



IUCN's evolving Role(s) in World Heritage

4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves

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Outline

- **IUCN and World Heritage at a Glance**
- **Added Value and Challenges**
- **Trends from an IUCN Perspective**
- **Overlap with Biosphere Reserves**
- **Discussion**

IUCN and World Heritage at a Glance



- Drafted World Heritage Convention with UNESCO
- Formal advisory body with independent technical role to help UNESCO World Heritage Committee make informed decisions on natural heritage
- Evaluation of all natural and 'mixed' sites nominated for World Heritage Status, contributions to evaluations of selected cultural landscapes
- Monitoring of the state of conservation of existing World Heritage properties
- Increasingly Proactive Contributions

Added Value

- Added layer of Protection to Places that count
- Visibility and Support in Times of Crisis
- (Underutilized) Intergovernmental Forum dedicated to “Nature” and “Culture”
- Unlike other MEAs intergovernmental and national Commitments to concrete Places

Challenges

- Political incentives often focused on inscriptions
- “Simplistic” protected area approach vs. emerging large-scale landscape and seascape approaches
- Longstanding focus on governmentally managed protected areas
- Poor record of involving local communities and Indigenous Peoples



World Heritage Trends from an IUCN Perspective

- Simplicity can work (as a temporary solution)
- Instrument to successfully secure Conservation Priorities facing acute threats (large-scale projects)
- Eventual Finalization of the List...
- Revisiting existing Properties
- Acceptance of broader Range of Governance Types
- Exploring the underutilized “Nature”-”Culture” Nexus
- New Partnerships and Civil Society Involvement under the Umbrella of the Convention

Overlap with Biosphere Reserves

- Some 100 places are both Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage properties
- Different Approaches and Mixed Messages from the Intergovernmental Level
- Need to harmonize without watering down Conservation Commitments
- Better Development Models as opposed to juxtaposing “Development” and “Conservation”

Discussion

- What can and should the intergovernmental level add?
- What will be the role of the impressive network of natural World Heritage Properties in the future?
- How can we best take advantage of dual designations (Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage)?
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Thank you