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Cultural Organization

# Consultation meeting on the role of accredited NGOs in the 2003 Convention

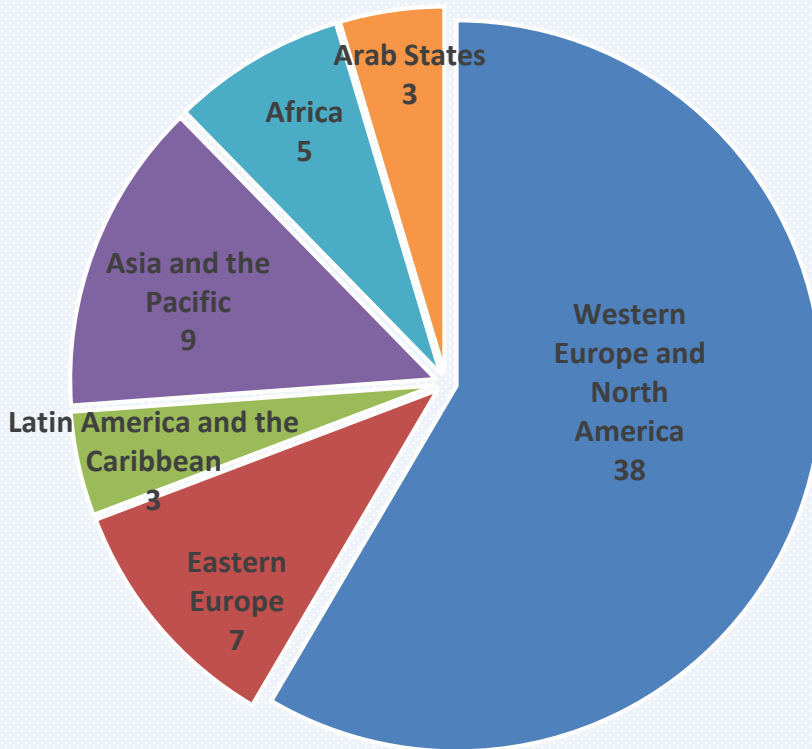
UNESCO Headquarters, 18 April 2019



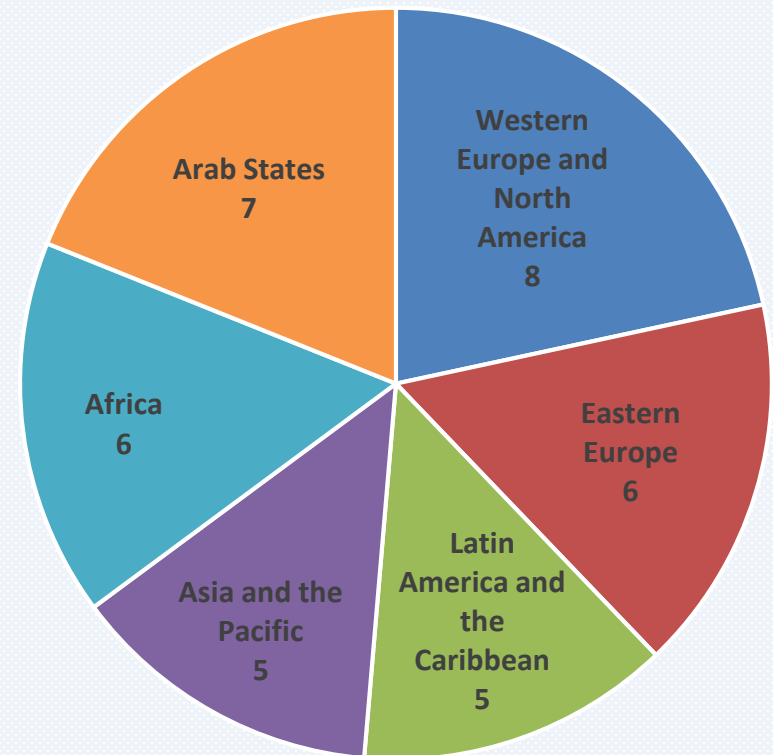
# Participants of the consultation meeting

- 65 accredited NGOs and 37 States Parties registered (as of 17 April)

## Accredited NGOs



## States Parties



Wifi network: HQ-AIR-PUB

Username: hq-air

Password: uneswifi

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/reflection-on-the-role-of-ngos-01037>

<https://ich.unesco.org/fr/reflexion-sur-le-role-des-ong-01037>





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# Consultation meeting on the role of accredited NGOs in the 2003 Convention

UNESCO Headquarters, 18 April 2019





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# Objectives, working methods and agenda



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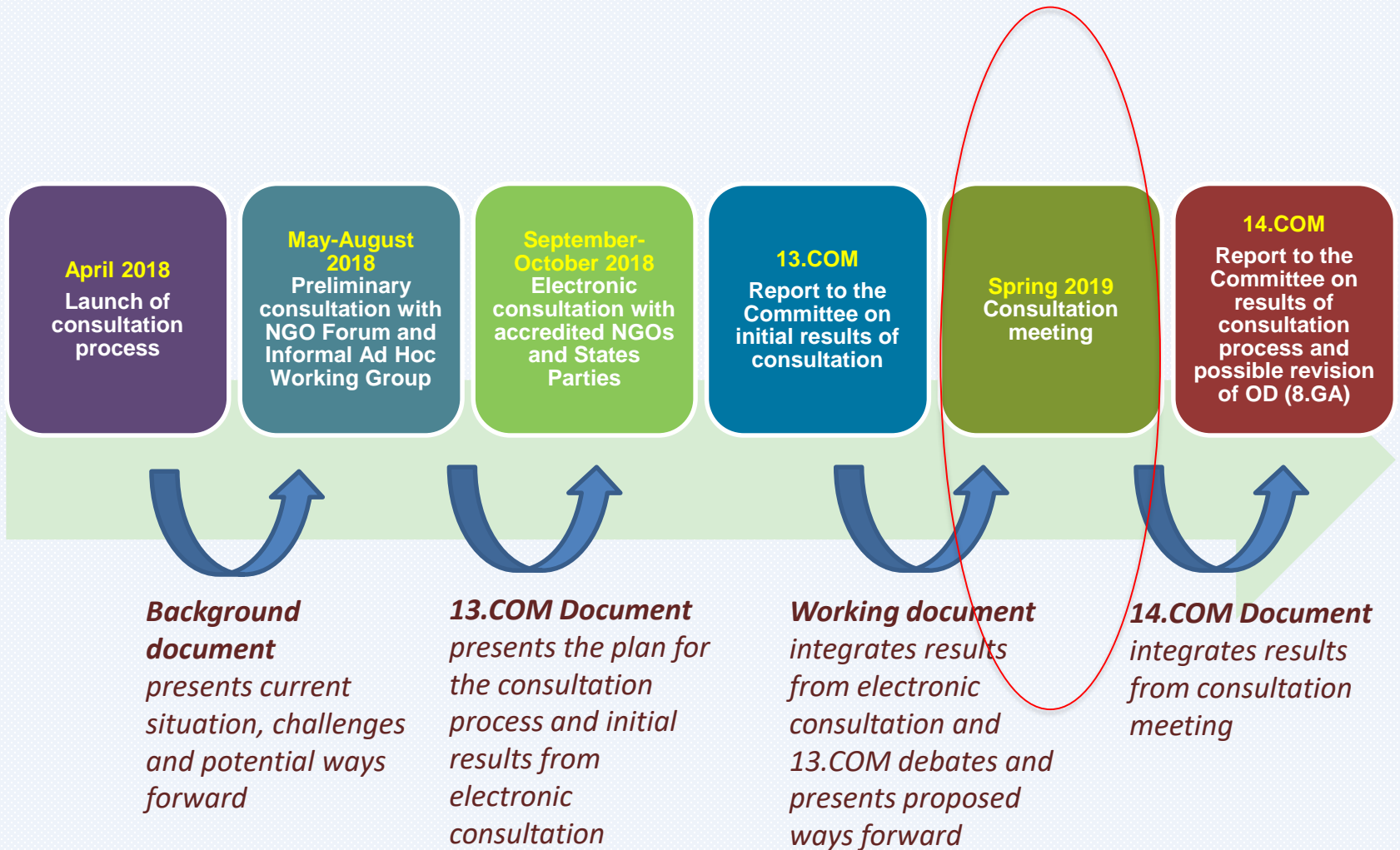
# Context of the reflection on the role of NGOs

- **2008**: Creation of the accreditation system for NGOs
- **2013 (8.COM)**: Report on the profile of the NGOs accredited to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee
- **2015 (10.COM)**: First quadrennial review of accredited NGOs
- **2017 (12.COM)**: Launch of the reflection process on the role of NGOs



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# Timeline



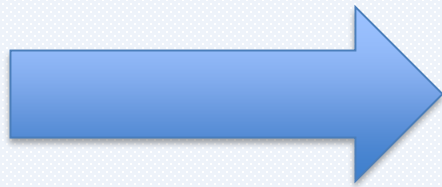
# Why a need for a reflection on the role of NGOs?

## Challenges

- Lack of clear definition of *inter alia* advisory functions
- Assymetry of criteria applied in accreditation and review processes
- Imbalance in geographical representation
- Workload of the governing bodies and of the Secretariat

## Other issues to be considered

- Regular increase in the number of accredited NGOs
- Diversity of profiles and expertise among accredited NGOs
- Role of the ICH NGO Forum



**Does the current system fulfill its objectives?**



# Electronic consultation (2018)

- **68 accredited NGOs (39% of the accredited NGOs) and 38 States Parties (21% of States Parties) responded**
- **Main general findings:**
  - Overall positive impression of the current accreditation system (80% of accredited NGOs)
  - NGOs expect more concrete guidance from Committee
  - Need to improve cooperation among accredited NGOs
  - Need to improve cooperation between accredited NGOs and States
  - Importance of improving the fair representation of all regions
- **Findings form the basis of the 3 main ways forward proposed**

# Three proposed ways forward

## Main rationale:

- To ensure that the accreditation system is best fit to advise the Committee given the limited resources at hand
- To ensure that the Committee can adequately benefit from a diversity of expertise/experience

### Option 1: Improved current accreditation system

- **Maintain and adjust the current accreditation system**

### Option 2: Accreditation system managed by umbrella organization

- **Establish an 'umbrella organization' responsible for the accreditation system and the coordination of the contribution of NGOs to the work of the Committee**

### Option 3: 'Hybrid' system

- **Create a hybrid system with two or more types of accreditation for NGOs**

# Objectives and agenda of the consultation meeting

	Objectives
<b>Session 1 (AM)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify ways in which accredited NGOs could advise the Committee (Advisory functions)</li><li>• Review the relevance of accreditation criteria and define additional criteria in relation to the advisory functions</li><li>• Review the relevance of the criteria applied for the review of accreditation</li><li>• Discuss potential measures to improve the representation of each region among accredited NGOs</li></ul>
<b>Session 2 (PM)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss ways in which the accreditation process and the review process can be managed</li><li>• Identify potential actions to enhance the active participation of NGOs to the work of the Committee and the implementation of the Convention</li></ul>
<b>Next steps and conclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present and discuss the steps leading up to 14.COM and 8.GA</li></ul>



# Working methods



- Public meeting
- Each session will be framed by introductory presentations
- General debate moderated by the Secretariat



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## Session 1

# Identifying the advisory functions of accredited NGOs and reviewing accreditation criteria



# Which advisory functions?

## Current advisory functions (OD 96):

- Mainly relate to the evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests
- Fulfilled through the work of the Evaluation Body
- Only concern 6 NGOs (1 per region) at any one time

- 
- Also include the evaluation of the effects of safeguarding plans for elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List





# Which advisory functions?

## Potential new advisory functions:



# Which accreditation criteria?

## General observations

- Accreditation criteria are interlinked with advisory functions
- Alignment of criteria for the review of accreditation and accreditation criteria
- Additional criterion on integrity and professional standing?

## If the accreditation system is focused on direct advisory services to the Committee:

- Focus on capacities of NGOs to evaluate nominations and their international experience

## If the accreditation system is focused on the implementation of the Convention at all levels:

- Focus on experience in the safeguarding of living heritage at all levels (current accreditation criteria based on the 'inter alia' advisory functions')

# How to improve the geographical representation?

- Issue **linked with the identification of advisory functions**
- **Fair geographical distribution difficult to achieve**

## 'Hard' measures

- Impose a **ceiling/priority system** to limit the maximum number of accredited NGOs per region
- May prevent the Committee to benefit from a full range of expertise
- Only **10%** of respondents to survey were favourable

## 'Soft' measures

- Focus on **specific awareness-raising and capacity-building activities** targeting NGOs in under-represented regions
- Requires the mobilization of **national authorities** (Ministries, National Commissions) and **partners** (ICH NGO Forum, accredited NGOs, C2Cs, UNESCO Chairs)
- **States** could be encouraged to **mobilize NGOs active** in the safeguarding of heritage at the national and local levels
- **53%** of respondents proposed at least one type of soft measures





1. **What does the Committee expect from accredited NGOs?**
2. **How shall NGOs be evaluated when requesting/renewing accreditation?**
3. **How can NGOs from all regions be encouraged to seek accreditation?**



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## Session 2

# Defining an accreditation system for NGOs (process and responsibilities)



# Accreditation and review of accreditation processes

## Current situation

- Ever-increasing number of accredited NGOs, many of which do not have the intention, interest or capacities to serve in the Evaluation Body
- Heavy processes for NGOs, the General Assembly, the Committee and the Secretariat while assigned tasks are very limited

## Question

48% of accredited NGOs considered that the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels is a potential advisory function



Should the accreditation system make a distinction between advisory services to the Committee and participation in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels?

# How to facilitate the contribution of accredited NGOs?

## Improve information-sharing

- Mapping of expertise offered by accredited NGOs
- Informational welcome letter to all newly accredited NGOs

## Facilitate networking and coordination among NGOs

- Need for a coordination mechanism for accredited NGOs?
- Enhance the role of the ICH-NGO Forum?

## Prevent the misuse of accreditation

- Formal pledge against unrelated political claims in accreditation requests
- Development of a code of conduct for all accredited NGOs



## **Towards a revision of the accreditation process?**

- From what type of NGOs does the Committee expect advisory services?
- Should NGOs of all sizes and competencies be accredited? Or shall the accreditation be more selective?
- On what basis shall NGOs be selected?
- How shall the contribution of NGOs be reviewed?

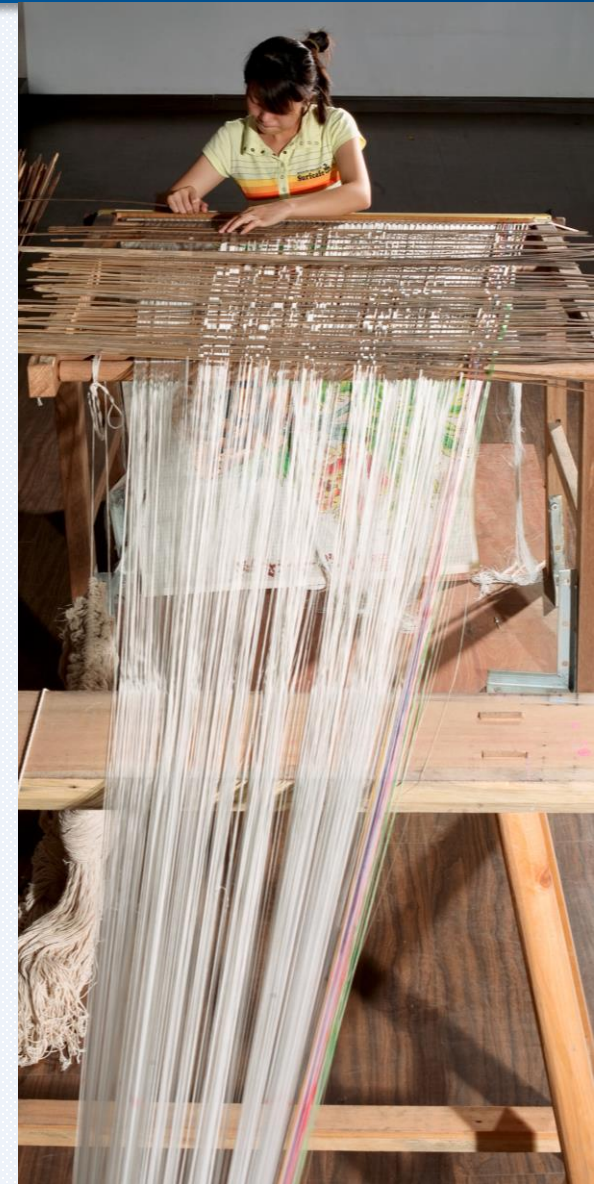
## **Relation between the Committee and accredited NGOs**

- How to facilitate the contribution of accredited NGOs to the work of the Committee?
- How shall the Committee interact with accredited NGOs?

## **Relations between States and accredited NGOs**

- How to facilitate cooperation between accredited NGOs and States?

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# Next steps and conclusion



# What's next?

