



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

World Heritage

36 COM

WHC-12/36.COM/INF.5A.1

Paris, 11 May 2012

Original: English / French

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Thirty-sixth session

Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation

24 June– 6 July 2012

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda: Reports of the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies

5A: Report of the World Heritage Centre on its activities and the implementation of the World Heritage Committee's Decisions

INF.5A.1 UNESCO Conventions in the field of Culture

SUMMARY

Further to Decisions **33 COM 5** and **34 COM 5E** adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 33rd session (Seville, 2009) and 34th session (Brasilia 2010) respectively, the World Heritage Centre prepared this information document to provide an update on the relationships between the 1972 *Convention* and the other UNESCO conventions in the field of culture.

This document concerns the UNESCO's standard-setting instruments specifically devoted to cultural heritage protection.

An update on the ongoing cooperation with the biodiversity related Conventions is also provided.

I. BACKGROUND

1. By its Decision **33 COM 5** (Seville, 2009), the World Heritage Committee requested the World Heritage Centre to prepare a document on the relationships between the 1972 *Convention* and the other UNESCO conventions in the field of culture. This document was provided to the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session (Brasilia 2010).
2. The document WHC-10/34.COM/5E included only 4 Conventions: the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (hereafter called The Hague Convention, 1954 (and its Protocols of 1954 and 1999), the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970), the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003). It focused specifically on the relationships with UNESCO's Conventions devoted to cultural heritage protection.
3. The Committee, in its Decision **34 COM 5E**, noted with interest the information provided in the document and invited the World Heritage Centre to strengthen the links between the 1972 *Convention* and 2005 Convention on the Safeguarding and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.
4. Furthermore, the Committee invited all States Parties to the 1972 *Convention* to become party to other standard-setting instruments of UNESCO in the field of culture, and to coordinate the initiatives they develop for the implementation of the different conventions and encouraged the information exchanges and the participation at committee sessions of the different conventions.

II. COORDINATION OF STANDARD SETTING INSTRUMENTS IN THE UNESCO CULTURE SECTOR

5. Following informal consultations among the secretariats of the UNESCO Culture Conventions, and especially the 1972, 2003 and 2005 Conventions, as well as participation in respective Committee meetings, a more structured approach to cooperation was considered necessary. It was, therefore, decided to establish the **Cultural Conventions Liaison Group (CCLG)**, which met for the first time on 9 January 2012. The meeting which was chaired by the Assistant Director-General for Culture discussed: working methods of the Conventions, Culture and Development and the Conventions, as well as other matters concerning enhancing cooperation and coherence among Conventions. A second meeting took place on 20 March 2012 and it is proposed to have at least 2 meetings of this group each year.
6. One of the first decisions of the Group that had already been taken was the creation of a common logistics unit that would be responsible for planning and organising the meetings of the governing bodies of the various Conventions.
7. The CCLG also decided to establish working groups on the following topics: Periodic Reporting, International Assistance, Capacity Building, Information Management, and Visibility and Partnership Development.

8. These groups have started reviewing the provisions in the different Conventions, practices and policies developed so far and will be reporting to the CCLG in due course. The main purpose of this exercise is to identify opportunities for better synergy in these common areas of cooperation. Additionally, better guidance could also be provided to the States Parties in the implementation of these Conventions, particularly in cases where the institutions and focal points concerned may be common. The following table presents the list of Conventions covered by this exercise.

The World Heritage Convention and Other UNESCO Conventions in the Field of Culture						
Name of Convention	Hague Convention 1954 + Second Protocol 1999	Illicit Traffic, 1970	World Heritage, 1972	Underwater Cultural Heritage, 2001	Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003	Diversity of Cultural Expressions, 2005
Number of State Parties	124 ----- 61	122	189	41	142	122
Listing	International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection (under the Hague Convention) List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection (under the Second Protocol)	N/A	World Heritage List: 936 sites on World Heritage List of which 35 are on Danger List	N/A	Urgent Safeguarding List: 27 Representative List: 232 Register of Best Safeguarding Practices: 8	N/A
Periodic Reporting	Art 26(2) of the Convention: States Parties provide the DG with a report once every four years ----- Art.37 (2) of the Second Protocol: States Parties provide the Second Protocol Intergovernmental Committee with a report every four years. This issue is dealt with in detail by paragraphs 100-104 of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Second Protocol	Article 16 of the Convention Guidelines contained in document 177EX/35 Part II (Annex)	Art 29 of the Convention: guidelines framed under this require States Parties to report every 6 years	Art 11 of the Convention: voluntary, <i>ad hoc</i> , reporting	Art 29 of the Convention: Reports by State Parties every six years on global implementation of the Convention and elements on the RL Reports by States Parties every 4 years for each element on USL Art 30: Committee Reports	Art 9 of the Convention: provide report to UNESCO every 4 years

9. The World Heritage Centre also attended the sixth meeting of the **Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict** (UNESCO Headquarters, 14-16 December 2011) which considered three requests for the granting of enhanced protection, two from Azerbaijan and one from Lithuania. Kernavė Archaeological Site (Cultural Reserve of Kernavė), Lithuania - World Heritage site - has been granted "enhanced protection" status by the Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (see <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/824>). This status had also been requested for two World Heritage sites in Azerbaijan: Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower, and Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape. The Committee referred these requests back to the States Parties for complementary information related essentially to the national implementation of Article 15(1)(b) of the Second Protocol as well as more specific implementation of safeguarding measures. The meeting demonstrated that there is an increasing synergy between the World Heritage List and the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection. However, it should be noted that both lists are autonomous.
10. The Secretary of the **2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage** attended the 34th session and the 35th session of the World Heritage Committee held respectively in Brasilia and in Paris. The two Secretariats continue to share experiences of working methods and explore possible synergies through more systematic sharing of information. Furthermore, ICOMOS was among the NGOs accredited by the General Assembly of States Parties at its third session in June 2010 to provide advisory services to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
11. The cooperation between 1972 World Heritage Convention and the **1970 Convention against the illicit trafficking of cultural property** should be further enhanced as increasingly World Heritage properties are affected by illicit traffic. In early 2011, the Director-General launched appeals to International Organizations, governments, NGOs and the international art market to protect the cultural heritage of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. UNESCO then promptly mobilized its resources and networks of experts and partners to elaborate a multi-pronged strategy for safeguarding cultural heritage in the countries concerned. On 15 March 2011, in conjunction with the 40th anniversary celebration of UNESCO's Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the Director-General convened an emergency meeting of concerned stakeholders and experts. This meeting dealt with the numerous reports of destruction, damage and theft at museums, archaeological sites and libraries - and was difficult due to the lack of reliable information on the status of cultural heritage sites and institutions.
12. One outcome was the dispatch of emergency assistance missions to Egypt to make contact with the newly-appointed personnel of the Ministry of Culture, and to elaborate a comprehensive programme for the long-term protection of cultural heritage. The joint UNESCO-INTERPOL mission carried out in May 2011 conducted numerous site visits, leading to the elaboration of concrete guidelines for security at Egypt's historic sites and museums. Following the mission's recommendations, UNESCO launched two Swiss-funded projects to train Egyptian officials in museum disaster preparedness and risk mitigation, and combating illicit trafficking of cultural property.

13. With regard to Libya, due to the suspension of co-operation with the government of Colonel Gaddafi and the dangerous military situation in this country, UNESCO's experts were unable to intervene directly during the early stages of the conflict. In March 2011, the Director-General, called on both Libya and the coalition of States implementing a no-fly zone over the country to respect their engagements under the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols, by refraining from any act of hostility directed against Libya's cultural property. UNESCO provided members of the Coalition with geographic coordinates and detailed cartographic documents to situate major collections and historic monuments, including the country's five World Heritage sites. In the light of reports of illicit trafficking, the Director-General sent an international alert to the six neighbouring countries of Libya (Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Niger, Sudan and Tunisia) and IGOs and NGOs concerned (INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization and ICOM) in application of the 1970 Illicit Trafficking Convention. UNESCO is collaborating with the Italian authorities and INTERPOL to retrieve the spectacular Benghazi Treasure comprising some 8,000 bronze, silver, and gold coins and other precious Roman and Hellenistic objects, which was looted from a bank in Tripoli in the summer of 2011. In October 2011, UNESCO convened an expert meeting - the first on protecting Libyan cultural heritage since the end of the civil war - to urgently examine the status of cultural heritage in the country. The international participants including Libyan specialists, UNESCO partners and representatives of the Blue Shield, British Museum, the Louvre and international archaeological missions working in Libya, examined measures to safeguard cultural sites, prevent illicit trafficking, protect museums and strengthen cultural institutions in the context of the Libyan civil war. The first UNESCO expert mission to Libya was sent in December 2011. Organized in partnership with the Italian authorities, this mission undertook a survey of imminent threats and opportunities related to planned heritage projects throughout the country and funded by Italy. In the post-conflict period, UNESCO has been coordinating short and medium-term activities for the reconstruction and reorganization of Libyan cultural institutions.
14. Finally, with regard to the protection of the Syrian cultural heritage, the Director-General contacted INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization and the specialized French and Italian police forces to alert them to the possibility of illicit trafficking of objects. She also contacted Syria's neighbouring countries (Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey) and notified them of the same possibility.

III. COOPERATION BETWEEN CULTURE AND BIODIVERSITY CONVENTIONS

15. In addition to the interactions among the Culture Conventions, cooperation with the Biodiversity related Conventions continued both within the framework of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) and bilaterally with the Secretariat of each the individual Convention. Several meetings were held with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention in order to increase the cooperation on sites which have a double designation as Ramsar site and World Heritage site, including exchanges of information on the State of Conservation projects, cooperation on monitoring and advisory missions and exchanges of information on sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and under the Montreux record. Furthermore, it was agreed to sensitize national focal points of the two Conventions to increase the exchange of information at their level, for example

through the organization of information meetings at the World Heritage Committee or the Ramsar Conference of the Parties. Unfortunately it has not been possible to implement this at the meeting in 2012 because of the fact that both Conventions meetings overlap in dates and because of budgetary constraints. Cooperation also continued with CITES, in particular on a number of specific conservation issues such as the listing of Rosewood and Ebony from Madagascar under CITES. Efforts were also undertaken to improve coordination with the Council of Europe on World Heritage Sites which hold the European diploma.

16. The World Heritage Centre also contributed to a paper by the UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre to increase synergy between the different Conventions and to a joint statement of the biodiversity related Conventions on the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). IPBES approved its final operational design at its plenary meeting held in Panama City, Panama, from 16 to 21 April 2012. IPBES was established by more than 90 Governments, after several years of international negotiations. The IPBES secretariat will be located in Bonn (Germany). The IPBES mandate covers the collaboration with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations bodies and networks of scientists and knowledge holders. This will further enhance coordination within and beyond the United Nations system mandate considered as an important step before Rio +20.
17. The BLG also adopted a *modus operandi* for cooperation, a copy of which is accessible at <http://www.cbd.int/blg/>.
18. UNESCO and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have joined forces to review issues related to cultural and biological diversity. A joint work programme is the outcome of the Conference on "Biological and Cultural Diversity for Development" in Montreal, Canada, 8–10 June 2010. The work programme was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Nagoya (Japan) in October 2010 and the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session took note of progress achieved in this regard (Decision 34 COM 5E). UNESCO and the CBD Secretariat began elaborating a set of guiding principles for future research, management, practice and policy work at the interface between biological and cultural diversity. The work programme will strengthen collaboration and coordination among relevant international agreements, in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) and UNESCO's culture-related conventions, including the World Heritage Convention (1972), the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005).
19. The Executive Secretary of the CBD, Mr Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, sent a notification dated 3 April 2012 referring to the COP decision X/20, paragraph 16, by which "the Parties *welcomed* the joint programme of work between UNESCO and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as a useful coordination mechanism to advance the implementation of the Convention and deepen global awareness of the inter-linkages between cultural and biological diversity and invited Parties and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to and support the implementation of this joint programme." The Secretariat of the CBD and UNESCO will bring together diversity experts and possible donors for a cultural and biological Informal Diversity Liaison Group meeting (DLG), planned to be held on 28-29 April

2012, at the UNESCO's office in New York. Participants are invited based on their expertise, their ability to contribute to the deeper understanding of the interface between biological and cultural diversity, as well as on gender considerations and geographic balance. The main objective of the cultural and biological informal Diversity Liaison Group is to provide technical advice and to assist the Secretariats of the CBD and UNESCO in advancing the Joint Programme, as well as to assess progress made and identify the next steps. The report of the meeting will be made available as an information document to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-11) and the notification is available on the CBD website at: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2012/ntf-2012-050-tk-en.pdf>

IV. CONCLUSIONS

20. The cooperation initiated between the secretariats of the various Conventions will be continued, which will contribute to a better coordinated approach to their implementation, as well as provide better guidance to the States Parties. The Governing Bodies of these Conventions will be periodically informed of the various actions taken in this regard.