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### 3 Policies Regarding CONSERVATION of World Heritage Properties

Conservation of cultural and natural heritage is at the core of the *Convention*. Conservation includes effective and active measures that can be taken by States Parties to ensure the identification, protection, presentation and transmission of heritage.

There is no single definition of conservation in relation to both cultural and natural heritage. However, with regards to cultural heritage 'all operations designed to understand a property, know its history and meaning, ensure its material safeguard, and, if required, its restoration and enhancement' could be part of its conservation (Nara Document on Authenticity). Conservation of natural heritage refers to the protection, care, management and maintenance of ecosystems, habitats, wildlife species and populations, within or outside of their natural environments, in order to safeguard the natural conditions for their long-term permanence (IUCN).

The **Conservation** theme includes policies related to protection, management, monitoring, impact assessments, factors affecting the properties, tourism and sustainable development.

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#### 3.1 Protection, conservation and management of World Heritage properties

##### [The UNESCO World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy](#)

C. 4) "Apply the Ecosystem Approach

(...)

18. a) Promote integration of the ecosystem approach principles into all stages of planning and management of World Heritage sites."

##### [Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention](#)

9. "All dimensions of sustainable development should apply to natural, cultural and mixed properties in their diversity. These dimensions are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, with none having predominance over another and each being equally necessary. States Parties should therefore review and reinforce governance frameworks within management systems of World Heritage properties in order to achieve the appropriate balance, integration and harmonization between the protection of OUV and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives. This will include the full respect and participation of all stakeholders and rights holders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, the setting up of effective inter-institutional coordination mechanisms and provisions for the systematic assessment of environmental, social, and economic impacts of all proposed developments, as well as effective monitoring through continuity in data collection against agreed indicators".

15. "States Parties should ensure that biological and cultural diversity, as well as ecosystem services and benefits for people that contribute to environmental sustainability, are protected and enhanced within World Heritage properties, their buffer zones and their wider settings. To this end, States Parties should:

i. Integrate consideration for biological and cultural diversity as well as ecosystem services and benefits within the conservation and management of all World Heritage properties, including mixed and cultural ones,

ii. Avoid, and if not possible mitigate, all negative impacts on the environment and cultural diversity when conserving and managing World Heritage properties and their wider settings. This can be achieved by promoting environmental, social and cultural impact assessment tools when undertaking planning in sectors such as urban development, transport, infrastructure, mining and waste management - as well as by applying sustainable consumption and production patterns and promoting the use of renewable energy sources".

25. “The management and conservation of World Heritage properties should contribute to fostering inclusive local economic development and enhancing livelihoods, compatibly with the protection of their OUV”.

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 112**

“Effective management involves a cycle of short, medium and long-term actions to protect, conserve and present the nominated property. An integrated approach to planning and management is essential to guide the evolution of properties over time and to ensure maintenance of all aspects of their Outstanding Universal Value. This approach goes beyond the property to include any buffer zone(s), as well as the broader setting. The broader setting may relate to the property’s topography, natural and built environment, and other elements such as infrastructure, land use patterns, spatial organization, and visual relationships. It may also include related social and cultural practices, economic processes and other intangible dimensions of heritage such as perceptions and associations. Management of the broader setting is related to its role in supporting the Outstanding Universal Value. Its effective management may also contribute to sustainable development, through harnessing the reciprocal benefits for heritage and society.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 110**

“An effective management system depends on the type, characteristics and needs of the nominated property and its cultural and natural context. Management systems may vary according to different cultural perspectives, the resources available and other factors. They may incorporate traditional practices, existing urban or regional planning instruments, and other planning control mechanisms, both formal and informal. Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 108**

“Each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which must specify how the Outstanding Universal Value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 98**

“Legislative and regulatory measures at national and local levels should assure the protection of the property from social, economic and other pressures or changes that might negatively impact the Outstanding Universal Value, including the integrity and/or authenticity of the property. States Parties should also assure the full and effective implementation of such measures.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 97**

“All properties inscribed on the World Heritage List must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection and management to ensure their safeguarding. This protection should include adequately delineated boundaries. Similarly States Parties should demonstrate adequate protection at the national, regional, municipal, and/or traditional level for the nominated property. They should append appropriate texts to the nomination with a clear explanation of the way this protection operates to protect the property.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 96**

“Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure that their Outstanding Universal Value, including the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription, are sustained or enhanced over time. A regular review of the general state of conservation of properties, and thus also their Outstanding Universal Value, shall be done within a framework of monitoring processes for World Heritage properties, as specified within the Operational Guidelines.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 86**

“In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.”

### Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7

15. "[The World Heritage Committee] encourages (...) the reflection on reconstruction within World Heritage properties as a complex multi-disciplinary process, towards developing new guidance to reflect the multi-faceted challenges that reconstruction brings, its social and economic context, the short- and long-term needs of properties, and the idea of reconstruction as a process that should be undertaken within the framework of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the properties."

### Decision of the World Heritage Committee 40 COM 7

"Integrated management, Decision making, Governance

23. [The World Heritage Committee,] noting with concern that the lack of an integrated management approach is reported to cause challenges to the coordination of management and decision making processes of properties where different authorities are involved, in particular in the cases of mixed, serial, and transboundary properties, urges States Parties to establish appropriate mechanisms in order to facilitate a coordinated approach to the management of all properties, in line with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines as laid out in Paragraphs 112, 114, and 135, and encourages States Parties with contiguous natural properties on either side of their international borders, which are not listed as transboundary properties, to establish appropriate mechanisms for cooperation between their respective management authorities and ministries;

24. Also encourages States Parties to promote recognition and awareness across all relevant national and regional agencies of the World Heritage status of the properties on their territory, and to develop mechanisms to ensure consideration of impacts on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the decision making processes of relevant ministries, before permits are issued for developments that could negatively impact the OUV."

### Decision of the World Heritage Committee 39 COM 7

8. "[The World Heritage Committee] takes note of the increasing number of State of Conservation reports due to inadequate management systems or plans and urges States Parties to ensure that management systems and plans are in place at the time of inscription."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

States Parties are responsible for elaborating a comprehensive and integrated site management plan and to secur[ing] the necessary resources for its full implementation (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests the States Parties to establish the Outstanding Universal Value of the property as a clearly defined and central element within the protection and management system for the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>2</sup>

The World Heritage Committee recommends the States Parties to improve institutional coordination, including international coordination, between the different agents in charge of the management of transnational, transboundary and/or serial properties in order to avoid potential negative impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (*based on Case law on decisions on Nominations*).<sup>3</sup>

The World Heritage Committee recommends the States Parties to develop a long-term strategy for the sustainable financing of the property, and to ensure adequate human, material and financial resources to support the effective management (*based on Case law on decisions on Nominations*).<sup>4</sup>

## **3.2 Monitoring**

### **3.2.1 General**

#### Operational Guidelines

##### **Paragraph 181**

“In addition, the threats and/or their detrimental impacts on the integrity of the property must be those which are amenable to correction by human action. In the case of cultural properties, both natural factors and human-made factors may be threatening, while in the case of natural properties, most threats will be human-made and only very rarely a natural factor (such as an epidemic disease) will threaten the integrity of the property. In some cases, the threats and/or their detrimental impacts on the integrity of the property may be corrected by administrative or legislative action, such as the cancelling of a major public works project or the improvement of legal status.”

#### Operational Guidelines

##### **Paragraph 173**

“The World Heritage Committee requests that reports of missions to review the state of conservation of the World Heritage properties include:

a) an indication of threats or significant improvement in the conservation of the property since the last report to the World Heritage Committee;

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.70](#) , [33 COM 7B.116](#) , [34 COM 7A.27](#) , [35 COM 7B.131](#) , [36 COM 7B.74](#) , [40 COM 7B.50](#) , [41 COM 7A.42](#) .

<sup>2</sup> See for example Decisions [34 COM 7A.27](#) , [36 COM 7B.74](#) , [36 COM 7B.8](#) , [41 COM 7B.47](#) .

<sup>3</sup> See for example Decisions [40 COM 8B.9](#) , [41 COM 8B.21](#) , [41 COM 8B.3](#) , [41 COM 8B.7](#) .

<sup>4</sup> See for example Decisions [40 COM 8B.6](#) , [41 COM 8B.11](#) , [41 COM 8B.3](#) , [41 COM 8B.31](#) , [41 COM 8B.5](#) , [41 COM 8B.9](#) .

- b) any follow-up to previous decisions of the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of the property;
- c) information on any threat or damage to or loss of Outstanding Universal Value, integrity and/or authenticity for which the property was inscribed on the World Heritage List."

## Operational Guidelines

### **Paragraph 96**

"Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure that their Outstanding Universal Value, including the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription, are sustained or enhanced over time. A regular review of the general state of conservation of properties, and thus also their Outstanding Universal Value, shall be done within a framework of monitoring processes for World Heritage properties, as specified within the Operational Guidelines."

## The UNESCO World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy

C. 4) "Apply the Ecosystem Approach

(...)

18. c) Consider landscape/seascape level issues when monitoring the state of conservation of World Heritage sites (...)."

## Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties

"States Parties and managers of individual World Heritage properties will consider undertaking site-level monitoring, mitigation and adaptation measures, where appropriate".

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 5E

9. "[The World Heritage Committee] Invites the Advisory Bodies to engage in effective and constructive dialogue with States Parties in the preparation of Tentative Lists, in the nomination process, including before the publication of recommendations, and post inscription (including monitoring missions), with the aim of achieving more effective credibility, transparency and better implementation of the Convention and Sustainable Development Goals."

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7

54. "[The World Heritage Committee] encourages States Parties to make full use of such Earth Observation technologies for the early detection of activities potentially harmful to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of World Heritage properties, such as deforestation, mining, illegal fisheries, agricultural encroachment, etc. and to better understand trends and respond appropriately."

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 31 COM 5.2

5. "[The World Heritage Committee] (...) underlines that reinforced monitoring is a constant cooperative process with the State Party concerned, which will always be undertaken in full consultation and with its approval."

## Case Law

### Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions

The World Heritage Committee recommends establishing key monitoring indicators to relate more directly to the Outstanding Universal Value to allow for judgment of changes in state of conservation, and adding specific indicators, periodicity and institutional responsibilities (*based on Case law on decisions on Nominations*).<sup>5</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties to monitor wildlife and populations, including key species, in order to assess the populations and trends (*based on case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>6</sup><sup>1</sup>

## 3.2.2 Periodic Reporting

### Operational Guidelines

#### Paragraph 202

“Periodic Reporting is important for more effective long term conservation of the properties inscribed, as well as to strengthen the credibility of the implementation of the Convention. It is also an important tool for assessing the implementation by States Parties and World Heritage properties of policies adopted by the World Heritage Committee and the General Assembly.”

## 3.2.3 Reactive Monitoring

### Operational Guidelines

#### Paragraph 170

“When adopting the process of Reactive Monitoring, the Committee was particularly concerned that all possible measures should be taken to prevent the deletion of any property from the List and was ready to offer technical co-operation as far as possible to States Parties in this connection.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### Paragraph 169

“Reactive Monitoring is the reporting by the Secretariat, other sectors of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies to the Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat. To this end, the States Parties shall submit specific reports and impact studies each time exceptional circumstances occur or work is undertaken which may have an impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property or its state of conservation. Reactive Monitoring is also foreseen in reference to properties inscribed, or to be inscribed, on the List of World Heritage in Danger (...). Reactive Monitoring is also foreseen in the procedures for the eventual deletion of properties from the World Heritage List (...).”

### Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 7.1

14. “[The World Heritage Committee] Recognizes that the selection of the state of conservation reports to be discussed by the Committee during its sessions should be based on clear and objective criteria, including the level of threat to the property, rather than being based on representativity.”

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Decisions [38 COM 8B.37](#) , [39 COM 8B.25](#) , [39 COM 8B.33](#) , [41 COM 8B.26](#) , [41 COM 8B.27](#) , [41 COM 8B.28](#) , [41 COM 8B.31](#) , [41 COM 8B.33](#) , [41 COM 8B.38](#) .

<sup>6</sup> See for example Decisions [37 COM 7B.11](#) , [38 COM 7B.92](#) , [40 COM 7B.69](#) , [40 COM 7B.70](#) , [41 COM 7A.15](#) .

### 3.2.4 List of World Heritage in Danger

#### Operational Guidelines

##### **Paragraph 183**

“When considering the inscription of a property on the List of World Heritage in Danger, the Committee shall develop, and adopt, as far as possible, in consultation with the State Party concerned, a Desired state of conservation for the removal of the property from the List of World Heritage in Danger, and a programme for corrective measures.”[1]

[1] In relation to [the paragraph 183 of the Operational Guidelines](#), there are several decisions from different properties related to the desired state of conservation. See for example [31 COM 7A.16](#), [31 COM 7A.21](#), [36 COM 7A.34](#), [36 COM 7B.102](#), [38 COM 7A.23](#), [39 COM 7A.13](#), [39 COM 7A.18](#), [41 COM 7A.19](#), [41 COM 7A.23](#).

#### Operational Guidelines

##### **Paragraph 182**

“The Committee may wish to bear in mind the following supplementary factors when considering the inclusion of a cultural or natural property in the List of World Heritage in Danger:

- a) Decisions which affect World Heritage properties are taken by Governments after balancing all factors. The advice of the World Heritage Committee can often be decisive if it can be given before the property becomes threatened.
- b) Particularly in the case of ascertained danger, the physical or cultural deteriorations to which a property has been subjected should be judged according to the intensity of its effects and analyzed case by case.
- c) Above all in the case of potential danger to a property, one should consider that:
  - i) the threat should be appraised according to the normal evolution of the social and economic framework in which the property is situated;
  - ii) it is often impossible to assess certain threats such as the threat of armed conflict as to their effect on cultural or natural properties;
  - iii) some threats are not imminent in nature, but can only be anticipated, such as demographic growth.
- d) Finally, in its appraisal the Committee should take into account any cause of unknown or unexpected origin which endangers a cultural or natural property.”

#### Operational Guidelines

##### **Paragraph 9**

“When a property inscribed on the World Heritage List is threatened by serious and specific dangers, the Committee considers placing it on the List of World Heritage in Danger. When the Outstanding Universal Value of the property which justified its inscription on the World Heritage List is destroyed, the Committee considers deleting the property from the World Heritage List.”

### 3.2.5 Deletion of a World Heritage property from the List



## Operational Guidelines

### **Paragraph 192**

“The Committee adopted the following procedure for the deletion of properties from the World Heritage List in cases:

- a) where the property has deteriorated to the extent that it has lost those characteristics which determined its inclusion in the World Heritage List; and
- b) where the intrinsic qualities of a World Heritage site were already threatened at the time of its nomination by human action and where the necessary corrective measures as outlined by the State Party at the time, have not been taken within the time proposed (...).”

## **3.3 Impact assessments**

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 172**

“The World Heritage Committee invites the States Parties to the *Convention* to inform the Committee, through the Secretariat, of their intention to undertake or to authorize in an area protected under the *Convention* major restorations or new constructions which may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. Notice should be given as soon as possible (...) and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, so that the Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is fully preserved.”

### Operational Guidelines

#### **Paragraph 110**

“An effective management system depends on the type, characteristics and needs of the nominated property and its cultural and natural context. Management systems may vary according to different cultural perspectives, the resources available and other factors. They may incorporate traditional practices, existing urban or regional planning instruments, and other planning control mechanisms, both formal and informal. Impact assessments for proposed interventions are essential for all World Heritage properties.”

### Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention

9. "(...) appropriate balance, integration and harmonization between the protection of OUV and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives will include (...) provisions for the systematic assessment of environmental, social, and economic impacts of all proposed developments, as well as effective monitoring through continuity in data collection against agreed indicators."

### Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7

37. "[The World Heritage Committee] stresses the necessity for HIAs and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) to be proportionate to the scope and scale of projects, with simpler assessments being undertaken for smaller projects and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for very large projects, and the necessity for

assessments to be undertaken in a timely fashion and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies (...)."

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 39 COM 7](#)

11. "[The World Heritage Committee] taking note of the benefits to States Parties of systematically utilizing Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) in the review of development projects, encourages States Parties to integrate the EIA/HIA processes into legislation, planning mechanisms and management plans, and reiterates its recommendation to States Parties to use these tools in assessing projects, including assessment of cumulative impacts, as early as possible and before any final decision is taken, and, taking into account the need for capacity-building in this regard, requests the States Parties to contribute financially and technically towards the development of further guidance regarding EIA/HIA implementation, by the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre, based on case studies and field experience."

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 35 COM 12E](#)

15.c) "[The World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties to] (...) be proactive in relation to development and conservation of World Heritage properties by conducting a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) at the time of nomination to anticipate the impact of any potential development on the Outstanding Universal Value."

## [Case Law](#)

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests the States Parties to provide, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the [Operational Guidelines](#), detailed information on the planning and design of proposed and on-going projects, which may impact on the visual integrity of the World Heritage property or its immediate and wider setting, and undertake a visual impact study, for review by the Advisory Bodies, prior to approval and implementation and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse (*Based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>7</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests the States Parties to ensure that development is not permitted if it would impact individually or cumulatively on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>8</sup><sup>1</sup>

## **3.4 Disaster risks management**

### [Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties](#)

7. "(...)"

a) Cultural and natural heritage, with their related technologies, practices, skills, knowledge systems and ecosystem's goods and services can play an important positive role in reducing risks from disasters at all phases of the process (readiness, response and recovery), and hence in contributing to sustainable development in general".

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<sup>7</sup> See for example Decisions [27 COM 7B.67](#) , [28 COM 15B.71](#) , [28 COM 15B.74](#) , [31 COM 7B.89](#) , [31 COM 7B.90](#) , [31 COM 7B.94](#) , [32 COM 7B.72](#) , [33 COM 7B.113](#) , [35 COM 7B.96](#) , [37 COM 7B.96](#) , [38 COM 7B.42](#) , [41 COM 7B.23](#) , [41 COM 7B.43](#) .

<sup>8</sup> See for example Decisions [36 COM 7B.8](#) , [38 COM 7B.62](#) , [38 COM 7B.69](#) , [39 COM 7B.15](#) , [40 COM 7B.105](#) , [41 COM 7B.42](#) .

- b) The key to an effective reduction of risks from disasters is advance planning and the building of a culture of prevention”.
- c) In developing plans for reducing risks at World Heritage properties it is essential to give adequate consideration to cultural diversity, age, vulnerable groups and gender perspective”.
- d) Property occupants and users, and concerned communities in general, should be always involved in planning for disaster risk reduction”.
- e) The protection of the Outstanding Universal Value and the integrity and authenticity of World Heritage properties from disasters implies consideration for the associated intangible aspects and movable items that contribute directly to its heritage significance.

(...).

9. The five objectives [of the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disaster at World Heritage Properties] are the following:

- a) Strengthen support within relevant global, regional, national and local institutions for reducing risks at World Heritage properties;
- b) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of disaster prevention at World Heritage properties;
- c) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks at World Heritage properties;
- d) Reduce underlying risk factors at World Heritage properties;
- e) Strengthen disaster risk preparedness at World Heritage properties for effective response at all levels”.

#### **Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention**

16. “In the face of increasing disaster risks and the impact of climate change, States Parties should recognise that World Heritage represents both an asset to be protected and a resource to strengthen the ability of communities and their properties to resist, absorb, and recover from the effects of a hazard. In line with disaster risks and climate change multilateral agreements, States Parties should:

- i. Recognise and promote – within conservation and management strategies – the inherent potential of World Heritage properties for reducing disaster risks and adapting to climate change, through associated ecosystem services, traditional knowledge and practices and strengthened social cohesion.
- ii. Reduce the vulnerability of World Heritage properties and their settings as well as promote the social and economic resilience of local and associated communities to disaster and climate change through structural and non-structural measures, including public awareness-raising, training and education. Structural measures, in particular, should not adversely affect the OUV of World Heritage properties;
- iii. Enhance preparedness for effective response and ‘building-back-better’ in post-disaster recovery strategies within management systems and conservation practice for World Heritage properties”.

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7**

24. “[The World Heritage Committee] encourages States Parties and other stakeholders to further strengthen international cooperation aiming at mitigating impacts of major natural disasters affecting World Heritage properties and reducing vulnerabilities on lives, properties and livelihoods.”

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7**

24. “[The World Heritage Committee] also recalls the need for all States Parties to continue, and where necessary to strengthen all efforts to build resilience of World Heritage properties to Climate Change, including by further reducing to the greatest extent possible all other pressures and threats, and by developing and implementing climate adaptation strategies for properties at risk of Climate Change impacts.”

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 36 COM 7C

5. "[The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties] to make every endeavour to take into consideration disaster risks, including from human-induced hazards, in the management plans and systems for the World Heritage properties located in their territories."

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7

16. "[The World Heritage Committee] urges States Parties to include risk mitigation measures in the management plans of World Heritage properties to address the potential effects of conflicts or disasters on their integrity;"

### 3.5 Factors affecting properties

#### 3.5.1 Buildings and development

*The physical footprint in relatively localized areas including:*

- *Tourism facilities*
- *Recreation facilities*
- *Destruction of traditional buildings and other heritage*
- *Modern construction*
- *Encroachment*
- *Deterioration/loss of setting*

*Housing (For example: Urban high rise/urban sprawl, Encroachment/changes to skyline, etc). Commercial development (For example: Skyscrapers, Large shopping malls, Encroachment/changes to skyline etc). Industrial areas (For example: Individual factories, Industrial areas/parks, Encroachment/changes to skyline etc). Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure (For example: Major accommodation and associated infrastructure (hotels, restaurants, golf courses, ski resorts, etc, Major/permanent high cost tourism facilities (pontoons, jetties, observatories, cable cars, chalets, fully serviced camping areas, etc). Interpretative and visitation facilities (For example: Visitor interpretive facilities (visitor centre, site museum, etc), Signage etc, Trail hardening (trail markers etc), Information booths etc, Minor picnic facilities, Minor camping areas, Moorings/marker buoys.*

## Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape

Preamble

"The dynamic nature of living cities [must be recognized]. However, (...) rapid and frequently uncontrolled development is transforming urban areas and their settings, which may cause fragmentation and deterioration to urban heritage with deep impacts on community values, throughout the world".

Preamble

"In order to support the protection of natural and cultural heritage, emphasis needs to be put on the integration of historic urban area conservation, management and planning strategies into local development processes and urban planning, such as, contemporary architecture and infrastructure development, for which the application of a landscape approach would help maintain urban identity".

22. "Conservation of the urban heritage should be integrated into general policy planning and practices and those related to the broader urban context. Policies should provide mechanisms for balancing conservation and sustainability in the short and long terms. Special emphasis should be placed on the harmonious,

integration of contemporary interventions into the historic urban fabric. In particular, the responsibilities of the different stakeholders are the following:

(a) Member States should integrate urban heritage conservation strategies into national development policies and agendas according to the historic urban landscape approach. Within this framework, local authorities should prepare urban development plans taking into account the area's values, including the landscape and other heritage values, and features associated therewith;

(b) Public and private stakeholders should cooperate, inter alia, through partnerships to ensure the successful application of the historic urban landscape approach;

(c) International organizations dealing with sustainable development processes should integrate the historic urban landscape approach into their strategies, plans and operations;

(d) National and international non-governmental organizations should participate in developing and disseminating tools and best practices for the implementation of the historic urban landscape approach".

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7](#)

26. "(...) The increasing urban pressure in and around numerous World Heritage properties has become a major threat to their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)."

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 34 COM 7C](#)

8. "Given the percentage of threats related to Development and infrastructure projects and to high-rise buildings (...) [the World Heritage Committee] stresses the need for structured heritage impact assessments of major projects to be carried out at the earliest opportunity in order to assess the impact of potential projects on Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties."

### [Case Law](#)

#### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee recommends to develop a comprehensive urban land use plan, which includes provisions for protection mechanisms and regulatory measures to ensure the adequate protection and control of the property and its landscape setting (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>9</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee recommends to put in place appropriate protection and planning measures and to develop an integrated urban conservation and development tool, in the urban settlement and its wider context, in order to address development pressures, to protect the urban landscape and prevent the construction of new buildings that could have a visual impact (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>10</sup><sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.2 Transportation infrastructure**

*The physical 'footprint' and derived effects of use (includes visitor transportation infrastructure). Ground transport infrastructure (For example: Roads, Car parks, Railways, including easements). Air transport infrastructure (For example: Airports, Airstrips). Marine transport infrastructure (For example: Harbour & port facilities). Effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure (For example: Effects of vehicle traffic on roadways, Effects of shipping traffic in shipping routes, Effects of air traffic).*

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 40 COM 7](#)

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<sup>9</sup> See for example Decisions [34 COM 7A.27](#) , [36 COM 7B.61](#) , [41 COM 7B.41](#) .

<sup>10</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.72](#) , [32 COM 7B.84](#) , [33 COM 7B.67](#) , [36 COM 7B.88](#) , [37 COM 7B.71](#) , [40 COM 7B.49](#) , [41 COM 7](#) , [41 COM 7B.40](#) , [41 COM 7B.42](#) , [41 COM 7B.53](#) .

25. "[The World Heritage Committee] notes with concern that the number of cases of ground transport infrastructure having potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of World Heritage properties is continuing to grow, and calls upon States Parties to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) early in the process of transportation planning to allow for potential impacts of the OUV, including those resulting from foreseeable associated future developments, to be identified prior to the development of specific projects;

26. Encourages States Parties to carry out Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) on ground transport projects, once they are designed, with multiple options to ensure that transportation needs can be met with minimal impacts on the OUV of World Heritage properties."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests Heritage Impact Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments of all significant development proposals in the property and of any major transportation infrastructure project, before approval for the schemes is granted and prior to making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, including definitive location and plans for construction, in order to identify any adverse impacts on the property and ways to mitigate these impacts, and to submit the HIA and the EIA to the World Heritage Centre for review by the Advisory Bodies, in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines (based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation)*.<sup>11</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests the State Party to submit, in accordance to Paragraph 172 of the *Operational Guidelines*, details about any cable car project, including design, technical specifications and precise location of the route, in relation to the inscribed property, together with a HIA and an EIA, well before any irrevocable decisions are taken about the construction of the cable car (*based on case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>12</sup><sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.3 Utilities or service infrastructure**

***Developments in relation to infrastructure for energy utilities (i.e. gas, electricity and water) and other service requirements.***

***Water infrastructure (For example: Dams, Locks, Water tanks, Pumping stations, Introduction of new systems/infrastructure). Renewable energy facilities (For example: Thermal, Wave, Solar, Wind). Non-renewable energy facilities (For example: Nuclear power plants, Coal power plants, Oil/gas facilities). Localised utilities (For example: Incinerators, Cell phone towers, Sewerage works, Microwave/TV/radio towers). Major linear utilities (For example: Power lines/easements, Pipelines etc). Channels.***

## Decision of the World Heritage Committee 40 COM 7

17. "[The World Heritage Committee, noting] with significant concern that an increasing number of properties are facing potential threats from major dam projects, considers that the construction of dams with large reservoirs within the boundaries of World Heritage properties is incompatible with their World Heritage status, and urges States Parties to ensure that the impacts from dams that could affect properties located upstream or downstream within the same river basin are rigorously assessed in order to avoid impacts on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV)."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

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<sup>11</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.122](#) , [36 COM 7B.100](#) , [36 COM 7B.80](#) , [37 COM 7B.65](#) , [38 COM 7B.62](#) , [39 COM 7B.91](#) , [40 COM 7B.55](#) , [41 COM 7B.31](#) , [41 COM 7B.59](#) , [41 COM 7B.69](#) .

<sup>12</sup> See for example Decisions [37 COM 7B.102](#) , [38 COM 7B.45](#) , [38 COM 7B.77](#) , [40 COM 7B.91](#) , [42 COM 7B.26](#) .

The World Heritage Committee recommends to strengthen the protection of the immediate and wider setting of properties for addressing the impact of wind turbines, and to identify a wind turbine exclusion zone, based on the potential visual impact on the components of the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>13</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests to conduct an adequate environmental impact study for the power transmission lines, before any decision is taken (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>14</sup><sup>1</sup>

### 3.5.4 Pollution

*All types of pollution (residential or commercial) as well as garbage, solid waste. Pollution of marine waters (For example: Ocean dumping, Bilge water discharge, Solid debris in marine environments). Ground water pollution (For example: Oil / chemical spills, Industrial effluent, Agricultural runoff, Household sewage/waste, Acid sulphate soils, Effluent discharge, Mine/tailings runoff). Surface water pollution (For example: Acid rain, Mine/tailings runoff, Agricultural runoff). Air pollution (For example: Excessive smoke or other airborne particulates, Dust, Local effects of emissions from use of fossil fuels). Solid waste (For example: Mine tailings, Litter, Industrial waste, Household rubbish). Input of excess energy (For example: Any inputs of heat and light that disturb ecosystems including inappropriate urban lighting, heat pollution, etc.).*

#### Case Law

#### Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions

The World Heritage Committee recommends to enhance the regulation and monitoring of pollution, and to create management plans that consider options to address and to put in place adequate measures to mitigate the impact associated to the pollution, and its potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property, including the control of sources of pollution affecting the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>15</sup><sup>1</sup>

### 3.5.5 Biological resource use/modification

*The collecting/harvesting of wild plants and animals (forestry, fishing, hunting, gathering) and harvesting domesticated species (silviculture, agriculture, aquaculture). Fishing/collecting aquatic resources (For example: Trawling, Netting, Line fishing, Game fishing, Collection/harvest fisheries, Spearfishing, By-catch/incidental take issues). Aquaculture (For example: Marine, Freshwater aquaculture). Land conversion (For example: Agriculture (crops and livestock), Rural, Forestry). Livestock farming/grazing of domesticated animals (For example: Grazing on farms or by pastoral groups). Crop production (For example: Deep ploughing, New crops, Intensification of planted agriculture, Traditional crops, Traditional systems, Gardening). Commercial wild plant collection (For example: Pharmaceutical trade, Medicinal plant, Fodder collection, Thatching, Mushrooms, Bulbs etc). Subsistence wild plant collection - Indigenous subsistence hunting, gathering and collecting, i.e. not for economic benefit, for example: Food plants, Medicinal plants, Fodder collection, Thatching, Mushrooms, Bulbs etc). Commercial hunting (For example: Bushmeat trade, Guided game hunting, Subsistence hunting). Subsistence, i.e. not for economic benefit, hunting. Forestry /wood production (For example: Logging, Pulp production, All silvicultural operations, Restoration/regeneration, Sustainable wood harvesting).*

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<sup>13</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.118](#) , [34 COM 7B.83](#) , [36 COM 7B.74](#) , [41 COM 7B.45](#) , [41 COM 8B.19](#) .

<sup>14</sup> See for example Decisions [21 BUR IVB.33](#) , [25 BUR V.126-127](#) , [37 COM 7B.79](#) , [38 COM 7B.59](#) .

<sup>15</sup> See for example Decisions [31 COM 7B.31](#) , [31 COM 7B.4](#) , [33 COM 7B.28](#) , [35 COM 7B.23](#) , [36 COM 7B.22](#) , [41 COM 7B.25](#) .

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties to ensure that no commercial logging can be permitted within the property/to ban all commercial logging (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[16](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests to undertake research to determine the effects and impact from existing resource use, including fishing activities, grazing and collection of medicinal plants on the OUV of the property and to work with communities and to fully involve local resource users to promote sustainable resource uses and practices (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[17](#)<sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.6 Physical resource extraction**

*Mining. Quarrying For example: Rock, Sand, Aggregates. Oil and gas. Water.*

## Decisions of the World Heritage Committee 37 COM 7 and 40 COM 7

18. "[The World Heritage Committee] notes with significant concern that World Heritage properties are increasingly threatened by extractive industries (...), once again urges all States Parties to the *Convention* and leading industry stakeholders to respect the "No-go" commitment by not permitting extractive activities within World Heritage properties, and by making every effort to ensure that extractives companies located in their territory cause no damage to World Heritage properties, in line with Article 6 of the *Convention*."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties not to explore or mine in World Heritage properties, in line with the Committee's established position that mineral exploration and mining are incompatible with World Heritage status and the international policy statement of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) of not undertaking these activities in World Heritage properties (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[18](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee reiterates that mining activities and oil and gas exploration and exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[19](#)<sup>1</sup>

When mining or other type of exploitation is foreseen, the World Heritage Committee requests to get an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, meeting international standards, before any commencement of exploitation at the property and adjacent to the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[20](#)<sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.7 Local conditions affecting the fabric**

*Environmental or biological factors that promote or contribute to deterioration processes of the fabric of heritage sites. Since decay effects cannot be attributed to a single factor, consider all elements.*

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[16](#) See for example Decisions [37 COM 7B.26](#) , [38 COM 7A.45](#) , [41 COM 7A.19](#) , [41 COM 7B.1](#) , [41 COM 7B.4](#) .

[17](#) See for example Decisions [38 COM 7B.62](#) , [38 COM 7B.84](#) , [40 COM 7B.85](#) , [41 COM 7B.15](#) , [41 COM 7B.17](#) , [43 COM 7B.8](#) .

[18](#) See for example Decisions [35 COM 7B.22](#) , [37 COM 7B.8](#) , [40 COM 7B.104](#) , [41 COM 7A.19](#) .

[19](#) See for example Decisions [38 COM 7B.80](#) , [38 COM 7B.92](#) , [40 COM 7B.71](#) , [40 COM 7B.85](#) .

[20](#) See for example Decisions [35 COM 7B.22](#) , [36 COM 7B.1](#) , [38 COM 7B.92](#) .



*Wind (For example: Erosion, Vibration). Relative humidity. Temperature. Radiation/light. Dust. Water. Pests. Micro-organisms.*

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the conditions as well as an analysis of ways to address the underlying causes of local conditions affecting the fabric, and to elaborate a comprehensive strategy to address the impacts, including priority emergency measures, mitigation measures and an intervention programme (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>21</sup><sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.8 Social/cultural uses of heritage**

*Social factors that contribute to deterioration processes of the fabric of heritage sites. Some uses might have a positive impact as they enhance certain values (eg ritual, religious) while others might compromise ascribed values and could lead to the deterioration of the heritage place. Ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses (For example: Ritual/spiritual/religious uses and associations, Festivals/performances). Society's valuing of heritage (For example: Changes in values leading to new uses of heritage resources, Expansions of / additions to current uses of heritage resources, Conflicting values, Abandonment). Indigenous hunting, gathering and collecting. Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system (For example: Loss of traditional knowledge and practices linked to heritage). Identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community (For example: Changes to identity and social cohesion, Changes in livelihood, Migration to or from site, Changes in local population and community). Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation (For example: Inappropriate/non-existent interpretation, High levels of visitation, Increase of vendors inside/outside site, Building community support, sustainable livelihoods).*

## Operational Guidelines

### **Paragraph 119**

“World Heritage properties may sustain biological and cultural diversity and provide ecosystem services and other benefits, which may contribute to environmental and cultural sustainability. Properties may support a variety of ongoing and proposed uses that are ecologically and culturally sustainable and which may enhance the quality of life and well-being of communities concerned. The State Party and its partners must ensure their use is equitable and fully respects the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. For some properties, human use would not be appropriate. Legislation, policies and strategies affecting World Heritage properties should ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value, support the wider conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and promote and encourage the effective, inclusive and equitable participation of the communities, indigenous peoples and other stakeholders concerned with the property as necessary conditions to its sustainable protection, conservation, management and presentation.”

## Operational Guidelines

### **Paragraph 90**

“For all properties nominated under criteria (vii) - (x), bio-physical processes and landform features should be relatively intact. However, it is recognized that no area is totally pristine and that all natural areas are in a dynamic

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<sup>21</sup> See for example Decisions [36 COM 7A.34](#) , [37 COM 7A.23](#) , [37 COM 7B.74](#) , [38 COM 7A.1](#) , [40 COM 7A.14](#) , [40 COM 7A.9](#) , [41 COM 7A.27](#) , [41 COM 7A.32](#) .

state, and to some extent involve contact with people. Biological diversity and cultural diversity can be closely linked and interdependent and human activities, including those of traditional societies, local communities and indigenous peoples, often occur in natural areas. These activities may be consistent with the Outstanding Universal Value of the area where they are ecologically sustainable.”

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 7.3](#)

10. "[The World Heritage Committee] Acknowledging the contribution of sustainable tourism to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the positive impact it can have on local communities and the protection of World Heritage properties, nevertheless notes with concern that the number of properties negatively affected by overcrowding, congestion and tourism infrastructure development continues to increase;

11. Noting that the protection of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) must be a central objective for all World Heritage properties, requests States Parties to develop visitor management plans and strategies that address the seasonality of tourism (smoothing visitor numbers over time and spreading visitors across sites), encourage longer more in-depth experiences promoting tourism products and services that reflect natural and cultural values, and limit access and activities to improve visitor flows and experiences, while reducing pressures on the attributes which underpin OUV."

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7](#)

46. "[The World Heritage Committee] requests States Parties to develop Visitor Management Plans that assess appropriate carrying capacity of properties for visitors and address the issue of unregulated tourism."

## [Case Law](#)

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to address gentrification processes in properties (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[22](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to take measures to mitigate the impacts of mass tourism representing potential threats to the OUV of a property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[23](#)<sup>1</sup>

For the impact of tourism, the World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties, prior to any development of tourism facilities (resort development, ski facilities, golf resorts, etc.) that its potential impact on the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) has been thoroughly assessed and to develop and implement a clear tourism strategy (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[24](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee recommends States Parties to pay special attention to the living religious heritage at properties, and to adopt efficient regulatory and management instruments to allow for religious uses at concerned properties (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[25](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee recommends States Parties to consider measures in order to address ways to respect the cultural and spiritual values and practices, and sustain the spiritual associations at World Heritage properties (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[26](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties to take into account the traditional uses of local communities and to support the livelihoods of local communities through initiatives related to environmentally

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[22](#) See for example Decisions [35 COM 7B.133](#) , [43 COM 7B.99](#) .

[23](#) See for example Decisions [41 COM 7B.43](#) , [43 COM 7B.58](#) .

[24](#) See for example Decisions [31 COM 7B.29](#) , [37 COM 7B.28](#) , [40 COM 7B.74](#) , [41 COM 7B.32](#) .

[25](#) See for example Decisions [38 COM 7A.1](#) , [38 COM 7B.32](#) , [39 COM 7A.24](#) , [41 COM 7A.32](#) .

[26](#) See for example Decisions [38 COM 7B.53](#) , [40 COM 7B.89](#) , [41 COM 7B.96](#) .

and culturally compatible options in order to prevent any threats from human activity to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property, and to promote the sustainable exploitation of resources and sustainable livelihoods (*based on case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[27](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to assess the impacts of grazing, hunting and other human traditional activities on the biodiversity in the traditional use zone and develop a policy for the sustainable use of the natural resources in the traditional use zones in the property in close cooperation with the indigenous communities using these areas (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[28](#)<sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to strengthen the cooperation with local communities, civil society and in particular the indigenous communities, including consideration of traditional knowledge for the management of the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).[29](#)<sup>1</sup>

### 3.5.9 Other human activities

***Illegal activities (For example: Illegal extraction of biological resources (i.e. poaching), Blast fishing, cyanide fishing, Illegal extraction of geological resources (mining/fossils), Illegal trade, Illegal occupation of space, Illegal excavations, Illegal construction, Looting, Theft, Treasure hunting, Ghost nets (discarded fishing gear). Deliberate destruction of heritage (For example: Vandalism, Graffiti, Politically motivated acts, Arson). Military training. War. Terrorism. Civil unrest.***

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 7.2](#)

9. "[The World Heritage Committee] Reiterates its utmost concern about the continuing threats of wildlife poaching and illegal trafficking of wildlife products linked to impacts of conflict and organized crime, which is eroding the biodiversity and Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of many World Heritage sites across the world, and urges States Parties to take the necessary measures to curb this problem, including through the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);"

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7](#)

20. "[The World Heritage Committee] expresses its utmost concern about the impacts of conflicts causing an escalation of the already severe poaching crisis in central Africa, as armed groups are financing their activities through illegal wildlife trade, which is having a severe impact on wildlife populations, thereby degrading the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of natural World Heritage properties;"

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7](#)

35. "[The World Heritage Committee] reiterates its utmost concern about the continued impacts of poaching and illegal logging on World Heritage properties driven primarily by the illegal trade of wildlife species and its products, and requests the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to take action, as resources permit, to strengthen the collaboration between the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the World Heritage Convention."

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 38 COM 7](#)

6. "Reiterating its utmost concern about the continued impacts on World Heritage properties due to the rising pressure from poaching, particularly of elephant, rhinoceros, and valuable timber species, linked to a growing illicit trade, and the increasing involvement of organized crime in this lucrative business, [the World Heritage

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<sup>27</sup> See for example Decisions [38 COM 7B.61](#) , [39 COM 7B.52](#) , [39 COM 7B.61](#) , [39 COM 7B.66](#) , [40 COM 7A.37](#) , [40 COM 7B.64](#) , [40 COM 7B.86](#) , [41 COM 7A.19](#) , [41 COM 7B.19](#) , [41 COM 7B.29](#) , [41 COM 7B.35](#) , [41 COM 7B.79](#) .

<sup>28</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.41](#) , [36 COM 7B.25](#) , [40 COM 7B.79](#) , [40 COM 7B.88](#) .

<sup>29</sup> See for example Decisions [36 COM 7B.25](#) , [43 COM 7A.2](#) .

Committee] reiterates its request to the World Heritage Centre and IUCN to strengthen their cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to assist States Parties to implement the measures taken by the 16th Conference of the Parties of the CITES (...), and urges States Parties to ensure strong international collaboration and coordination to control the illicit trade in flora and fauna and their products."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to take all measures possible to halt poaching in the property (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>30</sup><sup>1</sup>

The World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to promote traditional land management practices [and] reiterates its appeal to all Member States of UNESCO to cooperate in the fight against the illicit trade in wildlife and its products, including through the implementation of the CITES, and with the full engagement of transit and destination countries (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>31</sup><sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.10 Climate change and severe weather events**

**Storms (For example: Tornadoes, Hurricanes/cyclones, Gales, Hail damage, Lightning strikes, River/stream overflows, Extreme tides). Flooding. Drought. Desertification. Changes to oceanic waters (For example: Changes to water flow and circulation patterns at local, regional or global scale, Changes to pH, Changes to temperature). Temperature change. Other climate change impacts.**

## Strategy to Assist States Parties to Implement Appropriate Management Responses (Endorsed by World Heritage Committee at its Decision 30 COM 7.1)

11. "The potential impacts of Climate Change range from physical, to social and cultural aspects. (...). Experience and lessons learned on addressing Climate Change impacts stress the need for using a number of management responses at national and local levels. The *World Heritage Convention* provides an opportunity to develop strategies to implement relevant actions in respect of cultural and natural heritage properties threatened by Climate Change. Given the complexity of this issue, States Parties may request guidance from the World Heritage Committee to implement appropriate management responses to face the threats posed by Climate Change on their natural and cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List".

13. "Conservation is the management of change, and Climate Change is one of the most significant global challenges facing society and the environment today. The actions that need to be taken to safeguard heritage are threefold:

- Preventive actions: monitoring, reporting and mitigation of Climate Change effects through environmentally sound choices and decisions at a range of levels: individual, community, institutional and corporate.
- Corrective actions: adaptation to the reality of Climate Change through global and regional strategies and local management plans.
- Sharing knowledge: including best practices, research, communication, public and political support, education and training, capacity building, networking, etc."

15. "It is noteworthy that there are strong links between natural and cultural heritage and the Climate Change issue could be used as an opportunity for the two parts of the *Convention* to be brought closer together".

16. "(...) Climate Change is one risk among a number of challenges facing World Heritage sites. This threat should be considered in the broader context of the conservation of these sites".

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<sup>30</sup> See for example Decisions [33 COM 7B.11](#) , [38 COM 7A.45](#) , [40 COM 7A.37](#) .

<sup>31</sup> See for example Decisions [32 COM 7B.41](#) , [35 COM 7B.9](#) , [38 COM 7B.14](#) , [40 COM 7B.86](#) .

## **Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties**

Conclusions. "The following are [the] key principles:

- i. in addressing the impacts of climate change on the outstanding universal value, integrity and authenticity of World Heritage properties, the World Heritage community will work in cooperation with other partners that also have responsibility, resources and expertise related to this challenge.
- ii. The World Heritage Committee will be an advocate for relevant climate change research, and work to influence and support partners that are mandated and resourced to carry out such research.
- iii. World Heritage properties will be used wherever appropriate and possible as a means to raise awareness about the impacts of climate change upon World Heritage to act as a catalyst in the international debate and obtain support for policies to mitigate climate change, and to communicate best practices in vulnerability assessments, adaptation strategies, mitigation opportunities, and pilot projects.
- iv. Climate change will be considered in all aspects of nominating, managing, monitoring and reporting on the status of these properties.
- v. In considering the threat posed by climate change to the OUV, authenticity and/or integrity of a World Heritage property, the World Heritage Committee will use the existing tools and processes".

### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7**

24. "[The World Heritage Committee] also recalls the need for all States Parties to continue, and where necessary to strengthen all efforts to build resilience of World Heritage properties to Climate Change, including by further reducing to the greatest extent possible all other pressures and threats, and by developing and implementing climate adaptation strategies for properties at risk of Climate Change impacts."

### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7**

30. "[The World Heritage Committee] notes with concern increasing vandalism at World Heritage properties and encourages States Parties to improve monitoring and security measures as well as awareness raising on the detrimental effects of vandalism, and to consider introducing creative solutions to allow visitors to express themselves without leaving permanent marks or damage."

### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 29 COM 7B.a**

5. "[The World Heritage Committee] notes that the impacts of climate change are affecting many and are likely to affect many more World Heritage properties, both natural and cultural in the years to come;
6. Encourages all States Parties to seriously consider the potential impacts of climate change within their management planning, in particular with monitoring, and risk preparedness strategies, and to take early action in response to these potential impacts;
10. Strongly encourages States Parties and the Advisory Bodies to use the network of World Heritage properties to highlight the threats posed by climate change to natural and cultural heritage, start identifying the properties under most serious threats, and also use the network to demonstrate management actions that need to be taken to meet such threats, both within the properties and in their wider context;
11. Also encourages UNESCO to do its utmost to ensure that the results about climate change affecting World Heritage properties reach the public at large, in order to mobilize political support for activities against climate change and to safeguard in this way the livelihood of the poorest people of our planet."

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

At site-level, the World Heritage Committee recommends to monitor the impacts of global climate change and to develop adaptive management strategies and mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure the long-term protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the properties in response to climate and other environmental change (*based on Case law further to decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.11 Sudden ecological or geological events**

**Volcanic eruption. Earthquake. Tsunami/tidal wave. Avalanche/landslide. Erosion and siltation/deposition. Fire (For example: Altered fire regimes, High impact fire suppression activities, Lightning strikes, Accidental fires (i.e. dropped cigarettes) not ecological).**

## Case Law

### **Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions**

The World Heritage Committee encourages the assessment of the impacts and the damage caused after a sudden ecological or geological event, and the planning and implementation of the necessary remedial measures, including with a view to strengthening the overall resilience of the properties, to identify mechanisms for adaptive conservation and to improve risk preparedness, together with prevention and monitoring strategies and disaster response plans (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>1</sup>

### **3.5.12 Invasive/alien species or hyper-abundant species**

**Translocated species (For example: Fish stocking, Inappropriate plantings, Introduced soil etc, Dieback due to pathogens). Invasive/alien terrestrial species (For example: Weed, Feral animal, Rodent, Insect pest, Bird pest, Disease/parasite, Micro-organism). Invasive/alien freshwater species (For example: Weed, Invertebrate pests, Fish pests, Diseases/parasites, Micro-organisms).**

## Based on Committee Decisions 39 COM 7 and 41 COM 7

“[The World Heritage Committee] notes with concern the significant and continued threat posed by invasive alien species to natural World Heritage properties, [and] strongly encourages States Parties to develop adequately resourced strategies to eradicate invasive species that emphasize prevention and early warning and rapid response in World Heritage properties, and also calls on the international community to support invasive species eradication campaigns in affected properties.”

### **3.5.13 Management and institutional factors**

**Low impact research/monitoring activities (For example: Visitor surveys, Water sampling, Non-extractive surveys, In-situ surveys). High-impact research/monitoring activities (For example: Sampling using destructive techniques, Research involving removal of features or species (i.e. extraction). Management activities.**

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<sup>32</sup> See for example Decisions [33 COM 7B.11](#) , [33 COM 7B.23](#) , [33 COM 7B.7](#) , [34 COM 7B.14](#) , [35 COM 7B.22](#) , [36 COM 7B.4](#) , [37 COM 7B.14](#) , [38 COM 7A.29](#) .

<sup>33</sup> See for example Decisions [31 COM 7B.45](#) , [31 COM 7B.8](#) , [32 COM 7B.44](#) , [34 COM 7A.16](#) , [34 COM 7B.11](#) , [34 COM 7B.42](#) , [35 COM 7B.32](#) , [36 COM 7C](#) , [37 COM 7B.20](#) , [37 COM 7B.3](#) , [37 COM 7B.37](#) , [40 COM 7B.11](#) .

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 40 COM 7](#)

"Integrated management, Decision making, Governance

23. [The World Heritage Committee,] noting with concern that the lack of an integrated management approach is reported to cause challenges to the coordination of management and decision making processes of properties where different authorities are involved, in particular in the cases of mixed, serial, and transboundary properties, urges States Parties to establish appropriate mechanisms in order to facilitate a coordinated approach to the management of all properties, in line with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines as laid out in Paragraphs 112, 114, and 135, and encourages States Parties with contiguous natural properties on either side of their international borders, which are not listed as transboundary properties, to establish appropriate mechanisms for cooperation between their respective management authorities and ministries;

24. Also encourages States Parties to promote recognition and awareness across all relevant national and regional agencies of the World Heritage status of the properties on their territory, and to develop mechanisms to ensure consideration of impacts on Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the decision making processes of relevant ministries, before permits are issued for developments that could negatively impact the OUV."

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 38 COM 7](#)

3. "Noting with regret that issues related to Management Plan / System remain a serious cause for concern, [the World Heritage Committee] requests all States Parties to ensure that all World Heritage properties are managed in such a manner that their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is not put at risk and, whenever necessary, develop/update and fully implement Management Plans or Systems."

## **3.6 Tourism and visitor management**

### [Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention](#)

26. "World Heritage properties are important travel destinations that, if managed properly, have great potential for inclusive local economic development, sustainability and strengthening social resilience. Sustainable forms of tourism development, including community-based initiatives, should be accompanied by inclusive and equitable economic investment to ensure benefit sharing in and around World Heritage properties."

### [World Heritage Tourism Programme \(adopted with Decision 36 COM 5E\)](#)

7. "If undertaken responsibly, tourism can be a driver for preservation and conservation of cultural and natural heritage and a vehicle for sustainable development. But if unplanned or not properly managed, tourism can be socially, culturally and economically disruptive, and have a devastating effect on fragile environments and local communities".

18. "World Heritage and tourism stakeholders share responsibility for conservation of our common cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value and for sustainable development through appropriate tourism management".

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 7.3](#)

10. "[The World Heritage Committee] Acknowledging the contribution of sustainable tourism to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the positive impact it can have on local communities and the protection of World Heritage properties, nevertheless notes with concern that the number of properties negatively affected by overcrowding, congestion and tourism infrastructure development continues to increase;

11. Noting that the protection of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) must be a central objective for all World Heritage properties, requests States Parties to develop visitor management plans and strategies that address the seasonality of tourism (smoothing visitor numbers over time and spreading visitors across sites), encourage longer more in-depth experiences promoting tourism products and services that reflect natural and cultural values, and limit access and activities to improve visitor flows and experiences, while reducing pressures on the attributes which underpin OUV."

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 42 COM 7](#)

46. "[The World Heritage Committee] requests States Parties to develop Visitor Management Plans that assess appropriate carrying capacity of properties for visitors and address the issue of unregulated tourism."

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 38 COM 7](#)

5. "[The World Heritage Committee] also noting that tourism development in and around World Heritage properties is a key issue for their management, strongly encourages States Parties to ensure sustainable planning and management of tourism at World Heritage properties and to contribute to the implementation of the World Heritage Centre's World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme."

#### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 34 COM 5F.2](#)

2. "(...) The relationship between World Heritage and tourism is two way: tourism, if managed well, offers benefits to World Heritage properties and can contribute to cross-cultural exchange but, if not managed well, poses challenges to these properties (...);

##### **Attachment A. Policy orientations: defining the relationship between World Heritage and tourism**

2. (...)

Tourism is critical for World Heritage:

a. For States Parties and their individual properties,

i. to meet the requirement in the *Convention* to 'present' World Heritage;

ii. to realise community and economic benefits.

b. For the *World Heritage Convention* as a whole, as the means by which World Heritage properties are experienced by visitors travelling nationally and internationally,

c. As a major means by which the performance of World Heritage properties, and therefore the standing of the *Convention*, is judged,

i. many World Heritage properties do not identify themselves as such, or do not adequately present their Outstanding Universal Value;

ii. it would be beneficial to develop indicators of the quality of presentation, and the representation of the World Heritage brand.

d. As a credibility issue in relation to: i. the potential for tourism infrastructure to damage Outstanding Universal Value

i. the threat that World Heritage properties may be unsustainably managed in relation to their adjoining communities;

ii. sustaining the conservation objectives of the *Convention* whilst engaging with economic development;

iii. realistic aspirations that World Heritage can attract tourism."



## Case Law

### Synthesis based on relevant Committee decisions

The World Heritage Committee recommends States Parties to develop a comprehensive tourism management plan or a sustainable tourism strategy, including a set of measures to address the tourism pressure on the site (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>1</sup>

At sites with a high tourism pressure, the World Heritage Committee requests States Parties to put in place all necessary strategic, planning and management frameworks as well as legal regulations for cruise ship tourism, including identification of the sustainable carrying capacity of the site and an analysis of the impact on the World Heritage property by cruise ships (*based on Case law on decisions on the State of Conservation*).<sup>1</sup>

## 3.7 Sustainable development

### Operational Guidelines

#### Paragraph 6

“(…) The protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage are a significant contribution to sustainable development.”

### Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective Into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention

2. “In the current context of changing demographics and climate, growing inequalities, diminishing resources, and growing threats to heritage, the need has become apparent to view conservation objectives, (...) with a broader range of economic, social and environmental values and needs encompassed in the sustainable development concept”.

4. “In addition to protecting the OUV of World Heritage properties, States Parties should, (...) recognise and promote the properties' inherent potential to contribute to all dimensions of sustainable development and work to harness the collective benefits for society, also by ensuring that their conservation and management strategies are aligned with broader sustainable development objectives. In this process, the properties' OUV should not be compromised”.

5. “The integration of a sustainable development perspective into the *World Heritage Convention* will enable all stakeholders involved in its implementation, in particular at national level, to act with social responsibility (...)”.

6. “States Parties should recognise, by appropriate means, that World Heritage conservation and management strategies that incorporate a sustainable development perspective embrace not only the protection of the OUV, but also the wellbeing of present and future generations”.

7. (...) the overarching principles are (...):

- “Human Rights - The human rights embedded in the UN Charter and the range of broadly ratified human rights instruments reflect fundamental values that underpin the very possibility for dignity, peace and sustainable development. In implementing the *World Heritage Convention*, it is therefore essential to respect, protect and promote these environmental, social, economic, and cultural rights.

- Equality: The reduction of inequalities in all societies is essential to a vision of inclusive sustainable development. The conservation and management of World Heritage properties should therefore contribute to reducing inequalities, as well as its structural causes, including discrimination and exclusion.

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<sup>34</sup> See for example Decisions [35 COM 7B.17](#) , [36 COM 7B.17](#) , [36 COM 7B.78](#) , [37 COM 7B.19](#) , [38 COM 7B.27](#) , [38 COM 7B.92](#) , [39 COM 7B.61](#) , [40 COM 7B.50](#) , [40 COM 7B.74](#) , [40 COM 7B.81](#) .

<sup>35</sup> See for example Decisions [31 COM 7B.24](#) , [38 COM 7B.27](#) , [40 COM 7B.50](#) , [40 COM 7B.52](#) .

- Sustainability, through a long-term perspective: Sustainability, broadly defined, is inherent to the spirit of the *World Heritage Convention*. It should serve as a fundamental principle for all aspects of development and for all societies. In the context of the *World Heritage Convention*, this means applying a long-term perspective to all processes of decision-making within World Heritage properties, with a view to fostering intergenerational equity, justice, and a world fit for present and future generations”.

8. “States Parties should (...) recognize the close links and interdependence of biological diversity and local cultures within the socio-ecological systems of many World Heritage properties”.

9. “All dimensions of sustainable development should apply to natural, cultural and mixed properties in their diversity. These dimensions are interdependent and mutually reinforcing, with none having predominance over another and each being equally necessary. States Parties should therefore review and reinforce governance frameworks within management systems of World Heritage properties in order to achieve the appropriate balance, integration and harmonization between the protection of OUV and the pursuit of sustainable development objectives”.

13. “The role of World Heritage properties as a guarantee of sustainable development needs to be strengthened. Their full potential to contribute to sustainable development needs to be harnessed”.

14. “The *World Heritage Convention* promotes sustainable development, and in particular environmental sustainability, by valuing and conserving places of outstanding natural heritage value, containing exceptional biodiversity, geodiversity or other exceptional natural features, which are essential for human well-being. A concern for environmental sustainability, however, should equally apply to cultural and mixed World Heritage properties, including cultural landscapes. In implementing the *Convention*, States Parties should therefore promote environmental sustainability more generally to all World Heritage properties to ensure policy coherence and mutual supportiveness with other multilateral environmental agreements. This involves a responsible interaction with the environment in both cultural and natural properties, to avoid depletion or degradation of natural resources, ensuring long-term environmental quality and the strengthening of resilience to disasters and climate change”.

15. “States Parties should ensure that biological and cultural diversity, as well as ecosystem services and benefits for people that contribute to environmental sustainability, are protected and enhanced within World Heritage properties, their buffer zones and their wider settings (...)”.

24. “World Heritage properties, as cultural and natural heritage in general, offer great potential to alleviate poverty and enhance sustainable livelihoods of local communities, including those of marginalized populations. (...) The *Convention* should therefore contribute to promoting sustainable forms of inclusive and equitable economic development, productive and even employment and income-generating activities for all, while fully respecting the OUV of World Heritage properties”.

### [Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape \(Preamble\)](#)

“The principle of sustainable development provides for the preservation of existing resources, the active protection of urban heritage and its sustainable management is a condition *sine qua non* of development”.

### [Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 5D](#)

5. “[The World Heritage Committee] Recognizes the specifically delicate task of balancing World Heritage and Sustainable Development by the least developed countries, notably of the African region, given that it is faced with a disproportionately higher level of poverty globally;

6. Further recognizes the need to employ innovative and transformative solutions for reconciling World Heritage and Sustainable Development that will take into account the nature, complexity and specificity of socio-economic constraints that these less developed countries continue to face;

(...)

11. Further calls upon African States Parties to focus their development efforts to benefit local communities,

including them in the decision-making, and building on their knowledge and needs with progressive and proactive conservation of natural and cultural heritage; and to create enabling environments for innovative solutions inclusive of green and blue economies while progressing towards other SDGs."

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 5C**

4. "[The World Heritage Committee] (...) requests the States Parties to take a systematic and holistic approach to mainstreaming the WH-SDP [(Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the *World Heritage Convention*)] into their national and local policies, processes, and initiatives related to the implementation of the *Convention* and to development in and around World Heritage properties."

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 43 COM 5C**

5. "[The World Heritage Committee] Invites the States Parties undertaking activities towards the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to include synergies with the WH-SDP [(Policy Document for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the *World Heritage Convention*)], whenever possible, in order to tap into the potential of the *World Heritage Convention* to contribute to sustainable development."

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 7**

37. "Recalling that the [World Heritage Convention](#) explicitly links the concepts of cultural and natural heritage, highlights the importance of promoting integrated approaches that strengthen holistic governance, improve conservation outcomes and contribute to sustainable development;

38. [The World Heritage Committee] notes with appreciation the growing interest and efforts by the States Parties and heritage practitioners to develop and apply integrated approaches to conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and encourages the States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies, in cooperation with universities and other relevant actors, to continue and expand these efforts, in accordance with the Policy Document for the integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the Convention (2015)."

#### **Decision of the World Heritage Committee 41 COM 5C**

4. "[The World Heritage Committee] reiterates the need to achieve the right balance between environmental, social and economic sustainability, while fully respecting and protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties."

## ANNEX I. List of documents and texts

[Policy for the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention \(WHC-15/20.GA/INF.13\)](#)

[WHC-07/16.GA/10 Policy document on the impact of Climate Change on World Heritage properties](#)

[OG Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention \(WHC.19/01 - 10 July 2019\)](#)

[WHC-06/30.COM/INF.6A The World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy](#)

[A Strategy to Assist States Parties to Implement Appropriate Management Responses](#)

[WHC-07/31.COM/7.2 Issues related to the state of conservation of World Heritage properties: Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage properties](#)

[Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape \(HUL\)](#)

[WHC-12/36.COM/5E World Heritage Tourism Programme](#)

[Policy document on the impacts of climate change on World Heritage Properties \(2008\)](#)

[Decision 43 COM 7.3](#)

[Decision 43 COM 7.2](#)

[Decision 43 COM 7.1](#)

[Decision 43 COM 5E](#)

[Decision 43 COM 5D](#)

[Decision 43 COM 5C](#)

[Decision 42 COM 7](#)

[Decision 41 COM 7](#)

[Decision 41 COM 5C](#)

[Decision 40 COM 7](#)

[Decision 39 COM 7](#)

[Decision 38 COM 7](#)

[Decision 37 COM 7](#)

[Decision 36 COM 7C](#)

[Decision 35 COM 12E](#)

[Decision 34 COM 7C](#)

[Decision 34 COM 5F.2](#)

[Decision 31 COM 5.2](#)

[Decision 29 COM 7B.a](#)

[Decision 35 COM 7B.133](#)

[Decision 43 COM 7B.99](#)

[Decision 41 COM 7B.43](#)

[Decision 43 COM 7B.58](#)

[Decision 31 COM 7B.29](#)

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