

# World Heritage Site Management



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## **SITUATION BRIEF # 4**

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Heritage Resources included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination document will have to demonstrate site management plans that assure their preservation meets international standards for documentation, protection and interpretation.

The following is a summary of those requirements.

Excerpts from UNESCO Manual: Preparing World Heritage Nominations Edition 2011 <https://whc.unesco.org/en/preparing-world-heritage-nominations/>



## **Excerpt 1 ( protection)**

- Brief synthesis:
  - Summary of factual information (what the property consists of, and the geographical and historical context, 150 words maximum);
  - Summary of qualities (values, attributes, 150 words maximum);
- Justification for criteria (values and attributes which manifest them, and why the property justifies each proposed criterion, 200 words maximum for each criterion);
- Statement of integrity (all properties) at the date of drafting / inscription (the way the attributes or features of the property that convey potential Outstanding Universal Value may be said to be all in place and within the boundaries of the property, 200 words maximum);
- Statement of authenticity (the statement is only needed for properties nominated under criteria i-vi) at the date of drafting / inscription (whether the attributes that carry potential Outstanding Universal Value truthfully reflect the value, 200 words maximum);
- Requirements for protection and management necessary to maintain potential Outstanding Universal Value (how the protection and management arrangements, both systems and plans, are robust enough to carry forward the protection and management of the property in a way that sustains potential Outstanding Universal Value) (protection and management are discussed on pages 82–91):
  - Overall framework (200 words maximum);
  - Specific long-term expectations – the key issues that require long-term attention (for example protection from key threats, maintenance of capacity and finance, maintenance of community support, 150 words maximum).



## **Excerpts 2 (management)**

A principal focus of management of a World Heritage property is the attributes and features which are associated with or convey the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

The aim is to ensure that the value, authenticity and integrity of the property are sustained for the future through managing the attributes. Accordingly, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value is a key reference for management.

Management of the potential Outstanding Universal Value of the property also needs to be delivered in a holistic way that is also relevant to the conservation needs of the property as a whole, and has regard to all its values.

Nominated properties should demonstrate that they have an adequate management plan or documented management system to define their management arrangements. If neither of these is in place, it is important to set realistic timeframes for their development, and this may impact on the nomination timetable. Suitable management arrangements should also exist for the buffer zone and the setting for the property.

A nomination for a property which does not have satisfactory management at the time of nomination may struggle to achieve World Heritage inscription.

The Operational Guidelines include a provision indicating a nomination may be accepted without a management plan or documented system being fully in place (Paragraph 115).

However, this is not desirable. Having an effective management plan or documented system in operation greatly improves the chances of a nomination succeeding.

There is no particular preference for a management plan or a management system, and in some cases both may be available. The key issue is whether the management plan or system is effective and adequate. In some cultures, for example, management plans may be generally unknown, there is no experience with them, and their effectiveness would be highly uncertain.

Nonetheless, an adequate management system may well exist, and be appropriate to manage the nominated property. In other cultures, management plans are well established mechanisms and should be in place.

The management of a property should have a realistic vision for the medium- to long-term future of the property, including the changes and challenges that could arise from inscription in the World Heritage List. Such changes and challenges may be considerable.

Management plans and documented systems should be put forward as tried and tested arrangements rather than 'paper' plans that will be implemented in the future. There should be an intimate connection between key sections of the nomination (such as state of conservation and monitoring) and the information and programmes set out in any management plan for the property.

As part of any management plan or system, a mechanism to undertake impact assessments for proposed changes, developments or interventions is

essential. Sometimes the management of a property will rely on a number of management plans or documented systems. It is important to demonstrate that these various plans or systems provide an integrated or complementary and effective management outcome relative to the potential Outstanding Universal Value. This situation often arises where the property, its buffer zone and broader setting are managed by different agencies, or when several local authorities are involved.

Tourism management is often a major issue for World Heritage properties given the great interest by people in visiting properties, the potentially large scale of visitation, and the need to provide information about a property as well as other visitor facilities. The specific effects of World Heritage listing on visitor numbers vary, and should be specifically anticipated.

Tourism management consistent with and sympathetic to the protection, conservation and management of potential Outstanding Universal Value must be addressed as part of the nomination.

In many cases, a separate tourism management plan is prepared for properties – integrated with the general property management plan or system. Such tourism management plans must be implemented and effective.

For natural properties, a separate IUCN resource manual on management plans for World Heritage properties has been prepared (IUCN, 2008a). A resource manual for cultural properties is planned as part of the series of World Heritage Resource Manuals to be prepared by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.

Time is needed to put in place appropriate plans or documentation, and to demonstrate that these work, before the nomination is submitted. Achieving this could have a considerable influence on the timetable for the nomination process. Getting the management arrangements in place before the nomination



is submitted is to the long-term benefit of the conservation of the property, and to all owners and stakeholders.



Useful questions include:

- Does the management plan/ system specify how the potential Outstanding Universal Value will be sustained through protection and conservation?
- Is the management plan / system practically effective in achieving on-ground conservation outcomes?
- In the case of multiple plans or systems, are these integrated or complementary to achieve effective outcomes?
- Does the management plan or system have priority over other types of plans or systems (e.g. tourism, development and regional economic plans)?
- Do stakeholders in the property have a shared understanding of the property?
- Does the management plan / system include a cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback?
- Are the impacts of trends, changes and proposed interventions monitored and assessed?
- Are sustainable development principles integrated into the management?

- Does the management plan / system involve stakeholders, especially property owners and managers, and is there strong support for the plan / system?
- Is the plan / system adequately resourced, both at the moment and into the future?
- Is there adequate finance and business planning to meet current and future needs of the nominated property?
- Does the plan / system include relevant capacity-building?
- Does the plan / system provide a transparent description of how the system actually functions?
- Does the management plan include risk preparedness?
- Is the management system fully integrated with the protection of the property?

In this context, stakeholders may include local people, indigenous peoples, property owners and managers, governments at all levels, commercial interests including tourism, and NGOs. In the case of serial or transboundary / transnational nominations, a priority should be to ensure that adequate protection and management for each component is in place and working effectively. There should also be a management system at the level of the whole property that should ensure communication and coordination between all





component parts in relation to, at least:

- the harmonization of management of all the component parts to meet a set of shared objectives of conserving potential Outstanding Universal Value;
- the identification of and response to threats to the property; and
- the coordination of monitoring and reporting, in particular in relation to the requirements of the World Heritage Convention.

### **Excerpt 3. (Nomination dossier as a contribution to property management)**

In addition to the role of the nomination dossier as documenting the case for World Heritage inscription, the nomination can also contribute to the ongoing management of the nominated property. This contribution can arise because:

- the nomination includes information about the condition of the property and a series of commitments for future protection, management and monitoring;
  - World Heritage status has the potential to change and benefit a property, and the implications of this status need to be properly addressed in the nomination, such as, for example, in relation to increased visitation or growing tourism pressures after possible inscription;
  - the nomination, including the proposed management arrangements, will be closely analysed during the evaluation process. Changes to the property and its management may be proposed which need to be negotiated and understood by the State Party and the various stakeholders;
  - the potential for World Heritage status can be a powerful means of engaging stakeholders in the management and protection of the property, in particular if the potential benefits can be conveyed to them as a reason to take part.
- Equally, some stakeholders may perceive World Heritage status as a threat, and their views and concerns will need to be properly taken into account during the

development of the nomination; and

- the nomination will provide key baseline data against which the state of conservation of the property can be measured in future years.

## Addendum

Excerpt from Annex 5, of the UNESCO Operational Guidelines for Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (10 July 2019), p. 101

<b>NOMINATION FORMAT</b>	<b>EXPLANATORY NOTES</b>
<b>3.1.e Protection and management requirements</b>	<p>This section should set out how the requirements for protection and management will be met, in order to ensure that the Outstanding Universal Value of the property is maintained over time. It should include both details of an overall framework for protection and management, and the identification of specific long term expectations for the protection of the property. This section should summarise information that may be included in more detail in section 5 of the nomination document (and also potentially in sections 4 and 6), and should not reproduce the level of detail included in those sections.</p> <p>The text in this section should first outline the framework for protection and management. This should include the necessary protection mechanisms, management systems and/or management plans (whether currently in place or in need of establishment) that will protect and conserve the attributes that carry Outstanding Universal Value, and address the threats to and vulnerabilities of the property. These could include the presence of strong and effective legal protection, a clearly documented management system, including relationships with key stakeholders or user groups, adequate staff and financial resources, key requirements for presentation (where relevant), and effective and responsive monitoring.</p>

NOMINATION FORMAT	EXPLANATORY NOTES
<p><b>3.1.e Protection and management requirements</b></p>	<p>Secondly this section needs to acknowledge any long-term challenges for the protection and management of the property and state how addressing these will be a long-term strategy. It will be relevant to refer to the most significant threats to the property, and to vulnerabilities and negative changes in authenticity and/or integrity that have been highlighted, and to set out how protection and management will address these vulnerabilities and threats and mitigate any adverse changes.</p> <p>As an official statement, recognised by the World Heritage Committee, this section of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value should convey the most important commitments that the State Party is making for the long-term protection and management of the property. management will address these vulnerabilities and threats and mitigate any adverse changes.</p> <p>As an official statement, recognised by the World Heritage Committee, this section of the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value should convey the most important commitments that the State Party is making for the long-term protection and management of the property.</p>

