Unit 13

**The Intangible Heritage Convention and the World Heritage Convention**

**Participant’s text**

In Participant’s text Unit 2.4 a comparison was made between the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage[[1]](#footnote-1) and the World Heritage Convention. This unit examines the subject further, covering the following topics:

* Origins of the two Conventions.
* The texts of the two Conventions: Similarities and Differences
* Definitions of heritage in the two Conventions.
* Relationships between Intangible Heritage and World Heritage
* Inventory making under the two Conventions.
* Lists of the two Conventions.
* Organs of the two Conventions.
* Advisory organizations under the two Conventions.

Relevant entries in Participant’s text Unit 3 include: ‘1989 Recommendation’, ‘Authenticity’, ‘Cultural space’, ‘General Assembly’, ‘Intergovernmental Committee’ and ‘Masterpieces’.

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13.1 ORIGINS OF THE two COnventions

#### THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

Protecting heritage of outstanding universal value through international cooperation

The World Heritage Convention departs from the view that heritage of outstanding universal value needs to be preserved and protected through international cooperation, especially in times of war or adversity.

In the nineteenth century, heritage came to be thought of as a common good, like scientific knowledge, of importance not only to the people who live near it or use it, but also to others in the same region or country, or even to all of humankind. This was the root of the notion that some heritage with ‘outstanding universal value’ deserves special attention internationally.

The possibility of deploying international cooperation to protect heritage was explored further during the 1920s and 1930s by the League of Nations and its International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, and the matter was given greater urgency by the confiscation, bombing and looting of cultural property during the Second World War in Europe. The successful rescue of the Temples of Abu Simbel during the construction of the Aswan High Dam in Egypt between 1964 and 1966 proved that international cooperation could help to protect cultural heritage sites.

A Convention about cultural and natural heritage

At that time, discussions about heritage in Europe and North America focused on heritage buildings, monuments and objects, and increasingly also on natural sites. In 1965 a White House Conference in Washington DC called for a ‘World Heritage Trust’ that would stimulate international cooperation to protect ‘the world’s superb natural and scenic areas and historic sites for the present and the future of the entire world. During the discussions at UNESCO about this issue, the USA therefore suggested that both cultural and natural heritage be covered by one Convention. The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) were both involved in drafting the Convention. These organizations were later given specific advisory roles in the Convention (see below).

The World Heritage Convention, adopted in 1972, aims at ‘establishing an effective system of collective protection of the cultural heritage and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods’. This is necessary because ‘the cultural heritage and the natural heritage are increasingly threatened with destruction’, not only from ‘traditional causes of decay’ but from ‘changing social and economic conditions’ and ‘damage or destruction’ (see the World Heritage Convention, Preamble).

Mechanisms of protection

The backbone of the international protection under this Convention is the World Heritage List. Properties inscribed on this List have outstanding universal value, according to the World Heritage Committee. For the current number of properties (cultural, natural and mixed), see the World Heritage List webpage (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/).> For the current list of States that have ratified the Convention, see the States Parties: Ratification Status webpage (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/)>

For further information: UNESCO. 2002. ‘The World Heritage Convention: 30 Years Old and Going Strong’:   
<http://whc.unesco.org/archive/websites/venice2002/edito.htm>

#### THE INTANGIBLE HERITAGE CONVENTION

Expanding the concept of heritage

In the early 1970s, soon after the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO Member States, led initially by Bolivia, sought to expand the concept of heritage by including heritage elements that are of a less tangible nature, and to mobilize international cooperation for their protection.

Various early programmes and projects

At first, UNESCO tried, together with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), to develop international regulations for both the safeguarding and the legal protection of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) (although it was not yet termed ICH). Both organizations eventually decided to continue their work separately, albeit in a complementary way.

UNESCO adopted a Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore in 1989. That text, being a Recommendation, was not legally binding and only a few States followed it. The text also attracted considerable criticism because it overemphasized the role of research and researchers and did not sufficiently acknowledge the critical role of the communities concerned in the safeguarding of ICH. The text was also criticized for being influenced by the idea of outstanding universal value from the World Heritage Convention. After a series of evaluations and a conference of experts from all regions of the world, co-organized by UNESCO in 1999, it was concluded that the approach to ICH safeguarding should be less hierarchical and more community-focused.

Meanwhile, inspired by the experiences of Japan and the Republic of Korea, UNESCO started the Living Human Treasures (LHT) programme in 1994 and the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 1998 (see Participant’s text Unit 3). The first of these two programmes encouraged the continued transmission of ICH practices and the second was created to raise awareness about ICH by highlighting specific elements of it. The Masterpieces programme came to an end with the entry into force of the Intangible Heritage Convention (see Article 31); the Living Human Treasures programme is no longer promoted in its original form. Both programmes were influenced by the spirit of the 1989 Recommendation in introducing hierarchies between practitioners (LHT) and between elements of ICH (Masterpieces).

Developing consensus on a new Convention

By the late 1990s, there was broad support among UNESCO Member States for the elaboration of a new standard-setting instrument, which was prepared by UNESCO between September 2002 and June 2003. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was adopted in October 2003 and came into force in June 2006. It has been ratified very quickly by Member States.

13.2 THE TEXTS of the two conventions:  
SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

#### Similarities in the texts

The intergovernmental meeting that prepared the text of the Intangible Heritage Convention took the World Heritage Convention as its basis, as requested by UNESCO’s governing Organs. Provisions of a technical nature – for example, concerning the Funds of the Convention and procedures for adhering to or denouncing the Convention – thus show significant similarities.

Article 21 of the Intangible Heritage Convention about international assistance granted by the Committee, for example, is an adaptation of Article 22 of the World Heritage Convention. Article 13(a) of the Intangible Heritage Convention is an adaptation of Article 5.1 of the World Heritage Convention, as can be seen from the use of the word ‘society’ rather than ‘community’.

#### Differences in approach

There were naturally many discussions about the characteristics of ICH, and about the differences between tangible and intangible heritage. It was felt that different measures were required for the conservation of tangible heritage and the safeguarding of ICH (an illustration of these differences can be found in Case study 21). Thus, the final draft of the new Convention deviated significantly from the World Heritage Convention in both spirit and content, especially in its textual and procedural recognition of the prominent roles of the communities concerned in identifying, defining and safeguarding ICH and in its broad welcome to organizations and experts who could assist the Committee, States Parties and communities in their tasks (this is discussed further below).

Under the World Heritage Convention (Article 4; Operational Guideline 15), States Parties undertake to identify and conserve all the cultural and natural heritage on their territories and considered to be of ‘outstanding universal value’ (as defined under the World Heritage Convention, Articles 1–2), i.e. properties inscribed on the World Heritage List by the Committee. Although the Intangible Heritage Convention also introduces a listing system, its first objective is the safeguarding of the ICH present in the territories of the States Parties. This is not only, or primarily, ICH listed internationally, but all ICH that is recognized by the communities concerned as belonging to their cultural heritage.

The Intangible Heritage Convention asks States Parties to implement both general and specific safeguarding measures (i.e. safeguarding measures for specific elements) at the national level, whether or not any of the ICH concerned is inscribed on the Lists of the Convention.

#### Complementary implementation

The two Conventions both contribute in their own way to the promotion and protection of cultural diversity. Their implementation should be complementary when interlinked properties and elements are inscribed respectively on the World Heritage List and on one of the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention. Since the 1990s, the World Heritage Committee has been moving slowly towards recognizing greater community involvement in the identification and management of heritage properties.

The Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List (http://whc.unesco.org/archive/global94.htm), adopted in 1994 proposed a ‘move away from a purely architectural view of the cultural heritage of humanity towards one which was much more anthropological, multi-functional and universal’ in regard to cultural properties. In 2009 the Committee agreed to ‘develop an inclusive plan of action to increase community awareness and engagement’ around world heritage.

13.3 dEFINITIONS OF HERITAGE IN THE TWO CONVENTIONS

#### Defining cultural and natural heritage in the World Heritage Convention

The World Heritage Convention deals with cultural and natural heritage; it defines ‘cultural heritage’ (Article 1) for the purposes of the Convention as follows:

* **Monuments:** architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
* **Groups of buildings**: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.
* **Sites:** works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

Article 2 outlines what, for the purposes of the Convention, is defined as ‘natural heritage’:

* **Natural features** consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view.
* **Geological and physiographical** formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.
* **Natural sites** or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

World Heritage properties are thus classified as cultural, natural or mixed (cultural and natural) sites. Since 1992, the World Heritage Committee has also inscribed a number of properties classified as ‘cultural landscapes’ on the World Heritage List, defined as ‘the combined works of nature and man’.

See: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

#### Defining ICH in the Intangible Heritage Convention: the importance of associated spaces

In the Intangible Heritage Convention the definition of ICH (Article 2.1) focuses on ‘practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills’ and emphasizes their constantly changing nature.

This has been extensively discussed in Participant’s text 1.4; see also Participant’s text Unit 3.

All intangible heritage is enacted somewhere; most ICH elements can be enacted anywhere as long as there are sufficient practitioners and other community members present. There are also ICH elements that depend on a specific location for their enactment, whether man-made, natural or a combination of both.

The definition of ICH includes ‘the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces’ needed for practising or transmitting ICH. The Convention does not only mention ‘cultural spaces’ but also covers:

* ‘natural spaces and places of memory whose existence is necessary for expressing the intangible cultural heritage’ (Article 14(c)); and
* ‘forums and spaces intended for the performance or expression’ of ICH (Article 13(d)(i)).

13.3.1 rELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INTANGIBLE HERITAGE   
AND WORLD HERITAGE

In the conservation of heritage places, the social values and ICH practices of associated communities may need to be taken into account, whether inscribed on a List of the Intangible Heritage Convention or not. The safeguarding of an ICH element may also require the protection of a place or a natural resource. In some cases, places associated with an ICH element have tangible heritage value; in exceptional cases, they are even recognized as having outstanding universal value and are inscribed on the World Heritage List.

#### Inscribed ICH elements associated with World Heritage sites

A number of ICH elements already inscribed on one of the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention are directly or indirectly associated with properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Some examples are:

* Albanian folk iso-polyphony (Albania, RL, 2008) and Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (WHL, 2005).
* Processional giants and dragons in Belgium and France (Belgium and France, RL, 2008) and Belfries of Belgium and France (WHL, 1999, 2005).
* Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges (Belgium, RL, 2009) and Historic Centre of Brugge (WHL, 2000).
* The Royal ballet of Cambodia (Cambodia, RL, 2008) and Angkor (WHL, 1992).
* Yamahoko, the float ceremony of the Kyoto Gion festival (Japan, RL, 2009) and Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto (Kyoto, Uji and Otsu Cities) (WHL, 1994).
* The Cultural space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum (Jordan, RL, 2008) and Petra (WHL, 1985) and Wadi Rum Protected Area (WHL, 2011).
* Traditions and practices associated to the Kayas in the sacred forests of the Mijikenda (Kenya, USL, 2009) and Sacred Mijikenda Kaya Forests (WHL, 2008).
* The Cultural space of Jemaa el-Fna Square (Morocco, RL, 2008) and Medina of Marrakesh (WHL, 1985).
* The Hudhud chants of the Ifugao (the Philippines, RL, 2008) and Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (WHL, 1995).

In some cases the link between the practice and the property mentioned above is accidental; in other cases it is organic. In the Albanian case mentioned above, the connection is somewhat accidental as polyphonic singing is performed in many places, including the two town centres that are inscribed on the World Heritage List. The Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges, by contrast, is only enacted in the historic centre of that town and has developed in and with that place. The best example of an organic link is probably the Hudhud chants of the Ifuago and Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (see Case study 33 for an extensive discussion).

The list of inscribed ICH elements connected to World Heritage sites will certainly grow in the years to come: there are communities living at or near most World Heritage sites and it is difficult to imagine a community without ICH. There are, for example, communities associated with most Ethiopian sites inscribed on the World Heritage List and in all cases in question there is a strong interdependence between the ICH of these communities and the cultural or natural sites with which they are associated.

#### Acknowledgement by the Intangible Heritage Convention

The Intangible Heritage Convention acknowledges its relationship to the World Heritage Convention, and the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage, in the following ways:

* It mentions ‘the deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage’ (Preamble).
* It states that ‘existing international agreements, recommendations and resolutions concerning the cultural and natural heritage need to be effectively enriched and supplemented by means of new provisions relating to the intangible cultural heritage’ (Preamble).
* It warns that its implementation should not lead to ‘altering the status or diminishing the level of protection under the 1972 Convention … of World Heritage properties with which an item of the ICH is directly associated’ (Article 3(a)).

In general, the inscription of an ICH element associated with a World Heritage site is unlikely to lead to any reduction in the status or level of protection of the site. When associated communities are encouraged to practise their ICH on sites like the market square of Jemaa el-Fna, for example, the sites will only benefit from being used, maintained or given added value. Cases of conflict have arisen, however, when people wish to practise their ICH elements on a heritage site and are not permitted to do so by the conservation authorities for reasons linked to the conservation of the site. It is in the interest of both ICH safeguarding and site conservation to resolve such conflicts to the mutual satisfaction of the parties concerned, whether or not the element and/or the site are inscribed on either of the Lists of the two Conventions.

13.4 INVENTORy making under the two COnventions

The World Heritage Convention requires its States Parties to compile inventories of properties that they consider suitable for inclusion in the World Heritage List (Article 11.1). These so called Tentative Lists are limited in size and do not usually contain more than twenty entries.

The Intangible Heritage Convention requires its States Parties to prepare one or more ‘inventories of the ICH’ present in their territories (Article 12); eventually, these inventories (note the use of the definite article) need to be fairly exhaustive. The Operational Directives (ODs) of the Intangible Heritage Convention stipulate that any element nominated for one of the two Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention should already have been included in such an inventory. Several States Parties already have inventories that include thousands of elements.

Under the World Heritage Convention, it is the States Parties who identify and delineate the different properties situated in their territory that might be proposed for recognition as world heritage (Article 3). Under the Intangible Heritage Convention, the communities and groups concerned are the ones who must identify their ICH (Article 2.1) and who must eventually give their consent for a nomination.

13.5 lists of the two conventions

#### World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger

Over 1000 properties (cultural and/or natural) have been inscribed on the World Heritage List since 1978 and over 360 elements have been inscribed on one or other of the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention since 2008. The Lists of the two Conventions are often mentioned together, or even confused, but in fact they represent quite different listing systems, for different types of heritage, each with its own criteria and regulations.

The World Heritage Convention has one List (the World Heritage List) and a sub-list (the List of World Heritage in Danger). This sub-list is a ‘list of the property appearing in the World Heritage List for the conservation of which major operations are necessary and for which assistance has been requested under the World Heritage Convention’ (Article 11.4). When a property on this List is no longer in danger, it is restored to the World Heritage List.

#### Representative List and Urgent Safeguarding List

The Intangible Heritage Convention has two separate Lists: the Representative List for thriving ICH elements and the Urgent Safeguarding List for elements that face significant threats or risks to their viability. Elements may be transferred from one List to the other if assessments of their viability change. The Intangible Heritage Convention, which aims primarily at ICH safeguarding, has also introduced a Register of Good Safeguarding Practices.

States Parties submit nominations to the Committees of both Conventions but proof of community participation and consent to the preparation of the nomination file is only required in the case of the Intangible Heritage Convention, not for nominations to the World Heritage List, even when the site is inhabited. Nominations to the World Heritage List are called ‘nomination dossiers’ and nominations to the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention are called ‘nomination files’. Nomination dossiers must be quite detailed and they need to include a great deal of historical background.

This means that nomination dossiers for the World Heritage List tend to be longer than nomination files for the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention and their preparation may require more expert involvement. A detailed conservation management plan is required for a World Heritage nomination, while safeguarding and/or management measures are required for the nomination of an ICH element to one of the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention.

13.5.1 Criteria for inscription

#### Outstanding universal value

The World Heritage Convention requires elements inscribed on the World Heritage List to have ‘outstanding universal value’ (Article 11.2). A property is considered to have outstanding universal value if it meets one or more of the ten criteria enumerated in Operational Guideline 77 of the World Heritage Convention. In other words, it should:

1. represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
2. exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
3. bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
4. be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
5. be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
6. be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance;
7. contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
8. be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
9. be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
10. contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

#### Authenticity and integrity

In terms of World Heritage Convention Operational Guideline 78, the property must also ‘meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity and must have an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding’.

The concepts of ‘authenticity’, ‘integrity’ and ‘outstanding universal value’ are not used in determining heritage value under the Intangible Heritage Convention (see Participant’s text Unit 3: ‘Authenticity’). Inscription on the Intangible Heritage Lists is justified in the first place by the value of the ICH to the communities, groups and individuals who practise and transmit that heritage.

It is important to note that properties nominated to the World Heritage List do not need to satisfy more than one criterion from the World Heritage Convention Operational Guideline 77, except in the case of criterion (vi), which should preferably be used in conjunction. This differs from the situation regarding nominations to the Intangible Heritage Lists, the Urgent Safeguarding List and Representative List, which must meet all five or six of the criteria in the paragraphs 1 and 2 of the ODs respectively (see Participant’s text Unit 11).

#### ICH that contributes to outstanding universal value

Many World Heritage sites have ICH elements associated with them; these ICH elements are not all inscribed on the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention. In some cases, associated ICH may inform the criteria chosen for the World Heritage nomination file. Particularly important in this regard are properties nominated under World Heritage Operational Guideline 77, criteria (v) and (vi).

Criterion (v) covers properties that demonstrate ‘traditional human settlement, land- use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment’. This type of property might be linked to ICH such as traditional building or agricultural techniques (see Case study 33).

Criterion (vi) covers sites ‘directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance’. The words ‘living traditions’ were only added to criterion (vi) in 1992, to allow for the inscription of ‘cultural landscapes’ as World Heritage sites.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Living traditions associated with World Heritage sites might include certain types of religious ceremonies, songs or festivals (such as the Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges) associated with specific places (the Historic Centre of Brugge).

Criterion (vi) is commonly used to set out what ICOMOS has called the ‘intangible values’ associated with World Heritage sites. These ‘intangible values’ are not precisely the same as what is now understood to constitute ICH under the Intangible Heritage Convention as they may include historical, literary and artistic associations with places in addition to ‘living traditions’ that would constitute ICH.

#### Recognizing and managing ICH associated with World Heritage properties

The recognition of ICH associated with World Heritage List properties, and the involvement of local communities in the management of these sites and the associated ICH, has been a slow process. Some community-oriented approaches have already been implemented in States Parties. In 1994 Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in Australia was re-inscribed on the World Heritage List to include, under criterion (vi), spiritual cultural heritage values associated with the property by Indigenous communities, in addition to the natural values under which it had originally been inscribed. It is managed jointly by the traditional owners of the land, the Anangu people, and Parks Australia. All management policies and programmes now aim to ‘maintain Anangu culture and heritage, conserve and protect the integrity of the ecological systems in and around the park and provide for visitor enjoyment and learning opportunities within the park’.

Because of the expert-defined nature of most of the criteria for World Heritage listing, and the use of significance statements based on these criteria as benchmarks to judge the success of conservation management of the properties after listing, it is difficult to ensure the safeguarding of ICH associated with a site that is not mentioned in the criteria for World Heritage listing. The emphasis on historical continuity and historical data in the compilation of World Heritage List nominations also sometimes diverts attention from the involvement of modern-day communities associated with the management of the site.

13.5.2 REGIONAL IMBALANCES   
ON THE LISTS OF THE TWO CONVENTIONS

Because of the diverse origins and focus of the two Conventions, States Parties in different regions have participated at different rates in the implementation thereof, including the submission of nominations to the Lists of the Conventions.

Asia is highly represented on the Lists of the Intangible Heritage Convention (specifically East Asia, where ICH policies were implemented long before the other regions), while Europe (with a long history of tangible heritage management) is highly represented on the World Heritage List. Africa is less represented on the Lists of both Conventions, but highly represented on the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. For a table comparing inscriptions between the two Conventions by electoral groups, see the Facts and figures webpage.

There are other imbalances evident in the Lists too. Far more cultural than natural or mixed properties have been inscribed on the World Heritage List and far more ICH elements have been inscribed on the Representative List than on the Urgent Safeguarding List. Moreover, there are still major gaps in the coverage of certain types of natural ecosystems.

#### Addressing imbalances on the Lists

These imbalances on the Lists of both Conventions have been recognized and several attempts have been made to address them. In 1994 the World Heritage Committee launched its Global Strategy to ensure that the World Heritage List better reflected the world’s cultural and natural diversity of outstanding universal value. Efforts were made to encourage ratification by States in under-represented regions, to encourage nominations from States Parties that had not previously nominated sites and to build capacity in these regions through regional programmes.

The Organs of the Intangible Heritage Convention have also attempted to redress the imbalances in the Lists of the Convention by prioritizing the evaluation of nominations from under-represented regions and by implementing a capacity-building strategy, partly aimed at encouraging more nominations from these regions.

13.6 ORGANs of the two conventions

The Intergovernmental Committee of the Intangible Heritage Convention (Article 5) operates under the strict control of the General Assembly of the States Parties (Article 4), which also elects the members of the Committee. The General Assembly must approve (and may discuss and modify) ODs prepared by the Committee, for example. The Committee reports to the General Assembly.

The Intergovernmental Committee established under the World Heritage Convention is not controlled by a General Assembly. It reports to the General Conference of UNESCO (Article 29) and its members are elected by the States Parties to the Convention meeting at the time of the biennial ordinary sessions of the General Conference of UNESCO (Article 8).

13.7 ADVISORY ORGANIZATIONS under the two conventions

#### Three advisory organizations

The World Heritage Convention emphasizes the importance of scientific methods in establishing the value of properties and in undertaking conservation activities. Expert members of its three advisory organizations help the Committee to determine whether properties qualify for inclusion on the World Heritage List. They are the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). These three organizations are explicitly mentioned in Article 8.3 of the World Heritage Convention.

#### Many advisory organizations

This expert-driven approach, adapted to intangible heritage management in the 1989 Recommendation, was not replicated in the Intangible Heritage Convention. The latter emphasizes the role of the communities concerned (rather than experts or the State) in the identification of ICH elements, in the determination of their heritage value and in their management/safeguarding.

Therefore, no specific NGOs are mentioned in the Intangible Heritage Convention. This is in line with the idea that the immense diversity of ICH cannot be assessed by a small number of NGOs; another reason was that many States did not want to repeat the World Heritage experience and restrict advisory organizations to a few European-based organizations. Instead, in conformity with Article 9 of the Convention, and following the procedures and criteria set out in ODs 90–99, multiple NGOs have been accredited under the Convention to assist the Committee in an advisory capacity; the Committee reserves the right to consult an even wider range of organizations and individual experts where necessary (Article 8.4; OD 89).

For NGOs accredited under the Convention, see:  
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=331>

1. 1. Frequently referred to as the ‘Intangible Heritage Convention’, the ‘2003 Convention’ and, for the purpose of this unit, simply the ‘Convention’. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 2. O. Beazley and H. J. Deacon, ‘The Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage Values under the World Heritage Convention: Auschwitz, Hiroshima and Robben Island’, in J. E. Blake (ed.), 2007, Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage – Challenges and Approaches, Builth Wells, United Kingdom, Institute of Art and Law, pp. 93-107. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)