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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-first session

Christchurch, New Zealand

23 June – 2 July 2007

Item 11B of the Provisional Agenda: Periodic Reports

Follow up of the Periodic Report for Asia and the Pacific

SUMMARY

This document presents a summary of follow-up actions to implement the recommendations of the first cycle of the Periodic Reporting for Asia and the Pacific region (2003) in line with the regional programme-“Action Asia 2003-2009”, adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session (UNESCO, 2003). Progress reports on follow up of the Periodic Report for Asia and the Pacific were presented in working documents: *WHC-04/7EXT.COM/5D* and *WHC-06/30.COM/11D*.

In consideration of the particular focus on this region during the 31st Session of the World Heritage Committee, information regarding the follow up on the Periodic Reporting process within the Pacific is contained in a separate Document, *WHC-07/31.COM/11C*.

For further details on the Action Plans for Periodic Reporting follow-up adopted in the sub-regional workshops in Asia, please consult documents at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting/>

The Action Plan Pacific - 2009 is accessible online at:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/5/> (in English), and
<http://whc.unesco.org/fr/activites/5/> (in French)

Draft Decision: 31 COM 11B, see Point IV

I. BACKGROUND

A. Asia-Pacific Periodic Reporting in brief

1. Between 1999 and 2003, 39 States Parties (27 from Asia and 12 from the Pacific) participated in the first cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise and submitted national reports on the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*. The state of conservation reports for 88 World Heritage properties inscribed on the World Heritage List until 1994 (55 cultural and 33 natural and mixed) were reviewed. Over 4,000 pages of national and site-specific reports were read, synthesized and analyzed by the World Heritage Centre, in co-operation with the Advisory Bodies and UNESCO Field Offices. As a result of this exercise, a World Heritage Paper (No 12) entitled "*The State of World Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region*" was prepared by the World Heritage Centre and made available in English and French.
2. The Asia-Pacific Periodic Reporting exercise provided an overall assessment of the application of the *World Heritage Convention* by the States Parties. It also provided a real time picture of the state of conservation and the management and monitoring arrangements of the Asia-Pacific World Heritage properties inscribed on the World Heritage List before or in 1994. Finally, it enhanced regional co-operation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties in the region concerning the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* as well heritage sites' conservation and management.
3. Following the presentation of the results and recommendations of the Periodic Reporting exercise to the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session (UNESCO, 2003), the Committee adopted the two regional programmes "Action Asia 2003-2009" and "World Heritage – Pacific 2009".
4. The follow-up activities to the Periodic Report in the Asia-Pacific Region have been elaborated according to the regional programmes adopted by the World Heritage Committee, taking into account the comments and recommendations of the Asia-Pacific States Parties.

B. Progress in the implementation of the Programme "ActionAsia 2003-2009"

5. Three sub-regional workshops on Periodic Report follow-up in Asia were organized by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with the States Parties and the Advisory Bodies to develop and implement sub-regional Action Plans in line with the two regional programmes These workshops include:
 - Sub-regional Workshop for Periodic Report follow-up in South Asia (Lahore, Pakistan, April 2005);
 - Sub-regional Workshop for Periodic Report follow-up in Central Asia (Almaty, Kazakhstan, November 2005);
 - Regional Workshop for Periodic Report follow-up in South-East and North-East Asia (Malacca, Malaysia, December 2005).
6. As a result of implementing the Action Plans between 2005 and 2007, 13 Asian countries have now submitted or revised their national Tentative Lists, addressing the under or non-represented categories of cultural and natural heritage sites. New nominations from three non-represented States Parties (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan) have been added to the World Heritage List or submitted for examination by the Committee in 2008.

7. Moreover, national action plans have been developed in some six countries and national training activities on the *Operational Guidelines* and Tentative Lists preparation were organized in Indonesia and the Philippines with support from the World Heritage Fund.
8. The Action Plans, developed through the implementation of the two regional programmes, were endorsed by the World Heritage Committee at its 7th extraordinary session (UNESCO, 2004) and 30th session of the Committee (Vilnius, 2006). The Action Plans contains a list of activities to be implemented up to 2009, and serve as a reference to the Asia-Pacific States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for the implementation of the *Convention* in the region.
9. For further details on the Action Plans for Periodic Reporting follow-up adopted in the sub-regional workshops in Asia, please consult documents at the following Web address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting/>.

II. SOME HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PLANS IN ASIA

A) Serial World Heritage Nomination of the Silk Roads

10. With financial support from the Netherlands Funds-In-Trust, UNESCO expert missions were carried out in August 2003 and July 2004 to the Chinese section of the Silk Roads in order to research and improve understanding of the specific type of "Cultural Routes", with a view to its possible nomination. The missions also sought to develop a systematic approach towards the identification and nomination of the Chinese section of the Silk Road, in particular the Oasis Route, which, with the Steppe and the Maritime Routes, is one of three inter-cultural routes along the Silk Roads, relating the story of the Silk Roads in a comprehensive manner. Following consultations with China's State Administration of Cultural Heritage, a thematic approach for cultural heritage identification was adopted for the Chinese section of the Silk Roads (land routes).
11. In November 2005, during the sub-regional workshop for 2003 Periodic Reporting follow-up, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, representatives from Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) adopted an Action Plan which gave highest priority to the Serial Nomination for the "Central Asian Silk Roads". The workshop on Periodic Reporting follow-up in North-East and South-East Asia took place at Malacca, Malaysia in December 2005 and also supported the identification of potential themes such as the Silk Roads for serial and transboundary World Heritage nomination in Asia.
12. Financed through the Netherlands Funds-In-Trust, further support to this approach was developed at a Stakeholders Consultation Workshop on the Silk Roads World Heritage nomination held in Turfan, China in August 2006. This Workshop was attended by 50 participants from Central Asian countries, China and UNESCO. It also provided the opportunity for the work being undertaken in China on a potential Silk Roads nomination to be officially presented to representatives from Central Asian countries.
13. With financial support from the World Heritage Fund, a UNESCO Sub-regional Workshop on the World Heritage Serial Nomination for Central Asian Silk Roads was organized in Samarkand, Uzbekistan from 25 to 31 October 2006. The meeting agreed upon a general strategy and action plan in order to proceed with the Silk Roads nominations in both Central Asia and in China. A Concept Paper and strategic approach for the serial nomination are currently being developed by a group of international experts, with support from ICOMOS, for further consultation with the concerned States Parties.
14. Representatives of the Central Asian countries and China will meet from 16 to 21 April 2007 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to review the proposed Concept Paper and strategic

approach for the serial nomination and to develop a practical work plan for the next three to four years and recommendations for action/s both by UNESCO and the States Parties involved.

15. The preparation and groundwork on the serial and trans-boundary World Heritage nomination of the Silk Roads is at present being undertaken at the request and initiative of the six States Parties currently involved – the People’s Republic of China and the Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. At the same time, it is being understood that the network of routes to which the name “Silk Roads” has been applied extended South into the Indian subcontinent and west to the Mediterranean, and that this initial preparatory work currently concentrated in China and Central Asia will provide a paradigm for the eventual identification and inscription of sites all along the entire land route that could involve many other countries.

B) Serial Nomination on the “Central Asia Petroglyph sites”

16. It is apparent that petroglyphs constitute one of the most promising concepts to promote World Heritage in the Central Asian sub-region. Despite the UNESCO-supported “Central Asian Petroglyphs Network” initiative to develop common standards in documentation and research since 2003, no concrete action has been taken towards a new World Heritage nomination after the inscription of the Archaeological Landscape of Tamgaly (Kazakhstan) on the World Heritage List.
17. Participants at the sub-regional workshop for the follow-up of the 2003 Periodic Reporting Exercise for Central Asia, held in November 2005 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, adopted an action plan which placed the Serial Nomination for “Central Asian Petroglyphs” among the top priorities.

C) Improved integrated site management and monitoring

18. Following the recommendations of the Asia-Pacific Periodic Reporting, the revision of boundaries and buffer zones has been (or will be) carried out at several cultural and natural World Heritage properties in Asia. For instance, Historic Ensemble of the Potala Palace in Lhasa (China), the Kathmandu Valley (Nepal), Archaeological Ruins at Moenjodaro (Pakistan), the Complex of Hue Monuments (Vietnam) and Tubbataha Reef Marine Park (Philippines). The integrated site-management and monitoring system have also been introduced by the national and the local authorities at World Heritage properties such as the Groups of Monuments at Hampi (India) and Borobudur Temple Compounds (Indonesia).

D) Training on Sustainable Tourism Management

19. The above-mentioned sub-regional workshop in Malacca endorsed the organization of training activities on sustainable tourism management as one of the top priorities. To address the challenges of mass tourism and the rapidly growing visitor numbers at all Chinese World Heritage properties, a first national training workshop was organized by the World Heritage Centre and the competent Chinese ministries in May 2006 to support future work on tourism planning and monitoring. The workshop provided a broad overview of sustainable tourism issues and techniques, and identified management needs and an Action Plan set the stage for future training interventions. Financed by the Netherlands Funds-In-Trust, it presented the first of a series of training activities for tourism management in China and brought together the two Advisory Bodies (IUCN and ICOMOS) as well as tourism representatives and UNWTO.

20. A Chinese version of World Heritage Manual No 1—“*Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites: a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers*” was produced for distribution to the decision-makers, experts and site managers in China.
21. Similarly, training activities on tourism management were organized for World Heritage sites managers in Vietnam.

E) UNESCO Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Training and Certification Programme

22. Based on the national reports submitted by States Parties and recommendations of regional consultation meetings, a number of regional recommendations was issued in order to sustainably manage World Heritage sites in the Asia-Pacific region vis-à-vis tourism. These include the recommendation for developing tourism management measures, including visitor management plans as part of the sites’ Management plan.
23. In response to these concerns, the UNESCO Office in Bangkok, in the framework of the UNESCO-ICCROM Asian Academy of Heritage Management (AAHM), started in 2005 a regional initiative called “UNESCO Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Training and Certification Programme”, to improve training for heritage guides, particularly those working at World Heritage sites.
24. The programme provides specialized professional guide training, through a UNESCO-certified Cultural Heritage Specialist Guides scheme. With a view to raising the professional capacities of the guides at heritage sites, the Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Programme provides core training curriculum on World Heritage sites; helps in developing customized national curricula; offers technical support for training national trainers; and introduces training and certification systems resulting in cultural heritage specialist guides. It is designed so that the trained guides provide the highest level of visitor experience, while raising awareness about conservation issues; all aimed at aiding the long-term sustainability of Asia and Pacific region World Heritage properties.

III. ACTIVITIES PROPOSED FOR IMPLEMENTATION UNDER THE WORLD HERITAGE FUND IN THE BIENNIUM 2008 – 2009

25. With a view to further and consolidate the above-mentioned initiatives, the following activities, including an estimate of their cost, are proposed for implementation through the World Heritage Fund during the biennium 2008-2009:

Description of the activity	Estimated cost in USD
Development of working tools/best practice to facilitate the implementation of the Convention	20,000
Support to the serial World Heritage nomination of the Silk Roads in Asia	30,000
Co-funding of a Sub-Regional training workshop on sustainable tourism management in South-east Asia	20,000
Support to development of serial, trans-boundary nomination for Petroglyphs sites in Central Asia	30,000
Total	100,000

IV. DRAFT DECISION

Draft Decision: 31 COM 11B

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined Document WHC-07/31.COM/11B,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **27 COM 20B.3** and **30 COM 11D** adopted respectively at its 27th session (UNESCO, 2003) and 30th session (Vilnius, 2006),*
3. *Notes with satisfaction the significant progress achieved in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in Asia through the execution of the Action Plans developed within the framework of the regional programme “Action Asia 2003-2009”;*
4. *Commends the Asian States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for their efforts, as well as the concerned institutions and donors for their contributions to achieve these positive results;*
5. *Strongly commends the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Training and Certification Programme as a best-practice example of an initiative aiming at integrating the conservation of World Heritage within the wider sustainable development framework for the benefit of local communities;*
6. *Takes note of, and welcomes the launch of the World Heritage Regional Training and Research Institute in China;*
7. *Invites the Asian States Parties, in cooperation with the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, to continue implementing the Action Plans concentrating on the priorities identified at the sub-regional workshops of 2005, and to submit revised Action Plans covering the period 2010-2015, including a budget estimate, for the consideration of the Committee at its 33rd Session in 2009;*
8. *Decides to allocate the amount of USD 100,000 from the World Heritage Fund for the implementation of the activities indicated in Section IV of Document WHC-07/31.COM/11B;*
9. *Requests the World Heritage Centre to submit a report on the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plans, including proposals for the period 2010-2015, for examination by the Committee at its 33rd session in 2009.*