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World Heritage
Regional
Action Plan

**for Europe
and
North America**

2024-2031

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Europe and North America region



<https://whc.unesco.org/en/eur-na/>

Background

The World Heritage Regional Action Plan for Europe and North America was endorsed by the World Heritage Committee at its 46th session (New Delhi, 2024).

The draft of the Action Plan has been developed based on:

- a) the outcomes of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reports submitted by the States Parties in the region through the completion of the online questionnaires;
- b) the results of the three-day consultation workshop with States Parties of the region, held from 19 to 21 December 2023, at UNESCO Headquarters, thanks to the support of the governments of Germany and Ireland¹;
- c) Comments received from 18 States Parties on a pre-final draft.

Implementation and ownership by States Parties of the Regional Action Plan

Designed as a framework for all States Parties in the region, the Regional Action Plan responds to the needs most frequently expressed at the national level and seeks to reflect the priorities at the regional level. Thus, while the strategic objectives and expected results are intended to be relevant to all States Parties in the region, the means of achieving them (the proposed activities) provide a “menu” from which to choose, based on parameters such as existing management frameworks and financial and human resources.

The full implementation of the Regional Action Plan can only be achieved through the collective efforts of global, regional, national and local actors involved in the

protection and management of World Heritage properties. Therefore, multilateral and subregional implementation frameworks may also be established by the States Parties, with the support of UNESCO and the Advisory Bodies as appropriate. National Focal Points, along with their relevant national authorities, play a key role in the adoption, dissemination and implementation of the Regional Action Plan. They should work with the managers of World Heritage properties to translate, where appropriate, the expected results and actions included in the Regional Action Plan into the management planning tools of their World Heritage properties. In this joint endeavour, partnerships with academia (and in particular UNESCO Chairs), non-governmental and civil society organizations and others are encouraged.

States Parties shall develop (or update, where they exist) national action plans that identify the actions that are most relevant to them and the level of priority that can be given to each of them, according to national, subnational or local priorities, contexts and capacities. In doing so, States Parties are strongly encouraged to undertake stakeholder mapping to identify who should be responsible for the implementation of each relevant action and to ensure that dedicated budgets and adequate human resources are allocated at the appropriate levels for their implementation.

The Regional Action Plan should be understood and implemented in accordance with the following guiding principles:

Cultural and natural heritage are interconnected

The Regional Action Plan provides a framework for all World Heritage properties, whether they are inscribed on the World Heritage List as ‘cultural’, ‘natural’ or ‘mixed’. It also recognises the interconnectedness of cultural and natural heritage, noting that most World Heritage properties are the result

of deeply intertwined social and ecological dynamics over time. As such, the Regional Action Plan promotes a holistic approach to their protection and management, emphasising the importance of maintaining their Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), but also recognising their overall heritage significance, which is determined by the combination and interaction of their different cultural and natural values.

World Heritage is used as a catalyst for broader heritage conservation

While the focus of the Action Plan is on World Heritage properties, it promotes a holistic approach to heritage conservation, using World Heritage as a source of inspiration for all heritage places. Despite their international recognition, World Heritage properties are subject to similar threats and pressures as other cultural and natural heritage sites. As places considered of Outstanding Universal Value, World Heritage properties should set standards for exemplary practice in rights-based conservation and management, and be used as learning laboratories to catalyse global action.

The 5Cs – conservation, credibility, communities, capacity building and communication – are interdependent

The Action Plan addresses all five Strategic Objectives adopted by the World Heritage Committee as inseparable and interdependent cross-cutting themes.

Conservation is at the core of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* and underpins the entire content of the Action Plan.

Credibility is understood in relation to all aspects of the implementation of the *Convention*, although the credibility of the List as a representative and geographically balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of Outstanding

1 44 out of the 51 States Parties in the Europe and North America region were represented and participated in the event.

Universal Value remains critical for a region that accounts for almost half of the total number of properties inscribed.

The Action Plan also recognises that the full involvement of local *communities* and/or Indigenous Peoples in the management of World Heritage properties and respect for diversity, gender equality, and human rights are a fundamental to the equitable implementation of *the Convention* and the Action Plan itself.

Capacity-building and *communication* are considered enablers in their own right to support the implementation of the Action Plan. Building the capacity of different actors – whether they are heritage practitioners, governmental authorities, other types of institutions, or local communities’ representatives - is fundamental to achieving the expected results of the Action Plan. Therefore, the Action Plan sets overall priorities for capacity-building in the region, which can be further elaborated in local, regional and national capacity-building strategies. Such strategies should also contribute to strengthening people’s appreciation of World Heritage properties through education, participation, and information programmes. Communicating the benefits of protecting World Heritage properties to communities and society at large is key to garnering and maintaining public support for their conservation.



Figure 1. Diagram showing the interdependence of the SCs and their relationship to the strategic objectives of the Regional Action Plan.

Protecting World Heritage properties requires collective action

This is an Action Plan for all levels of government responsible for the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*: from regional, to national and local levels. Its success requires political will and institutional cooperation between national heritage authorities and (site) managers responsible for the day-to-day protection of World Heritage properties, as well as between heritage institutions and other sectors (e.g. education, energy, tourism, transport, agriculture).

Recognising the urgency of finding sustainable solutions to societal challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss or social inequality, the Action Plan may also be used as an advocacy tool by heritage professionals to seek much needed support from decision-makers to effectively protect World Heritage properties for future generations. In particular, in line with the 2023 Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage, the Action Plan advocates for enhancing the protection and conservation of heritage of Outstanding Universal Value through comprehensive adoption of climate action measures, including climate adaptation, mitigation, resilience building, innovation and research, taking advantage of synergies between the objectives and processes of the *World Heritage Convention* and those of the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC and other multilateral agreements, frameworks, processes and instruments, including but not limited to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the 2015 Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2016 New Urban Agenda, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Monitoring process

The World Heritage Centre and States Parties will monitor the implementation of the Regional Action Plan using, as far as possible, a clear set of monitoring indicators developed in consultation with States Parties. A mid-cycle review is foreseen approximately three years after adoption.

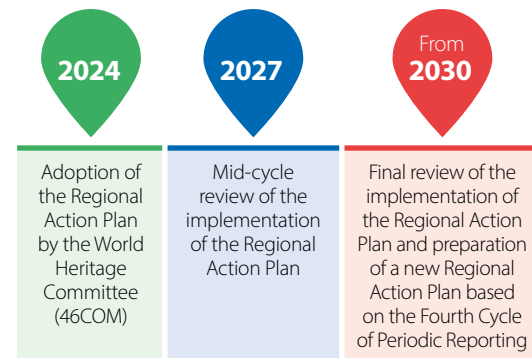


Figure 2. Diagram showing a provisional timeline for the next phases of the Regional Action Plan resulting from the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting.

Regular (sub)regional meetings of Focal Points can help to refine this monitoring framework, while providing an opportunity for exchange and mutual learning. In adapting the Regional Action Plan to the national level, States Parties are also encouraged to develop appropriate mechanisms to monitor its implementation.

The indicators proposed for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan can be found in the extended version of the Regional Action Plan available at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/eur-na/>.

Regional Action Plan for Europe and North America (2024-2031)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	<p>1</p> <p>Strengthen policy, legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure the protection of Outstanding Universal Value, through good governance, and effective management of World Heritage properties</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Improve management planning and monitoring processes to ensure the long-term protection and conservation of World Heritage properties</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Position resilience thinking, emergency preparedness, disaster risk management and climate change mitigation and adaptation at the heart of conservation and management efforts</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Harness the full potential of World Heritage properties as drivers for sustainable development and as a means to achieving human well-being within planetary boundaries</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Strengthen the credibility of the World Heritage List by identifying and protecting cultural and natural heritage of potential Outstanding Universal Value through structured, participatory and transparent processes</p>
EXPECTED RESULTS	<p>1.1. Natural and cultural heritage protection is appropriately adequately prioritised in public policies, goals and agendas and is promoted as a means to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and decent work.</p> <p>1.2. Legal and regulatory frameworks reflect the main provisions of the World Heritage Convention and the Operational Guidelines and are effectively implemented and enforced.</p> <p>1.3. Legal and regulatory frameworks enable managers to implement an integrated management approach that extends beyond the boundaries of the World Heritage property to include any existing buffer zone(s) as well as the wider setting.</p> <p>1.4. Collaboration between national, sub-national and local heritage authorities as well as with other sectors (e.g. education, energy, tourism, transports, marine, agriculture) is strengthened.</p> <p>1.5. Synergies between various international conventions, recommendations and other programmes, as well as regional conventions, are reinforced and result in more effective implementation of the World Heritage Convention.</p> <p>1.6. Impact assessments, including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), are used as a tool to identify potential impacts of proposed projects to World Heritage properties and are undertaken through independent, participatory and transparent processes.</p>	<p>2.1. World Heritage properties have, time-bound and formally recognised management plans (or similar primary planning instruments) focused on the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value and the attributes that convey it.</p> <p>2.2. Management plans are developed through rigorous and participatory planning processes, including participation from local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples as well as other relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>2.3. Management plans are well integrated into broader planning instruments (e.g., territorial plans, master plans, spatial plans and local plans) and clearly articulated with other (subsidiary) plans used to manage World Heritage properties (e.g. disaster risk management plan, visitor management plan, invasive species plan).</p> <p>2.4. The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of management plans and other management processes is ensured through adequate funding and human resources (including by funding schemes to supplement core funding sources), as well as through effective governance arrangements.</p> <p>2.5. Monitoring programmes for the state of conservation of the property are developed and revised based on a thorough understanding of the attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and the factors affecting them.</p> <p>2.6. Regional, sub-regional and national networks of World Heritage managers are strengthened and used as platforms for the exchange of good practices and for planning responses to common management challenges.</p>	<p>3.1. Disaster risk management plans, climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are developed based on best available data, information, and knowledge (including local and/or indigenous knowledge, detailed assessments of climate risks and vulnerabilities) and are integrated into broader disaster risk and climate change related plans and strategies.</p> <p>3.2. Emergency preparedness procedures for World Heritage properties are developed and regularly updated with the active involvement of local communities and other relevant actors and are included in disaster risk management plans, as part of their management system.</p> <p>3.3. Recovery, rehabilitation, and restoration of the affected World Heritage properties is driven by the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value and based on internationally agreed conservation principles.</p> <p>3.4. National adaptation plans incorporate precautionary approaches for World Heritage properties to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptations measures (including energy transition efforts) within and around them are balanced with the need to maintain their Outstanding Universal Value.</p>	<p>4.1. The contribution of World Heritage properties to achieving Sustainable Development Goals is harnessed and supported by evidence.</p> <p>4.2. Meaningful participation of local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes about the sustainable management of World Heritage properties is ensured.</p> <p>4.3. World Heritage properties have well-developed visitor management, presentation and interpretation and/or public engagement plans integrated into their management systems.</p> <p>4.4. World Heritage properties have well-developed communication strategies and education programmes.</p> <p>4.5. Heritage institutions are involved in the development of sustainable tourism strategies and related decision-making processes that help generate benefits for local communities as well as resources for heritage conservation.</p>	<p>5.1. Tentative List processes are informed by comprehensive assessments of thematic studies, international tools and databases, national inventories, gap analyses, and by extensive and transdisciplinary consultations.</p> <p>5.2. Local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples' role as custodians of heritage and partners in its conservation is recognised, and their full and effective participation in the revision of Tentative Lists, in the management of candidate sites and in the preparation of nominations is ensured.</p> <p>5.3. Tentative Lists are harmonised, at the regional and/or sub-regional level, as appropriate, and used as instruments for cooperation.</p> <p>5.4. Tentative lists are used within existing protection or conservation regimes, where candidate sites are considered for their potential to help address the current threats posed by the biodiversity and climate crises in accordance with international standards.</p> <p>5.5. States Parties make use of the existing advisory processes under the World Heritage Convention to inform decision making and to assist in the identification of Tentative Lists and the preparation of nominations.</p>

Regional Action Plan for Europe and North America (2024-2031)

Strategic objective 1: strengthen policy, legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure the protection of Outstanding Universal Value, good governance, and effective management of World Heritage properties

Expected Results	Proposed activities
1.1. Heritage protection is adequately prioritised in public policies, goals and agendas and is promoted as a means to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and decent work.	1.1.1. Establish and/or strengthen inter-institutional agreements requiring that National Focal Points and (site) managers are involved and/or consulted in the development or revision of strategies, policies and action plans, at different levels, that can influence the protection and management of World Heritage properties (cross-reference to Activity 1.4.2).
	1.1.2. Establish partnerships between government agencies, universities, research institutions and NGOs to access existing information and data on the ways in which heritage contributes to sustainable economic growth, to advocate for greater support from decision-makers for heritage protection and management (cross-reference to Activities 4.1.3 and 4.1.4).
	1.1.3. Develop and promote inclusive and equitable economic investments in and around World Heritage properties that make use of local resources and skills, preserve local knowledge systems and infrastructure, and make local communities the primary beneficiaries of these investments (cross-reference to Activities 4.1.3 and 4.1.4).
1.2. Legal and regulatory frameworks reflect the main provisions of the World Heritage Convention and the Operational Guidelines and are effectively implemented and enforced.	1.2.1. Translate the World Heritage Convention and, where possible, relevant aspects of the Operational Guidelines into national languages; disseminate both documents as complementary tools to existing laws and regulations at the national, sub-national/regional and local levels.
	1.2.2. Ensure that the commitments made upon signing the World Heritage Convention, and detailed in its Operational Guidelines, are reflected in national legal and regulatory frameworks and take action to address any identified gaps, including in terms of specific terminology.
	1.2.3. Ensure the dissemination of applicable laws and regulations within the World Heritage property and any existing buffer zone(s) to different audiences, through appropriate means (e.g. events, publications, online platforms and social media) to promote compliance.
	1.2.4. Assess the application of existing sanctions and penalties for non-compliance and illegal activities, clarify responsibilities for their implementation and adopt necessary measures to ensure adequate enforcement powers and capacity of the responsible authorities to implement the legal and regulatory frameworks (at the national, sub-national/regional, and/or local levels).
	1.2.5. Establish clear and simple administrative procedures for collaboration between heritage institutions and regulatory authorities.
1.3. Legal and regulatory frameworks enable managers to implement an integrated management approach that extends beyond the boundaries of the World Heritage property to include any existing buffer zone(s) as well as the wider setting.	1.3.1. Ensure that legal and regulatory frameworks recognise World Heritage properties, as well as the concepts of 'buffer zone' and 'wider setting', through provisions appropriate to the national context (cross-reference to Activity 1.2.2).
	1.3.2. Assess the adequacy of existing legal, regulatory and planning instruments to guide use and development in buffer zones.
	1.3.3. Evaluate whether the existing mandate and legal capacity of the institutions responsible for the management of World Heritage properties grant them agency on all issues affecting World Heritage, including those arising in the buffer zone(s) and wider setting, and take necessary measures to address gaps and challenges.

<p>1.3. (continued)</p>	<p>1.3.4. Adopt policies and, where possible, regulatory measures requiring that management plans for World Heritage properties adopt an integrated approach to management that recognises the interactions between the property, the buffer zone(s) and the wider setting (cross-reference to Activity 2.1.2).</p>
<p>1.4. Collaboration between national, sub-national and local heritage authorities as well as with other sectors (e.g. education, energy, tourism, transports, marine, agriculture) is strengthened.</p>	<p>1.4.1. Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of national, sub-national/regional and/or local authorities for the protection and management of World Heritage properties and document governance arrangements to facilitate collaboration between them.</p> <p>1.4.2. Identify the most important areas of collaboration between heritage authorities and their counterparts in other sectors, and establish processes and procedures for facilitating information sharing and joint action.</p>
<p>1.5. Synergies between various international conventions, recommendations and other programmes, as well as regional conventions, are reinforced and result in more effective implementation of the World Heritage Convention.</p>	<p>1.5.1. Develop and implement a national strategy for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, including how it relates to the implementation of other international Conventions, recommendations and programmes as well as regional Conventions.</p> <p>1.5.2. Convene meetings between the Focal Points and their counterparts from different international conventions, recommendations and programmes to promote exchanges, articulate work programmes and facilitate reporting requirements.</p> <p>1.5.3. Publish regular reports or otherwise exchange information at the national level on efforts to implement various international conventions, recommendations and programmes.</p>
<p>1.6. Impact assessments, including Strategic Environmental Assessment, are used as a tool to identify potential impacts of proposed projects to World Heritage properties and are undertaken through independent, participatory and transparent processes.</p>	<p>1.6.1. Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to incorporate the principles and key provisions of the <i>Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessments in a World Heritage Context</i> and to specify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> when impact assessments are required and/or advisable; what principles must be respected; what processes should be followed; and who needs to be involved. <p>1.6.2. Where necessary revise EIA/SEA legislation to ensure that the necessary requirements for the assessment of potential impacts on World Heritage properties are included, particularly at the screening and scoping stages for triggering an impact assessment.</p> <p>1.6.3. Identify potential obstacles to the proper use of impact assessments and identify ways to overcome them (e.g. reducing administrative burdens, streamlining procedures).</p> <p>1.6.4. Guarantee independence and transparency of impact assessment processes and outcomes by involving, where appropriate, third party, neutral oversight.</p> <p>1.6.5. Encourage and support the participation of (site) managers in capacity building activities on how to undertake and review World Heritage related impact assessments, bringing together heritage managers and other practitioners (e.g., planners, architects, developers, etc.).</p> <p>1.6.6. Provide examples of good practice in carrying out Impact Assessments, make them available on websites showcasing heritage-enabled solutions and share them via World Heritage (site) managers' networks.</p>

Strategic objective 2: improve management planning and monitoring processes to ensure the long-term protection and conservation of World Heritage properties

Expected results	Proposed activities
<p>2.1. World Heritage properties have time-bound and formally recognised management plans (or similar primary planning instruments) focused on the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value and the attributes that convey it.</p>	<p>2.1.1. Determine the duration of the management plan (or similar planning instrument) on the basis of a well-established cycle of planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback, appropriate to the context of each World Heritage property.</p> <p>2.1.2. Require that the management plan has legal status or is officially recognised by government authorities and reflects a commitment by (site) managers as to how and when management actions are to be implemented over the duration of the plan (cross-reference to Activities 1.3.4 and 2.4.2).</p> <p>2.1.3. Ensure that management plans for World Heritage properties are based on a clear understanding of their OUV and their attributes and of factors affecting their state of conservation; that they are also based on a clear definition of the boundaries and any existing buffer zone(s) (cross-reference to Activity 2.4.1), and an understanding of their wider-setting; and that they include a well-defined programme of actions to be undertaken over the period of the plan.</p> <p>2.1.4. Share the management plan of World Heritage properties with the World Heritage Centre for inclusion as part of the documents available about the respective properties on the Centre's website.</p>
<p>2.2. Management plans are developed through rigorous and participatory planning processes, including participation from local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>2.2.1. Strengthen legal and administrative requirements to ensure the participation of rights-holders in management planning processes and to ensure that their concerns and contributions are identified, considered, and respected (cross-reference to Activity 1.2.2).</p> <p>2.2.2. Provide (site) managers with the necessary resources to adequately develop or revise the management plan, in particular to ensure the participation of rights-holders in the management planning processes.</p>
<p>2.3. Management plans are well integrated into broader planning instruments (e.g., territorial plans, master plans, spatial plans and local plans) and clearly articulated with other (subsidiary) plans used to manage World Heritage properties (e.g. disaster risk management plan, visitor management plan, invasive species plan).</p>	<p>2.3.1. Use available open access GIS data to clearly identify areas protected under the World Heritage Convention and share the data between agencies and within the various relevant databases and planning tools, as well as with the World Heritage Centre, to complement retrospective inventory requirements where appropriate.</p> <p>2.3.2. For large and/or complex World Heritage properties (i.e. historic settlements, cultural landscapes or natural areas), reinforce legal and planning frameworks to require the integration of management plans into broader planning instruments and to establish clear rules as to which provisions shall prevail in case of discrepancies between instruments (cross-reference to Activities 1.3.4 and 2.1.2).</p> <p>2.3.3. Ensure that any (subsidiary) plans or strategies at the property level are well-articulated with the provisions of the management plan and that their timeframes are complementary.</p>

<p>2.4. The implementation, monitoring and evaluation of management plans and other management processes is ensured through adequate funding and human resources (including by funding schemes to supplement core funding sources) and well as through effective governance arrangements.</p>	<p>2.4.1. Ensure that the management plan includes a well-defined programme of actions, with as much detail as possible on who is responsible for their implementation, the financial resources required and a clear timetable for their implementation (cross-reference to Activity 2.1.3).</p> <p>2.4.2. Monitor the implementation of the programme of actions contained in the management plan (or, alternatively, in a work plan) on an annual or biennial basis, especially where different institutions are responsible for implementation.</p> <p>2.4.3. Carry out management effectiveness assessments (States Parties are encouraged to use the <i>Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit 2.0</i>) prior to the development/review of the next management plan to identify what has been achieved, and what should remain a priority in the future and what may no longer be relevant.</p> <p>2.4.4. Link funding to the programme of action included in the management plan and with a clear identification of financial and human resources needed to respond to the factors affecting the World Heritage property.</p> <p>2.4.5. Public expenditure of the management of the World Heritage property is included in publicly available annual reports providing an overview of the management activities undertaken.</p> <p>2.4.6. Develop innovative funding mechanisms dedicated to heritage conservation and management and designed to harness economic revenues generated by the conservation of World Heritage properties.</p>
<p>2.5. Monitoring programmes for the state of conservation of the property are developed and revised based on a thorough understanding of the attributes conveying the Outstanding Universal Value of the property and the factors affecting them.</p>	<p>2.5.1. Identify and map (to the extent possible) the attributes underlying the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage property and assess whether existing monitoring indicators are adequate to assess the condition of the attributes and to understand the impact of the factors affecting the property on these attributes.</p> <p>2.5.2. Develop effective data management systems based on clear baselines and monitoring protocols on how data for each indicator is to be collected (including from multiple agencies and information sources) and how it will inform management decisions.</p>
<p>2.6. Regional, sub-regional and national networks of World Heritage managers are strengthened and used as platforms for exchange of good practices as and for planning responses to common management challenges.</p>	<p>2.6.1. Bring together (site) managers of World Heritage properties on a regular basis to share experiences and use them as opportunities to undertake capacity-building activities to address common management needs.</p> <p>2.6.2. Use digital technologies to increase communication and cooperation among World Heritage (site) managers.</p> <p>2.6.3. Ensure effective and coordinated management of serial, transboundary and transnational World Heritage properties, through appropriate governance arrangements and management planning processes at international, national, sub-national/regional and local levels.</p>

Strategic objective 3: position resilience thinking, emergency preparedness, disaster risk management and climate change mitigation and adaptation at the heart of conservation and management efforts

Expected results	Proposed activities
<p>3.1. Disaster risk management plans, climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies are developed based on best available data, information, and knowledge (including local and/or indigenous knowledge, detailed assessments of climate risks and vulnerabilities) and are integrated into broader disaster risk and climate change related plans and strategies.</p>	<p>3.1.1. Conduct detailed assessments of the condition of the attributes of the World Heritage property and document the state of conservation and the main conservation interventions and/or objectives (cross-reference to Activities 2.5.1 and 2.5.2).</p> <p>3.1.2. Establish partnerships with government agencies, universities, research institutions and NGOs to access and contribute to existing reliable datasets from different sectors to inform risk and vulnerability assessments (including gathering information on slow changes and the cumulative impact of factors affecting the property).</p> <p>3.1.3. Assess how the current and potential factors affecting the World Heritage property might be exacerbated by the effects of climate change and, where appropriate, take the necessary management measures to respond to the findings.</p> <p>3.1.4. Research and document how local and/or indigenous knowledge and traditional practices contribute to risk reduction and resilience in World Heritage properties.</p> <p>3.1.5. Identify actions needed to tackle invasive alien species in World Heritage properties and enhance biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>3.1.6. Develop disaster risk management plans, including emergency preparedness and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, and ensure their integration into the management plan of the World Heritage property (cross-reference to Activities 3.1.1 to 3.1.4, 3.2.1 and 3.3.2).</p> <p>3.1.7. Use, disseminate and contribute to case studies and best practices available through existing platforms that promote solutions to management challenges related to disaster risk and climate change (e.g. Panorama Solutions and World Heritage Canopy).</p>
<p>3.2. Emergency preparedness procedures for World Heritage properties are prepared and regularly updated with the active involvement of local communities and other relevant actors and are included in disaster risk management plans, as part of their management system.</p>	<p>3.2.1. Ensure that emergency preparedness measures are in place, updated to respond to current threats (including civil unrest and armed conflict as appropriate) and integrated into the disaster risk management plans and overall management plans of the World Heritage properties (cross-reference to Activity 3.1.5).</p> <p>3.2.2. Develop coordination mechanisms between the heritage sector and emergency responders.</p> <p>3.2.3. Encourage the participation of (site) managers in capacity building activities related to disaster risk management and emergency preparedness.</p>

<p>3.3. Recovery, rehabilitation and restoration of the affected World Heritage properties is driven by the protection of the OUV and based on internationally agreed conservation principles.</p>	<p>3.3.1. Ensure that disaster risk management plans or specific measures are developed based on a good understanding of the OUV and attributes of World Heritage properties, and that risk prevention and mitigation measures do not have unintended impacts on attributes (cross-reference to Activity 3.1.6).</p> <p>3.3.2. Translate, as far as possible, resource manuals and similar materials related to disaster risk management and climate change mitigation and adaptation into the languages used in World Heritage properties and ensure their wide dissemination and accessibility.</p>
<p>3.4. National adaptation plans and other planning instruments incorporate precautionary approaches for World Heritage properties to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptations measures (including energy transition efforts) within and around them are balanced with the need to maintain their OUV.</p>	<p>3.4.1. Develop national climate change mitigation and adaption frameworks for cultural and natural heritage to be integrated into national adaptation plans as appropriate.</p> <p>3.4.2. Translate, disseminate, and implement the <i>Policy Document on climate action for World Heritage (2023)</i> and integrate its main provisions into national policies and guidance materials for the conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage.</p> <p>3.4.3. Promote World Heritage properties as climate change observatories to support climate science and understanding of short and long-term environmental change (cross-reference to Activities 3.1.2 and 4.1.3).</p> <p>3.4.4. Research and disseminate information on local and indigenous knowledge and practices that can support climate action.</p> <p>3.4.5. Build capacity in futures thinking and scenario planning methodologies to inform and develop long-term planning strategies for World Heritage properties.</p> <p>3.4.6. Integrate climate action (mitigation and adaptation measures) into disaster risk management plans and/or the management plans of World Heritage properties, based on robust assessments of climate risks and vulnerabilities at the property level (cross-reference to Activity 3.1.5).</p> <p>3.4.7. Use existing guidance on renewable energy in a World Heritage context when planning and making decisions about renewable energy installations that may impact on World Heritage properties.</p> <p>3.4.8. Assess, on a case by case basis, the vulnerability of World Heritage properties to renewable energy projects, as well as to other infrastructure projects related to climate change mitigation and adaptation and map sensitive areas within the World Heritage property, any existing buffer zone(s) and, where feasible, the wider setting as a proactive measure to identify areas unsuitable for such types of development (cross-reference to Activities 3.1.2 and 3.4.5).</p>

Strategic objective 4: harness the full potential of World Heritage properties as drivers for sustainable development policies and as a means to achieving human well-being within planetary boundaries

Expected results	Proposed activities
<p>4.1. The contribution of World Heritage properties to achieving Sustainable Development Goals is harnessed and supported by evidence.</p>	<p>4.1.1. Use and adapt existing tools and methodologies to identify and assess ecosystem services and other benefits generated by World Heritage properties.</p>
	<p>4.1.2. Identify and promote opportunities for public and private investment in sustainable development projects that foster local creative industries and safeguard the intangible cultural heritage associated with World Heritage properties.</p>
	<p>4.1.3. Use World Heritage properties as laboratories for the implementation of research agendas combining societal and scientific priority areas with conservation needs identified by (site) managers (e.g. climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity loss, food security, social inequality, gender equality, alternatives to mainstream growth theories) (cross-reference to Activities 3.1.2 and 3.4.3).</p>
	<p>4.1.4. Establish systematic data collection on total per capita public expenditure on the protection and conservation of World Heritage properties compared to the economic investment and revenues generated and use it as a means to strengthen support for heritage protection.</p>
	<p>4.1.5. Seek opportunities to promote the multiple contributions to society of protecting World Heritage properties and to increase exposure of their global significance at public and private events.</p>
<p>4.2. Meaningful participation of local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes about the sustainable management of World Heritage properties is ensured.</p>	<p>4.2.1. Review existing governance arrangements for each World Heritage property to ensure consultation of different groups within the local communities on their aspirations for the development in and around the property and their effective participation in decision-making processes about the evolution of the property (cross-reference to Activity 3.4.4).</p>
	<p>4.2.2. Promote efforts to ensure meaningful participation of younger generations in consultation and decision-making processes on the sustainable development of World Heritage properties, including the most appropriate measures to address the impacts of climate change, as a means of ensuring intergenerational equity.</p>
<p>4.3. World Heritage properties have well-developed visitor management, presentation and interpretation and/or public engagement plans integrated into their management systems.</p>	<p>4.3.1. Adopt appropriate tourism and visitor management planning, compatible with the conservation needs of the World Heritage property and that encourages sustainable tourism in and around World Heritage properties.</p>
	<p>4.3.2. Ensure appropriate presentation and interpretation of World Heritage properties, incorporating both their OUV and other important heritage values, as a mean to improve visitor experience.</p>

<p>4.4. World Heritage properties have well-developed communication strategies and education programmes.</p>	<p>4.4.1. Develop educational programmes and communication strategies related to World Heritage in general and to specific properties to promote understanding of their natural and cultural significance, to raise public awareness of the shared responsibility for their protection and of their contribution to education for global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>4.4.2. Ensure the participation of (site) managers in the development of educational programmes and communication strategies and in the planning of capacity building activities related to heritage interpretation and education for sustainable development.</p> <p>4.4.3. Provide the necessary funding for education and outreach programmes.</p>	Strategic objective 1
<p>4.5. Heritage institutions are involved in the development of sustainable tourism strategies and related decision-making processes, that help generate benefits for local communities as well as resources for heritage conservation.</p>	<p>4.5.1. Promote collaboration and mutually beneficial partnerships between heritage institutions and relevant tourism related actors.</p> <p>4.5.2. Conduct cost-benefit analyses of the (potential) revenues generated by World Heritage properties in relation to public expenditure, as a means of stimulating reinvestment of part of the revenues in their conservation and management (cross-reference to Activity 4.1.4).</p> <p>4.5.3. Work to identify incentives and subsidies that have a negative impact on heritage conservation, either directly or indirectly, and ensure that they are evaluated, and where appropriate, phased out in the light of these impacts.</p> <p>4.5.4. Develop initiatives to generate innovative funding mechanisms for heritage protection.</p> <p>4.5.5. Ensure that the development of World Heritage-related tourism strategies is informed by independent studies on how the strategies will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) help generate benefits for local communities; b) ensure a balance between tourism and non-tourism activities; c) complement other sources of sustainable economic growth; and d) address potential negative impacts of increased visitation on the attributes of the World Heritage property as well as on community well-being. <p>4.5.6. Provide opportunities and incentives for indigenous and local communities to participate in information exchange within the World Heritage system, through inter alia face-to-face exchanges or virtual networks for learning and development, exchanging ideas, fostering dialogue between socio-cultural regions and sharing sustainable heritage management practices.</p>	Strategic objective 2
		Strategic objective 3
		Strategic objective 4
		Strategic objective 5

Strategic objective 5: strengthen the credibility of the World Heritage List by identifying and protecting cultural and natural heritage of potential Outstanding Universal Value through structured, participatory and transparent processes

Expected results	Proposed activities
<p>5.1. Tentative List processes are informed by comprehensive assessments of thematic studies, international tools and databases, national inventories, gap analyses, and by extensive and transdisciplinary consultations.</p>	<p>5.1.1 Establish national policies and/or procedures for updating Tentative Lists in accordance with the <i>Guidance on Developing and Revising World Heritage Tentative Lists</i>, and determining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) who is to be involved and who has the right to be engaged and/or consulted in the process; b) how the identification and selection process will be carried out and documented; and c) how the results of the process will be communicated and made publicly accessible. <hr/> <p>5.1.2 Use available thematic studies and similar scientific materials and tools to conduct regional gap analyses with the aim of identifying and selecting under-represented categories of cultural, natural and mixed heritage to be considered for inclusion to national Tentative Lists, contributing to increased typological representation and balance, at both national and global level.</p> <hr/> <p>5.1.3 Identify potential extensions of properties already inscribed on the World Heritage List to enhance their integrity and to minimize new inclusions of over-represented typologies in Tentative Lists.</p> <hr/> <p>5.1.4 Ensure adequate consideration of different types of designations (e.g. Ramsar, Man and Biosphere, Geoparks, Natura 2000, Creative Cities, Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, European Heritage Label sites) before deciding on a World Heritage nomination.</p>
<p>5.2. Local communities' and/or Indigenous Peoples' role as custodians of heritage and partners in its conservation is recognised, and their full and effective participation in the revision of Tentative Lists, in the management of candidate sites and in the preparation of nominations is ensured.</p>	<p>5.2.1 Identify Indigenous Peoples and rights-holders groups who have the right to give or withhold their consent (including the need for free, prior, and informed consent) to the potential inclusion of a candidate site on the Tentative List, and ensure their participation in the identification and selection process.</p> <hr/> <p>5.2.2 Give careful attention to the different values that local communities and/or Indigenous Peoples may hold regarding a potential candidate site, including how these values may differ from, but be interconnected with, the site's potential OUV.</p> <hr/> <p>5.2.3 Ensure meaningful and timely participation throughout the Tentative List process, using culturally appropriate and sensitive methods to involve local communities and Indigenous Peoples.</p> <hr/> <p>5.2.4 Ensure that local authorities and local communities understand the purpose, benefits, and potential costs (including potential restrictions on use and development) of proposing a candidate site for inclusion in the Tentative List, and that their views are respected before any political and administrative decisions are made in this regard.</p>

<p>5.3. Tentative Lists are harmonised at the regional and/or sub-regional level, as appropriate, and used as instruments for cooperation.</p>	<p>5.3.1 Well-represented States Parties give priority to making World Heritage properties in their territories examples of good practice for optimal protection and management, and to assisting States Parties with fewer properties on the World Heritage List, including those in under-represented regions, both in the Tentative List and in the nomination process.</p> <p>5.3.2 Reinforce collaboration mechanisms, promote information exchange and adopt partnership programmes to identify regional (and sub-regional) priorities to balance the representativeness and credibility of the World Heritage List in Europe and North America.</p> <p>5.3.3 Identify sites that may only meet conditions of integrity if conceived as transboundary or transnational (serial) sites, as appropriate.</p> <p>5.3.4 Strengthen inter-institutional cooperation for the identification of candidate sites that may demonstrate potential OUV through a combination of cultural and natural values.</p>	Strategic objective 1
<p>5.4. Tentative lists are used within existing protection or conservation regimes, where candidate sites are considered for their potential to help address the current threats posed by the biodiversity and climate crises in accordance with international standards.</p>	<p>5.4.1 Reinforce, wherever necessary, the legal, regulatory and planning mechanisms of candidate sites based on a clear understanding of their potential OUV and of the factors affecting their state of conservation, both currently and potentially.</p> <p>5.4.2 Identify the specific protection and management needs of candidate sites at an early stage to ensure that their management systems are fully aligned with the requirements of the Operational Guidelines before a full nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List is prepared and submitted.</p> <p>5.4.3 Promote the use of sensitivity mapping and impact assessments (including SEAs) to identify (potential) adverse impacts of development, which may limit the possibility of nominating the candidate site in the future, and to consider ways of dealing with them.</p> <p>5.4.4 Identify how management challenges arising from the combination of multiple designations will be addressed through well-established governance arrangements.</p>	Strategic objective 2
<p>5.5. States Parties make use of the existing advisory processes under the World Heritage Convention to inform decision making and to assist in the identification of Tentative Lists and the preparation of nominations.</p>	<p>5.5.1 Use the Upstream Process to develop a sound process for selecting candidate sites with clear OUV potential and to assist in determining the feasibility of potential nominations.</p> <p>5.5.2 Use the World Heritage Preliminary Assessment process as an opportunity to gather information and advice on the strengths and weaknesses of a potential nomination and to reduce the risks of preparing nominations that may be unlikely to succeed.</p>	Strategic objective 3
		Strategic objective 4
		Strategic objective 5

World Heritage Regional Action Plan

for Europe and North America

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