suitable advocacy paper that aims to gain attention and convey urgency for Heritage / World Heritage and articulates the importance, challenges and opportunities relating to Heritage / World Heritage in the region
 - considers partnering this advocacy action with SPTO and some of the CROP agencies to ensure wider support and joint impetus
 - facilitates the positioning of this paper as an agenda item for inclusion and delivery at the 2024 PIF annual meeting

approaches an influential individual/s in a leadership position/s in the Pacific Islands to help convey and advocate for the paper, its presence at the PIF 2024 meeting and press for the endorsement of a communique statement as an outcome of the PIF that envisions a unified voice among Pacific leaders on this theme

Regional networking and information flow

To strengthen and maintain regional discourse on WH it is recommended that the UNESCO Office for Pacific States:

- operates as the accepted first point for coordination and direction for WH in the region, including on WH processes, while the merits of a range of WH coordination mechanisms are assessed and considered

- creates and maintains a master contacts list of people and their roles involved in WH in the PICs the wider region, and internationally as relevant
- creates and maintains a social media platform such as WhatsApp, as an accepted networking mechanism for information flow on WH. Consider building on the Pacific WH site managers network that was suggested by the UNESCO HQ in 2021 during the 3rd Cycle of Periodic Reporting
- disseminates previous and current guidance and analysis reports, prepared for WH at regional and national levels, to personnel in PICs with WH responsibilities and encourages them to use this information to inform their action decisions and as a hook for funding submissions
- ensures all personnel in PICs with WH responsibilities are aware of the many sources of funding available to support aspects of World Heritage for example through UNESCO, Governments with assistance interests in the Pacific, international funding donors and programmes, CROP agencies, BINGOs, NGOs and research institutions
- ensure the correct contact points and the mechanisms to lobby for, or directly apply for, funding are made known to personnel in PICs with WH responsibilities
- relevant tool kits and services, detailed guides, manuals, and case studies concerning WH are made known to WH related personnel in PICs and are accessible through an online directory
- facilitates the convening of annual or biennial forums, both virtual and in person, that bring together relevant people to share knowledge and participate in targeted capacity development activities around WH
- maintain a strong strategic partnership with the SPTO and other relevant actors
- include, where possible and appropriate, the O/S Territories of the Pacific, and Hawaii, and Australia and New Zealand, in regional networking and knowledge sharing

Capacity development

To strengthen capacity for WH in the region it is recommended that:

- the UNESCO Office for Pacific States:
 - investigates pathways and funding to provide direct in-person support by experienced mentors for countries that have identified the need for support on specific WH related processes such as Tentative Listing processes and site management. As guided by the outcomes of the WH Workshop.
 - arranges for a set of tailored, modularised training packages, on-line resources and manuals to be progressively developed to address regional and national skills needs on topics including: WH Convention; awareness raising techniques; community engagement; Tentative List development; WH property nominations; property management plans and management issues; project management; funding submissions; monitoring and reporting; legislative development processes; sustainable financing; tourism opportunity
 - launch an EoI in early 2024 for all Member States of the World Heritage Convention to submit a request for mentoring and technical support relevant to the review and update of TLs in Pacific Island Countries. The EoI will include clear guidance on the focus of the support, requirements as well as of the information required to be included in the proposal. The implementation of this

initiative is a continuation of the WH Workshop and the partnership with DCCEEW, and partially supported under the 42C/5 UNESCO Regular Programme Budget.

Awareness

To strengthen awareness for WH in the region it is recommended that:

- the UNESCO Office for Pacific States:
 - initiates the development of a regional WH ‘communication plan’ focused on key target audiences which clearly sets out: the background and rationale for WH in the Pacific region including the inherent connections between natural and cultural WH; the benefits of WH as well as the definition and meaning of OUV; the implications of WH for State Parties and local communities; the processes of WH including nomination, inscription, management and monitoring; case studies of positive WH examples in the Pacific region
 - pursues funding for the development of suitable awareness products and activities based on guidance from the communication plan, including guideline material that could be utilised for WH awareness initiatives at local levels
 - collaborates with the SPTO on suitable tourism promotion and awareness initiatives
 - supports UNESCO National Commissions to play a more effective role in promoting WH
 - An e-resource center (or similar model) be initiated

Recommendations at national levels

The following recommendations are derived from the conclusions outlined above and present priority actions for initiation and implementation over the next 2 years.

They focus on critical actions required to underpin and solidify WH progress at national levels. They should be considered in parallel with the actions described in the World Heritage Work Plan (2021-2025) for the Pacific Region (November 2021); Natural World Heritage in Oceania Progress and Prospects, Final Report (June 2022); and the Action Plan (2023–2030) for the Asia and the Pacific Region (September 2023).

As national resources and capacity are acknowledged as a significant challenge, the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States is likely to have to perform as a significant assistance plank for PICs.

The extent to which the following recommendations can be implemented is reliant on:

- national funding allocations and funding streams, and general support from other sources
- funding and support available from the UNESCO Pacific Office.
- the level of priority, capacity and attention given to WH actions by national governments

National level coordination

To strengthen national level coordination across agencies that have roles associated with World Heritage, it is recommended that:

- the ministry / division within which a WH focal point is located, initiates cross government discussion identifying the gaps, misinformation, delayed work, and lost opportunities that can occur where formal collaborative working relationships between ministries/divisions are not in place, and on this basis to create mechanisms for collaboration (such as working committees or information sharing groups) to reduce disparities in knowledge and actions where WH is concerned. For some countries this will require the establishment or reviving of existing national WH Committees.
- dedicated heritage legislation, specifically tailored to include World Heritage, be reviewed/ developed with due consideration for contextual nuances and jurisdictional requirements, and examined by cross-government mechanisms for information sharing and collaboration
- heritage / World Heritage considerations are incorporated in national planning frameworks, policies and strategies that recognize the value of cultural and natural heritage alongside economic priorities, ensuring a more balanced approach to governance and conservation activities.

Specific national actions

World Heritage related actions recommended for PICs are as follows:

- be familiar with the existence and content of the World Heritage Work Plan (2021-2025) for the Pacific Region (November 2021); Natural World Heritage in Oceania Progress and Prospects, Final Report (June 2022); and the Action Plan (2023–2030) for the Asia and the Pacific Region (September 2023) and action national recommendations identified in the regional WH plan
- maintain a realistic and regularly reviewed and updated list of priority actions that align with the national status level on WH matters (e.g., ratification, Tentative Lists, WH nominations, existing WH properties management challenges, etc)
- periodically review issues, actions and priorities relating to World Heritage and maintain updated action plans (supports the State Parties in contributing to periodic reviews of the World Heritage Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific and links to the desire expressed via the Council of Pacific Arts and Culture (CPAC) for countries to do 5yr Draft Action Plans).
- utilise the first point assistance opportunity provided by the UNESCO Office for the Pacific States
- ensure personnel with roles associated with WH are and remain familiar with the range of assistance points, funding opportunities and capacity development support options available to them and that they are connected to any regional WH information networks that are established
- create and / or maintain clear information flow with decision makers in relevant government ministries concerning WH matters
- initiate and /or develop and /or maintain effective relationships and clear information sharing with communities associated with potential or existing WH properties
- be responsive to the need to equip local communities with the skills necessary to manage and sustain livelihood projects independently in conjunction with WH values and management

Annex A. List of workshop participants

Annex B. Workshop Programme
