



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Promote tourism as a tool for conservation and sustainable development at World Heritage sites



Name and unit of project officer	Peter DeBrine, World Heritage Centre
Geographical scope/benefitting country(ies):	Global
Duration (in months):	24 months
Partner(s) institutions:	The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Total estimated budget inclusive of Programme Support costs	2.170.000 US\$

Rationale and background

The UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, which was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 36th Session in St Petersburg, Russian Federation, creates an international framework for the cooperative and coordinated achievement of shared and sustainable outcomes related to tourism at World Heritage properties including sustainability, national pride, community benefit, economic development and heritage conservation.

The United Nations system has adopted a number of decisions and resolutions on sustainable tourism. However, they do not address the very issues of heritage preservation and sustainable development of tourism. Therefore, there is a compelling need for setting forth principles and guidelines to consistently address sustainable development of tourism in the framework of heritage preservation.

Why UNESCO?

UNESCO is the leading international platform that can assist in bridging a gap by proposing the necessary worldwide reference for policy guidelines and capacity building that would both reinforce and complement the existing references texts that UNESCO and other organizations have previously proposed to the international community for preserving heritage.

Furthermore, the overarching goal of the 1972 World Heritage Convention is the protection of cultural and natural properties of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). This cultural and natural heritage in turn represents resources for economic activities such as tourism and the accrual of benefits for the local communities living in proximity to or associated with the World Heritage property.

Therefore, in order to achieve long-term economic, environmental and social sustainability, heritage values and associated assets - tangible and intangible - should be considered by States Parties as significant cultural capital which needs to be preserved and maintained through appropriate and responsible tourism in order to fulfill the ultimate responsibility set out by the World Heritage Convention.

For tourism there is a need to communicate these values in a way that is readily understood and explains its significance within a local, national and international context. An informed appreciation of OUV and the implications of potential adverse impacts through tourism on heritage values are essential to decision-making by a broad range of tourism stakeholders. It is within this context that the World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme takes place and that an appropriate definition of World Heritage sustainable tourism is identified.

Overall Goal/Objective

To foster the sustainable development and management of tourism at World Heritage properties through increased awareness, improved capacity of site management and engagement of all relevant stakeholders in order to protect the properties and their OUV whilst ensuring that tourism delivers benefits for conservation, sustainable development for local and other communities as well as a quality experience for visitors.

The overall objectives of the programme include:

- Integrate a sustainable tourism perspective into the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention (nominations, Periodic Reporting, State of Conservation reporting).
- Strengthen government actions, policies and regulatory frameworks to support sustainable tourism as an important vehicle for protecting and managing cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.
- Promote broad stakeholder engagement in the planning, development and management of sustainable tourism that takes into consideration the surrounding destination and focuses on empowering local communities.
- Provide World Heritage stakeholders with the capacity and the tools to manage tourism efficiently, responsibly and sustainably based on the local context and needs.

- Promote quality authentic tourism products and services that encourage responsible behaviour among all stakeholders and foster understanding and appreciation of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value and protection of World Heritage.

Main expected results

Expected Result 1

Sustainable tourism perspective is incorporated into the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention.

Expected Result 2

National, regional and local governments have policies and frameworks that recognize sustainable tourism as an important vehicle for protecting and managing their cultural and natural heritage.

Expected Result 3

Local communities are empowered and engaged in site conservation and in the planning and management of sustainable tourism at World Heritage destinations.

Expected Result 4

The tourism sector values World Heritage and engages in its protection while ensuring that its activities are responsible and support social and economic development.

Expected Result 5

Visitors understand and gain appreciation of the OUV of World Heritage and adopt responsible behaviours.

Expected Result 6

Practitioners are aware and committed to sustainable development and have the capacity to manage tourism sustainably.

<h2>Activities and outputs/deliverables relating to the achievement of expected results</h2>

<h3>Activity 1 – expected result 1</h3>
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<p><i>Develop a template for the nomination and inscription process that outlines the requirements for a baseline analysis of current tourism, its development and necessary elements ensuring sustainable tourism management taking into consideration the surrounding destination.</i></p>
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<h3>Output/deliverable 1.1</h3>
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<p>Template for nomination process developed</p>
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<p>Activity 2 – expected result 1 <i>Integrate sustainable tourism in the Periodic Reporting and Reactive Monitoring mechanisms, and undertake strategic analysis of the results from all monitoring to identify opportunities and challenges in terms of World Heritage and sustainable tourism.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 2.1 Indicators on how to integrate sustainable tourism in the Periodic Reporting and Reactive Monitoring identified</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 2.2 Methodology for strategic analyses of the results from the monitoring developed</p>
<p>Activity 3 – expected result 2 <i>Support relevant data generation and quality research identifying examples of successful policies, regulatory frameworks, institutional arrangements and development strategies strengthening the enabling environment, policy development and decision making concerning the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and sustainable tourism. Identify and promote appropriate analytical tools, e.g. cost-benefit analyses of inscription and models for assessing impacts of tourism, to support decision making and policy development relating to sustainable tourism development.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 3.1 Relevant research conducted and made available</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 3.2 Tools developed and guidance to support decision making and policy development relating to sustainable tourism development provided</p>
<p>Activity 4 - expected result 2 <i>Work with relevant international agencies and organizations (e.g. other UN related organizations) to bring a World Heritage perspective to a broader policy development, and support the dissemination of relevant policies to World Heritage stakeholders.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 4.1 Common activities with relevant agencies organized</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 4.2 A platform for information exchange created and accessible</p>
<p>Activity 5 - expected result 3 <i>Develop frameworks and guidelines that support the development and implementation of sustainable tourism development plans and other appropriate planning frameworks that involve and engage a broad set of stakeholders and empower local communities.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 5.1 Frameworks and guidelines developed</p>
<p>Activity 6 - expected result 3 <i>Support relevant data generation and quality research identifying good practices concerning World Heritage and sustainable tourism (planning, development and implementation), stakeholder engagement and benefits.</i></p>

<p>Output/deliverable 6.1 Research on the good practices WH and sustainable tourism conducted</p>
<p>Activity 7 - expected result 4 <i>Identify and promote authentic, sustainable and responsible tourism products and services that provide high quality and low impact visitor experiences at World Heritage properties and the destination as a whole.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 7.1 Criteria to identify quality and sustainable tourism products developed</p>
<p>Output/deliverable 7.2 Assistance provided for the development and promotion of quality products and services</p>
<p>Activity 8 - expected result 4 <i>Support relevant data generation and quality analyses on visitation, impacts and trends, and increase the availability of good practices and lessons learned through information sharing and recognition mechanisms.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 8.1 Indicators relating to impacts and trends developed and applied</p>
<p>Activity 9 - expected result 5 <i>Identify and support approaches to increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the concept of Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage amongst the visitors.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 9.1 Communication strategies and tools for the understanding gain appreciation of the OUV</p>
<p>Activity 10 - expected result 6 <i>Identify capacity development needs among stakeholders in relation to World Heritage and sustainable tourism, and develop approaches to integrate into existing initiatives such as the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 10.1 Case studies on the capacity development and approaches to integrate capacity development in to existing initiatives developed</p>
<p>Activity 11 - expected result 6 <i>Develop tools and strategies to support stakeholders in the management of World Heritage and sustainable tourism that can be adapted to local conditions and needs.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 11.1 Guidance tools on the management of WH and sustainable tourism developed</p>
<p>Activity 12 - expected result 6<i>Support information sharing, networking and collaboration among stakeholders, and establish links to training, education and research institutions delivering appropriate training and education.</i></p>
<p>Output/deliverable 12.1 Mechanisms for communication are established and disseminated</p>

Beneficiaries and stakeholders

The direct beneficiaries of the Programme are those stakeholders responsible for World Heritage site management, policy makers at all levels of government and local communities.

Other key affected stakeholders include the tourism private sector, and the travelling public. Those stakeholders, influential to solving the problems, include civil society groups, universities and research institutions, and intergovernmental organizations. Each stakeholder group needs are addressed in the design and delivery of the Programme activities to ensure broad participation and benefits.

Implementation strategy

The Programme will work in partnership with the key stakeholders (States Parties, site practitioners/management, tourism sector, and local communities). Opportunities to create synergies and add value to existing initiatives will be part of the overall approach. As resource constraints will limit its ability to operate at the World Heritage site level, the Programme will focus on leveraging existing initiatives, capabilities and resources, to facilitate the engagement between those stakeholders and institutions active in this area and able to provide financial and technical support.

The Programme is coordinated through the World Heritage Centre and works extensively through UNESCO's regional and country offices in close collaboration with the World Heritage Advisory Bodies, UNWTO and other UN Agencies, and with the support of the World Heritage related Category 2 centres. Relevant Field Offices will be consulted to design the precise activities once the sites / countries are identified. The Programme implementation is guided by a Steering Group comprised of representatives of the UNESCO Electoral Groups, the Advisory Bodies, UNWTO, and donor agencies. It's mandate would be given by the World Heritage Committee.

The Programme methodology features:

- Using the mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention to address tourism management,
- Addressing tourism management at an early stage in the development of management plans for World Heritage properties,
- Strengthening policies, regulatory frameworks and government action,
- Developing partnerships and co-operation with the tourism sector,
- Engaging relevant stakeholders in the surrounding destinations to promote sustainable tourism management and conservation,
- Capacity development, training and education.

Sustainability and exit strategy

The governance of the Programme reflects the agreed institutional arrangements, and it should be expected that the Programme will evolve over time. The Programme governance arrangements need to ensure that:

- The Programme remains aligned with the needs of its stakeholders.
- Adequate resources are provided.
- Intended impacts are delivered and remedial action taken where necessary.

Monitoring of the Programme is conducted according to the Results Based Programming, Management and Monitoring (RBM) approach as applied by UNESCO. The World Heritage

Centre reports on the progress of the Programme implementation to the World Heritage Committee on a biennial basis.

The sustainability of the actions will depend on the institutional arrangements and scale of interventions and in particular:

- Clearly defined and accountable institutional arrangements concerning the allocation of responsibilities as well as processes facilitating the interactions between institutions and stakeholder groups, including community outreach.
- Appropriate regulatory frameworks that provide the necessary powers to manage tourism and related development.
- An overarching policy framework addressing conservation and tourism.