

The World Heritage Convention

A Flagship Programme for the Conservation of Biodiversity

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Chairperson

World Heritage Committee
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What is World Heritage?



Grand Canyon National Park, USA



They are all places of “outstanding universal value”

- they are part of a heritage of all humankind
- their protection is our shared responsibility
- they are held in trust for this and future generations

This is the rationale for the World Heritage
Convention





Detail of Temple, Luang Prabang, Laos





Ancient Ksour, Oualata, Mauritania





Sagarmatha National Park, Nepal





Venice and its lagoon, Italy





The Great Barrier Reef, Australia



What is the World Heritage Convention?

- An international agreement adopted in 1972
- 178 “States Parties”
- Identifies, protects & preserves natural and cultural properties of outstanding universal value for mankind
- Links Nature and Culture
- Integrates Conservation and Development
- Mobilizes International Solidarity



What is the World Heritage Convention?

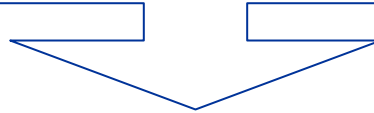
- Overseen by the World Heritage Committee, composed of 21 States Parties elected by its General Assembly
- Serviced by UNESCO
- Advised by IUCN, ICCROM and ICOMOS
- UNESCO's World Heritage Centre created in 1992 as Secretariat to the World Heritage Committee



How does it work?

States Parties ...

- nominate sites for inclusion on the WH List
- agree to protect the sites
- elect the WH Committee (composed of 21 States Parties)



The WH Committee ...

- sets ground rules for operation of Convention
- establishes criteria for sites
- agrees what sites go on WH List
- keeps sites on List under review
- agrees what sites go on the List of WH in Danger
- oversees budget
- provides funds and advice to help countries



What are the benefits of World Heritage designation?

Governments seek World Heritage status because it:

- Provides recognition for the site
- Strengthens its protection
- Attracts international funding
- Helps to get technical support



World Heritage in Numbers

- 178 countries (“States Parties”) have now ratified the Convention
- 788 sites in 134 countries
 - 611 Cultural Sites
 - 134 Natural sites
 - 23 Mixed Sites



Natural Heritage

- ***Natural features*** consisting of physical and biological formations of outstanding universal value from aesthetic or scientific point of view
- ***Geological and physiographical*** formations
- ***Natural sites*** of outstanding universal value for science, conservation and beauty



A Tool for Biodiversity Conservation

(ii) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals



A Tool for Biodiversity Conservation

(iv) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation



Protected Areas and Biodiversity Conservation

Convention on Biological Diversity:

Protected Areas are essential to achieving the 3 Objectives of the Convention:

The conservation of biodiversity, its Sustainable use and the Sharing of its benefits

Vital to reach Millenium Development Goal 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability



The World Heritage Convention and Protected Areas

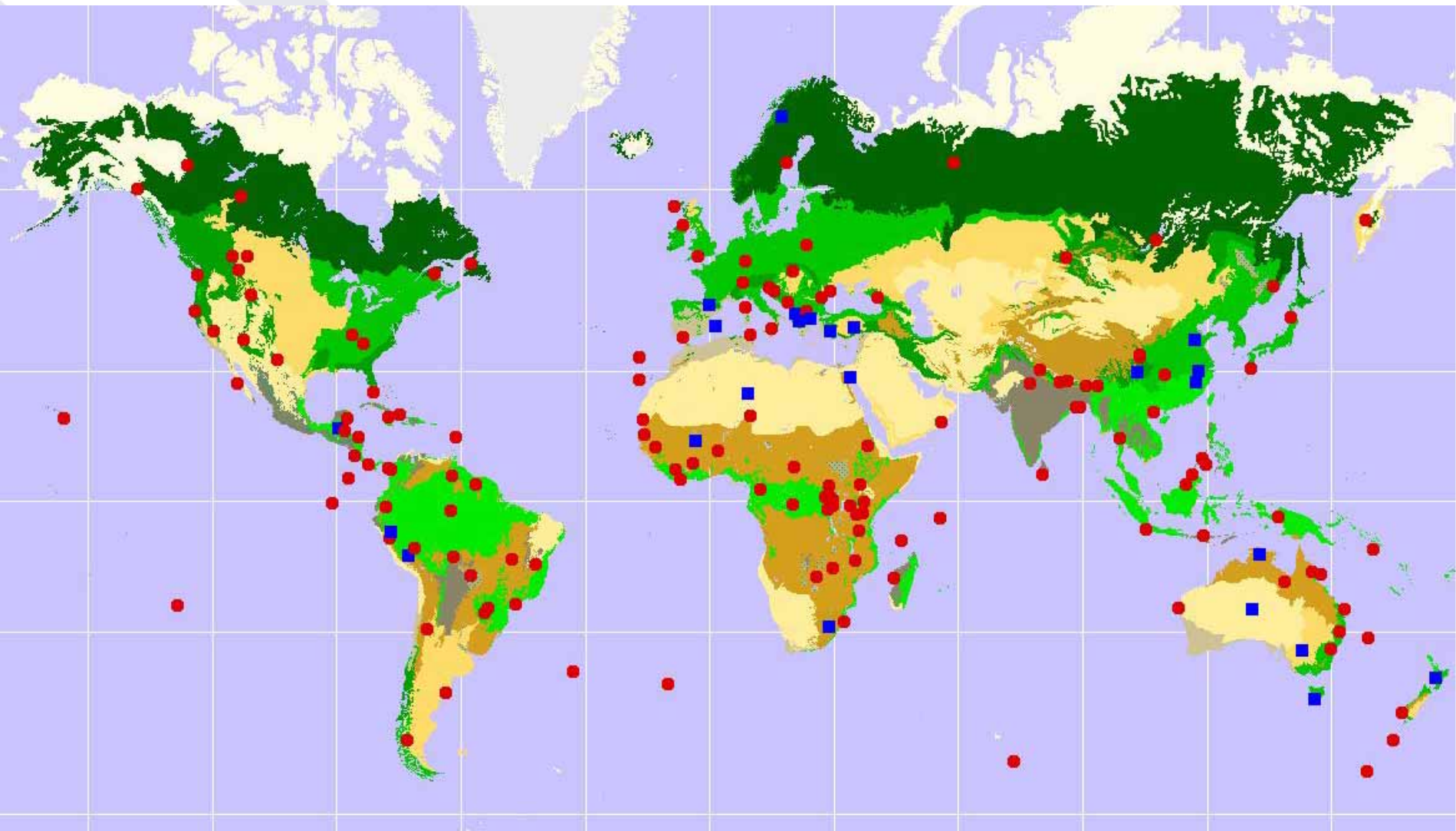
100,000 protected areas designated covering almost 19 million km² or 3,67% of the total surface area of the earth and more then 12% of its land surface

Only 154 natural sites and 23 mixed sites, but they cover together 1.71 Mio km², close to 10% of the total area protected.

The Convention is given international status to 10% of all protected area lands!



Distribution of Natural Sites



The World Heritage Convention representing major ecosystems

WWF Global Ecoregions:

867 ecoregions in the world

Global 200: priorities for conservation action:

142 terrestrial priority ecoregions

53 freshwater priority ecoregions

43 marine priority ecoregions

The World Heritage List has sites in

65 % of the terrestrial priority ecoregions

57 % of the freshwater priority ecoregions

58 % of the marine priority ecoregions



The World Heritage Convention protecting important areas for biodiversity

Biodiversity Hotspots (Conservation International):

Areas with exceptional high biodiversity but extremely threatened

25 Hotspots identified covering less than 2 % of the global terrestrial ecosystems but 44% of all plant species and 38% of birds, mammals reptiles and amphibians

In 21 of the 25 hotspots (84%), World Heritage Sites were designated



The World Heritage Convention

A practical Conservation Tool

State of Conservation reporting

Reactive Monitoring

Periodic Reporting

List of World Heritage in Danger



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