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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
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**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Seventeenth session

**Cartagena, Colombia
6 to 11 December 1993**

**Item 7: Examination of methodological aspects of monitoring of
the state of conservation of properties**

At the request of the sixteenth session of the World Heritage Committee and taking into account the recommendations made by the Bureau at its seventeenth session, the World Heritage Centre convened an expert meeting on the methodology of systematic monitoring. The expert meeting was held from 1 through 4 November 1993 at the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, U.K. with the participation of the advisory bodies to the World Heritage Convention and experts from around the world experienced in monitoring the state of conservation of the natural and cultural heritage. The report of this meeting is available as information document WHC-93/CONF.002/INF.5.

While focusing on systematic monitoring, the expert meeting concluded that there were three types of monitoring:

Systematic monitoring: the continuous process of monitoring the conditions of World Heritage sites with periodic reporting on its state of conservation.

Administrative monitoring: follow-up actions by the Centre to ensure the implementation of recommendations and decisions of the World Heritage Committee and Bureau at the time of inscription or at a later date.

Ad-hoc monitoring: the reporting by the Centre, other sectors of UNESCO and the advisory bodies to the Bureau and the Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage sites that are under threat.

The expert meeting defined systematic monitoring more precisely as the process of the continuous/repeated observation of the condition(s) of the site, the identification of issues that threaten its conservation and World Heritage characteristics and values, the identification of actions and decisions to be taken, and the reporting of the findings of monitoring and the resulting recommendations to the appropriate authorities, the World Heritage Bureau and the Committee and the cultural and scientific communities.

The following principles are proposed to serve as the framework for such a systematic monitoring:

- Reliable baseline information is indispensable for monitoring and will have to be established and maintained in a systematic and professional manner.
- It is primarily the responsibility of the States Parties to undertake monitoring as an essential part of the conservation and management of the sites.
- Periodic reporting (e.g. every five to ten years) on the state of conservation of the sites is required. Such reporting should involve independent professional advisers as well as the site manager.
- State of conservation reports should lead to concrete and practical recommendations for actions on the level of site management, national policies and regional activities. It will also serve as a framework and reference for decisions to be taken by the Committee and should lead to improved World Heritage technical assistance.
- The World Heritage Centre will coordinate and seek ways to implement the monitoring and reporting programme in joint collaboration with the advisory bodies and other appropriate partners.
- In order to optimize the impact of monitoring and its reporting, a regional or national approach will be applied. For each of the regional or national monitoring programmes the most appropriate partners will be identified. These regional or national programmes may be initiated with a regional workshop for the partners who will be involved with the objective to adapt the framework and to identify professional resources and networks in the region.
- Training will be incorporated in monitoring activities in joint collaboration with ICCROM and IUCN.

Based on the above, the Committee may wish to invite the States Parties to put on-site monitoring arrangements in place and to report on the actions they have taken in order to do so.

The Committee may also wish to instruct the Centre to undertake the following actions and to report to the Bureau at its eighteenth session on its progress:

- establishment of guidelines for baseline information and its collection and management;
- revision of the nomination and evaluation procedures and process to secure baseline information at the time of inscription of sites on the World Heritage List;
- establishment of the format for reporting;
- preparation of a draft text on monitoring and its procedures for inclusion in the Operational Guidelines;
- the determination, jointly with ICCROM and IUCN, of the need for training in monitoring;
- establishment of a unit at the World Heritage Centre that will enable the implementation of a systematic monitoring and reporting system.