

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee

Twelfth session

(Brasilia, Brazil, 5-9 December 1988)

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ITEM 5 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA: BUREAU REPORT - EXAMINATION OF
NOMINATIONS WITH A COMBINATION OF CULTURAL AND NATURAL ELEMENTS

1. In the report of the Rapporteur of the twelfth session of the Bureau, paragraph 13, reference is made to the difficulty which the Bureau had encountered in the examination of nominated properties which had an indissociable combination of cultural and natural elements. This difficulty arose from the fact that "culture" and "nature" were evaluated separately by ICOMOS and IUCN respectively, using separate sets of criteria.
2. The Bureau had requested that ICOMOS, IUCN and the Secretariat work together to agree on a joint evaluation of these nominations, as well as to consider the means whereby the Bureau and the Committee could more easily examine such nominations in the future.
3. On 28 September, Prof. L. Pressouyre of ICOMOS, Mr. J. Harrison of IUCN and the Secretariat held an informal consultation on this matter.
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4. The group recalled that the separation between cultural and natural heritage in the Convention and in the "Operational Guidelines" was not clear cut. Indeed, Article 1 defining natural heritage refers in particular to "the combined works of nature and man", whereas Article 2 defining natural heritage makes no concession for cultural elements. The criteria laid out in the "Operational Guidelines" are not (totally) consistent with these definitions. Article 1 does refer to the natural aspects of cultural heritage but the criteria themselves make no allusion to these aspects. Article 2 does not refer to cultural aspects and yet natural criterion (iii) refers to "...areas of natural beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements".

5. Rather than artificially split the World Heritage into "culture" and "nature" for examination respectively by ICOMOS and IUCN, the group agreed that there was no reason why ICOMOS could not examine a property using both the cultural criteria and also natural criterion (iii) for natural beauty and the exceptional combination of cultural and natural elements.

In the same manner, States Parties could present the justification for such properties evoking both the cultural criteria and natural criterion (iii).

6. Following this principle, it was agreed that ICOMOS should take the lead in preparing the evaluation of cultural properties in their natural setting, in consultation with IUCN.

7. Following this agreement, ICOMOS proceeded to make a single evaluation of the following properties, taking account of the comments of IUCN: Mt. Athos (Greece); Meteora (Greece); and Hierapolis-Pamukkale (Turkey).

8. Using these sites as examples, the group recommended that this procedure of evaluation should be used in future and should be adopted by the Committee. The group furthermore noted that the apprehension of the Bureau and the Committee regarding the integrity of sites responding to the definition of "the combined works of nature and man" could be largely allayed by the proposed introduction of new conditions for authenticity of cultural properties (revised "Operational Guidelines", paragraph 24 b) (ii)) and for integrity of natural properties (new paragraph 36 b) (vi)). Indeed, both these new paragraphs ask for adequate legal protection and management mechanisms which should control the rate and degree of change which could threaten such properties.