

# REPORT

**on the Consultation Meeting  
for the Sub-regional Capacity Building Strategy  
for Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe  
Baku (Azerbaijan), 28 October 2013**

## SUMMARY

The meeting gathered the National Focal Points for World Heritage from Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, FYR of Macedonia, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and was generously hosted by Azerbaijan and co-organized by the World Heritage Centre as part of the Meeting of the Focal Points for World Heritage from Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe in the framework of the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting (Baku, Azerbaijan, 28-31 October 2013) with the participation of the representatives from World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN.

The consultation meeting focused on the activities related to the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy, in particular the feedback from State Parties on the Blueprint document and discussions on how to move towards a sub-regional Strategy Document.

## **FOLLOW UP ON THE BLUEPRINT DOCUMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUB-REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY**

The points for discussion in the consultation meeting on the sub-regional Capacity Building Blueprint (Draft of January 2012) were the following:

- Short overview of the Blueprint document and the feedback from the States Parties
- How to move from Blueprint to Strategy Document
- Implementing Partners and timeline
- Discussion and drafting of a prioritised CESEE Capacity Building Action Table

WHC raised the question on how to move forward and reminded that the initiative is carried out on a voluntary basis, taking into account the needs expressed as a result of the First Cycle of PR. It has been recalled that the Blueprint document was elaborated jointly by the Steering Group, established at the Periodic Reporting workshop in Tbilisi in November 2012, the Advisory Body ICCROM and the World Heritage Centre. It is based on a first draft prepared by the World Heritage Centre following the feedback from the Training and Capacity-Building questionnaires that were filled-in by 80% of the Focal Points.

In this framework, the consultation meeting mainly focused on the overall need of sub-regional workshops and possibilities for their implementation.

### **(i) Issues**

In general, it was agreed that the ongoing Periodic Reporting exercise provides baseline material for identifying key issues for capacity building.

However, following on the previous meeting that was held in the framework of the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee (Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 19 June 2013), the overarching issue dealt with the contents and format for a sub-regional Capacity building strategy.

In particular it was pointed out that the format of the strategy should fit the sub-regional structure and needs, also taking into account the actual interest to develop training institutions. In this context, the relation between the format of the strategy and the global capacity building strategy was highlighted.

The other main questions that were raised in both sub-regional meetings were the following:

- How to best ensure cross-cutting transnational, regional and sub-regional cooperation and networks;
- Web-based platforms;
- Organise more trainings and information meetings;
- Develop manuals and handbooks;
- Sharing of experiences (good practices) and common projects;
- Develop programmes on national, regional and local level according to thematic groups. The themes need to respect the typology of the properties in the sub-region.

### **(ii) Regional focus on capacity building needs**

There is generally a high professional level and existing university education in the region. Therefore there may be a *lack of understanding of the problem or need* for a regional capacity building strategy among the SP institutions.

This can also be applied to the level of understanding of the World Heritage concept, processes and requirement for an integrated management system, which becomes even more crucial as in view of the lack of institutional continuity.

Political and financial instability is high in the region. The increasing number and pressure of private investors and external funding projects and programmes, especially from EU, requires *readiness for project management*. Participants also stated that the fragmented implementation of projects by different (EU) programs weakens the overall conservation strategy implementation. Current external (mostly EU) funded programs are a major driver for heritage conservation and management activities in the region. They bring about the problem of project management (tender system, for example) and there is a risk of fragmentation of national programs and strategies.

An effective *monitoring strategy* regarding outputs from the different programs is essential at all levels, and hence capacity building in this field is needed. Hungary and Slovakia shared good experiences on linking project management and monitoring.

As a whole, the concept of *integrated management and decision-making* needs special attention in the capacity building strategy for the region. The relation of World Heritage with national heritage is one of the issues where the decision makers may not see the difference or need for targeted capacity building activities.

*Thematic capacity building* initiatives were discussed. For example, the revival of *religious interest* in heritage management was one of the characteristics in the region; Georgia pointed out that most of the inscribed and tentative list properties were churches. Within the World Heritage initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest the issue regarding the protection of religious and sacred heritage has been discussed at the international level, involving active participation of the religious authorities.

Some recent and planned thematic workshops in the region could serve as examples:

- Modules for Capacity-building activities for the representatives of religious communities and site managers in charge of WH sites of religious interest:
  - International Seminar for religious representatives involved in the management and use of the World Heritage properties (Moscow, May 2013) <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1056/>
  - Multidisciplinary Workshop on the Strategic Framework for the Conservation and Management of the Mount Athos Cultural and Natural Heritage (Thessaloniki, August 2013) <http://whc.unesco.org/en/events/1076/>
- The planned regional workshop “Protecting World Heritage: Disaster Risk Management and Sustainable Tourism Planning” in Bulgaria, autumn 2014 (tbc)

### (iii) Target groups

The integrated management concept mentioned above includes the identification of *mixed target audiences*, which was pointed out as a priority need in the CBS and the Blueprint document. There is a gap between international focus and the specific needs on national and site level. In particular, the capacity building at site level must aim at a permanency; it includes professionals, practitioners, communities and only needs outside experts as facilitators. The need to integrate the private sector, including developers and private owners, is crucial.

### (iv) Capacity building in the World Heritage context and the role of Advisory Bodies

ICCROM pointed out that the recent capacity building programme carried out jointly with all Advisory Bodies has been successful. Regional cooperation in Asia Pacific region can be a model, for example, the collaboration with the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region (WHITRAP) in China.

ICCROM is willing to support the CESEE Capacity Building Programme provided that there is a programme structure and institutional capacity for implementation.

ICOMOS highlighted that there is a gap between international and site specific needs. Site level needs permanent capacity building (on conservation, community involvement), which may be supported by an outside expert. Universities are permanent institutions, which could be given the task.

IUCN informed that a road map for capacity building has been discussed in recent conferences and workshops. Among the issues addressed are the need to enhance the overall and individual expert networks and experiences exchange on Europe specific topics such as the ones related to mixed properties, and the relationship to other designations, etc.

It was noted that WH Committee's recommendations on management do not always lead to action at site level, and *adaptive conservation management* tools should be introduced using capacity building activities. The European contribution at the 2014 World Park Congress (Sydney, Australia, November 2014) should stress that World Heritage will be a cross-cutting theme while Natura 2000 is one of the most prominent topics for Europe. The coordination and communication tools recommended include setting up a database of experts, exchange of information via an external interactive website, with a platform for specialists groups/ taskforce on World Heritage.

Other capacity building proposal are to promote mentoring processes, use the 'Enhancing our Heritage toolkit' as a tool for monitoring management effectiveness for both natural and cultural World Heritage, glossary and "soft methods" such as networking opportunities etc. (Ref: [Enhancing the IUCN World Heritage Programme II – Focus Europe, Expert Workshop 7 – 11 November 2013 in Vilm, Germany](#)).

There is also a need to strengthen the cooperation between Advisory Bodies and to establish common principles for looking at natural/ cultural / mixed sites.

Communication opportunities include the above World Park Congress to be held in Sydney, Australia, November 2014, ICOMOS General Assembly to be held in Florence, November 2014 and in general the Periodic Reporting exercise.

A joint Advisory Bodies capacity building programme on the management of cultural and natural World Heritage properties is currently been running and could be used as an example of joint training activity. Other initiatives are ICOMOS /IUCN "Connecting Practice" exploring practical strategies to deliver a fully connected approach to consider nature and culture in the practice and institutional cultures of IUCN and ICOMOS.

#### **(v) Priority actions identified during roundtable discussion**

- Understanding World Heritage, including the role of State Parties and political arena
- Sharing best practice – especially on cooperation and partnership models
- Need for management effectiveness tools and follow up mechanisms

#### **(vi) Next steps**

The structure and format of the capacity building strategy was a key topic.

The possibilities and function of a regional capacity building centre were discussed. Slovakia, for example is interested to create a UNESCO Category 2 centre. But Category 2 Centre establishment takes time and considerable funding. The Russian Federation explained their intentions to create a national / international centre. The importance of a strong base for capacity building in each country was brought up, concluding that it is preferable to start on a national level, and then continue with collaboration with other partners.

WHC stressed that the CBS initiative is an activity to be taken on board by the State Parties. The participants discussed a possible workplan for spring 2014, but no conclusion was reached.

The Periodic Reporting process and results should be used to refine the work plan.

The following proposal from the World Heritage Centre on implementing partners and timeline was therefore not yet agreed on in detail:

- Consortium of interested regional institutions
- Pilot project on the preparation of the capacity-building strategy
- First draft of the Capacity Building Strategy, spring 2014
- Consultation meeting in Paris, spring 2014
- Presentation of the strategy to the sub-region during the side-event at the 38th session of The World Heritage Committee

The WHC proposal to commission the drafting of a strategy/ programme to a consultant for consideration and fine-tuning by the Steering group seemed appropriate. This draft should then be discussed and refined by the Steering group.

\*