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WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

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Item 10 of the Provisional Agenda: Periodic Reports

10A: Report on the results of the Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States

SUMMARY

This document presents the outcomes of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Arab States region in pursuant to Decision **41 COM 10A** and is structured with the following main parts:

Part I – Third Cycle Periodic Report in the Arab States
Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* by States Parties in the Arab States region
Chapter 3: Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* at the World Heritage property level in the Arab States region
Chapter 4: Monitoring Indicators for the Arab States region
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Part II – Framework Action Plan and process
Chapter 6: Draft Action Plan (2021-2027) for the Arab States region
Chapter 7: Draft Decision

Additional information on Periodic Reporting in the Arab States region is published at the following address: http://whc.unesco.org/en/arabstates/

***Draft Decision*: 44 COM 10A, see Part II, Chapter 7**

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The World Heritage Centre would like to extend its deep gratitude to all States Parties, through all the World Heritage focal points and World Heritage site managers for their active participation and commitment in the implementation of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States region. Their invaluable inputs provided insight into the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in the respective States Parties, as well as information about the factors affecting the World Heritage properties and the challenges they face. The examples provided concerning good practice reflect the substantial efforts that are being made in ensuring the protection, conservation and presentation of World Heritage properties in the Arab States region.

The World Heritage Centre would like to express its profound gratitude to the States Parties of Bahrain and Egypt for kindly hosting regional training workshops during the first stage of the exercise. Sincere appreciation is also extended to the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH) for their continued active support and commitment throughout the implementation of Third Cycle in the Arab States, as well as to all heritage experts who contributed to this Report, the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, namely ICCROM, ICOMOS and IUCN, as well as the UNESCO Field Offices in the Region and the UNESCO Institute of Statistics.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States was launched in 2018 following Decision **41 COM 10A** (Krakow, 2017), with the participation of all 19 States Parties and 82 World Heritage properties (74 cultural properties, 5 natural properties and 3 mixed properties).

States Parties responded to the Third Cycle questionnaire, which comprises two sections: Section I focuses on the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* at the national level, while Section II focuses on its implementation at each World Heritage property. Compared to the Second Cycle questionnaire, the Third Cycle questionnaire has additional areas relating to synergies between the *World Heritage Convention*, other conservation Conventions and Programmes, the implementation of the 1972 Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage, the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL), as well as the 2015 World Heritage Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the *World Heritage Conventio*n, and other key policies adopted by the World Heritage Committee. It also takes into consideration an attributes-based approach to assessment of the state of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of individual World Heritage properties and provides an opportunity for States Parties and properties to provide examples of best practice management. Moreover, the Periodic Report draws upon the Monitoring Indicators that have been developed to improve follow-up on progress in the implementation of the *Convention* as well as the 1972 Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage.

World Heritage national focal points were invited to fill in and submit Section I of the questionnaire for the respective State Party. Section II of the questionnaire was completed by the World Heritage site managers of the respective properties, which was in turn validated and submitted by the national focal points. The compilation of the statistical results and information that were provided by the States Parties were analysed on the scale of the Region as a whole, providing a holistic view of the situation.

It is to be noted that between the Second and Third Cycles, 19 properties were inscribed on the World Heritage List (16 cultural properties; 2 mixed properties; and 1 natural property), with criterion (iii) and criterion (iv) as the most applied criteria. In the meantime, 17 properties were added on the List of World Heritage in Danger during this period.

By compiling and analysing the data and information provided by States Parties, trends and priorities could be identified. The Periodic Report has highlighted the impact of conflict on the capacity of some States Parties to effectively protect and conserve heritage. The priority of protecting heritage in the face of conflict has been highlighted whether in terms of synergy needs,

factors affecting the properties, or policies and resources. Properties with impacted Outstanding Universal Value have increased from 11 during the Second Cycle to 20 at the time of the Third Cycle.

Priority areas have been identified in terms of capacity building, international cooperation, general policy development, policy and resourcing of World Heritage properties, and, financial status and human resources, among others. Priority management needs that have been identified are related to boundaries and buffer zones, legal frameworks, use of the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties, and the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage properties, in addition to coordination between the various levels of administration, management systems and management plans, budget, financing and human resources, and capacity building, among others.

At the time of submission of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire in July 2019, COVID-19 had not yet emerged, and hence it had minimal impact on the process and the results of the exercise. Only the workshop that was organized in March 2020 to reflect on main outcomes and discuss the draft Action Plan, was cancelled due to the pandemic. Instead, an online meeting was organized in July 2020, during which participants noted the impact of COVID-19 on tourism, particularly impacting communities, and highlighted that alternative sustainable solutions are needed.

A proposed Action Plan framework for the Arab States has been developed in consultation with national focal points and site managers of the Arab States region, Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee, and World Heritage experts. It is based on the analysis of the Periodic Report, focusing on priority needs and areas that have been highlighted by States Parties, and is an overall framework proposed for States Parties, along with the World Heritage site managers and other stakeholders, to appropriate the Action Plan and decide on the actions that would be relevant for implementation by the respective authorities.

The Action Plan framework is based on three strategic objectives, which were deduced from the identified priorities. These strategic objectives are to:

- Contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States, reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the Region;
- Enhance the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage, particularly for sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including through emergency preparedness, disaster risk response, and planning for recovery;
- Improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites.

In addition, two transversal thematic priorities were identified, which are mainstreamed under all strategic objective. The thematic priorities are:

- Strengthening capacities for the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage;
- Enhancing participation and engagement of all stakeholders, particularly local communities, fostering education and awareness building.

Overall, the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting was assessed positively by the States Parties in the Arab States region, and was considered useful for the revision of priorities, strategies and policies for the protection, management and conservation of properties. The online guidance and training tools developed, and continuous helpdesk support provided during the reporting exercise by the World Heritage Centre, were well received. While the questionnaire was on the whole considered as easy to use, some of the ratings suggest room for improvement.

PART I – THIRD CYCLE PERIODIC REPORT FOR THE ARAB STATES

1. INTRODUCTION

Periodic Reporting was established by the World Heritage Committee in 1997 in accordance with Article 29 of the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Periodic Reporting is a self-reporting process, that is led as far as possible by the States Parties in each region and is one of the core conservation monitoring mechanisms of the *Convention*. It requires States Parties to submit reports to the World Heritage Committee, on the legislative and administrative provisions they have adopted and other actions which they have taken for the application of the *Convention*, including the state of conservation of the World Heritage properties located on their territories.

According to Paragraph 201 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, Periodic Reporting serves the following main purposes:

a) To provide an assessment of the application of the *World Heritage Convention* by the State Party;
b) To provide an assessment as to whether the Outstanding Universal Value of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List is being maintained over time;
c) To provide updated information about the World Heritage properties to record the changing circumstances and state of conservation of the properties;
d) To provide a mechanism for regional cooperation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties concerning the implementation of the *Convention* and World Heritage conservation.

Since the adoption of Periodic Reporting by the World Heritage Committee, two cycles have been completed: The First Cycle was carried out from 1998 to 2006, and the Second Cycle from 2008 to 2015.

The Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting was launched in 2017 at the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee in Krakow (Decision **41 COM 10A**), during which the Committee decided to exceptionally postpone the start of Periodic Reporting of all regions by one year, in view of the need to allow sufficient time for appropriate preparation, by the Secretariat, and by the States Parties of the Arab States region, and commencing with Arab States region in 2018. This report presents the outcomes of this exercise to the World Heritage Committee at its extended 44th session.

1.1. First and Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States

1.1.1. First Cycle: background, outcomes and follow-up

Background

At the 22nd session of the World Heritage Committee (Kyoto, 1998), the strategy for Periodic Reporting was presented in document WHC-98/CONF.203/06, while an overall approach to the reporting for the Arab States was presented to the World Heritage Committee (WHC-99/CONF.209/12) at its 23rd session (Marrakesh, 1999).

The Arab States region was selected as the first region to submit its Periodic Reports, covering properties inscribed between 1978 and 1992. The exercise was carried out in a limited timeframe, with the First Cycle being experimental in nature. The exercise concerned 12 States Parties having inscribed World Heritage properties on their territories, out of the 16 States Parties that had ratified the *Convention* at that time. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section I for the State Party, and Section II for each property concerned.

Outcomes and follow-up

Only 11 Reports related to Section I were received, as 1 State Party did not submit this questionnaire. Regarding Section II, reports were received for 39 out of the 43 inscribed properties. The analysis of the Periodic Reports enabled reaching conclusions and the formulation of a set of recommendations, under the following overall goals:

- Goal I: Identification of Properties
- Goal II: Management Plans and Integrated Conservation
- Goal III: Factors affecting Properties
- Goal III (Continued): Preventive Conservation and Monitoring
- Goal IV: Promotion of the Convention and the Inscribed Properties
- Goal V: Training and International Co-operation

The report (Document WHC-2000/CONF.204/7) was presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 24th session (Cairns, 2000). As a follow up, a Regional Programme for the Arab States was developed on the basis of the findings of the Periodic Report, which was approved by the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session in 2003 (Decision **27 COM 20B.1**). The Report and the Regional Programme (Document WHC.03/27.COM/INF.20A) were later published in 2004 (World Heritage Reports, issue 11, UNESCO).

Between 2000 and 2006, the other regions undertook the Periodic Reporting exercise. In the course of this exercise, the World Heritage Committee decided to reflect on the First Cycle of Periodic Reporting, as some general conclusions were drawn up and several issues were identified (Decision **7 EXT.COM 5**).

1.1.2. Second Cycle: background, outcomes and follow-up

Background

In 2007, the main results and recommendations of the Periodic Reporting Reflection meetings (WHC-07/31.COM/11D.1) were presented to the World Heritage Committee and endorsed (Decision **31 COM 11D.1**), while the revised Periodic Reporting questionnaire (WHC-08/32.COM/INF.11E) for the Second Cycle, was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 32nd session (Quebec, 2008) by Decision **32 COM 11E**. In its decision, the World Heritage Committee launched the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States Region.

The Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting concerned 18 Sates Parties in the Region that had ratified the *World Heritage Convention*, and 64 properties inscribed in 15 Arab States. A crucial part of the programme was the organisation of a series of meetings to inform States Parties of the changes made to the Periodic Reporting questionnaire as compared to the First Cycle, and the expected results. Out of the 18 States Parties, 17 participated in the meetings. The respondents were invited to submit the questionnaires electronically (online).

Outcomes and follow up

The questionnaire related to Section I was submitted by 15 (out of 18) States Parties and Section II of the questionnaire was submitted for 59 (out of 64) World Heritage properties. Significant improvement from the First Cycle was noted in the results, particularly in the process of implementation of the Periodic Reporting exercise, and in the active participation of States Parties.

The report comprised four parts, with the first part presenting an analysis of Section I of the questionnaire. It focused on the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in the Arab States, with an analysis of the data provided on general policy development, Tentative Lists and the status of services for protection, conservation and presentation, among others. Part II provided an analysis on World Heritage properties, particularly the main factors affecting the properties, in addition to issues of management, financing, protective measures, and information and awareness building. Recommendations for sub-regional action plans were presented in Part III, whereby such action plans would address the gaps and challenges of the Region and provide a way forward for safeguarding World Heritage properties in the Region. Part IV of the report provided the draft decision proposed to the World Heritage Committee. The report's annexes included information on priorities identified at a sub-regional level, in addition to those that were noted for the Region as whole, with the respective actions and recommendations. The sub-regional action plans were based on a sub-regional division at the time of the exercise, which was as follows:

Gulf:	Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen
Maghreb:	Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia
Middle East:	Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan and Syrian Arab Republic

Common priorities, actions and recommendations identified by the sub-regional working groups, included channelling training needs towards site management with a focus on sustainable development and funding, monitoring, public and community awareness, in addition to finding effective modalities to involve local communities in World Heritage processes, and updating of legislations. As regards nominations, priorities focused on the need to further develop nominations to comprise other heritage categories, including natural heritage and cultural landscapes, and to explore transboundary opportunities. Other priorities comprised the creation of a network of institutions and heritage professionals, assembling World Heritage documentation in the Region and ensuring its availability and translation into Arabic, and encouraging research relevant to the Outstanding Universal Value and focusing on socio-economic dimensions associated with the benefits of World Heritage listing within the framework of sustainable development.

The Second Cycle Periodic Report for the Arab States region (WHC-10/34.COM/10A) was adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 34th session by Decision **34 COM 10A** (Brasilia, 2010). As a follow up, a meeting took place in Rabat, Morocco, from 7 to 9 March 2011 in order to elaborate a Regional Programme (2011-2016). The proposed Regional Programme was developed and presented to the World Heritage Committee in document WHC-11/35.COM/INF.10C. it was approved it at its 35th session in 2011 with Decision **35 COM 10C.3**.

Follow-up on the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States region was presented to the World Heritage Committee in its subsequent Decisions: **37 COM 10C.3** (Phnom Penh, 2013); **38 COM 10B.3** (Doha, 2014); **39 COM 10B.3** (Bonn, 2015); **40 COM 10B.3** (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016); **41 COM 10B.3** (Krakow, 2017) and **43 COM 10A.3** (Baku, 2019).

1.2. Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States

1.2.1. Background

At the end of the Second Cycle, the Periodic Reporting Reflection Expert Group conducted a review on the effectiveness of the process and the questionnaire. An online survey was organised for States Parties to explore their experience in the Second Cycle. The review process resulted in a revised questionnaire and several key outputs. In its Decision **41 COM 10A** (Krakow, 2017), the World Heritage Committee welcomed the recommendations of the Periodic Reporting Reflection Expert Group with regard to the format, content, relevance, analysis and use of data in the Periodic Reporting process. In particular, the revised questionnaire includes questions relating to synergies with other international instruments and programmes on cultural and natural heritage, questions relating to the implementation of the 1972 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage and to the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape, as well as questions assessing the implementation of the World Heritage Policy for integrating a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the *World Heritage Convention*, and of other key policies adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

In addition, the Committee welcomed the development of Periodic Reporting Monitoring Indicators to improve follow-up on progress made by States Parties in the implementation of the *Convention* as well as the 1972 Recommendation concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage. With the same decision, the Committee decided to officially launch the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, but to exceptionally postpone the start of the Periodic Reporting of all regions by one year, starting with the Arab States region in 2018. Moreover, the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session (Manama, 2018), welcomed the offer of the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH) to assist in facilitating the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States region by organising regional meetings and providing targeted technical support to States Parties, in close collaboration with the World Heritage Centre (Decision **42 COM 10A**).

1.2.2. Scope

The Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States was launched in 2018 following Decision **41 COM 10A** (Krakow, 2017), with the participation of all 19 States Parties in the Region. Since the Second Cycle, Palestine ratified the *Convention* in 2011, raising the total number of States Parties in the Region to 19. With this ratification, all Member States of UNESCO in the Arab States region have ratified, accepted or accessioned the *World Heritage Convention*:

State Party, date of ratification (R) /accession (A) /acceptance (Ac)	
Algeria, 24/06/1974, *R*	Oman, 06/10/1981, Ac
Bahrain, 28/05/1991, R	Palestine, 08/12/2011, R
Egypt, 07/02/1974, R	Qatar, 12/09/1984, Ac
Iraq, 05/03/1974, Ac	Saudi Arabia, 07/08/1978, Ac
Jordan, 05/05/1975, R	Sudan, 06/06/1974, R
Kuwait, 06/06/2002, R	Syrian Arab Republic, 13/08/1975, Ac
Lebanon, 03/02/1983, R	Tunisia, 10/03/1975, R
Libya, 13/10/1978, R	United Arab Emirates, 11/05/2001, A

Mauritania, 02/03/1981, R Morocco, 28/10/1975, R	Yemen, 07/10/1980, R

At the time of initiating the Third Cycle exercise in September 2018, 83 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, located in 18 States Parties, were requested to participate in the exercise. The Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (Site proposed by Jordan) was not included in the exercise. Babylon (Iraq) and the Dilmun Burial Mounds (Bahrain) were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2019, thus after the start of the Third Cycle in 2018, and hence were not part of the Third Cycle reporting process.

18 States Parties submitted Section I of the questionnaires at 100% completion, and one was completed at 73%. Out of the 83 World Heritage properties, 82 submitted Section II of the questionnaire. Therefore, in total, 74 cultural properties, 5 natural properties and 3 mixed properties actively participated in the exercise by submitting Section II of the questionnaire, with most of them complete at 100%.

Due to the relatively small number of States Parties and World Heritage properties in the Arab States, and taking into account the similarities and challenges faced by these properties as a whole, despite the fact that they may be located in different geographical zones, it was decided to analyse the data at the regional level and to develop a Draft Regional Action Plan, which would help in having an overview of the Region as a whole. However, the sub-regional statistics may be consulted in the Quantitative Summaries of Outcomes of Sections I and II (Annexes 1 and 2).

1.2.3. Structure of the Questionnaire

The Third Cycle questionnaire comprises two sections: Section I focuses on the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* at the national level, while Section II focuses on its implementation at each World Heritage property. The questionnaire has the following structure:

Section I (State Party level)	**Section II (World Heritage property level)**
1. Introduction 2. Synergies with other Conventions, Programmes and Recommendations for the Conservation of the Natural and Cultural Heritage 3. Tentative List 4. Nominations 5. General Policy Development 6. Inventories/Lists/Registers of Cultural and Natural Heritage 7. Status of Services for the Identification, Protection, Conservation and Presentation of Natural and Cultural Heritage 8. Financial Status and Human Resources 9. Capacity Development 10. Policy and Resourcing of World Heritage Properties 11. International Cooperation 12. Education, Information and Awareness Building 13. Conclusions and Recommended Actions 14. Good Practice in the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* 15. Assessment of the Periodic Reporting Exercise	1. World Heritage Property Data 2. Other Conventions/Programmes under which the World Heritage property is protected (if applicable) 3. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value 4. Factors Affecting the Property 5. Protection and Management of the Property 6. Financial and Human Resources 7. Scientific Studies and Research Projects 8. Education, Information and Awareness Building 9. Visitor Management 10. Monitoring 11. Identification of Priority Management Needs 12. Summary and Conclusions 13. Impact of World Heritage Status 14. Good Practice in the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* 15. Assessment of the Periodic Reporting Exercise

1.2.4. Implementation strategy

The Third Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Arab States was coordinated by the World Heritage Centre's Arab States and Policy and Statutory Meeting Units. It was implemented in close cooperation with World Heritage national focal points and site managers, the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), as well as the Advisory Bodies, UNESCO Field Offices and individual heritage consultants.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the Periodic Reporting exercise, all of the States Parties were invited to designate their focal point(s) responsible for coordinating the exercise at the national level, as well as to communicate the contact details of the World Heritage site managers for each inscribed World Heritage property.

The roles and responsibilities of the key actors were as follows:

- National focal points:
    - Support site mangers and coordinate their responses on Periodic Reporting;
    - Consolidate national responses to the Periodic Reporting questionnaire;
    - Respond to Section I of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire;
    - Validate and submit Sections I and II of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire.
- World Heritage site managers:
    - Respond to Section II of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire;
    - Participate in regional training workshops.
- Category 2 Centre (ARC-WH):
    - Support facilitation of the State Party driven process of the exercise;
    - Co-organise regional meetings and assist the World Heritage Centre in providing technical support to States Parties in the Arab States region;
    - Coordinate the compilation and preparation of the draft Regional Report and draft Action Plan framework for the Third Cycle.
- Advisory Bodies (ICCROM, ICOMOS, IUCN):
    - Provide technical support and guidance at workshops;
    - Assist States Parties in the completion of the questionnaire.
- UNESCO Regional Offices:
    - Facilitate and co-organise regional meetings and workshops;
    - Communicate with national focal points and World Heritage site managers during the questionnaire completion process.
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre:
    - Facilitate and co-organise regional meetings, and, provide technical support to States Parties responding to the Periodic Reporting questionnaire;
    - Ensure that access to the Periodic Reporting platform and appropriate permissions were given to the national focal points and site managers;
    - Prepare the data after the submission of the questionnaire, and compile, review and finalize the Periodic Report and Action Plan framework.

The World Heritage Centre provided continuous desk support to the national focal points and site managers regarding the content as well as technical aspects of the questionnaires throughout the reporting process. In line with the Committee Decision **41 COM 10A** and its call for a State Party-driven exercise and a holistic approach across the regions, the World Heritage Centre developed a set of training and guidance materials, comprising:

- The "Periodic Reporting: A Handbook for Site Managers " describing the objectives, process and format of the exercise to a broad range of stakeholders in a concise manner, using clear and accessible language. The document, available in English and French was also translated into Arabic with the collaboration of ARC-WH. In addition to the electronic format, more than 200 copies of the Arabic version of the handbook were printed and distributed to site managers during workshops and meetings;
- Two animation videos on the overall Periodic Reporting process and on the specificities of Section II of the questionnaire related to World Heritage properties. They were made available in English, French and Arabic;
- A list of key terms, providing definitions of terms used in relation to World Heritage, conservation, or by the UN system, based on pre-existing published sources.

The training material and tools developed aim to explain some complex concepts, provide clarifications on the kind of information sought in specific questions, and provide context and background to many of the thematic areas covered through linkages with publications, relevant World Heritage policies, documents and recommendations as well as external websites. The complete list of the training materials was reported to the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session (Baku, 2019) in document WHC/19/43.COM/10B and made available on the Periodic Reporting Cycle 3 web platform: http://whc.unesco.org/en/prcycle3.

1.2.5. Methodology

- *Self-assessment*

According to the *Operational Guidelines*, Periodic Reporting is a self-reporting process and should be led as far as possible by the States Parties in each region. In this regard, it is important to highlight that the data presented and analysed in this report was provided directly by the national focal points and site managers of World Heritage properties, and therefore reflects their assessment of the situation.

Filling Section I and II questionnaires required access to large amounts of information on various topics, and it is important to take into consideration that not all of this information was readily available for States Parties. Moreover, although the new online guidance and training tools provided by UNESCO were rated positively overall, and most respondents noted that the questionnaires were clear and easy to use, there was nevertheless some misunderstanding of some questions. This led to contradiction in some of the answers, inaccuracies, discrepancies, blank answers, and answers which do not necessarily reflect the reality. To a certain extent, this could be expected, considering the length and complexity of the questionnaires. In few instances, and where necessary, the World Heritage Centre reviewed some of the data related to information concerning the ratification of the UNESCO culture Conventions and participation in UNESCO Programmes.

- *Workshops, meetings and activities*

In the course of implementing the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States region, activities were carried out in close collaboration with the ARC-WH. The Category 2 Centre, based in Manama, Bahrain, contributed in facilitating and supporting the organisation of several meetings and workshops, in order to achieve the first phase of the process pertaining to filling out the questionnaires by the focal points and site managers in the Arab States. Prior to the first meeting, ARC-WH conducted a translation of the questionnaire's sections into Arabic and reviewed the Arabic translation of the Periodic Reporting Handbook for Site Managers.

During the second phase of the exercise and based on the statistical data provided by the World Heritage Centre, collaboration with ARC-WH included coordination in the preparation of a draft analytical Regional Report and related draft Action Plan. These were presented and discussed with States Parties, and subsequently reviewed by the Centre. The draft Action Plan was shared with the focal points by email for feedback.

The schedule of meetings and activities that facilitated the Periodic Reporting exercise was as follows:

Activity	**Description**	**Date and Location**
Information session on the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting	Introductory session organised by ARC-WH in collaboration with WHC, as a side event during the 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee. It was attended by States Parties of the Arab States region and aimed and introducing the processes of Periodic Reporting as well as a tentative implementation schedule on the conduct of activities in the Region.	1 July 2018, Manama, Bahrain
First Regional meeting for focal points for World Heritage in the Arab States	Regional meeting for focal points for World Heritage, in preparation of the submission of the questionnaires. Focal points of 14 States Parties attended (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates), in addition to Advisory Bodies. It was organised by ARC-WH, in collaboration with World Heritage Centre and the Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities.	12-14 November 2018, ARC-WH Headquarters Manama, Bahrain
Second National Focal Points Meeting for Periodic Reporting Workshop	The meeting was organised for the focal points from States Parties who were unable to attend the meeting of November 2018. Kuwait, Libya, Mauritania, Qatar, and Yemen attended the meeting, organised by World Heritage Centre in cooperation with ARC-WH.	26-27 February 2019, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France
First sub-regional workshop for World Heritage site managers (Anglophone countries)	This workshop was attended by 30 site managers from Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and United Arab Emirates, in addition to regional experts and representatives from the Advisory Bodies. The workshop aimed to familiarise site managers with the process of filling Section II of the questionnaire and to provide the necessary technical assistance during the process. It was organised by WHC, UNESCO Office in Cairo and ARC-WH.	26-27 March 2019, Cairo, Egypt
Second sub-regional workshop for World Heritage site managers (Francophone countries)	The second workshop was attended by 20 site managers from Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen, in addition to regional heritage experts. The workshop aimed to familiarise site managers with the process of filling Section II of the questionnaire, to provide the necessary technical assistance through discussions, and share experiences and good practices. It was organised by ARC-WH in collaboration with World Heritage Centre.	29-30 April 2019, ARC-WH Headquarters, Manama, Bahrain
Third Cycle Periodic Reporting: A Collaborative Implementation in the Arab States	This event was organised during the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee. It aimed at sharing the experience of the collaboration between WHC and ARC-WH as the first UNESCO Category 2 Centre to be involved in the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting. It also presented the first impressions from different perspectives including those from national focal points and site managers, and the primary lessons learned from this experience. It was organised by World Heritage Centre and ARC-WH.	4 July 2019, Baku, Azerbaijan
~~Final Meeting with National Focal Point on the outcomes of the Third Cycle Periodic Reporting~~	~~This workshop aimed to gather focal points, site managers, representatives of the Advisory Bodies, UNESCO Offices in the Region, as well as experts to reflect on the main~~	~~15-16 March 2020~~ ~~ARC-WH Headquarters~~

	~~outcomes of the exercise and provide feedback on preparation of the Regional draft Action Plan.~~	~~Manama, Bahrain~~ *Cancelled*
Online regional meeting to discuss the outcomes of the Periodic Reports and draft Action Plan	The regional online meeting brought together focal points, site managers, representatives of the Advisory Bodies, UNESCO Offices in the Region, as well as experts to reflect on the main outcomes of the exercise and provide feedback on preparation of the Regional Action Plan. The meeting was organised by World Heritage Centre and ARC-WH, with simultaneous interpretation in Arabic, English and French. (The meeting was originally scheduled to be held on 15-16 March 2020 in Bahrain but was initially postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and eventually held online).	20-21 July 2020, online
Online meeting - World Heritage in Danger in the Arab States Region - Processes and Actions	This meeting was organised for States Parties that have properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, to discuss processes relevant to properties on this list, present the main outcomes of the Periodic Report in relation to properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and reflect on relevant activities with regards to these sites. It was organised by World Heritage Centre and ARC-WH, with simultaneous interpretation in Arabic, English and French.	23 November 2020, online meeting
Draft Action Plan sent to Focal Points	The draft regional Action Plan was shared by email with the national focal points for final comments and contribution, with a closing date of 15 March 2021.	3 March 2021
Mid-Cycle Monitoring Survey	The World Heritage Centre will carry out a monitoring survey on the extent of the implementation of the Action Plan at the national and regional levels.	Report to World Heritage Committee at its 47th session

- *Formulation of the questions*

Compared to the Second Cycle questionnaire, the following additional areas have been incorporated into the Third Cycle questionnaire:

- Synergies between the *World Heritage Convention*, other conservation conventions and UNESCO Programmes;
- Extent to which States Parties and World Heritage properties had implemented the 1972 Recommendation and the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape;
- The utilisation of the 2006 Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties, the 2007 Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage properties, and the 2011 World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy;
- Implementation of the 2015 Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the *World Heritage Convention;*
- Adoption of an attributes-based approach to assessment of state of Outstanding Universal Value of individual World Heritage properties;
- Greater opportunity for States Parties and properties to draw attention to positive examples of management.

- *Data collection and analysis*

Section I of the questionnaire submitted by the national focal points of the Arab States region serves as the primary source of data for this Periodic Report. Focal points also validated the input in Section II for the World Heritage properties in the respective countries before its submission. This process aimed at ensuring that accurate and reliable information was provided regarding national implementation programmes and the state of conservation of each World Heritage property.

Nevertheless, some discrepancies between the two sections of the questionnaire were observed. When deemed necessary, the received information from the questionnaires was cross-referenced with available sources. In addition, information related to the adhesion to other conventions and participation in UNESCO's programmes was checked and validated to ensure accuracy and consistency in the report.

At the outset, a reference document was prepared with regard to the "methodology and framework for analysis" in order to guide the analysis of the Third Cycle Periodic Report for the Arab States region, and eventually ensure a common approach across all regions. This methodology served as an overall guidance and was modified as necessary on the basis of experience gained throughout the task. Statistical results and information provided were analysed on the scale of the Region as a whole, which helped in providing a holistic view of the situation, especially in light of the relatively small number of States Parties and properties. The report is essentially a narrative one, based on a statistical analysis and illustrated from the qualitative replies. The quantitative summaries of the outcomes of Sections I and II can be found in Annexes 1 and 2, providing an opportunity to verify the conclusions of the report against the primary statistical data. Nevertheless, the report does contain statistical graphs which were considered crucial for supporting and further explaining the narrative.

1.3. Feedback on the Third Cycle

Overall, the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting was assessed positively. The usefulness of the exercise and its conclusions for the management staff was confirmed in the responses. In addition, the data may be used for the revision of priorities, strategies and policies for the protection, management and conservation of properties in the overwhelming majority of cases. Often, the information is foreseen to be used to promote awareness raising, update management plans and promote advocacy.

Focal points and site managers generally found the questionnaire easy to use but indicated that a few questions were either difficult or very difficult to understand. Some site managers reported during the training workshops that the formulation of questions in the questionnaires were often complex and led to some difficulties and misunderstandings.

Some questions seemed to be unclear and did not always provide as much useful guidance as could be expected. For instance, the question on public annual expenditure in Section I (questions 8.4 and 8.5.) was not sufficiently clear to several respondents, leading to large discrepancies in replies, which do not necessarily reflect the reality.

The online guidance and training tools provided by the World Heritage Centre were generally considered to be useful, and most of the participants confirmed the ease of use of the questionnaire. In terms of clarity of questions, the ratings were slightly lower, suggesting room for improvement. Furthermore, some participants indicated that the questionnaire is too long and that some questions are redundant. Several respondents suggested making the online questionnaire available in Arabic, which may improve issues concerning the clarity of the questions. A number of participants commented on the need to receive more training and support during the exercise.

1.4. Overview of World Heritage properties in the Arab States region

At the time of launching the Third Cycle, the Arab States region comprised 19 States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*. The number of States Parties with inscribed properties increased from 15 to 18. The total number of properties increased by 19, reaching a total of 84 inscribed properties (including the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (Site proposed by Jordan)): 76 cultural properties, 5 natural properties and 3 mixed properties. To date, the State Party of Kuwait does not have a site inscribed on the World Heritage List. One property, the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary (Oman), was delisted in 2007 (Decision **31 COM 7B.11**). Following the launch of the Third Cycle in 2018, two properties were inscribed in 2019, but were not included in the exercise, namely Babylon (Iraq) and Dilmun Burial Mounds (Bahrain).

Between 2010 and 2018, a steady increase of inscriptions can be noted, as follows:

	World Heritage Property	State Party	Type	Year of Inscription
1.	At-Turaif District in ad-Dir'iyah	Saudi Arabia	Cultural	2010
2.	Ancient Villages of Northern Syria	Syrian Arab Republic	Cultural	2011
3.	Archaeological Sites of the Island of Meroe	Sudan	Cultural	2011
4.	Cultural Sites of Al Ain (Hafit, Hili, Bidaa Bint Saud and Oases Areas)	United Arab Emirates	Cultural	2011
5.	Wadi Rum Protected Area	Jordan	Mixed	2011
6.	Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem	Palestine	Cultural	2012
7.	Pearling, Testimony of an Island Economy	Bahrain	Cultural	2012
8.	Rabat, Modern Capital and Historic City: a Shared Heritage	Morocco	Cultural	2012
9.	Al Zubarah Archaeological Site	Qatar	Cultural	2013
10.	Erbil Citadel	Iraq	Cultural	2014
11.	Historic Jeddah, the Gate to Makkah	Saudi Arabia	Cultural	2014
12.	Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir	Palestine	Cultural	2014
13.	Baptism Site "Bethany Beyond the Jordan" (Al-Maghtas)	Jordan	Cultural	2015
14.	Rock Art in the Hail Region of Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Cultural	2015
15.	Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park	Sudan	Natural	2016
16.	The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities	Iraq	Mixed	2016
17.	Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town	Palestine	Cultural	2017
18.	Al-Ahsa Oasis, an Evolving Cultural Landscape	Saudi Arabia	Cultural	2018
19.	Ancient City of Qalhat	Oman	Cultural	2018

1.4.1. Outstanding Universal Value: criteria used for inscription

The World Heritage Committee considers a property as having Outstanding Universal Value if it meets one or more of the criteria listed in paragraph 77 of the *Operational Guidelines*. By the time of launching the Third Cycle, criteria have been applied as follows in the Arab States region:

Criterion and description	Cultural	Natural	Mixed	Total Inscribed	% Inscribed*	Total Inscribed Single	% Inscribed Single**
Criterion (i) "masterpiece of human creative genius"	17	0	1	18	21.42%	0	0%
Criterion (ii) "interchange of human values"	30	0	0	30	35.71%	0	0%
Criterion (iii) "exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization"	49	0	3	52	61.90%	5	5.95%
Criterion (iv) "outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble"	49	0	0	49	58.33%	4	4.76%
Criterion (v) "traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use"	22	0	2	24	28.57%	2	2.38%

Criterion and description	Cultural	Natural	Mixed	Total Inscribed	% Inscribed*	Total Inscribed Single	% Inscribed Single**
Criterion (vi) “associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or beliefs”	25	0	0	25	29.76%	0	0%
Criterion (vii) “superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty”	0	1	2	3	3.57%	0	0%
Criterion (viii) “major stages of earth’s history”	0	1	1	2	2.38%	1	1.19%
Criterion (ix) “ongoing ecological and biological processes”	0	2	1	3	3.57%	0	0%
Criterion (x) “significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity”	0	4	1	5	5.95%	2	2.38%

** Percentage of properties in the Arab States region inscribed under the respective criterion.*

****** *Percentage of properties in the Arab States region inscribed under a single criterion.*

Since the Second Cycle, the majority of the 19 inscribed properties are cultural (16 sites), with Criterion (iii) and Criterion (iv) the most applied criteria for inscription, as illustrated in the below table:

Number of properties inscribed under each criterion in the Arab States region since the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting (2010-2018)										
Criterion	**(i)**	**(ii)**	**(iii)**	**(iv)**	**(v)**	**(vi)**	**(vii)**	**(viii)**	**(ix)**	**(x)**
Number of times used	1	5	11	12	9	5	2	0	2	2

1.4.2. State of conservation of World Heritage properties in the Arab States region

By September 2018, 490 state of conservation reports for 63 properties located in 16 States Parties from the Arab States region had been examined by the World Heritage Committee. Thus, 75% of properties in the Region had a state of conservation report at least once since inscription. Between the Second and the Third Cycle, 227 reports concerning 50 properties from 16 States Parties were presented to the Committee. The number of reports examined by the Committee from the Region has gradually increased from 16 reports in 2010 to reach 36 reports in 2018. This may be explained by the increasing pressures and impact of various factors affecting properties, among which are conflict situations that became prominent during the past decade.

The main threats affecting properties, as mentioned in state of conservation reports since the very first report in 1982 and until 2018, are the following:

Rank	Main threats mentioned in 490 SOC reports (1982-2018)	Main threats mentioned in 227 SOC reports, since Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting (2010-2018)
1	Management systems/management plan (345 mentions)	Management systems/management plan (172 mentions)
2	Housing (220 mentions)	Housing (124 mentions)
3	Management activities (147 mentions)	Management activities (78 mentions)
4	Illegal activities (82 mentions)	War (66 mentions)
5	Ground transport infrastructure (75 mentions)	Land conversion (46 mentions)
6	Deliberate destruction of heritage (75 mentions)	Deliberate destruction of heritage (44 mentions)
7	Water (rain/water table) (74 mentions)	Illegal activities (35 mentions)
8	Land conversion (71 mentions)	Legal framework (35 mentions)
9	War (68 mentions)	Ground transport infrastructure (32 mentions)
10	Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation (66 mentions)	Impacts of tourism/visitor/recreation (30 mentions)

- *List of World Heritage in Danger*

Regarding the List of World Heritage in Danger, 3 of the properties that were on that list during the Second Cycle have been removed, namely: Bahla Fort (Oman), Ichkeul National Park (Tunisia), and Tipasa (Algeria). Nevertheless, the total number of properties in the Region increased from 8 during the Second Cycle (including the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (Site proposed by Jordan)) to 22 by the Third Cycle. Most of these properties were inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to the conflict situation they were facing. To be noted is that the property Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine), was removed from that list by Decision **43 COM 7A.28** (Baku, 2019), after the launch of the Third Cycle. Hence, it was nevertheless included in the exercise.

Properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger considered in the exercise are the following:

	World Heritage Property	State Party	Year inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger
1.	Historic Town of Zabid	Yemen	2000
2.	Abu Mena	Egypt	2001
3.	Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat)	Iraq	2003
4.	Samarra Archaeological City	Iraq	2007
5.	Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem	Palestine	2012 (removed in 2019)
6.	Ancient City of Damascus	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
7.	Ancient City of Bosra	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
8.	Site of Palmyra	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
9.	Ancient City of Aleppo	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
10.	Crac des Chevaliers and Qal’at Salah El-Din	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
11.	Ancient Villages of Northern Syria	Syrian Arab Republic	2013
12.	Palestine: Land of Olives and Vines – Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir	Palestine	2014
13.	Hatra	Iraq	2015
14.	Old Walled City of Shibam	Yemen	2015
15.	Old City of Sana'a	Yemen	2015
16.	Archaeological Site of Cyrene	Libya	2016
17.	Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna	Libya	2016
18.	Archaeological Site of Sabratha	Libya	2016
19.	Rock-Art Sites of Tadrart Acacus	Libya	2016
20.	Old Town of Ghadamès	Libya	2016
21.	Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town	Palestine	2017

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE *WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION* BY THE STATES PARTIES IN THE ARAB STATES REGION

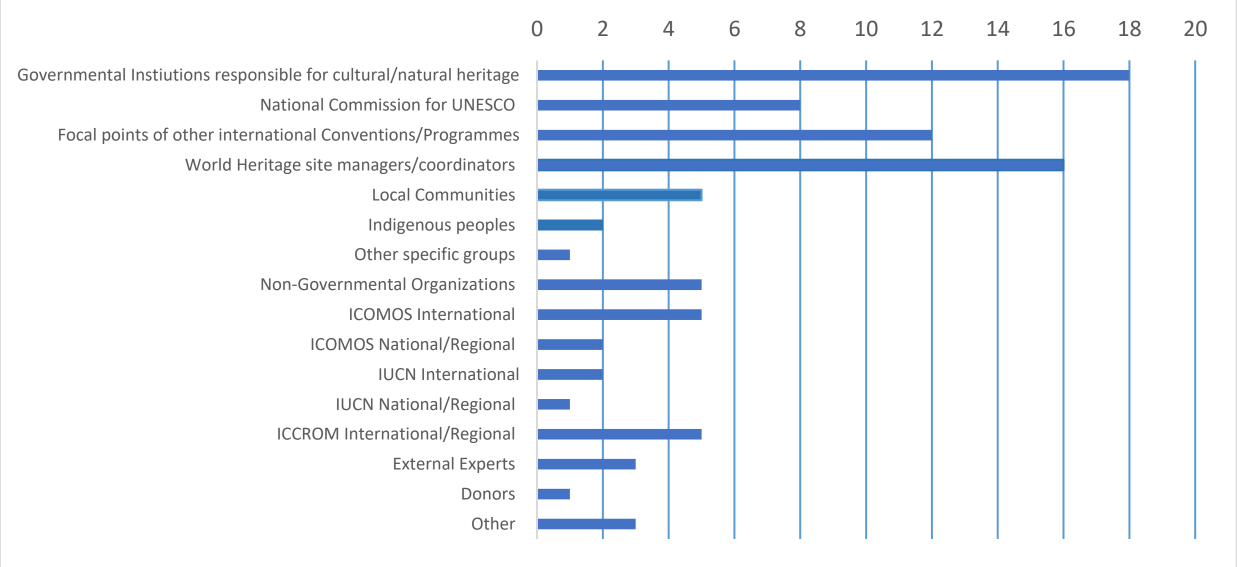
This section presents a summary of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* by States Parties at the national level. It is based on the analysis and outcomes of Section I of the Third Cycle questionnaire, which was completed and submitted by the national focal points on the behalf of their respective States Parties.

Since the Second Cycle of the Periodic Reporting exercise, Palestine ratified the *World Heritage Convention* in 2011, bringing the total number of States Parties in the Arab States region to 19. All national focal points for World Heritage in the Region participated in the exercise, and 100% submission of the questionnaire for Section I was recorded for the majority of them.

2.1. Introduction

This chapter first sought information about the primary bodies responsible for the implementation of the *Convention*, the entities involved in the preparation of Section I of the Periodic Report, and other key institutions.

Based on the information provided, the governmental institutions responsible for cultural and natural heritage were actively involved in the preparation of Section I of the Periodic Reports. A predominant number of States Parties noted the involvement of World Heritage site managers (16 States Parties), focal points of other international conventions and programmes (12 States Parties) and UNESCO National Commissions (8 States Parties).



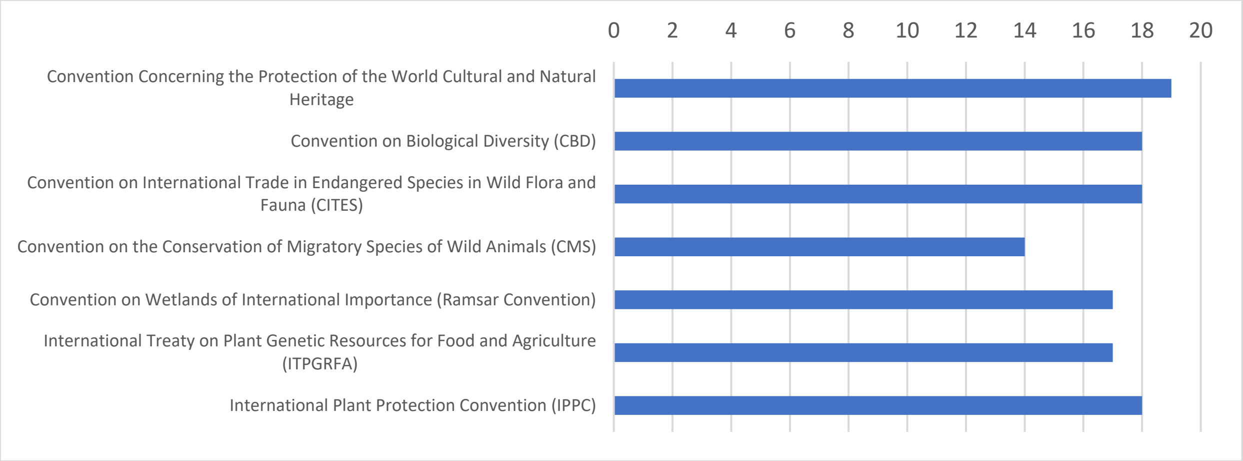
Groups and institutions that have been acknowledged as contributors to the Report.

2.2. Synergies with other Conventions, Programmes and Recommendations for the Conservation of the Cultural and Natural Heritage

Although a majority of States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention* are also party to other UNESCO Conventions, programmes, and multilateral agreements, synergies between the *World Heritage Convention* and other conventions and agreements could be further strengthened.

2.2.1. Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Most countries of the Arab States Region are also party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) as well as the other environmental and biodiversity conventions.



Number of States Parties that have joined Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in addition to the World Heritage Convention

Concerning specific information on World Heritage designations also on the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List), there are currently 9 properties.

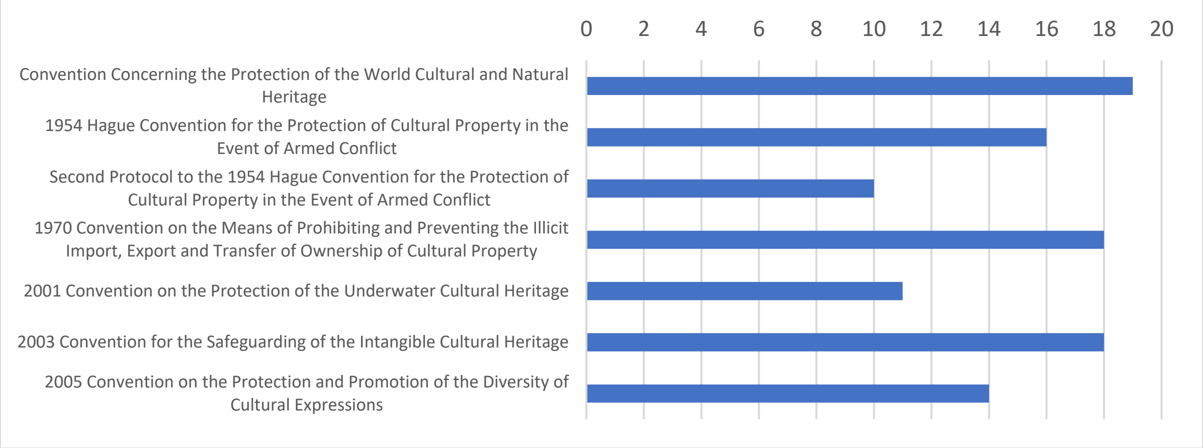
World Heritage Property	**Ramsar Designation**	**State Party**
Tassili n'Ajjer (mixed site)	Vallée d'ihrir	Algeria
Wadi Al Hitan (natural site)	Wadi El Rayan Protected Area	Egypt
Al Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of Mesopotamian Cities (serial mixed site)	Central Marsh, Hawizeh Marsh and Hammar Marsh (components of the property)	Iraq
Tyre (cultural site)	Tyre Beach	Lebanon
Banc d'Arguin National Park (natural site)	Parc National du Banc d'Arguin	Mauritania
Medina of Essaouira (formerly Mogador) (cultural site)	Archipel et dunes d'Essawira	Morocco
Ichkeul National Park (natural site)	Lac Ichkeul	Tunisia
Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park (natural site)	Dongonab Bay-Marsa Waiai	Sudan
Socotra Archipelago (natural site)	Detwah Lagoon	Yemen

It is noteworthy that all 5 natural World Heritage properties of the Arab States region are also on the Ramsar List, in addition to 2 out of the 3 mixed, and 2 cultural properties. Moreover, there is an interest in including sites that are currently on Tentative Lists, such as the upper part of Boubyan Island in Kuwait, The Hawf Area, Balhaf/Burum coastal areas, Jabal Bura and Jabal Haraz in Yemen.

With regards to participation of the Arab States in other multilateral environmental agreements not listed in the questionnaire, several countries, mentioned other agreements to which they are party to. The majority of such agreements are related to the marine environment, oil pollution, as well as climate change and desertification. These designations reflect the geographic context of many of the countries in the Region.

2.2.2. UNESCO Culture Conventions

Regarding existing and potential synergies with the other UNESCO Culture Conventions, the graph illustrates the number of States Parties in the Arab States region that have ratified other Conventions.



Number of States Parties that are party to other UNESCO Culture Conventions.

There are 16 States Parties that are also party to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which reflects the importance of preventing cultural heritage, both movable and immovable, from consequences of possible armed conflicts. On the other hand, only 10 States Parties have ratified the Second Protocol, but none currently benefiting from Enhanced Protection under this protocol. Nevertheless, several States Parties showed interest in requesting Enhanced Protection for properties within the next three years and have suggested specific World Heritage properties to be included.

Moreover, 18 States Parties in the Region are also party to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, for which some States Parties have additionally noted the existence of bilateral agreements with other states.

This high level of participation underscores the commitment of States Parties to implementing preventive measures, restitution provisions and participation in international frameworks for the protection of the Region’s cultural property.

11 States Parties have adhered to the 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, while 18 States Parties have ratified the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Property. In this regard, it is to be noted that 13 World Heritage properties have associated intangible practices/traditions, which are inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

2.2.3. UNESCO Programmes

With regard to the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, 12 States Parties reported participation in the programme, with 3 out of the 33 Biosphere Reserves in the Region being also World Heritage properties. Four States Parties indicated that they plan to nominate in whole or part of the World Heritage properties as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

Concerning the UNESCO Global Geoparks programme, 5 States Parties reported participation, yet currently there is no World Heritage property in the Region that is a UNESCO Global Geopark, and none of the States Parties reported that they had applied for any property to be designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark.

2.2.4. Cooperation and synergies between Conventions and Programmes

With regard to communication between the World Heritage focal point and the focal points of other Conventions and Programmes, overall communication is higher with cultural Conventions, which correlates with the relatively lower number of natural World Heritage properties in the Region. The communication is highest with regards to the Ramsar Convention, which reflects the relatively high number of properties that are designated under this Convention. This is also due to the fact that the Ramsar Convention is site-based

Moreover, cooperation appears to be relatively high in promoting synergies by engagement and dialogue with officials working on the different UNESCO cultural Conventions and programmes. This could be attributed to the fact that in most cases they are administered by the same ministry. In addition, higher communication is reported with focal points of conventions that are most relevant to the protection of intangible and tangible cultural heritage.

As regards synergies promoted by engagement and dialogue between officials working on different UNESCO programmes, 9 States Parties reported that World Heritage focal points cooperate with the focal point of the Man and the Biosphere Programme, while only 3 reported that World Heritage focal points cooperate with the focal point of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. The responses show an increasing interest in the Biosphere Reserve designations.

Furthermore, 14 States Parties reported the involvement of World Heritage focal points in the revision and implementation of national heritage strategies, policies and action plans beyond specific issues related to World Heritage. In the case of cultural heritage, 16 States Parties responded that World Heritage focal points are involved in the revision and implementation of strategies. This indicates that World Heritage focal points are not often working uniquely on World Heritage issues. As such, knowledge transfer is facilitated from World Heritage to national heritage policy and programme implementation, and vice versa.

2.2.5. UNESCO Recommendations

The majority of States Parties in the Arab States region are using the provisions of the 1972 Recommendation Concerning the Protection, at the National level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage (16 States Parties) and the 2011 HUL Recommendation (14 States Parties) to set policies or strategies for the protection of their cultural and natural heritage.

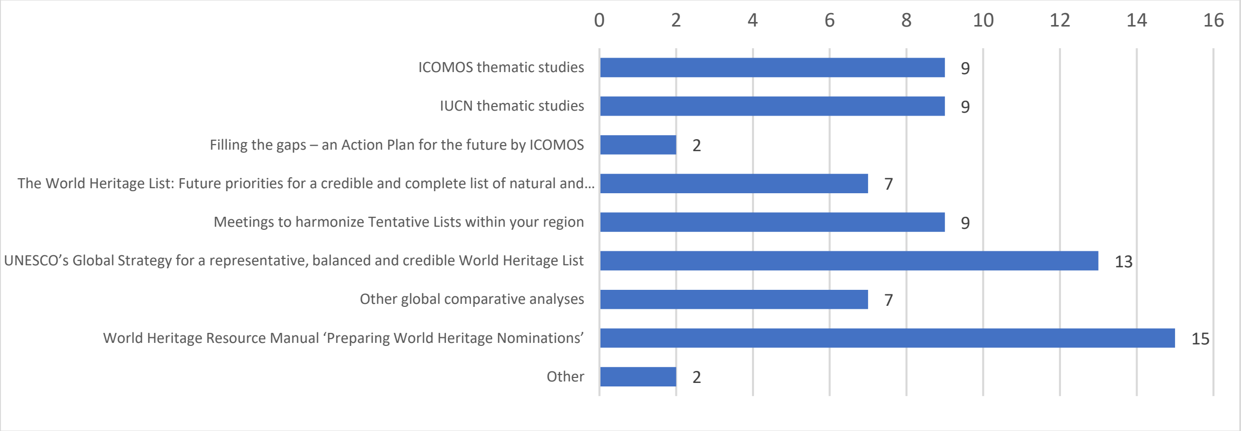
Commentary on the use of the 2011 HUL Recommendation shows that it is being very broadly used in policy development and as a standard setting tool across the Arab States. In addition, 13 States Parties reported that they are using the provisions of both Recommendations for policy development, development of management plans, urban development plans, cooperation with heritage agencies with regards to research and excavation, and the conservation of heritage, including World Heritage.

2.3. Tentative Lists

With reference to the tools used in order to make a preliminary assessment of the potential Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the process of preparing Tentative Lists, 15 States Parties referred to the Resource Manual ‘Preparing World Heritage Nominations’, and 13 States Parties referred to the Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, which aims to enhance the underrepresented categories of sites and improve geographical coverage.

The widespread use of these tools indicate that States Parties are working to integrate the guidance on ensuring a balanced World Heritage List. On the other hand, around half of the

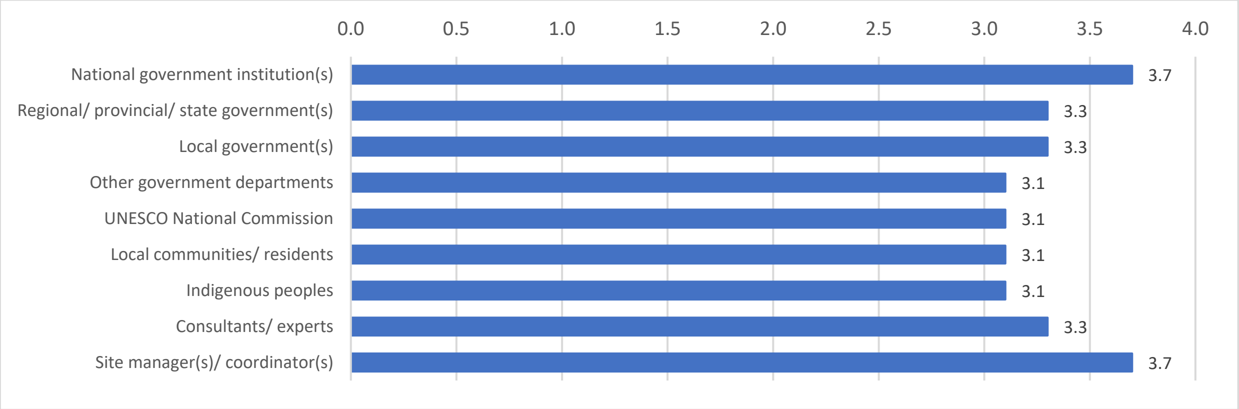
States Parties in the Region are using Advisory Body publications and thematic studies in the assessment of OUV for sites on Tentative Lists. Regional meetings to harmonise Tentative Lists are less frequent.



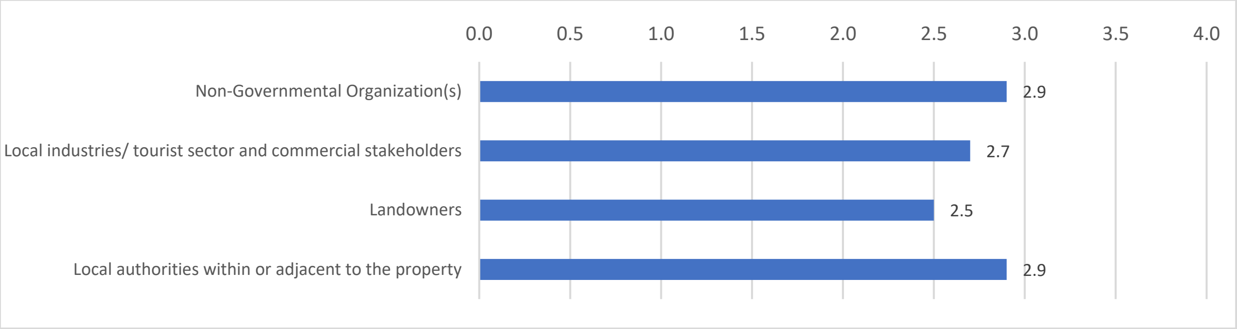
Tools and guidance materials used in by States Parties in the preparation of Tentative Lists.

With regard to the Upstream process, which enables the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre to provide guidance and capacity building to States Parties leading up to the possibility of World Heritage nomination preparation, 2 States Parties reported that they had used this process, while 15 States Parties reported the intention to use it in the next revision of their Tentative List, and 3 States Parties showed no intention of using it.

Moreover, for 8 States Parties, Tentative Lists have the potential to generate dialogue and cooperation among States Parties and different communities, for 5 States Parties the potential to generate dialogue is among different communities, and for 2 States Parties it is among the States Parties themselves. Regarding the involvement of various stakeholders, the ratings range from fair to good, with 13 States Parties recording effective involvement of communities and 7 States Parties recording involvement of indigenous peoples. However, overall, Non-Governmental Organisations, local industries, local authorities and landowners were rated poor to fair.

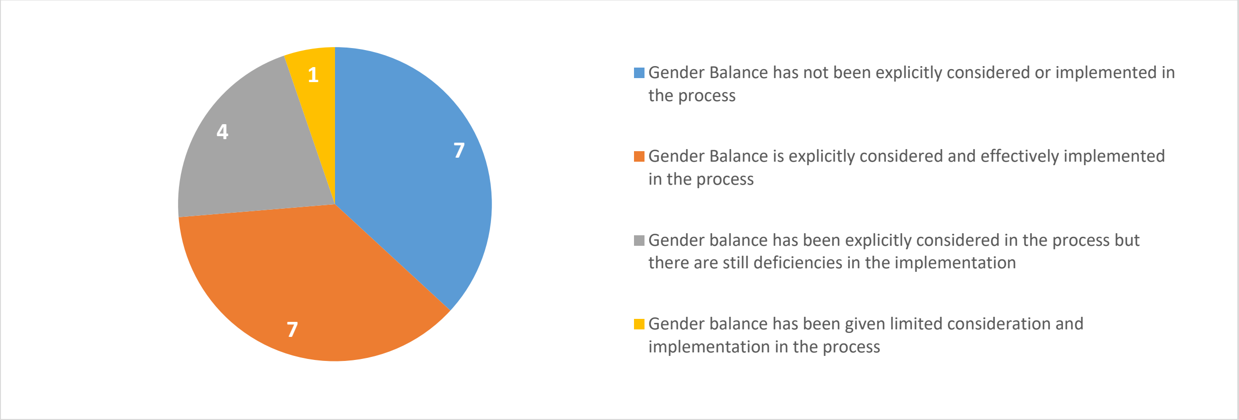


Involvement of stakeholder groups in the preparation of Tentative Lists that were rated fair to good, on a scale of 1-4 (1-none, 2-poor, 3-fair and 4-good).



Involvement of stakeholder groups in the preparation of Tentative Lists that were rated poor to fair, on a scale of 1-4 (1-none, 2-poor, 3-fair and 4-good).

In terms of gender considerations in the preparation of Tentative Lists, for 7 States Parties, it has been explicitly considered and implemented, while for 7 others, it has not been explicitly considered or implemented.



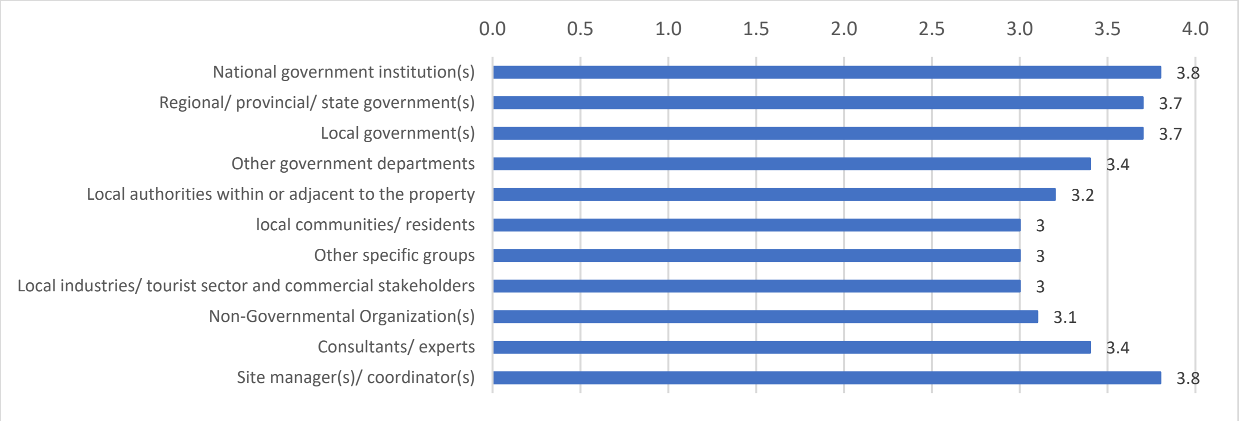
States Parties where an explicit gender balanced contribution and participation has been considered.

With regard to sites on Tentative Lists that are already benefiting from other international designations, either under other UNESCO Conventions/Programmes or under the Ramsar Convention, 9 States Parties responded positively, 5 States Parties mentioned that this was not applicable, and 4 States Parties noted that Tentative Lists were not benefitting from such designations.

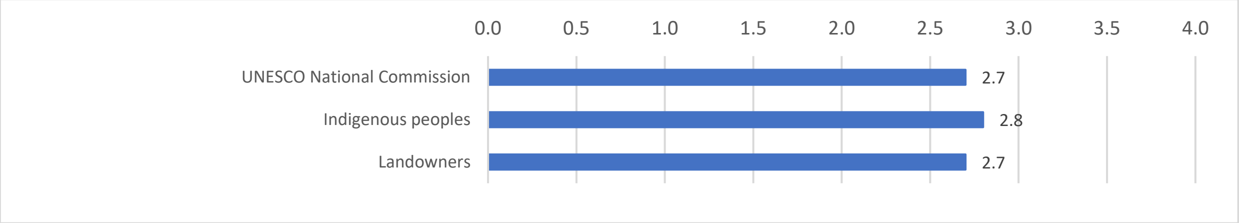
Specific comments highlighted that the main topics that need to be taken into consideration in the revision and updating of Tentative Lists include the need to better consider World Heritage requirements and criteria, to take into account ICOMOS Guidance on Tentative Lists, to reconsider sites listed as cultural to be categorized as cultural landscapes, to consider cases where sites have been impacted by conflict, looting and tourism or have lost potential OUV in any way, and to integrate the sustainable development perspective.

2.4. Nominations

The highest level of involvement of various stakeholder groups in the preparation of the most recent nomination files corresponded to the engagement of site managers/coordinators and government entities, followed by experts and local communities. However, indigenous peoples, National Commissions and landowners received a lower rating.

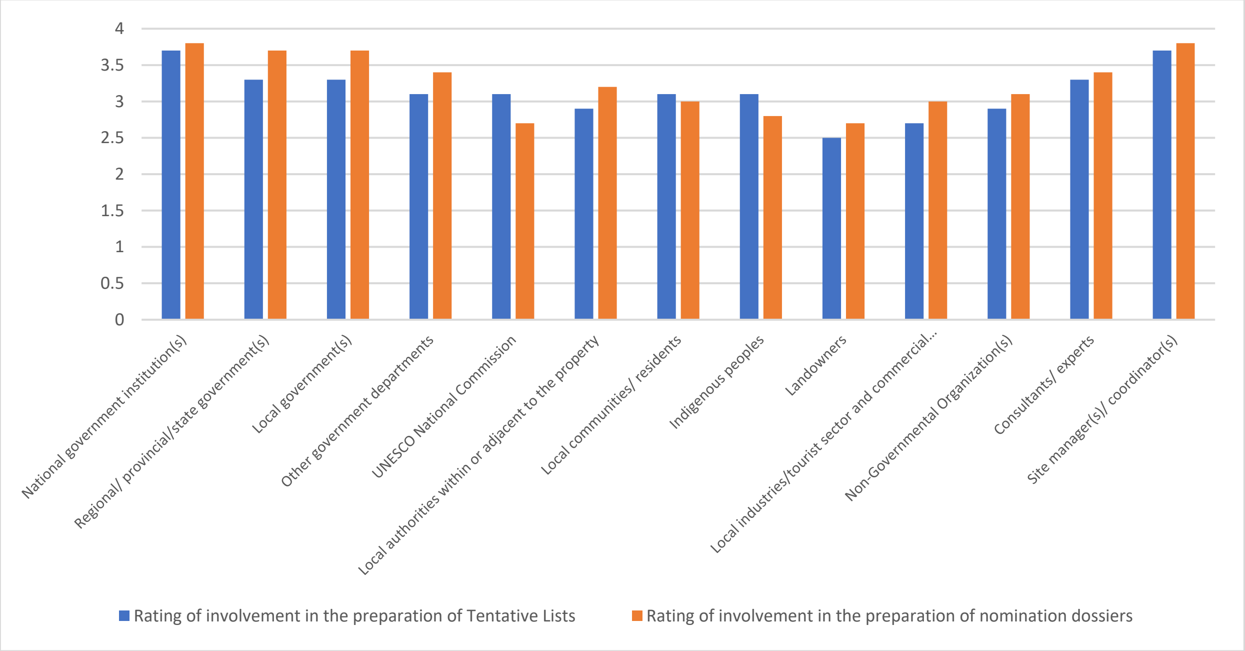


Rating the level of involvement of various stakeholder groups in the preparation of the most recent nomination files that were rated fair to good overall, on a scale of 1-4: (1-none, 2-poor, 3-fair and 4-good)



Rating the level of involvement of various stakeholder groups in the preparation of the most recent nomination files that were rated poor to fair overall, on a scale of 1-4: (1-none, 2-poor, 3-fair and 4-good)

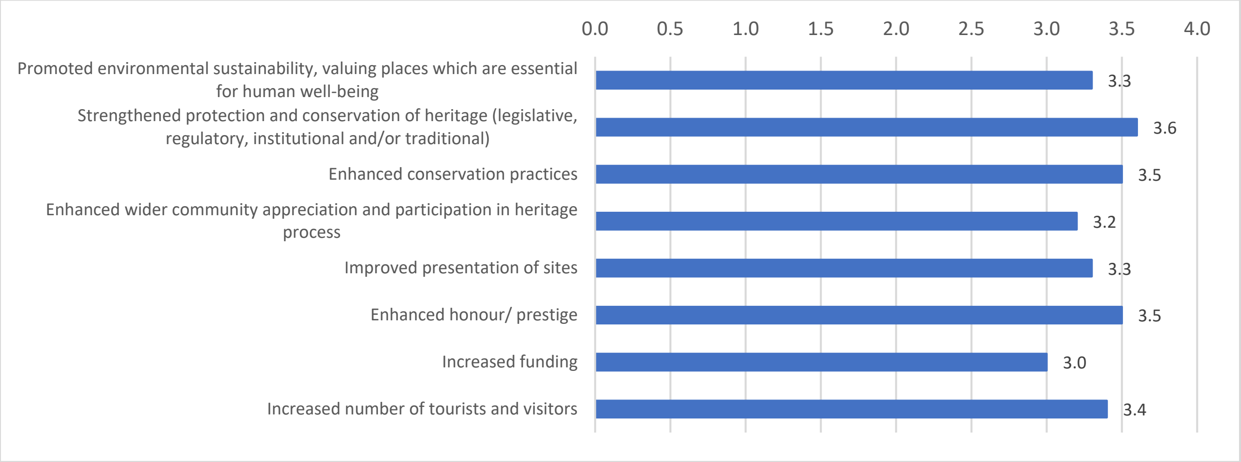
Results show that there is much more involvement of local and regional governments, local authorities, and other government departments at the nomination stage than at the stage of preparing Tentative Lists. However, the involvement of indigenous peoples, UNESCO National Commissions and local communities is considered to be less at the nomination stage than in Tentative List preparation.



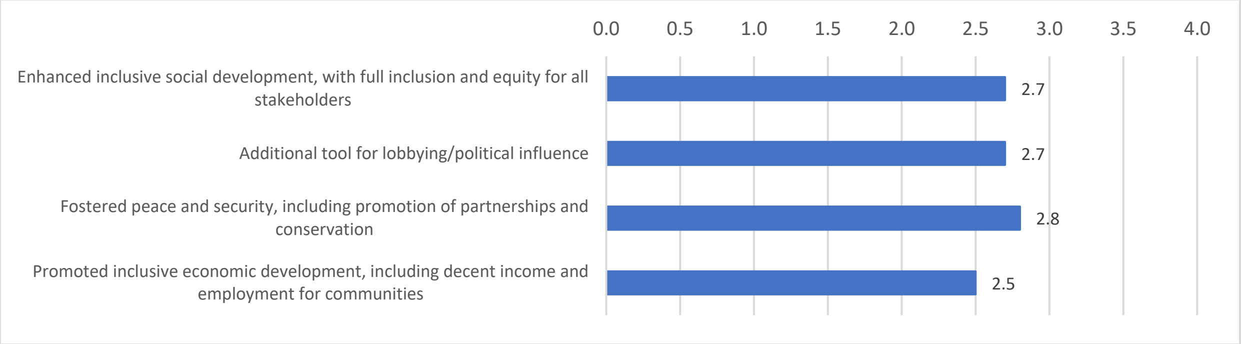
Comparison in rating the involvement of the same groups at the stage of Tentative List preparation and the stage of preparing World Heritage nominations.

With regard to gender balanced contribution and participation in the preparation of the most recent nomination files, 8 States Parties responded positively.

The highest perceived benefits of World Heritage status were reported as being related to strengthened protection and conservation, enhanced conservation practices, enhanced honour/prestige, increased tourism and improved site presentation, among others. Benefits related to the promotion of inclusive economic development, and enhanced inclusive social development received a lower rating.

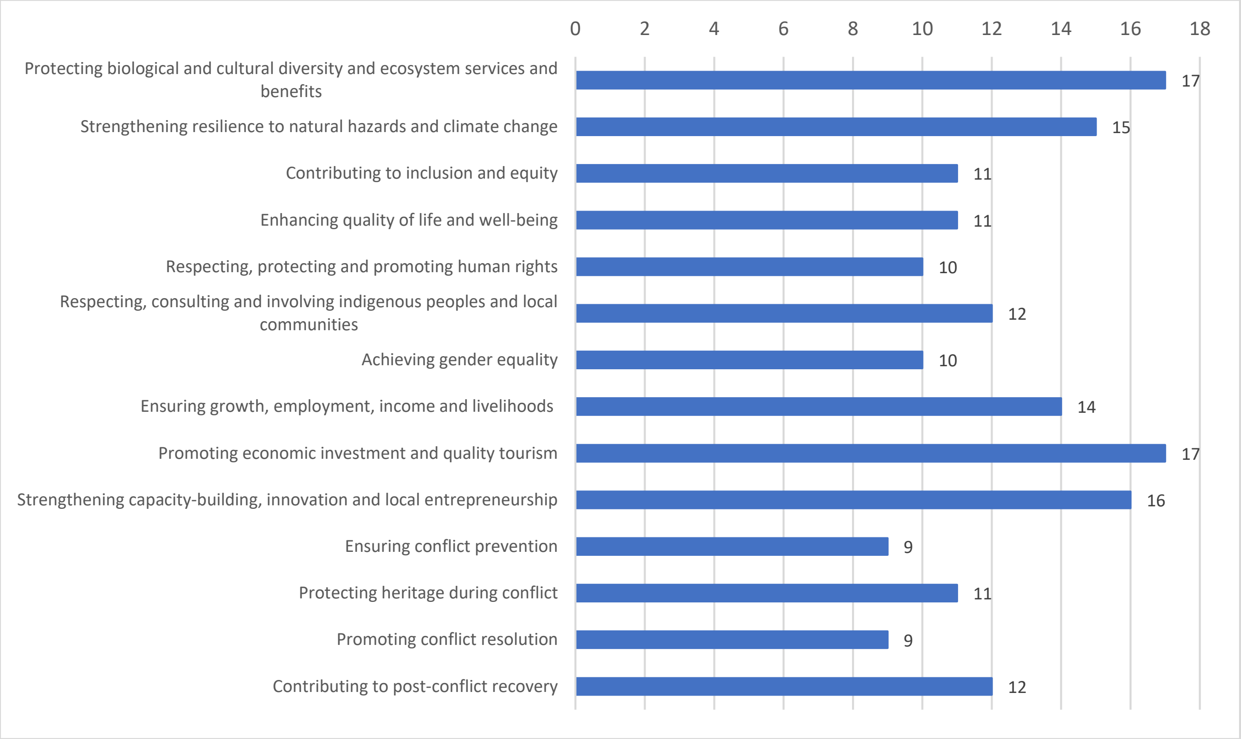


Perceived benefits of World Heritage status that received a rating from fair to good (rated on a 4-point scale, 1=none, 2= Limited, 3=some, 4=high)



Perceived benefits of World Heritage status that received a rating from poor to fair (rated on a 4-point scale, 1=none, 2= Limited, 3=some, 4=high)

Moreover, the number of States Parties that consider the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List contributing to achieve the objectives of the 2015 World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is highest with regard to protecting biological and cultural diversity and ecosystem services and benefits, and, promoting economic investment and quality tourism, followed by strengthening capacity-building, innovation and local entrepreneurship, and, strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change. Less than half of the States Parties, mainly those not facing conflict situations, considered that the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List highly contributes to ensuring conflict prevention and promoting conflict resolution. However, a higher rating was given to the protection of heritage during conflict, and to the contribution to post-conflict recovery.

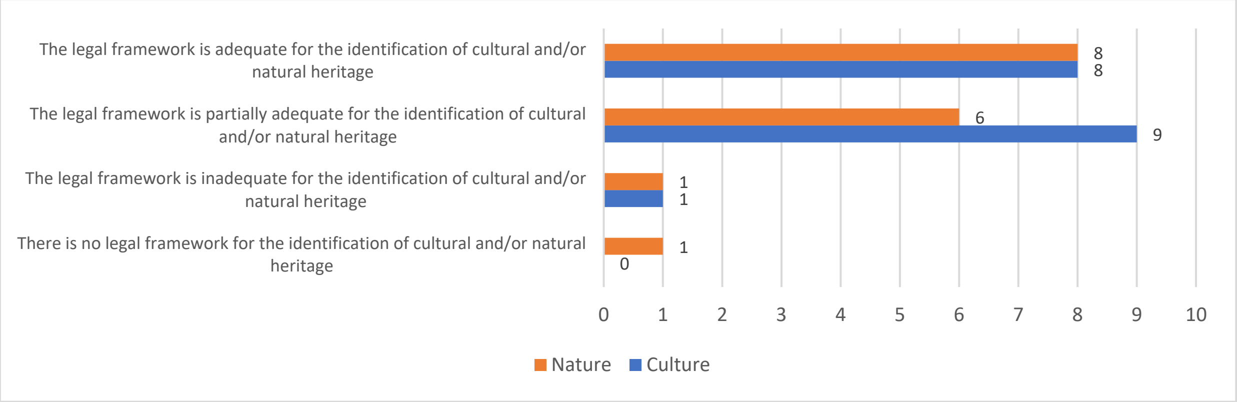


Number of States Parties considering the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List will highly contribute to achieving the objectives of the 2015 World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2.5. General Policy Development

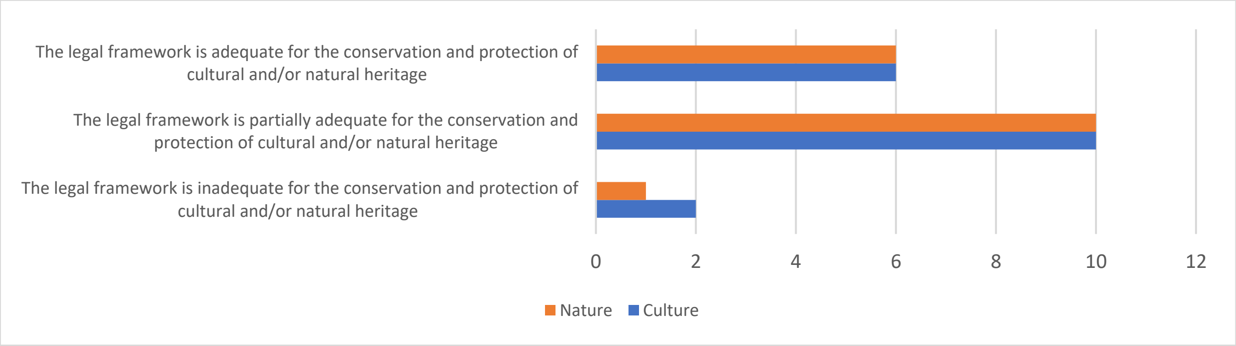
In terms of updates on national legislation for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and/or natural heritage, a number of new heritage laws or amendments to existing heritage laws have been introduced in the Arab States region in recent years.

Concerning the adequacy of the legal framework for the identification of the cultural and natural heritage, for 8 States Parties it was noted as adequate for the identification of natural and cultural heritage, while for 9 States Parties the legal framework is partially adequate for the identification of cultural heritage, and for 6 States Parties it is partially adequate for the identification of natural heritage.



Rating on the adequacy of the legal framework for the identification of cultural and natural heritage

The legal framework for the conservation and protection of the cultural and natural heritage is adequate for 6 States Parties, while for 10 States Parties it is partially adequate for the cultural heritage, and for 10 States Parties it is partially adequate for the natural heritage.

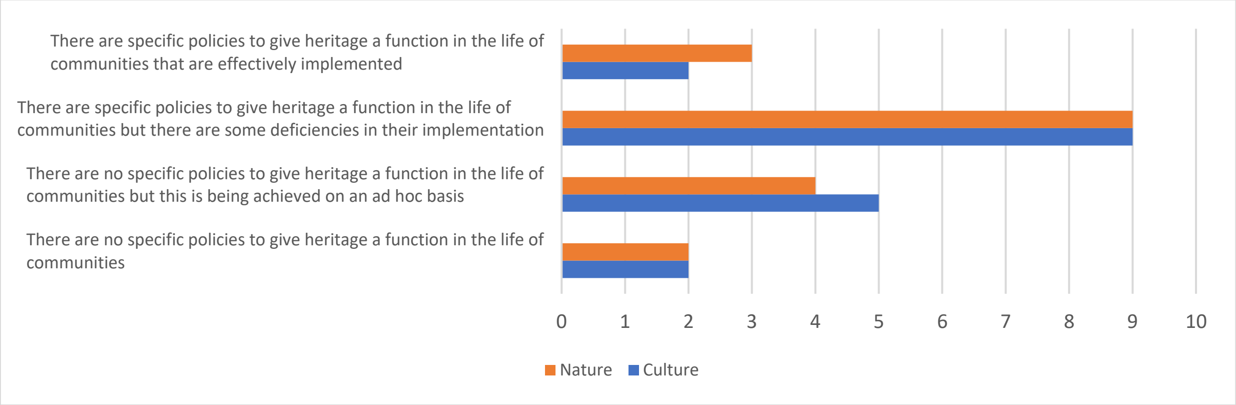


Rating on the adequacy of the legal framework for the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage

Most of the States Parties reported that existing capacity/resources to enforce the legal framework could be strengthened for both cultural and natural heritage. Three States Parties in the Region reported that existing capacity/resources to enforce the legal framework are adequate for cultural heritage and 2 reported that they are adequate for natural heritage. Three States Parties reported that there is no effective capacity/resources to enforce the legal framework for both cultural and natural heritage.

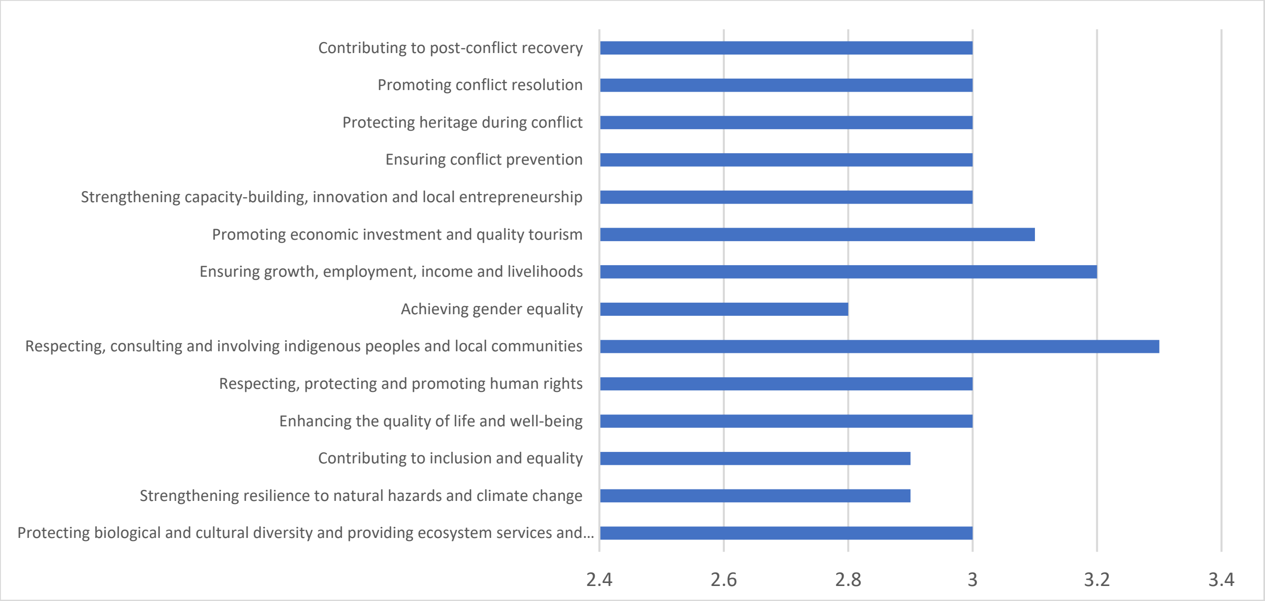
Gaps or complexities experienced in the enforcement of legal frameworks include issues such as the need for an update of terms, concepts and heritage, the enforcement of the protection of underwater heritage, private ownership, capacity of judicial authorities, lack of awareness amongst communities, instability, and impacts of conflict and security. Other issues comprise decentralisation to facilitate enforcement of the legal framework, coordination amongst stakeholders, and the need for resources.

Moreover, States Parties have reported about various policies that they are implementing to give heritage a function in the life of communities, such as in relation to education and awareness raising campaigns and the utilisation of heritage resources to improve local economic and living conditions, in addition to participatory management, eco-tourism, capacity building and promotion of public/private partnerships.



Rating of how effectively policies give cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of communities.

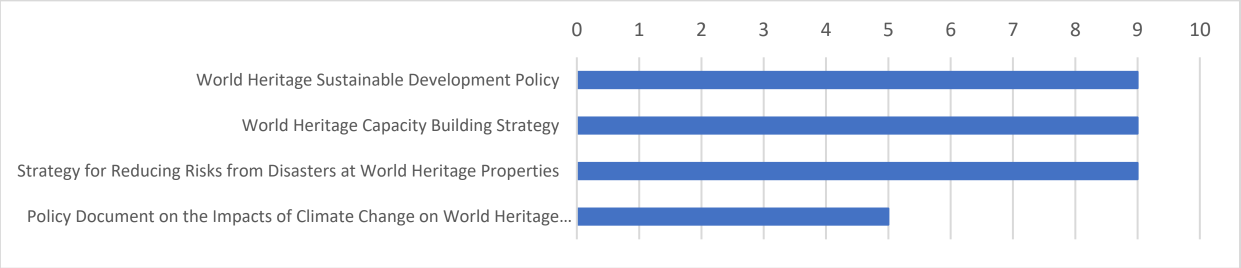
Concerning the effectiveness of integrating the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies, the highest ratings were related to: respecting, consulting and involving indigenous peoples and local communities; ensuring growth, employment, income and livelihoods; and, promoting investments and quality tourism.



Rating of the effectiveness of integrating the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies on a rating scale from 1 to 4

Results indicate that the UNESCO 2011 HUL Recommendation is being broadly implemented, particularly with regard to policy development. Yet, relatively few States Parties are adapting it to their specific contexts, with a moderate level in terms of formulating and adopting policies to monitor the implementation of the recommendation and its impact on the conservation and management of historic cities.

Furthermore, only 1 State Party reported effective integration of the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage into comprehensive/larger scale planning programmes, with a number of States Parties reporting that this integration is being achieved on an ad hoc basis. In addition, less than half of the States Parties are using World Heritage policies to set national policies, with the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties being the least used

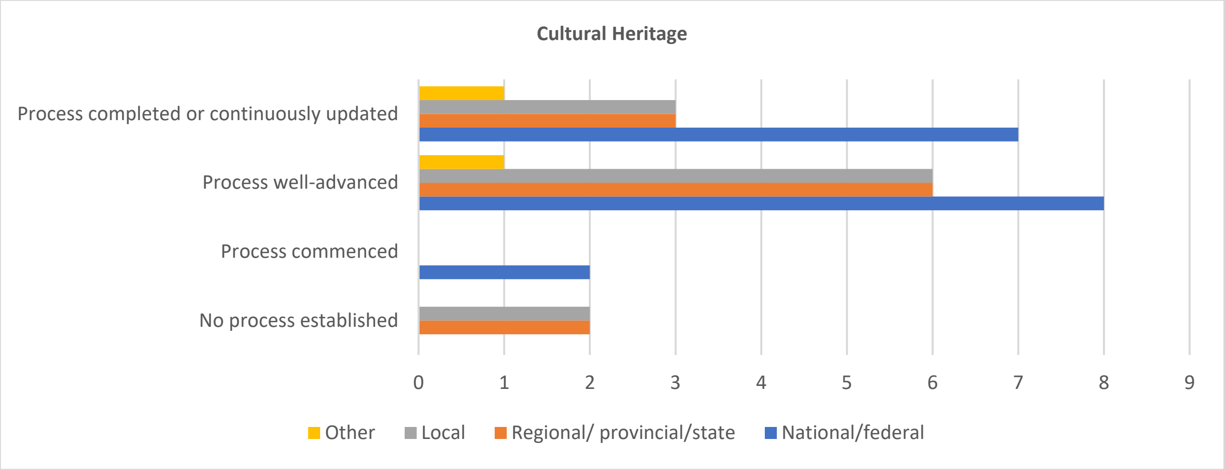


Extent to which World Heritage policy and strategy documents are being used.

Moreover, 14 States Parties reported that there is limited coordination and integration of the implementation of multilateral agreements, programmes and World Heritage policies and strategies into national policies for the conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage.

2.6. Inventories/Lists/Registers of Cultural and Natural Heritage

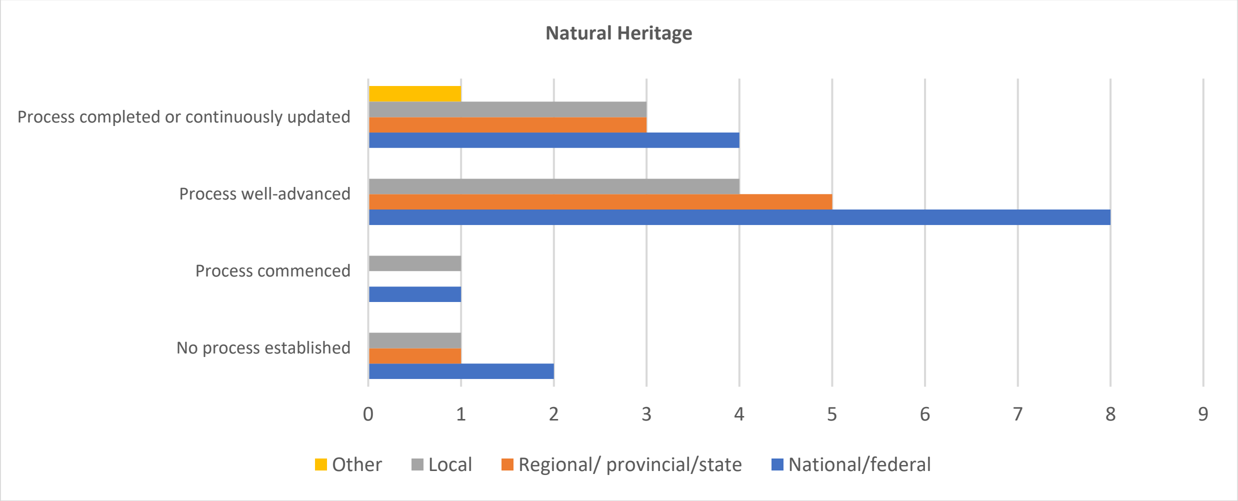
Overall, 15 States Parties reported that the process of compiling inventories/lists/registers of cultural heritage at the national level was either completed or well-advanced, and 2 States Parties reported that the process had commenced.



Extent to which States Parties have established inventories/lists/registers of cultural heritage

For 9 States Parties, the process of compiling inventories/lists/registers of cultural heritage at the regional level was either completed or well-advanced, and 2 States Parties reported that no process has been established. As for inventories at the local level, for 9 States Parties these were either completed or well-advanced, with 2 States Parties reporting that no process has been established.

As regards natural heritage, 12 States Parties reported that the process of compiling inventories/lists/registers at the national level was either completed or well-advanced, 8 reported that the process of compiling inventories/lists/registers of natural heritage at regional level was either completed or well-advanced, and 7 reported that the process of compiling inventories/lists/registers of natural heritage at local level was either completed or well-advanced.



Extent to which States Parties have established inventories/lists/registers of natural heritage

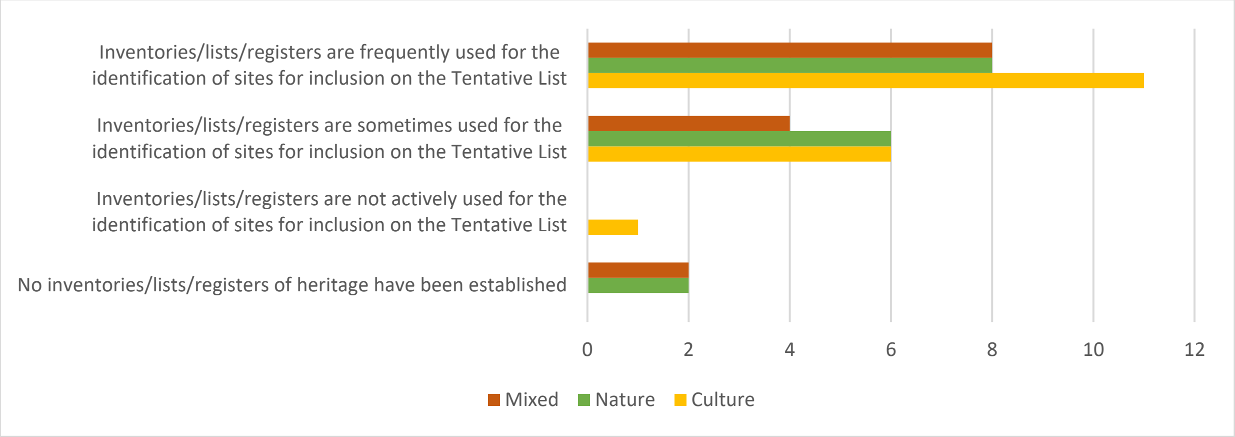
Across the Arab States region, the processes of compiling heritage inventories are most advanced for cultural heritage at the national level, and, existing inventories/lists/registers are either frequently or sometimes used for the protection of heritage.

Concerning whether the inventories/lists/registers are adequate to capture the diversity of cultural and natural heritage in the respective countries, the average response shows that the inventories capture full to some diversity of the cultural heritage and some of the diversity of the natural heritage. More specifically, 6 States Parties consider that inventories capture the full diversity of their cultural heritage, while the remaining 12 States Parties consider they capture some of the diversity of their cultural heritage.

With regard to inventories of natural heritage, 4 States Parties consider that inventories capture the full diversity of their natural heritage, and 11 States Parties noted that they include some of the diversity of their natural heritage.

Moreover, 5 States Parties reported that communities and indigenous peoples are regularly involved in the identification of cultural heritage for inclusion in inventories/lists/registers, while 9 States Parties sometimes involve communities and indigenous peoples in the identification of cultural heritage for inclusion in inventories/lists/registers. For natural heritage, 7 States Parties regularly involve communities and indigenous peoples, and 7 sometimes involve them.

It is noteworthy that inventories are not always used to identify sites for inclusion on the Tentative List. For cultural heritage, 11 States Parties reported that inventories/lists/registers are frequently used for this purpose, while 6 States Parties noted that they are sometimes used for the identification of sites for inclusion on the Tentative List. With regard to natural heritage, 8 States Parties reported that inventories/lists/registers are frequently used, and another 6 States Parties reported that they are sometimes used for the identification of sites for inclusion on the Tentative List. Concerning mixed heritage, 8 States Parties reported that inventories/lists/registers are frequently used, while 4 States Parties reported that they are sometimes used for the identification of sites for inclusion on the Tentative Lists.



Extent to which inventories/lists/registers are used for the identification of sites for the Tentative List

In specific commentary, some States Parties noted the need to update and enhance the diversity of existing cultural heritage inventories, that natural heritage inventories should play a greater role in identifying potential World Heritage nominations, and that generally inventory lists should represent the diversity and links between cultural and natural heritage. While a number of States Parties noted that inventories are being updated, the potential benefits of merging the cultural and natural heritage inventories into a common database was highlighted.

Therefore, the need has been emphasised for further advancement of processes for developing inventories of natural heritage in the Region, as well as for broadening the scope of stakeholder involvement at all levels, in particular communities and indigenous peoples, in addition to enhancing capacities in this regard.

2.7. Status of Services for the Identification, Protection, Conservation and Presentation of Natural and Cultural Heritage

For most of the States Parties, there is some cooperation between principal agencies, in the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of heritage (13 States Parties), while for 4 other States Parties, this cooperation is effective, and for 2 States Parties it is limited.

Moreover, for 11 States Parties, cooperation exists between other government agencies (e.g. those responsible for tourism, defence, public works, fishery, etc.) and the principal agencies/institutions for the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and/or natural heritage, but there are some deficiencies. This cooperation is limited in 4 States Parties, it is effective in 3 States Parties, and it is non-existent in 1 State Party.

As regards the effective cooperation among the different levels of government, 10 States Parties responded that in general, some cooperation exists but there are still deficiencies, 2 States Parties responded that different levels of government cooperate effectively, while 3 States Parties reported that there is limited cooperation. Overall, States Parties responded uniformly for both cultural and natural heritage. However, 1 States Party reported that there is no cooperation between different levels of government for the identification, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage.

Effective cooperation between the different levels of government with all segments of civil society in the identification, conservation, protection and presentation of cultural heritage is less than that among the different levels of government: for 8 States Parties there is some cooperation but with deficiencies; 3 States Parties reported that there is effective cooperation with all segments of civil society regarding cultural heritage; for 5 States Parties it is limited; and for 1 State Party no cooperation exists.

Concerning natural heritage, the results are somewhat similar: 8 States Parties reported some cooperation; 2 States Parties reported effective cooperation; 6 States Parties reported limited cooperation; and one State Party reported no cooperation.

2.8. Financial Status and Human Resources

National governmental funds are a major source of funding for running costs and maintenance for 11 States Parties, and for 3 States Parties they are a major source of project funding. Other levels of government funding were reported as a major source of project funding by 3 States Parties, and a minor source of project funding by 3 States Parties.

International Assistance from the World Heritage Fund is a major source of project funding for 2 States Parties and minor source of project funding for 7 States Parties. Funds from other international conventions/programmes was reported as a minor source of project funding by 7 States Parties and by 1 State Party as a minor source of income for running costs/maintenance.

International multilateral funding (e.g. World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, European Union, etc.) is a major source of project funding for 3 States Parties, and a minor one for 7 States Parties. This type of funding is a minor source of income for running costs/maintenance for 2 States Parties only. International bilateral funding was reported by 3 States Parties as a major source of project funding and by 5 States Parties as a minor source of project funding, while 1 State Party reported it as a minor source of funding for running costs/maintenance.

Funding from International and/or national NGOs is a major source of project funding for 4 States Parties and a minor one for 7 States Parties, while private sector funds, are a major source for 3 States Parties and a minor one for 9 States Parties.

The data shows that national government funds and funds from other levels of government are most frequently the major/minor sources of funding costs for running costs/maintenance of cultural and natural heritage. However, funding for projects appears to be usually derived from external funds and appears to be a predominant source of funding for several States Parties.

Moreover, 9 States Parties in the Region reported that they have policies to allocate site revenues for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage, while 10 States Parties reported that they have policies to allocate site revenues for the conservation and protection of natural heritage.

Only 1 State Party reported full satisfaction with the cultural and natural heritage budget available. On the other hand, 10 States Parties consider that their cultural heritage budget is acceptable but could be further improved to fully meet conservation, protection and presentation needs, whereas 7 States Parties reported that the budget was inadequate to meet current needs and is a serious constraint on the capacity to conserve and protect cultural heritage. In the case of natural heritage, 9 States Parties consider that their budget is acceptable but could be further improved, while 8 States Parties consider the budget as inadequate to meet current needs and is a serious constraint on the capacity to conserve and protect natural heritage.

It is to be noted that conflict-affected countries are highly represented in reporting inadequacy of budget for both cultural and natural heritage conservation.

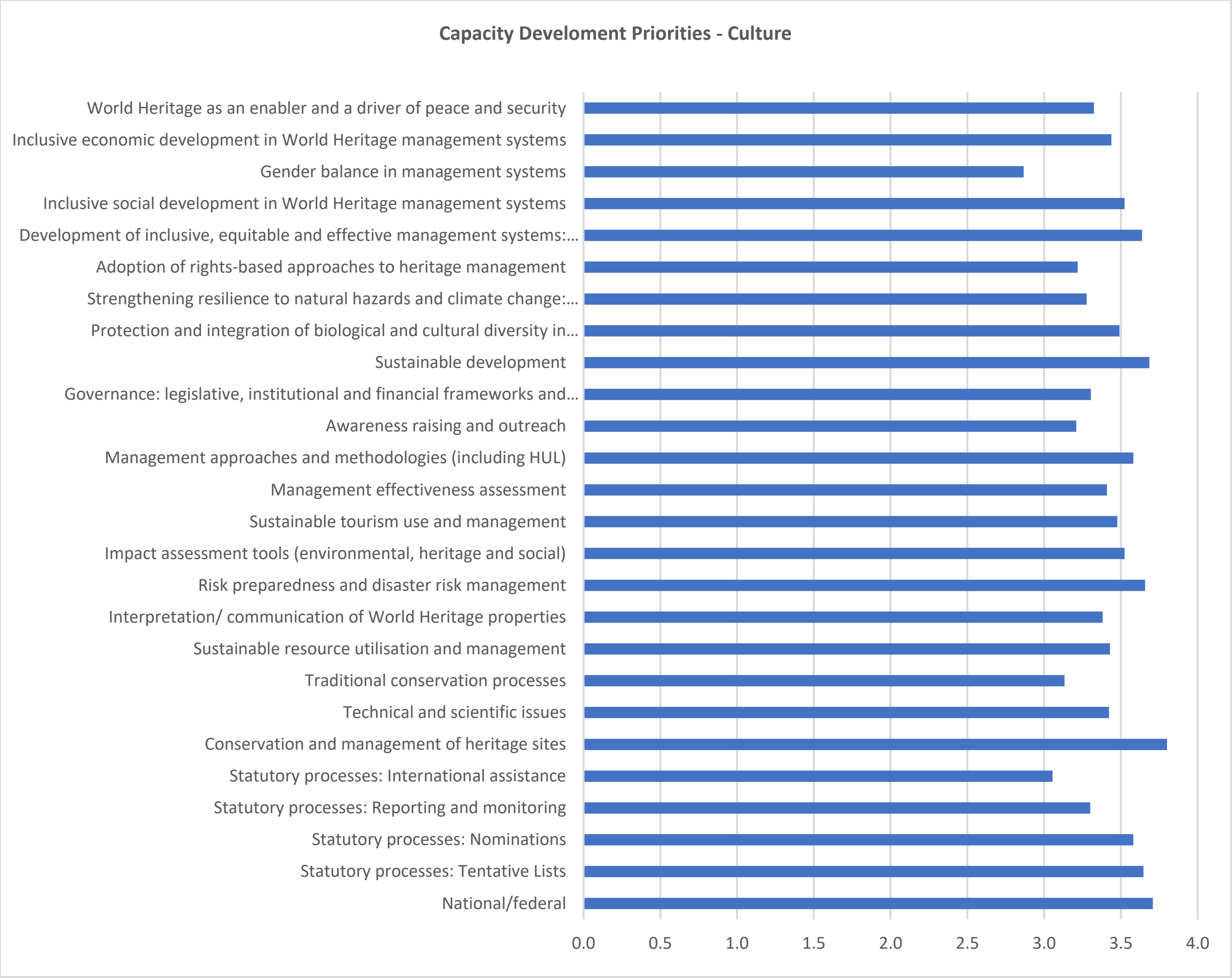
As regards human resources, 10 States Parties reported that a range of human resources exist, to conserve, protect and present cultural heritage, but these are below optimum, while for 6 States Parties human resources are inadequate. Only 2 States Parties confirmed that human resources are adequate to meet current needs.

The results for natural heritage are somewhat similar with11 States Parties reporting that a range of human resources exist, to conserve, protect and present natural heritage, but these are below optimum, for 5 States Parties human resources are inadequate, and only for 2 States Parties they are adequate.

2.9. Capacity Development

Across the Region, the highest rated capacity building needs for cultural heritage are the following:

- Conservation and management of heritage sites
- At national/federal level
- Sustainable development
- Risk preparedness and disaster risk management
- Development of inclusive, equitable and effective management systems: enhancing quality of life and well-being through heritage
- Statutory processes: Tentative Lists
- Statutory processes: Nominations
- Management approaches and methodologies (including HUL)



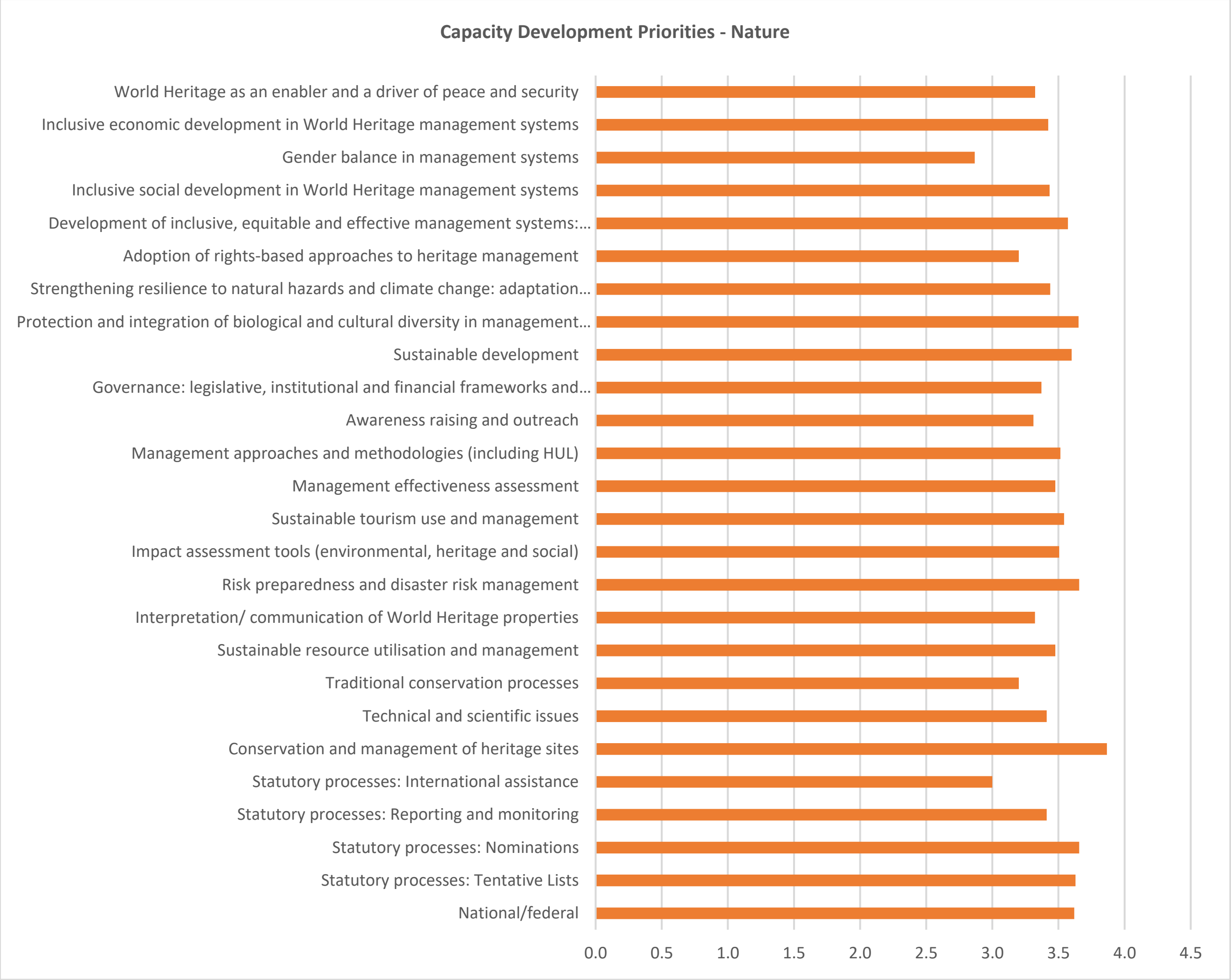
Rating of capacity building priorities for cultural properties

Although all other capacity building areas have high to medium priority, the statutory processes of international assistance, traditional conservation processes, awareness raising and outreach and adoption of rights-based approaches to heritage management were considered as medium priorities, while gender balance in management systems had the lowest ratings overall, signifying that it is generally viewed as medium to low priority.

With regard to natural heritage, across the Region, the highest rated capacity building needs are the following:

- Conservation and management of heritage sites
- At national/federal level
- Sustainable development
- Statutory processes: Nominations
- Statutory processes: Tentative Lists
- Protection and integration of biological and cultural diversity in management systems
- Development of inclusive, equitable and effective management systems: enhancing quality of life and well-being through heritage
- Risk preparedness and disaster risk management

Other fields were still rated as having a high to medium priority. However, as the case with cultural heritage, the statutory process involving international assistance, traditional conservation processes and adoption of rights-based approaches to heritage management were considered as medium priorities. Likewise, gender balance in management systems has the lowest ratings and was rated as medium to low priority.



Rating of capacity building priorities for natural heritage

Overall, among the 26 listed capacity building needs, the majority were rated by States Parties as high priority across the Region, underlining its importance. Furthermore, the data illustrates that in the areas of both cultural and natural heritage, capacity building priorities are closely aligned. States Parties rated the conservation and management of sites as the highest priority capacity building need for both cultural and natural heritage. Capacity building in the area of nominations and tentative lists, risk preparedness and sustainable development were also rated as a high priority.

While Sustainable development was highly rated as a capacity building need, some capacity building areas such as traditional conservation practices, gender balance in management and rights-based approaches were rated on the lower priority scale.

The priority capacity development areas for administrators and government bodies at all levels are as follows:

- Sustainable development
- Governance: legislative, institutional and financial frameworks and mechanisms
- Conservation and management of heritage sites
- Management approaches and methodologies (including HUL)

- Statutory Processes: Nominations

All capacity building areas were rated on average as being of high importance for the majority of this interest group.

Priority capacity development areas for communities, indigenous people, landowners, local businesses, and other social groups were identified as follows:

- Sustainable development
- Conservation and management of heritage sites
- Traditional conservation practices
- Awareness raising and outreach

Other areas were still considered to have high to medium priority but, statutory process of tentative lists and international assistance, as well as technical and scientific issues and development of inclusive, equitable and effective management systems were rated on average as less of a priority for these interest groups.

Priority capacity development areas for universities and NGOs are:

- Sustainable development
- Conservation and management of heritage sites
- Technical and scientific issues

While many other fields were considered to have high to medium priority, the implementation of the *Convention*, statutory processes such as tentative list procedures and international assistance along with sustainable tourism and management effectiveness assessment are as less of a priority for this target group.

Priority capacity development areas for heritage practitioners are:

- Implementation of the *Convention*
- Statutory processes: Nominations
- Statutory processes: Reporting and monitoring
- Technical and scientific issues
- Traditional conservation processes
- Awareness raising and outreach

Although conservation and management of heritage sites was rated as high to medium for many groups, it received the lowest overall rating in the case of heritage practitioners. Sustainable development is rated as a high-priority capacity building area for all interest groups except for heritage practitioners, while capacity building in implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* and related statutory processes as well as conservation-specific topics are of greater relevance to this group.

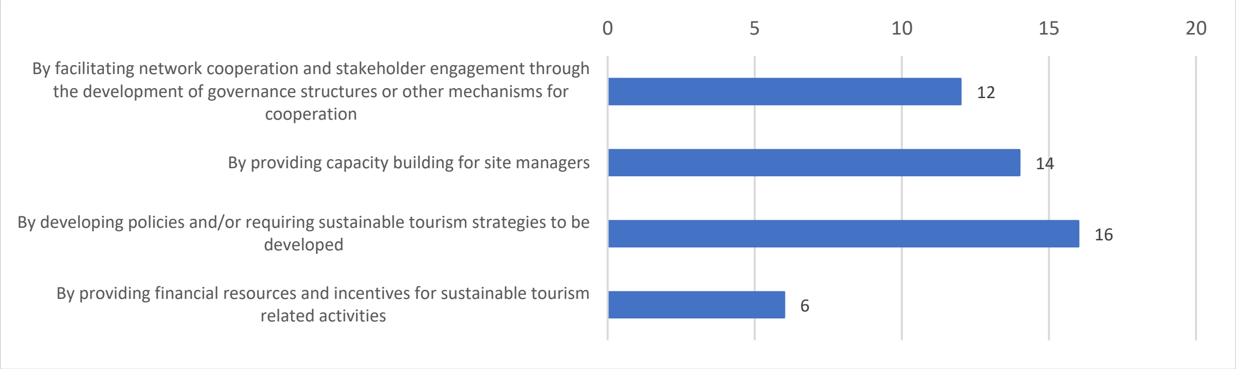
Moreover, more than half of the States Parties in the Region have reported using the 2011 World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy for implementing capacity building at the national level and identifying capacity building priorities. On the other hand, when comparing this result with responses related to the question on whether there is a national training/educational strategy to strengthen capacity development in the field of heritage conservation, a significant gap is evident, since only 9 States Parties confirm that a national strategy exists but there are deficiencies, and only 1 State Party reported that a national strategy for capacity development is effectively implemented. In further comments on capacity development, several States Parties highlighted the need for capacity building.

2.10. Policy and Resourcing of World Heritage Properties

5 States Parties took the opportunity to list legislation specific to the protection, conservation, presentation and management of World Heritage not previously listed.

For 5 States Parties, the services provided by agencies and institutions are adequate for the protection, conservation, presentation and management of World Heritage properties, and for 4 States Parties, they are adequate but some deficiencies remain, while for the majority (10 States Parties) there is some capacity, but significant deficiencies remain.

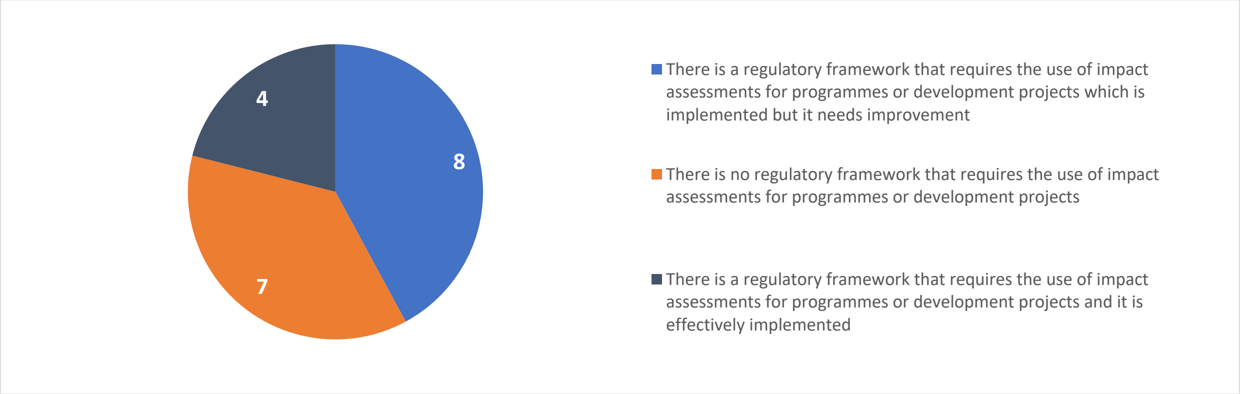
Concerning how States Parties encourage and support World Heritage properties to manage and develop visitation and tourism sustainably, the vast majority indicated that this would be by developing policies and/or requiring sustainable tourism strategies to be developed.



Extent to which States Parties encourage and support World Heritage properties to manage and develop visitation/tourism sustainably.

States Parties commented on approaches to property level sustainable tourism planning and management, including coordination with residents, local businesses, and NGOs, enhancement of visitor engagement, sustainable tourism planning, structured awareness raising on sustainable tourism, and, rehabilitation and reconstruction that will contribute to the revitalization of tourism and planning for sustainable management approaches. Comments also included the need for capacity building in sustainable tourism and a sustainable tourism approach at the World Heritage property level.

Regarding the use of impact assessments for programmes (e.g. strategic environmental assessments) or development projects (e.g. environmental impact assessments, heritage impact assessments) that may have an impact on the World Heritage properties, their buffer zones and the wider setting, for only 4 States Parties there is a regulatory framework that requires the use of such assessments and is effectively implemented. For 8 States Parties, the regulatory framework needs improvement, and for 7 States Parties there is no such regulatory framework.



Use of impact assessments for programme or development projects by number of States Parties.

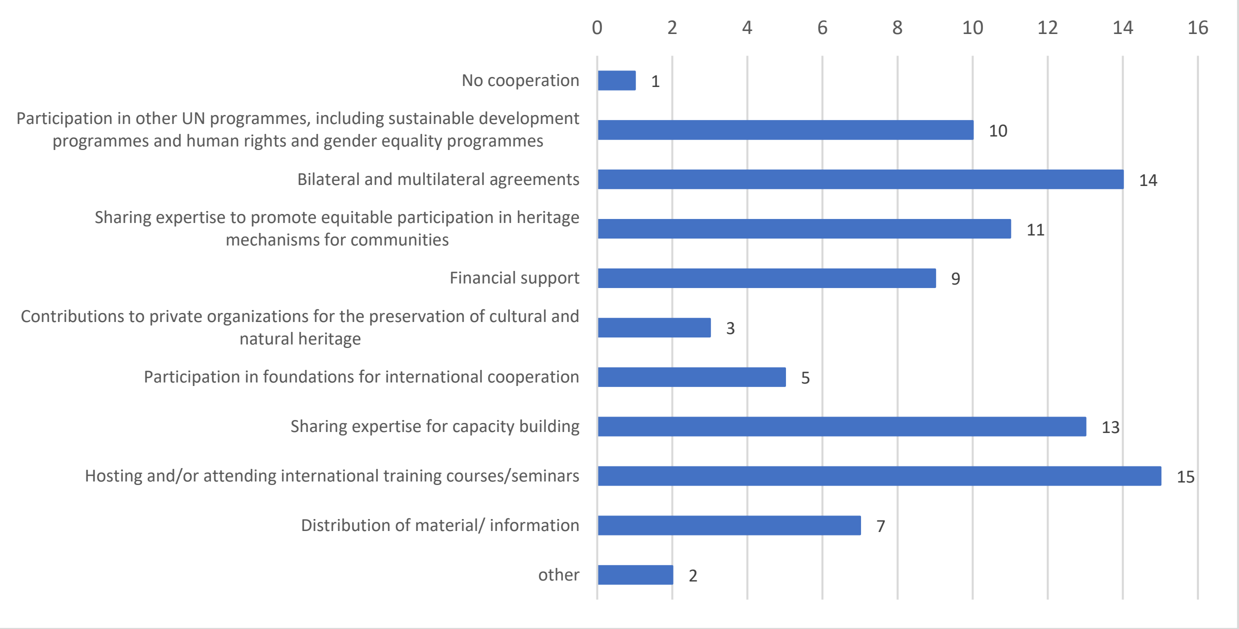
In terms of national capacity building strategies for World Heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management, for only 1 State Party there is such a strategy that is being implemented, for 7 States Parties the strategy has some deficiencies in implementation, for 8 States Parties, there is no strategy but capacity building is done on ad hoc basis, and for 3 States Parties there is no strategy.

Moreover, for 11 States Parties there is institutional capacity to conduct research specifically for World Heritage issues but could be improved, for 4 States Parties there is no institutional capacity to conduct such research, and for 4 other States Parties, there is no institutional capacity, but research is conducted in collaboration with partners. Hence, none of the States Parties in the Region reported on having effective capacity at the institutional level to conduct research specifically for World Heritage issues.

Furthermore, 7 States Parties confirmed that they helped to establish national, public and private foundations or associations for raising funds and receiving donations for the protection of World Heritage.

2.11. International Cooperation

The highest levels of reported engagement in international cooperation are in relation to hosting and/or attending international training courses/seminars (15 States Parties). On the other hand, participation in foundations for international cooperation (5 States Parties) and contributions to private organisations for the preservation of cultural and natural heritage (3 States Parties) were the least promoted cooperation mechanisms. Only 1 State Party reported that no cooperation had been promoted or established.



The extent to which the States Parties have promoted international cooperation.

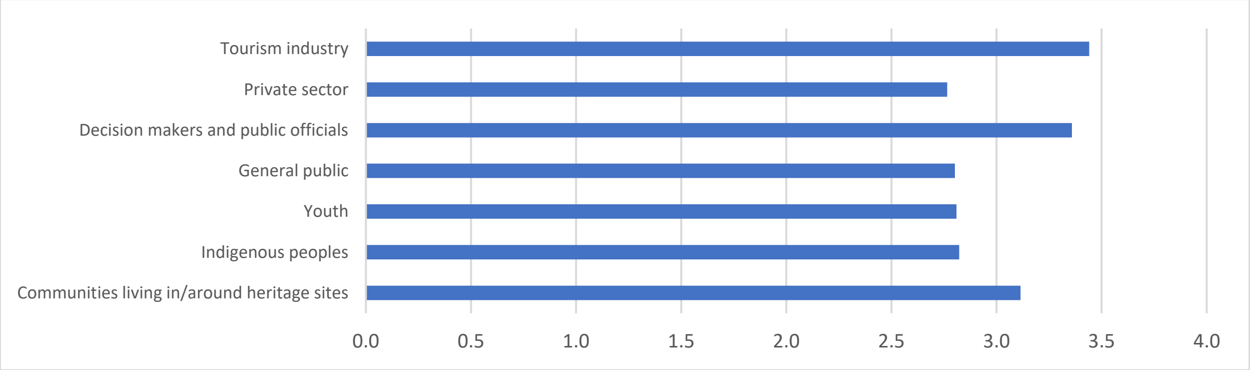
The data also highlights the broad participation in bilateral and multilateral agreements, as reflected in the chapter on synergies. The other main thematic areas for international cooperation, considered popular by States Parties, include: sharing expertise for capacity building (13 States Parties), sharing expertise to promote equitable participation in heritage mechanisms for communities (11 States Parties), and participation in other UN programmes including sustainable development programmes and human rights and gender equality programmes (10 States Parties). Some States Parties indicated the twinning of their World Heritage properties with others at the national or international level.

In further commentary, States Parties provided information on international cooperation activities they are engaged in. The key areas of cooperation fall in similar categories as those highlighted above: capacity building, exchange of expertise and experience, international research cooperation and international financial assistance for heritage. UNESCO, ARC-WH and the Gulf Cooperation Council were cited as coordinating bodies of some of these activities.

2.12. Education, Information and Awareness Building

All States Parties in the Region are engaged in awareness raising activities, yet only 11 States Parties have specific strategies in place, with one reporting that the strategy is effectively implemented and 10 States Parties indicating that there are some deficiencies. For 8 States Parties, there is no strategy for awareness raising, but it is done on ad hoc basis.

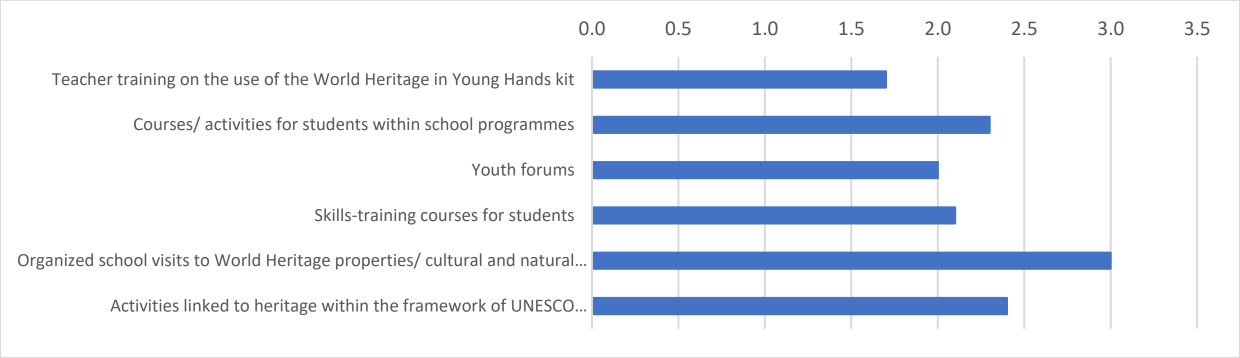
The tourism industry, decision makers and public officials, and communities living around World Heritage sites are considered to have the most general awareness (good to fair) while the general public, private sector, youth and indigenous peoples are rated as having less general awareness (fair to poor). It is important to note that 16 States Parties marked “other specific groups” as non-applicable, while for 2 out of 3 States Parties who gave a high rating to this group, indicated that they comprise local government, and, NGO’s, scientists and academics.



Rating general awareness about World Heritage amongst specific interest groups on a scale from 1 to 4 (4=good, 3=fair, 2=poor, 1=none).

Moreover, for 10 States Parties, there are heritage education programmes for children and/or youth, that contribute to improving understanding of heritage, promoting diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue, but there are deficiencies in implementation. There are no such programmes for 9 States Parties, 6 of which reporting that this is being done on *ad hoc* basis.

The most frequently reported activity aimed at improving the understanding of cultural and natural heritage among children/youth across the Region relate to school visits to World Heritage properties, followed by activities linked to heritage within the framework of UNESCO Clubs/Associations. Teacher training courses on the use of the World Heritage in Young Hands Kit was the least frequently reported activity.



Rating the frequency of activities to improve understanding of cultural and natural heritage, promote diversity and foster intercultural dialogue among children and/or youth on a scale from 1 to 4 (1-none, 2-low, 3-medium, 4-high).

Furthermore, the UNESCO's World Heritage in Young Hands programme has not been integrated into World Heritage Education and School Curricula by any State Party, and only 6 States Parties reported that they participate in the programme, and a further 9 States Parties reported that they intend to participate in the programme. Several States Parties also provided information about activities carried out in relation to the organisation of various education and awareness raising activities.

The data shows that while awareness in the tourism sector and among decision makers and communities living around World Heritage properties is relatively high, awareness raising among the general public and specifically among youth and indigenous peoples can be reinforced. Additionally, the majority of the feedback provided was focused on educational activities that were not necessarily organised on site, where opportunities for site-based education and the promotion of World Heritage can be further explored.

Another significant area that received limited attention is the leveraging of media for education, information and awareness building, as well as establishing links and partnerships with the private sector and engaging with civil society. The opportunities offered by twinning of sites nationally or internationally could also be further explored.

2.13. Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Overall, the Periodic Reporting exercise has shown that the *World Heritage Convention* is being implemented to some extent in the Region. Nevertheless, gaps could be identified, notably in the implementation of multilateral agreements, programmes and World Heritage policies and strategies and their integration into the development of national policies for the conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage. Other gaps are related to capacity building, education and raising awareness, whether in relation to the use of the 2011 World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy or the existence of national strategies, educational strategies and awareness raising among communities.

The effectiveness of cooperation by the different levels of government with all segments of civil society in the identification, conservation, protection and presentation of cultural heritage, has also been reported as inadequate by several States Parties. The inadequacy of financial and human resources has been reported by some States Parties.

The information presented below is an account of the information provided by States Parties in relation to questions that the State Party had rated as poor. Using the list of questions rated as poor as a basis, each State Party was required to select 10 areas (related questions) which it considered as a priority. Information regarding the overall 10 identified priority areas are provided below.

- **Priority 1: Capacity Development**

Priority theme selected by 15 States Parties: National training/educational strategies to strengthen capacity development in the field of heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen).

Priority theme selected by 13 States Parties: Use of the 2011 World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen).

- **Priority 2: International Cooperation**

Priority theme selected by 14 States Parties: promotion of international cooperation and the establishment of cooperation mechanisms for heritage (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen).

- **Priority 3: General Policy Development**

Priority theme selected by 12 States Parties: Implementation of multilateral agreements, programmes and World Heritage policies and strategies coordinated and integrated into the development of national policies for the conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen).

Priority theme selected by 11 States Parties: Effective integration of conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia).

Priority theme selected by 7 States Parties: Effective policies to give cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of communities (Algeria, Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Tunisia).

Priority theme selected by 1 State Party: Enforcement of a legal framework (i.e. legislation and/or regulations) for the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage (Palestine).

- **Priority 4: Policy and Resourcing of World Heritage Properties**

Priority theme selected by 10 States Parties: National capacity building strategy for World Heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management (Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Yemen).

Priority theme selected by 5 States Parties: The requirement for the use of impact assessments for programmes or development projects in order to assess the impact on the World Heritage Property and its buffer zone and setting (Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia).

Priority theme for 4 States Parties: Services provided by agencies/institutions for the protection, conservation, presentation and management of World Heritage properties (Algeria, Kuwait, Morocco, Yemen).

Priority theme for 4 States Parties: Institutional capacities to conduct research specifically for World Heritage issues (Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates).

- **Priority 5: Financial Status and Human Resources**

Priority theme for 8 States Parties: Adequacy of current budgets for the effective conservation, protection, and presentation of cultural and natural heritage (Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen).

Priority theme for 4 States Parties: Adequacy of human resources for effective conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage (Jordan, Libya, Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic).

- **Priority 6: Education, Information and Awareness Building**

Priority theme for 8 States Parties: Strategies to raise awareness among communities and different stakeholders about conservation, protection and presentation of World Heritage (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia).

Priority theme for 6 States Parties: Heritage education programmes for children and/or youth, that contribute to improving understanding of heritage, promoting diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue (Bahrain, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Yemen).

- **Priority 7: Status of Services for the Identification, Protection, Conservation and Presentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage**

Priority theme for 3 States Parties: Cooperation between different levels of government in the identification, protection, conservation and presentation of cultural and/or natural heritage (Kuwait, Libya, Morocco).

Priority theme for 6 States Parties: Cooperation of different levels of government with all segments of civil society in the identification, conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage (Bahrain, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia).

- **Priority 8: Synergies with other Conventions, Programmes and Recommendations for Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage**

Priority theme for 4 States Parties: Involvement of World Heritage focal points in the revision and implementation of national natural heritage strategies, policies and action plans, beyond specific issues related to World Heritage (Algeria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia. Tunisia).

Priority theme for 2 States Parties: Involvement of World Heritage focal points in the revision and implementation of national cultural heritage strategies, policies and action plans, beyond specific issues related to World Heritage (Saudi Arabia, Tunisia).

Priority theme for 5 States Parties: Use of provisions of the 1972 Recommendation and the 2011 HUL Recommendation to set policies or strategies for the protection of cultural and natural heritage (Bahrain, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Syrian Arab Republic).

- **Priority 9: Tentative Lists**

Priority theme for 2 States Parties: Use of the Upstream Process (Bahrain, Yemen).

- **Priority 10: Inventories/Lists/Registers for Cultural and Natural Heritage**

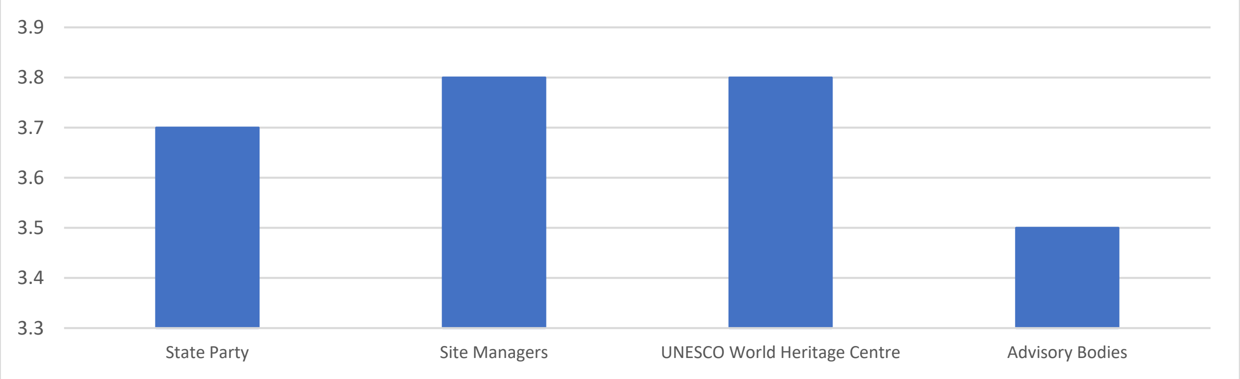
Priority theme for 2 States Parties: Use of inventories/lists/registers for the identification of sites for the Tentative List (Libya, Yemen).

2.14. Good Practice in the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* at the State Party Level

Examples of best practices in World Heritage identification, protection, conservation and management were provided by 16 States Parties. In defining the topics covered by the examples of best practices, conservation and management were each selected by 15 States Parties. Sustainable development was covered by 14 States Parties, while capacity building was covered by 11 States Parties, and synergies and governance were each covered by 10 States Parties. The examples were linked to several areas (between 2 and 6), several of which provided information on tangible outcomes.

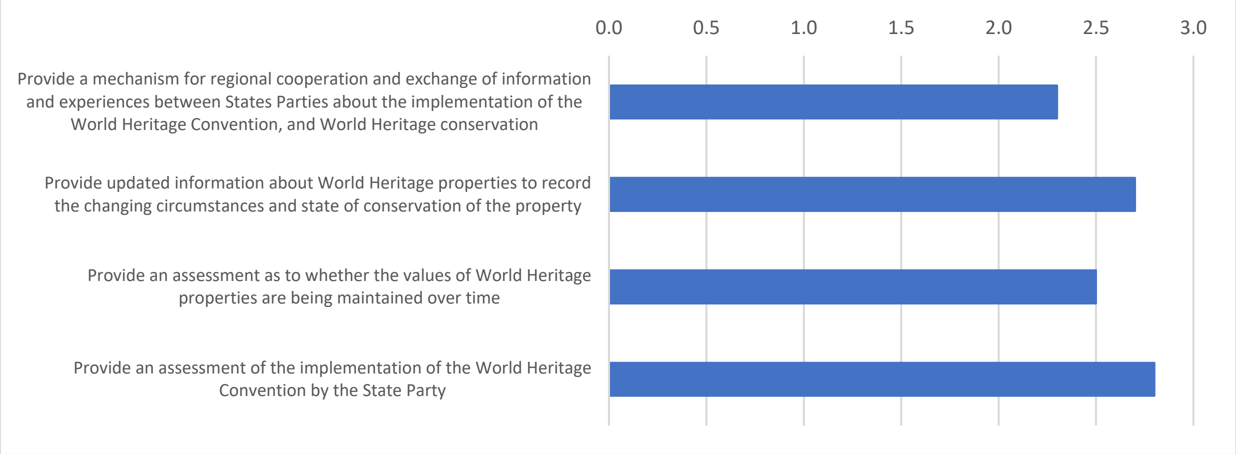
2.15. Assessment of the Periodic Reporting Exercise

Participants were asked to assess the format, content and process of the Periodic Reporting exercise, including the degree to which it meets the objectives of Periodic Reporting. Respondents rated the relevance of Periodic Reporting to 4 main interest groups, giving the highest rating to World Heritage site managers and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.



Rating relevance of Periodic Reporting to main interest groups on a 4-point scale (1=none, 2=poor, 3=fair and 4=good).

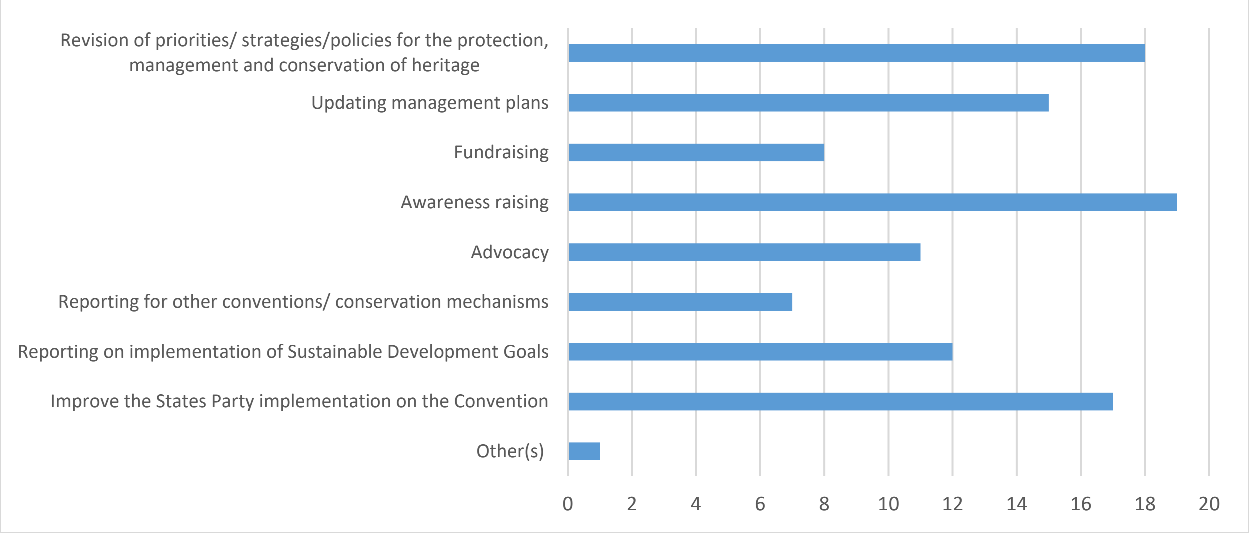
Overall, respondents gave a relatively high rating of how well the questionnaire addressed the four objectives of Periodic Reporting. They indicated that the objective of providing an assessment of implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* by the State Party was the most adequately addressed by the questionnaire.



Rating how well the current questionnaire addresses the four objectives of Periodic Reporting on a 3-point scale (not at all-1, partially-2, adequately-3).

In additional commentary, States Parties provided feedback and suggestions for improvement. Respondents noted the usefulness of the exercise for monitoring site conservation and management systems at the national and global levels, improving the understanding of the multidimensional significance of heritage, developing thinking and policies towards a more comprehensive and sustainable approach, as well as noting how the exercise improved understanding of the *World Heritage Convention*.

Positive feedback was given on the organisation of effective regional meetings and workshops. The relevance of World Heritage training courses, both for national authorities and World Heritage personnel beyond site managers, was also noted. Suggestions included the organisation of more meetings and workshops, with more support and participation by the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies.



Indication of the areas the State Party intends to use the data for.

Regarding the use of data generated from the Periodic Reporting exercise, the most widespread foreseen uses are for raising awareness, followed by the revision of priorities, strategies and policies for the protection, management and conservation of heritage (18 States Parties). The least identified use is for reporting for other conventions/conservation mechanisms (7 States Parties). In addition, 1 State Party noted that it would use the data to train staff in report writing.

In executing this cycle of Periodic Reporting, 6 States Parties mobilised additional human resources, and 4 States Parties mobilised additional financial resources for organising consultation meetings and training. The timeframe was considered adequate for 14 States Parties. In total, it was estimated that 141 people were involved in gathering data across the Region, with 2 States Parties reporting the involvement of more than 10 people in data gathering. Overall, 118 consulting stakeholders were involved in the process, with 2 States Parties involving more than 10. Across the Region, 51 people were involved in filling in the questionnaire, with 8 States Parties reporting the involvement of 1 person only, 7 States Parties reported the involvement of 2-3 people and 4 States Parties reported the involvement of 5-10 people. Overall, data gathering was rated as the most labour-intensive exercise, followed by stakeholder consultations, and filling out the questionnaire.

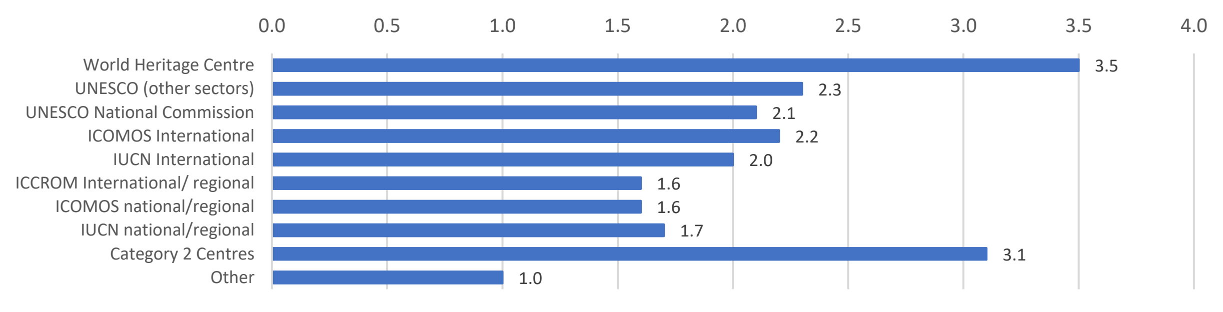
Gender balanced contribution and participation had not been explicitly considered or implemented for 8 States Parties, and for 2 States Parties it was given limited consideration. Only 4 States Parties reported on effective implementation, while for 4 others, there were some deficiencies in implementation.

Furthermore, the majority of States Parties reported that most of the information was easily accessible (13 States Parties), yet for 5 States Parties some information was accessible, and for 1 State Party little information was accessible.

As regards the questionnaire itself, it was considered easy to use and clear to understand for the majority of States Parties (17 States Parties), who gave it a rating between fair and good.

Comments and suggestions for the questionnaire underlined that it was lengthy, some questions did not fit in the context of its governance system, and there were issues in saving answers. One suggestion was for more flexibility for responses to some questions, specifically the financial section. The clarification of questions was considered necessary during the regional meetings and workshops, and, it was proposed to have the guidance extended to include terminologies specific to UNESCO and World Heritage. Other proposals include having an option to add documentation for specific questions, translating the questionnaire into Arabic (online), having two separate questionnaires for cultural and natural properties, and adding an option to reflect gender balance in the relevant sections.

States Parties rated the involvement of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and Category 2 Centre as highest, which reflects the good coordination of the exercise by the World Heritage Centre in collaboration with the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH). In addition, most States Parties found the online training materials as useful (14 States Parties).



Rating on the level of support received in terms of training and guidance for the completion of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire (1=none, 2=poor, 3= fair ,4=good)

From the data provided by respondents and specific commentary, the exercise seems to have been well received in the Region. The workshops and guidance that was provided seem to have been appreciated in terms of contributing to successfully filling the questionnaire.

Overall, the exercise seemed relevant and fulfilled the objectives of Periodic Reporting. Nevertheless, the least fulfilled objective of the exercise was considered to be the provision of a mechanism for regional cooperation and exchange of information and experiences. Disparities can be noted in the resources devoted to the exercise in each State Party, and, availability of necessary information was below optimal in over a quarter of cases.

Conclusions on Section I

The results of the report provide an overview of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in the Arab States region, demonstrating the steps States Parties are undertaking to ensure the effective conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage.

The report highlights the positive levels of synergies with the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Region, among other Conventions, Programmes and Recommendations. However, the level of synergies is lower with the Second Protocol to the Hague Convention, noting that it has a lower number of ratifications in the Region than the other UNESCO Culture Conventions. Overall, there is a higher level of contact with other cultural programmes than there is for natural programmes. In particular, the 2011 HUL Recommendation has had very positive uptake in the Region.

The process of preparation and revision of Tentative Lists follows the available UNESCO guidelines. Thematic studies are less used, and the Upstream Process is rarely consulted. Nevertheless, the very high level of interest in using the Upstream Process in the next revisions of Tentative Lists highlights the degree of benefits expected by States Parties in this process.

The highest perceived benefits of World Heritage status as reported by States Parties in the Region are related to strengthened protection and conservation, enhanced conservation practices, enhanced honour/prestige, increased tourism and improved site presentation. Benefits related to inclusive economic development and enhanced inclusive social development were rated poorly.

Several States Parties reported the legal frameworks as adequate for the identification of cultural and natural heritage, while a fewer number reported them as adequate for the conservation and protection. With regard to the integration of World Heritage policies, strategies and recommendations into national policy frameworks, nearly half of the States Parties are using World Heritage policies, with the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties being the least used. Most States Parties reported limited coordination and integration of multilateral agreements, programmes and World Heritage policies and strategies into the development of national policies for the conservation, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage.

Except in a few cases, human and financial resources have been reported as inadequate. Capacity development has come out as a very significant priority for the Arab States region. For both, the cultural and natural heritage, needs identified are in the fields of conservation and management, sustainable development, statutory processes (Nominations and Tentative lists), risk preparedness and disaster risk management. Most of the States Parties in the Region do not have a national capacity building strategy in relation to World Heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management. Where a national capacity building strategy exists, there are deficiencies in implementation.

Regulatory frameworks that require the use of impact assessments for programmes or development projects (Environmental Impact Assessments/Heritage Impact Assessments) is not effectively implemented, except in 4 States Parties.

Moreover, developing policies and/or requiring the development of sustainable tourism strategies was the most highly rated method to encourage and support World Heritage properties to manage and develop tourism sustainably. The provision of capacity building for site managers and facilitating network cooperation and stakeholder engagement was rated second.

International cooperation emerges from the report as an area of high priority, with States Parties reporting their commitment to enhance and develop international cooperation. The report highlights the current efforts being made to promote international cooperation within the Region, such as through bilateral agreements, participation in regional events and the coordination of regional World Heritage activities.

Amongst different groups, decision makers and public officials, the tourism industry, and communities living around World Heritage are considered to have the most general awareness about World Heritage, while the general public, private sector, youth, and indigenous peoples were rated as having less general awareness.

Heritage education programmes are in place for about half of the States Parties, but there are deficiencies in implementation. Teacher training courses on the use of the World Heritage in Young Hands Kit was the least frequently reported activity. Many of the States Parties in the Region are not participating in UNESCO’s World Heritage in Young Hands Programme.

On the whole, it seems that the Periodic Reporting exercise has been well received across the Region. The overall feedback shows that the exercise is viewed as a useful activity that successfully meets its objectives.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE *WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION* AT THE WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY LEVEL IN THE ARAB STATES

This section provides information about World Heritage properties in the Arab States and presents a summary of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in that regard. It is based on the outcomes of Section II of the questionnaire, which was completed by the site managers of World Heritage properties. The analysis follows the structure of the questionnaire, while the quantitative summary of the outcomes of Section II is presented in Annex 2.

3.1. World Heritage Property Data

Since the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, and by the time of commencing the Third Cycle in the Arab States region in 2018, the total number of World Heritage properties increased from 65 (including the Old City of Jerusalem and its Walls (Site proposed by Jordan), to 84: 76 cultural properties, 5 natural properties and 3 mixed properties. Moreover, the number of States Parties with inscribed properties increased from 15 to 18. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates each have an inscribed property, and Palestine, which ratified the Convention in 2011, has three inscribed properties. To date, the State Party of Kuwait does not have a site inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Moreover, three of the properties that were on the List of World Heritage in Danger during the Second Cycle have been removed from that list, namely: Bahla Fort (Oman), Ichkeul National Park (Tunisia), and Tipasa (Algeria). Nevertheless, the sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger in the Region increased from 8 properties at the time of the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, to 22, properties by the time of launching the Third Cycle. Most of these properties were added on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to conflict. Furthermore, the property Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem (Palestine) was removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2019 (Decision **43 COM 7A.28**), after the launch of the Third Cycle, and hence, it was still considered in the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting.

In total, 83 of 84 World Heritage properties were invited to submit Section II of the questionnaire. A total of 82 World Heritage properties located in 18 States Parties participated: 74 cultural properties, 5 natural properties and 3 mixed properties.

At the time of commencing the Third Cycle in 2018, the retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value for 14 properties had not been established and adopted, while 21 properties did not yet have an adopted boundary clarification.

3.2. Other Conventions/ Programmes under which the World Heritage Property is protected

This part of the Report aims to identify links between the *World Heritage Convention* and other Conventions and programmes, in order to recognise the multiplicity of values of each site and highlight synergies with other UNESCO initiatives.

3.2.1. Multilateral Environmental Agreements

As presented in Chapter 2 of the Report, 9 States Parties in the Region have properties, or component sites, inscribed on the Ramsar List, including 2 cultural, 5 natural, and 2 mixed properties. In addition, a few site managers expressed their intention to inscribe sites on this list in the future.

3.2.2. UNESCO Culture Conventions

Regarding the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, there are currently 13 World Heritage properties that are related to at least one cultural practice/expression of intangible heritage inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, as shown in the following table:

State Party	Property inscribed on the World Heritage List	Element inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
Algeria	Tassili n'Ajjer	Practices and knowledge linked to the Imzad of the Tuareg communities of Algeria, Mali and Niger
Egypt	Historic Cairo	Traditional hand puppetry
Jordan	Petra	Cultural Space of the Bedu in Petra and Wadi Rum
	Wadi Rum Protected Area	
Morocco	Medina of Essaouira	Argan, practices and know-how concerning the argan tree
	Medina of Marrakesh	Cultural space of Jemee el-Fna Square
Oman	Archaeological Site of Al-Khutm and Al-Ayn	Majlis, a cultural and social space; Arabic coffee, a symbol of generosity
	Bahla Fort	
Palestine	Birthplace of Jesus: Church of the Nativity and the Pilgrimage Route, Bethlehem	Palestinian Hikaye
	Land of Olives and Vines - Cultural Landscape of Southern Jerusalem, Battir	
	Hebron/Al-Khalil Old Town	
United Arab Emirates	Cultural Sites of Al Ain (Hafit, Hili, Bidaa Bint Saud and Oases Areas)	Al Azi, art of preforming praise, pride and fortitude poetry; Al Sadu, traditional weaving skills in the United Arab Emirates
Yemen	Old City of Sana'a	Song of Sana'a

Moreover, with reference to the 1954 Hague Convention, and as mentioned in Chapter II, there are currently no World Heritage properties on the International Register of Cultural Property under Special Protection pertaining to this convention, nor on the List of Cultural Property under Enhanced Protection as granted by the 1999 Second Protocol to the Hague Convention. A few States Parties expressed their interest in requesting Enhanced Protection under the Second Protocol in the next three years. It is to be noted that only 8 out of the 19 States Parties have ratified all components of the Hague Convention. While the responses show interest in this Hague Convention and its protection instruments, there is apparently a need to further strengthen synergies in this regard.

3.2.3. UNESCO Programmes

Three World Heritage properties are also included as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves: Ichkeul National Park (Tunisia), Socotra Archipelago (Yemen) and Tassili n’Ajjer (Algeria). In addition, 7 States Parties expressed their intention to include World Heritage properties in this programme, which indicates a good level of knowledge about the benefits of synergies between the *World Heritage Convention* and Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

On the other hand, none of the World Heritage properties is designated as a UNESCO Global Geopark. Nevertheless, the interest to apply to this programme in the next three years was expressed by 5 site managers of Petra and Wadi Rum Protected Area (Jordan), Socotra Archipelago (Yemen), The Ahwar of Southern Iraq: Refuge of Biodiversity and the Relict Landscape of the Mesopotamian Cities (Iraq), and Ouadi Qadisha (the Holy Valley) and the Forest of the Cedars of God (Horsh Arz el-Rab) (Lebanon).

Four World Heritage properties are linked to UNESCO’s Memory of the World Programme:

State Party	World Heritage property	Memory of the World Programme
Egypt	Historic Cairo	Deeds of Sultans and Princes
Lebanon	Byblos	Commemorative stela of Nahr el-Kalb, Mount Lebanon

Oman	Ancient City of Qalhat	Maden Al Asrar Fi Elm Al Behar Manuscript
Saudi Arabia	At-Turaif District in ad-Dar'iyah	Earliest Islamic (Kufic) Inscription

3.2.4. Cooperation and synergies between Conventions and Programmes

As regards the level of cooperation between designations under different Conventions/Programmes at the property level, there appears to be a higher level of contact with other cultural programmes than there is for natural programmes. However, this may be a reflection of the low number of mixed and natural properties in the Region. On the other hand, the data specific to natural heritage shows that there is the highest level of communication when other conventions and UNESCO programmes are involved with the specific sites, such as for the Ramsar Convention and the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

3.3. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

Respondents were requested to list the key attributes of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the property and give an assessment of their condition. It was suggested to focus on approximately 5 key attributes, and no more than 15. Accordingly, the key attributes of OUV of 76 World Heritage properties were assessed. As demonstrated in the below table, attributes were reported to have been preserved for most World Heritage properties, noting that for the natural sites, there is a higher percentage for compromised attributes than for the cultural and mixed sites. On the other hand, key attributes are reported to have been seriously compromised and, in some cases, lost, though in a very small percentage. In this regard, the results illustrate that most of the key attributes are preserved completely in 41 sites in the Region.

Key attributes of the OUV	Preserved	Compromised	Seriously compromised	Lost
All sites (76)	80.9%	15.8%	3%	0.2%
Cultural sites	80%	10.3%	9.1%	0.6%
Mixed sites	96.7%	3.3%	0%	0%
Natural sites	66.1%	33.9%	0%	0%

3.4. Factors Affecting the Property

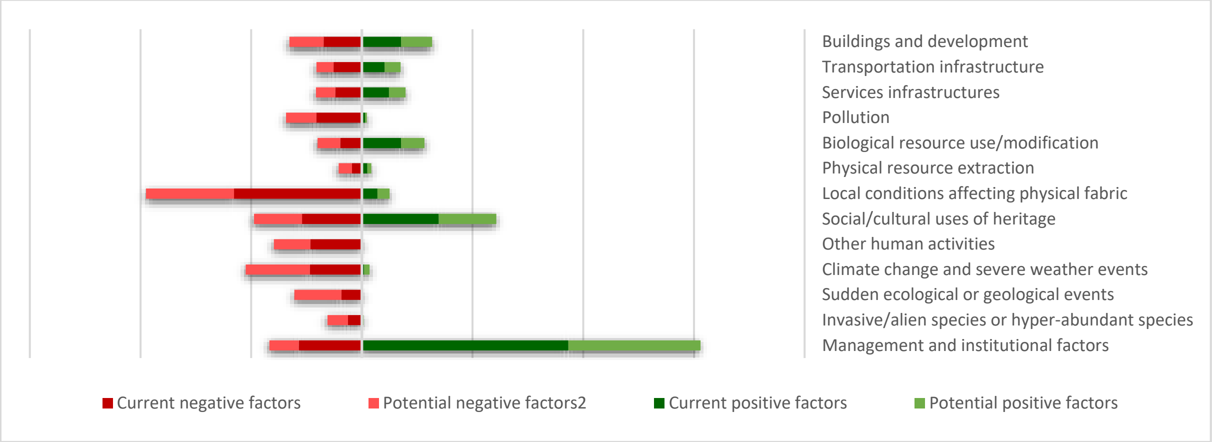
A set of questions (4.1 – 4.14) of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire focused on information about a range of factors affecting each property, among 13 factor groups. Each factor group consists of 3 to 10 factors. In total, 76 individual factors could be chosen from the options in the questionnaire and assessed according to whether they affect the property positively or negatively, whether their impact is current or potential, whether originating inside or outside the property, and whether the trend is increasing, decreasing or static.

There was no ceiling for the number of factors to be identified per property. In identifying the factors that are affecting, or have strong potential to affect World Heritage properties, the relevance of the 13 factor groups and the specific factors is reflected in the total number of mentions by respondents who found them relevant in relation to their respective properties (whether positive or negative):

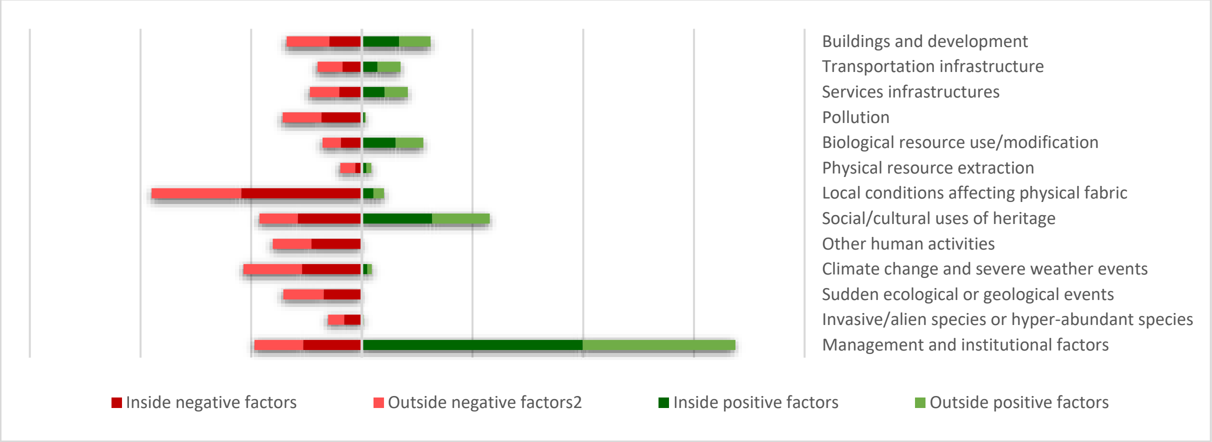
1. *Buildings and development (180 mentions)*
2. *Climate change and severe (153 mentions)*
3. *Sudden ecological or geological (95 mentions)*
4. *Invasive alien species (42 mentions)*
5. *Management and institutional factors (503 mentions)*

6. *Transport infrastructure (104 mentions)*
7. *Services infrastructure (114 mentions)*
8. *Pollution (104 mentions)*
9. *Biological resource (116 mentions)*
10. *Physical resource extraction (37 mentions)*
11. *Local conditions affecting physical fabric (289 mentions)*
12. *Social and cultural uses of heritage (254 mentions)*
13. *Other human activities (116 mentions)*

It can be observed that the local conditions affecting the physical fabric, pollution, climate change and severe weather events, sudden ecological or geological events, invasive alien or hyper-abundant species and other human activities were almost always considered as having current or potential negative impact on the properties. On the other hand, buildings and development, transport infrastructure, service infrastructure and social and cultural uses of heritage are almost equally viewed to have positive and negative impact. However, management and institutional factors are more often seen as having a current or potential positive impact on the properties. Moreover, local conditions affecting physical fabric, social/cultural uses of heritage, climate change and severe weather events followed by management and institutional factors are identified as the highest negative factors having an impact from inside and outside the properties. Buildings and developments, services infrastructure and transportation infrastructure are recognised as having almost equally positive and negative impact, but more commonly being factors outside the property.



Current/potential factors impacting the properties, whether negatively or positively.

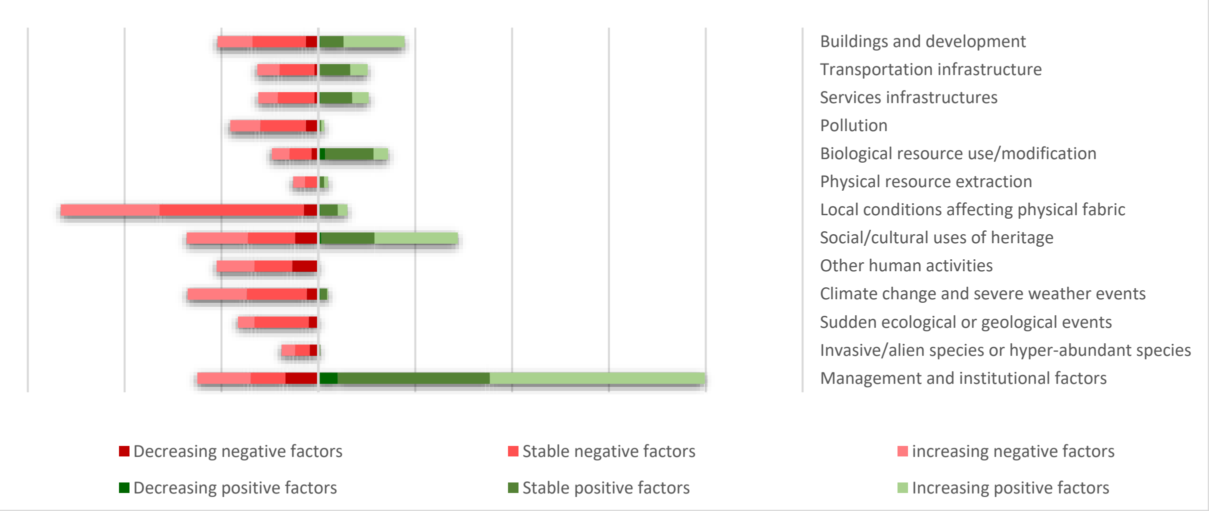


Current/potential factors impacting the properties originating inside or outside the properties

Management and institutional factors and social/cultural uses of heritage have the highest positive factors originating inside as well as outside the properties.

Based on the overall information, it can be observed that pollution, climate change and severe weather conditions, sudden geological or ecological events, invasive alien or hyper-abundant species and other human activities are factors always perceived as negative factors whether originating from inside or outside the property.

Moreover, the factor with the highest increasing and the highest stable negative impact is related to local conditions affecting the physical fabric. The factor with the highest decreasing positive impact, the highest increasing positive impact and stable positive impact is management and institutional factors.



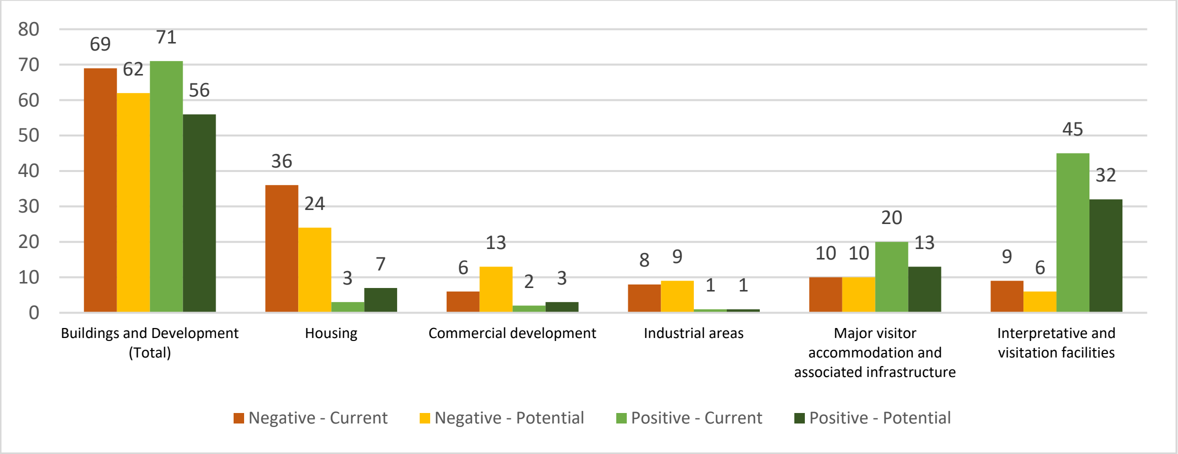
Factor trends, whether increasing, decreasing or stable and whether negatively or positively.

Through assessing trends in the Region, it can be deduced that for cultural sites many of the factors generally have a negative-stable impact. Nonetheless, building and development, social and cultural uses of heritage and management and institutional factors are more generally perceived as having a positive increasing impact. Biological resource use/modification is the only factor considered to have a mainly stable positive impact. In the case of natural properties, most factors are perceived as having a negative increasing impact on the properties. On the other hand, mixed properties have the most diverse trends concerning factors, with the social and cultural uses of heritage, and, management and institutional factors contributing to a positive stable trend. A more in-depth look at each factor group, with its specific factors, is provided with regards to impact, origin and trends.

3.4.1. Building and development

The factors falling under buildings and development include housing, commercial development, industrial areas, major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure, and interpretative and visitation facilities.

Housing is considered to have a substantive current negative impact on 35 cultural properties and one natural property in the Region. It has a potential negative impact on 24 properties, including two natural properties and one mixed property, making it one of the most important current and potential threats. On average, it is an increasing trend. Specific remarks focused on urban encroachment and visual impact. Frequent issues arising from housing are faced by 11 properties, while it is an on-going concern in another 10 properties in the Region. The impact of housing is significant in several properties and is being controlled in some.



Factors affecting the property: building and developement

Commercial development is considered to have a current negative impact on 5 cultural properties and one natural one. Nevertheless, 13 properties in the Region consider that this factor could have a potential negative impact. Positive impact has been mentioned much less frequently and, as it is the case for housing, the trend of development of this issue is mostly increasing. For some properties, commercial development is widespread and has a significant impact.

Industrial areas were rarely mentioned and are considered to have a current negative impact on 7 cultural properties and one natural one. For 9 properties, industrial areas could have a potential negative impact in the future. This factor does not appear to be widespread or ongoing, but sometimes has a localised major impact, while its trend appears to be static.

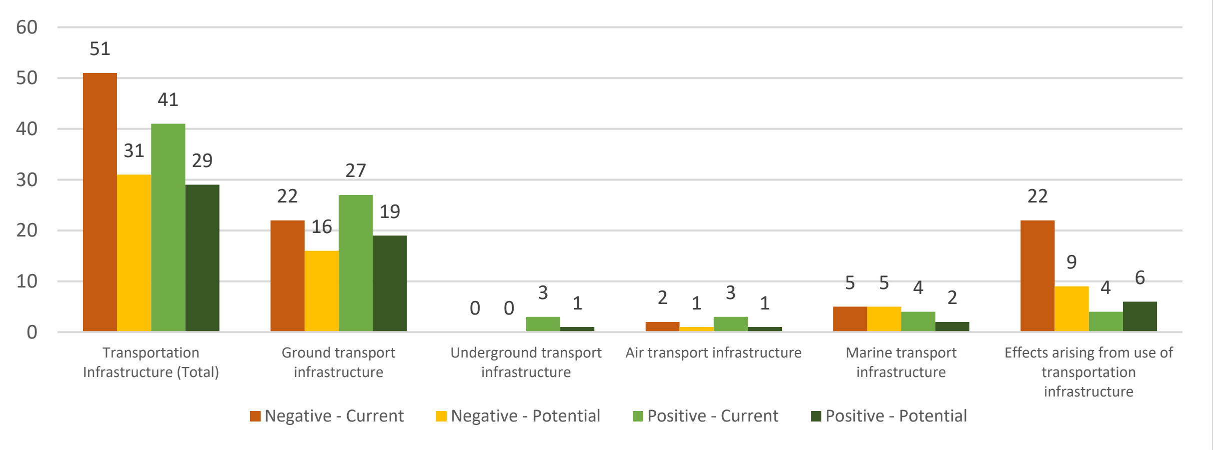
Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure is a factor which received a considerable number of mentions and seems to be developing with an increasing trend. They were assessed as having positive and negative impact on the properties - though for the majority it is considered as positive. The average trend of impact is mostly increasing.

Interpretative and visitation facilities are mainly considered as positive factors, both current and potentially: 40 cultural properties reported these facilities as currently having positive impact, together with 4 natural properties and 1 mixed property. Although they are mostly localised and in a restricted area, for 4 properties they are considered widespread. There is capacity and/or resources to manage this factor of the majority of properties. The average trend of impact of this factor is mostly increasing, indicating plans for integrating such facilities.

3.4.2. Transportation infrastructure

Factors falling under transportation infrastructure include ground transport infrastructure, underground transport infrastructure, air transport infrastructure, marine transport infrastructure and effects arising from use of transportation infrastructure.

Ground transport infrastructure is largely considered as currently having both positive and negative impact. For 22 properties, there are current negative consequences, while for 27 properties, this form of transport has a current positive impact on the properties. Four natural properties in the Region consider it as positive, while also highlighting the current negative impact. For the cultural properties, there were several comments on the importance of ground transportation, as well as on their negative impact. Additionally, this factor is largely considered as restricted or localised in at least half of the properties, extensive in 8 properties and widespread in 3 others. The impact of ground transport infrastructure is considered as significant or major in 11 properties, while capacities/resources to respond are high to medium in at least half of the properties in the Region. Its trend is generally static but is increasing in the case of 19 properties.



Factors affecting the property: transportation infrastructure

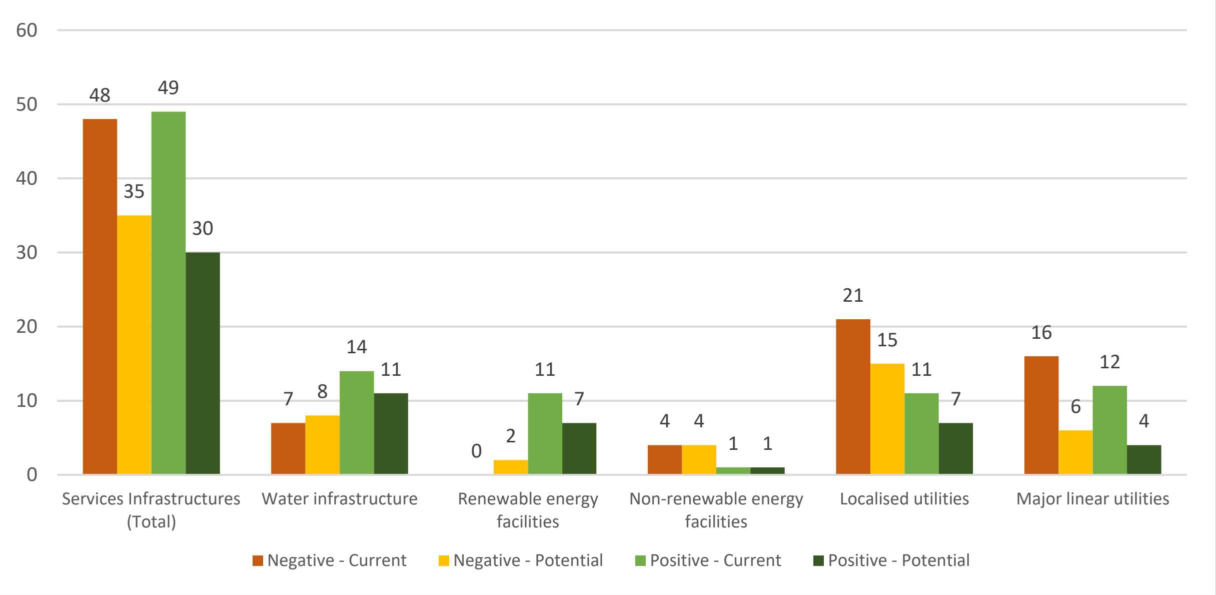
Underground transport infrastructure was mentioned by only 4 site managers in relation to cultural sites and is considered as positive. Moreover, the current negative impact of air transport infrastructure was reported for 2 properties, while for 3 properties, it is considered as having a current positive effect. Overall, the trend is considered to be static.

The impact of marine transport infrastructure has been assessed as both, positive and negative, though negative mentions slightly outweigh the positive ones. This trend was considered as increasing by the respondents for natural properties in the Region.

The effects arising from the use of transportation infrastructure, which have been mostly labelled as negative, are restricted or localised in the majority of concerned properties, but are considered as extensive in 4 properties, which happen to be historic urban centres. The impact is significant or major at 6 properties, in which transportation infrastructure plays an important role. Capacities to manage the response are low in 7 properties, while for 4 properties, there are no available capacities. The trend appears to be mostly static but increasing for 11 sites.

3.4.3. Services infrastructures

The factors falling under services infrastructures include water infrastructure, renewable energy facilities, non-renewable energy facilities, localised utilities and major linear utilities. There are some sites where an accumulation of the above factors could affect the site simultaneously.



Factors affecting the property: services infrastructures

Water infrastructure elements (dams, locks, water tanks, hydropower infrastructure, etc.) are more likely to negatively affect natural sites than others. In the case of cultural sites, water infrastructure is viewed as positive. It is restricted and localised in the case of 16 properties, extensive in 8 properties, and widespread in 2 properties. It has significant or major impact in most of properties. The majority of properties have between high to medium capacity to respond and manage, while for 5 properties, the capacities are low. The trend of this factor is considered to be static.

Renewable energy facilities seem to have a positive impact on the properties, especially for natural heritage (3 natural properties considered renewable energy facilities as currently having a positive effect). Among the cultural sites, the utilisation of solar energy to generate electricity was reported for several properties. The impact of this factor is insignificant or minor for the majority of properties, except for 3. Capacities are between high to medium for most of the properties in question, and the trend is generally static but increasing in one cultural and five natural properties.

Non-renewable energy facilities were mostly assessed as having a negative impact, though this factor received very few mentions. The impact is considered significant in only 2 properties. For some properties there is low or no capacity to manage such facilities, which are often beyond the sphere of influence of the site's management. Generally, the average trend is between static and increasing.

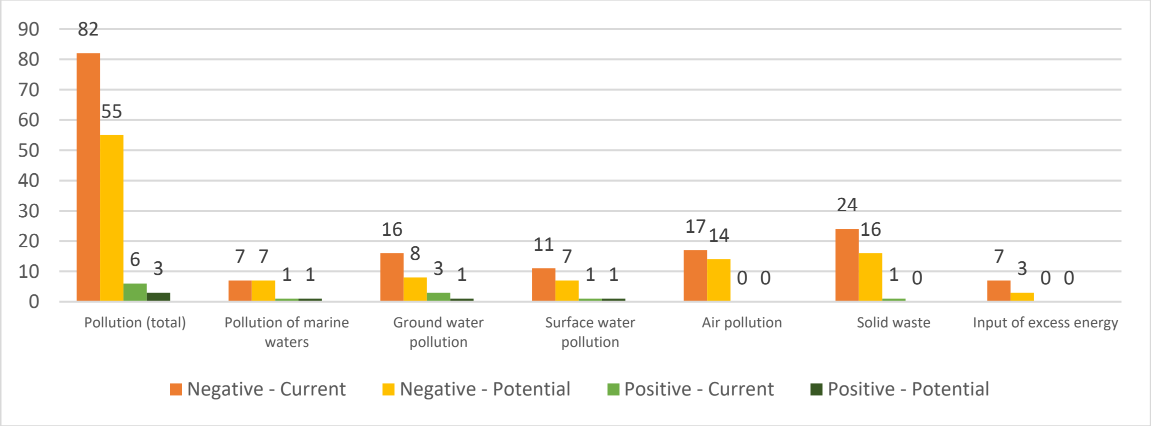
Localised utilities were rated as having more negative than positive impact. In particular, localised utilities, such as: incinerators, cell phone and TV/radio towers, among others, are considered as negatively affecting 20 cultural properties and 1 natural property. For another 11 properties, these utilities are considered as having a positive effect.

Although the area of impact is often localised, it is considered extensive in 3 properties, and widespread in one other property. While the majority considered the impact as being low, localised utilities have been reported of significant impact in 5 properties, all of which are dense historic urban areas. The capacities to manage are between high and medium, yet, for 3 properties, there are no such capacities/resources. Localised utilities are generally static, but increasing in several historic cities.

Major linear utilities such as power lines, pipelines and/or channels, were viewed as currently having a negative impact by 16 site managers, and a positive impact by 12 site managers. These utilities are mainly restricted or localised, but extensive in 2 properties. Generally, the trend of development of major linear utilities is considered as static.

3.4.4. Pollution

Factors falling under pollution include pollution of marine waters, ground water pollution, surface water pollution, air pollution, solid waste, input of excess energy. Additionally, some site managers mentioned light and noise pollution as an issue.



Factors affecting the property: pollution

The impact of pollution appears to be widespread in the Region, with the current negative impact of pollution mentioned 82 times by site managers, and the potential negative impact mentioned 55 times. Solid waste is considered as the biggest problem among the proposed issues, followed by air pollution and ground water pollution. The area of effect is rarely widespread and not many of the issues with pollution are reported to be on-going. The capacity to deal with the threats is usually between high and medium, with some exceptions (especially when it comes to air pollution, which is usually difficult to address on a local scale). The average trend of development of the pollution factor appears to be static. However, some site managers marked certain factors as negatively increasing, which may be a cause for concern. Ground water pollution is mostly originating from inside the site, whereas air pollution and solid waste seem to equally impact inside and outside the property.

Pollution of marine waters has been mentioned by several sites in which water bodies are a significant component or are adjacent to the site. The area of effect is mostly restricted or localised and the impact is neither significant nor major. On the other hand, ground water pollution is having a negative impact on 16 properties in the Region, although its area of effect is mostly restricted and localised. In some cases, ground water pollution is extensive, notably at sites associated with desert landscapes and areas in which ground water plays an important role. In 5 properties, capacities to manage are low or absent. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly static. Moreover, surface water pollution mostly appears to be of a current negative impact at 11 properties, but considered as restricted.

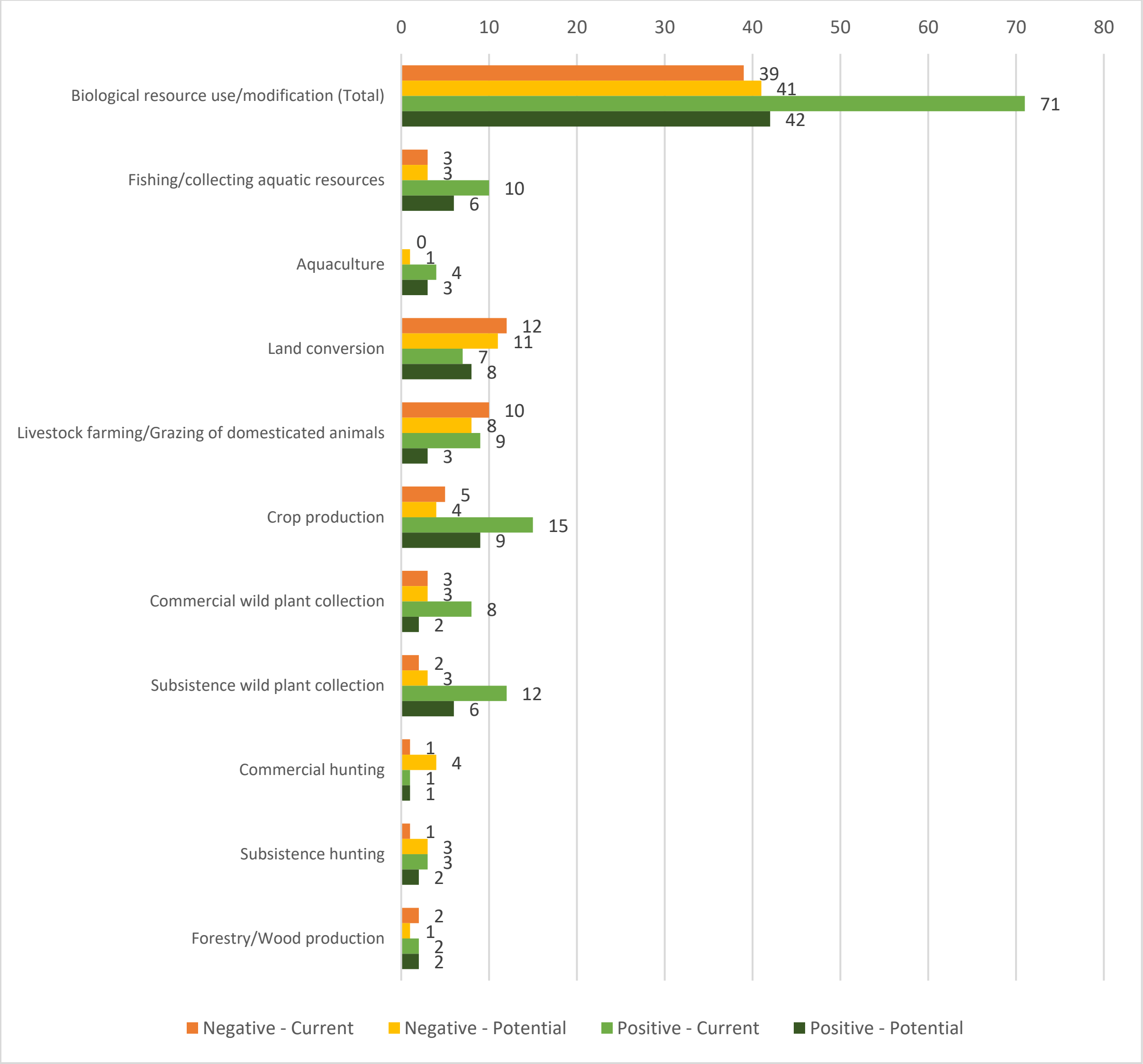
Air pollution has an impact on various sites across the Region, particularly in relation to dust pollution. Specific commentary highlighted the impact of air pollution, causing stone corrosion, degradation and black crust. The area of effect is usually localised or restricted, with exceptions. Most of the sites report medium capacity of management to respond, and the average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Several sites are suffering from the accumulation of garbage and household waste. Specific commentary demonstrated the efforts taken in order to mitigate the effects of pollution, specifically through regular cleaning and collection of waste, and allocating specific areas for garbage, as well as issues of waste management, particularly in urban centres. Most of the sites considered the issue as restricted or localised, with few considering it extensive or significant. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing. Pollution resulting from the input of excess energy was not mentioned often, and its area of effect is mostly restricted. None of the sites considered it as widespread, on-going, or major.

3.4.5. Biological resource use/modification

Factors falling under biological resource use/modification include fishing/collecting aquatic resources, aquaculture, land conversion, livestock farming/grazing of domesticated animals, crop production, commercial wild plant collection, subsistence wild plant collection, commercial hunting, subsistence hunting, and forestry/wood production.

Depending on the property, certain factors may have been considered positive, negative or both. However, overall fishing/collecting aquatic resources, aquaculture, livestock farming and grazing, crop production, commercial/subsistence wild plant collection were considered to have a positive-stable impact on the properties. On the other hand, land conversion, and commercial hunting were rated as negative-stable. Subsistence hunting was equally viewed as negative-decreasing and positive-decreasing. The area of effect of this factor is mostly restricted and localised, with very few exceptions. Capacity for dealing with the threats is usually between high and medium and the average trend of development appears to be static. Moreover, for all the properties in the Region, the factor mostly originates from inside the property whether it has a positive or negative impact. In the case of cultural properties, a few site managers made a reference to the negative impact of land conversion originating outside the property.



Factors affecting the property: biological resource use/modification

For natural sites, fishing and collecting aquatic resources are considered as impacting the properties, both negatively and positively, indicating that although fishing and collecting aquatic resources are likely to contribute highly to the livelihoods of local communities, over-fishing could lead to a loss in marine life, having an impact directly on the environment. It is noteworthy that comparable responses were received with regard to land conversion, livestock grazing, crop production, subsistence wild plant collection and commercial hunting, illustrating that these factors impact the property both negatively and positively depending on the mode of human activity and use of resources. This factor is reported as restricted and localised, with one exception, where it is widespread. The average trend of development is static.

The presence of aquaculture is mentioned for few properties, although the area of effect is restricted or localised. None of the sites report it as being widespread, on-going, or having a major impact, and the average trend of development is static.

On the other hand, land conversion is mentioned often, although the area is usually restricted or localised, with a few reporting it as extensive, frequent, or having significant impact. The average trend of development is static.

Livestock farming/grazing of domesticated animals is an essential part of the local community for 4 properties, while 1 site manager mentioned that overgrazing and hunting affects the property negatively. Nevertheless, this factor was generally considered to have a current positive impact on several sites in the Region. On the spatial scale, 3 properties consider it widespread or extensive. The majority of sites have high or medium capacity to manage this activity, and the average trend of development is between static and increasing.

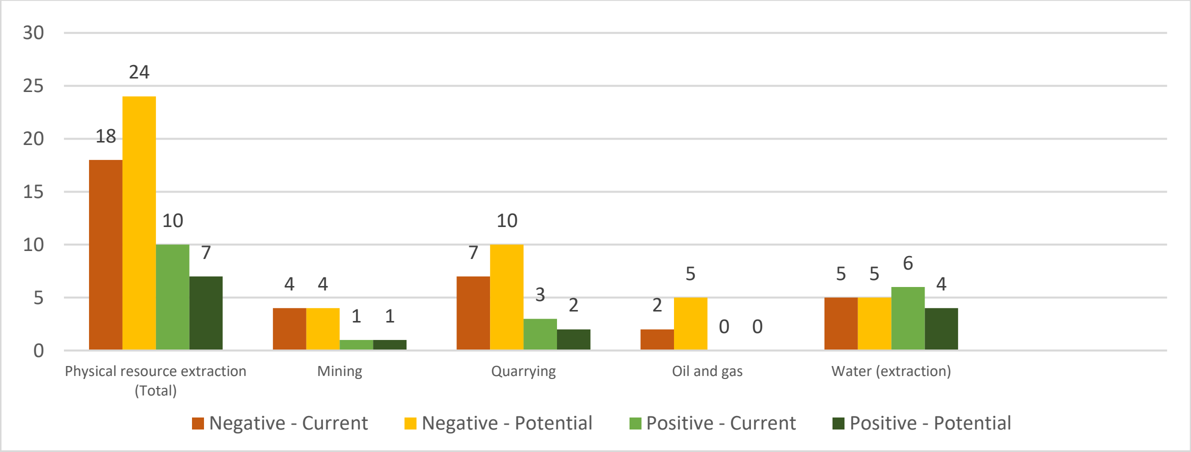
Crop production has been evaluated positively in most of the cases, and its area of effect is mostly restricted or localised, with 1 reporting as extensive, widespread or significant. None of the sites considered the impact as major and the average trend of development is between static and decreasing.

Commercial wild plant collection and subsistence wild plant collection were rarely mentioned and are either restricted or localised, with only one property considering the impact significant. The average trend of development is mostly static. Commercial and subsistence hunting were also rarely mentioned, and they are either restricted or localised. For only one property, these activities are frequent, and for another property, there is no management capacity to respond. The average trend of development is mostly static.

Forestry/wood production activities represent another factor that was rarely mentioned, such as in terms of impacting biodiversity and causing desertification. On the spatial scale, this factor is mostly restricted, with a trend of development that is mostly static. Site managers reported on having some capacity/resources to manage such activities.

3.4.6. Physical resource extraction

The factors that fall under physical resource extraction include mining, quarrying, oil and gas and water extraction. Overall, this factor has a current negative impact on 18 properties, while for 24 properties, it has a potential negative impact. Additionally, for 10 properties, this factor has a current positive impact, and for 7 others, it has a potential positive impact.



Factors affecting the property: physical resource extraction

Mining is currently a factor in 2 natural sites, 1 mixed site, and 1 cultural site. On the spatial scale, mining activities are restricted, and they are intermittent or sporadic, except for one case where it is frequent. The majority of the properties impacted by mining activities have low capacities to respond.

Quarrying activities (rock, sand, aggregates) have a current negative impact on 7 properties, while they were considered of potential future negative impact for 10 properties. On the other hand, it is considered of positive impact (current or potential) for 5 properties. Negative impacts that have been mentioned comprise visual and physical impact. On the spatial scale, quarrying activities are generally restricted in most properties but extensive in 1 property. The trend is generally static, but sometimes considered as increasing.

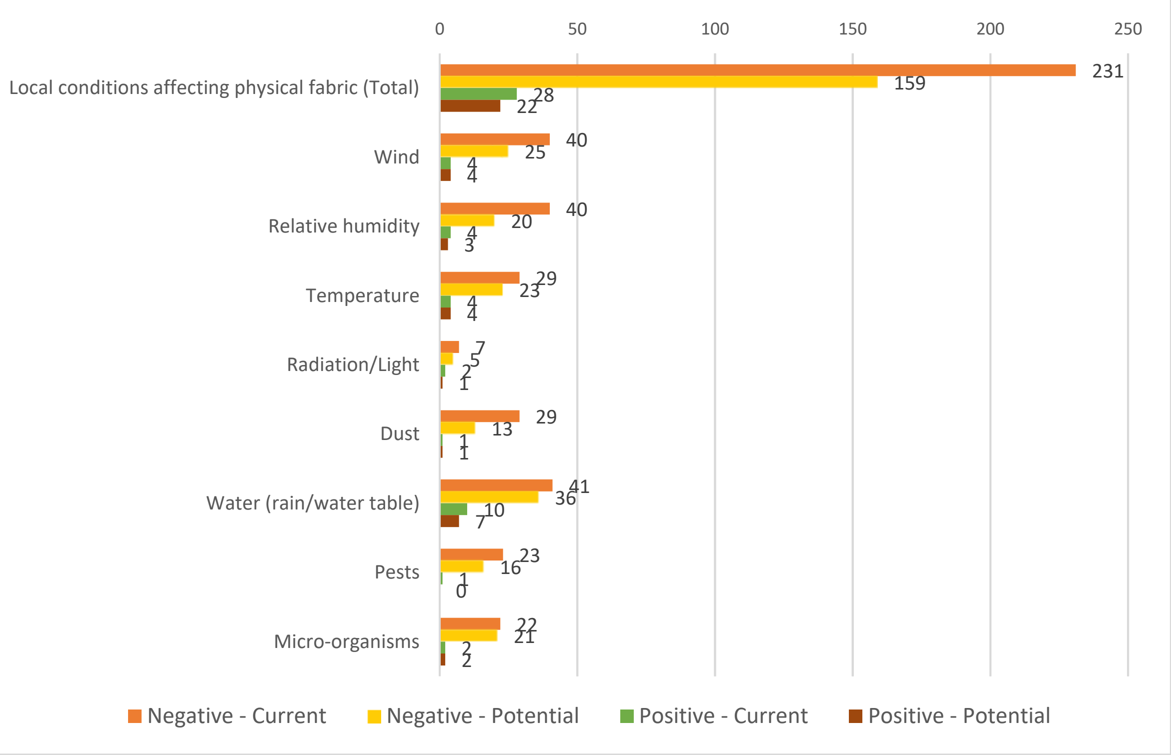
Water (extraction) is almost equally considered as negative and positive amongst properties in the Region. For some properties, water is necessary for sustainability at the properties. It is largely restricted or localised in the majority of affected properties but is extensive or widespread in 2 properties. The impact of this activity is significant at 3 properties, 2 of which having water infrastructure as integral components of the OUV.

Oil and gas exploitation are reported as having a current negative impact on 2 properties, while for 5 properties, it could have a potential negative impact. The impact is generally considered as insignificant or minor in all sites, and the trend is increasing in three properties.

Overall, the factors concerning physical resource extraction are generally viewed as negative and originating from outside the boundaries of the inscribed properties. For 3 properties, mining is currently happening inside the properties with a current negative impact.

3.4.7. Local conditions affecting physical fabric

The factors under local conditions affecting the physical fabric include wind, relative humidity, temperature, radiation/light, dust, water (rain/water), pests and micro-organisms. These have been rated as having the highest current, as well as potential, negative impact on properties, noting that the origin of the negative impact is more commonly identified inside the property. Factors related to local conditions have been extensively addressed by site managers, which could reflect a clear concern. Some respondents confirmed that these local conditions are the greatest threat they face, with wind, humidity, and heavy rainfall contributing to the degradation of properties. All 3 mixed sites in the Region noted that wind and temperatures have a negative impact, while water is a current positive factor. For natural sites in the Region local conditions are considered to have a generally positive and negative impact on properties. Relative humidity affects around 50% of sites and is considered widespread in several properties exposed to humid conditions due to their geographic location. It is frequent in 17 World Heritage properties and on-going in 10 properties. For several properties, there are no resources/capacities to respond to the effects of relative humidity, and the trend is generally viewed as static but is still considered as increasing in 11 properties.



Factors affecting the property: local conditions affecting physical fabric

Almost half of the site managers in the Region considered that wind has a current negative impact. More specifically, wind can be a main concern, leading to erosion and degradation of materials and monuments, including sandstone structures and earthen architecture. On the spatial scale, wind was noted as generally restricted or localised, but is extensive in 12 properties and widespread in a few. It is considered as frequent in 15 properties, and significant or major in 8 properties. It is noteworthy that the properties facing significant or major impact contain monuments of natural stone, which are prone to damage through wind erosion. There are no capacities/resources to respond to the issue in a number of properties, and although wind is generally considered as static, it is viewed as increasing in 6 properties.

Temperature has a current negative effect on 29 properties in the Region, which could be explained by difficult (or even extreme) climatic conditions in some areas. The effect of temperature is widespread in few properties. It is frequent in 16 properties and on-going in 10 others. The impact of temperature is significant or major at 10 properties across the Region, most of which face very high temperatures for prolonged periods. A few sites have no capacities/resources to respond to issues arising from the effects of temperature, while the trend is considered as static in the majority of concerned sites but increasing in 14 properties.

By comparison with other factors in this category, the impact of radiation/light appears to be on a relatively small number of properties. It is reported as extensive in one, and widespread in another, and there are no capacities/resources to respond, while the trend is mostly static.

Dust is perceived as having a current negative impact in 29 properties, and has a potential negative impact in 13 properties, several of which are located in a desert landscape. It is extensive in 11 properties in the Region and widespread in 3 properties. The effects of dust are on-going in a few properties, and the impact is significant or major in about a third of those currently experiencing the negative impact of dust. For a few properties, there are no capacities/resources to respond, and the trend is increasing at a number of properties.

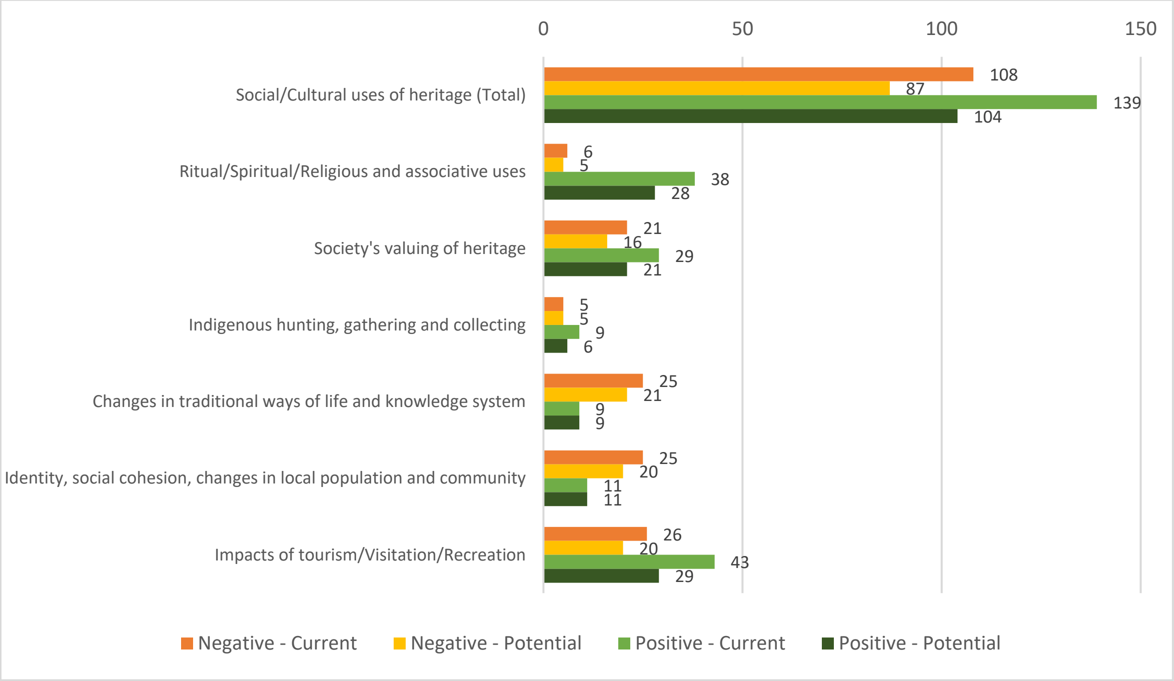
Heavy rains which result in flooding have an impact on mud structures, in addition to the ensuing growth of vegetation on external facades causing cracks and fissures. Nevertheless, in certain conditions, rainfall is considered positive depending on the specificity of the site. Moreover, the effect of water (rain/water table) is extensive in 14 World Heritage properties, widespread in 7 properties, and frequent in 17 properties. The impact of this factor is significant in 20 properties and is major for 6 properties. Many of those sites similarly reported impact from wind and temperature, which reflects the collective impact of these factors on building materials. There are low capacities in the case of 16 properties and no capacities/resources in none in 2 properties. The trend is considered as increasing in 17 properties in the Region.

A number of site managers informed about issues at properties due to pests. Specific examples were provided in relation to termites, which primarily affect structures made of wood and mud, where reference was made to preventive techniques. The effect of pests is extensive or widespread in few properties, and are a frequent concern in some. The impact is significant in 7 properties. There are low or no capacities to respond to issues arising from pests in 11 properties. The trend is static for the majority of affected sites but is increasing in few of them.

Moreover, the effect of micro-organisms is extensive, frequent, or ongoing in 8 properties where there is a current negative impact. For 10 properties, there are low capacities to respond to the issue, and for 4 properties there are no capacities/resources to respond. The trend is static for most of the affected properties, but is increasing in few of them.

3.4.8. Social and cultural uses of heritage

Factors under social and cultural uses of heritage include ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses, society’s valuing of heritage, indigenous hunting, gathering and collecting, changes in traditional life and knowledge, identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community, and impacts of tourism/visitation/recreation. Although, this factor group is sometimes perceived as having negative impact, most site managers have mentioned it in a positive sense.



Factors affecting the property: social and cultural uses of heritage

The impact of tourism/visitation/recreation and ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses appear to be the most mentioned factors under this category. Nevertheless, changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system and issues of identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community, can be similarly taken into account as significant factors negatively affecting the properties. The increasing trend of development, especially in the case of touristic activities, is noteworthy.

Ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses have been mainly reported as having a positive impact on the properties, with commentary indicating how properties provide opportunities for gatherings and religious events. For 18 properties, the impact was reported as significant or major. Most of the sites have high to medium capacity to manage these uses and the average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Society's valuing of heritage is considered to be impacting sites both positively and negatively, although current positive impact has been reported slightly more often. Nevertheless, issues concerning abandonment, and, in some cases, vandalism continue impacting some sites negatively. The average impact ranges between minor and significant, while for 6 properties the impact is considered as major. There is usually high to low capacity to manage, except in 2 cases. The average trend of development is between static and increasing.

Among the few properties where indigenous hunting, gathering and collecting has an impact, the majority perceived it as positive. Nevertheless, such activities have been highlighted as a concern in five properties, many of which encompass vast landscapes. On the spatial scale, indigenous hunting, gathering and collecting is mostly localised or restricted, and is intermittent or sporadic, except in one case where it is widespread. For 1 property, the impact is significant. For most properties, there is high to medium capacity to manage, and the average trend of development is between static and decreasing.

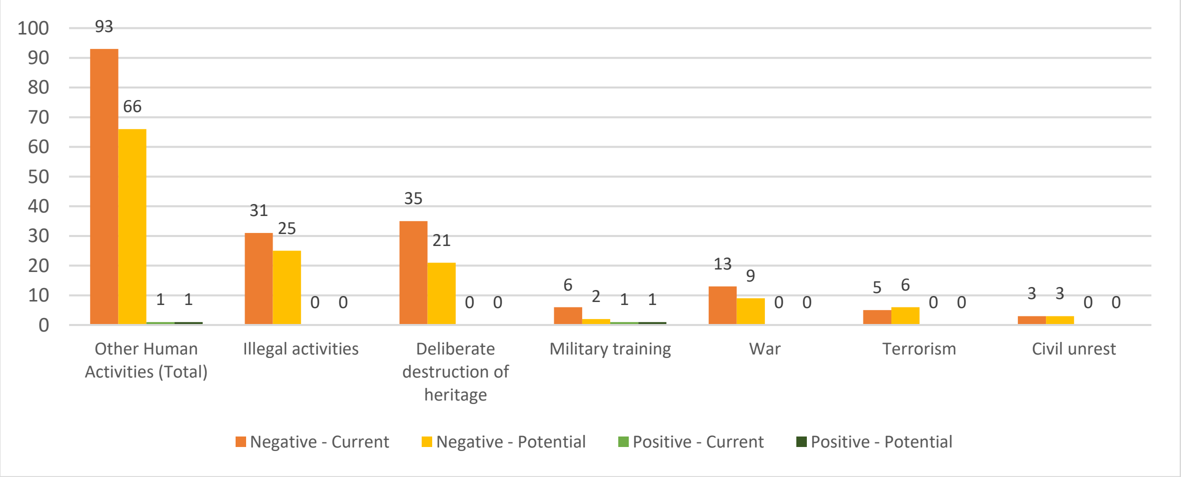
Changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system is considered more often by site managers as having a negative impact on the properties. Individual commentaries shed light on some examples of the impact of this factor, such as in the abandonment of ancestral fishing methods in favor for unsustainable fishing techniques. The abandonment of traditions and long-established professions has been reported at cultural sites, in addition to change in traditional uses of building materials. For 10 properties, changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge systems is an ongoing process, and for 18 properties, the impact is significant or major. For the majority of properties, there is management capacity to respond, while the average trend of development of this factor is mostly increasing.

Identity, social cohesion and changes in the population are more commonly perceived to have a negative impact. Some site managers mentioned that local communities are partners in the conservation, protection and development of properties, while others underscored that people are interested in getting a better understanding of heritage. In 11 properties, the effect is ongoing, signifying a process in motion, and for 3 properties, the impact is major. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly increasing, in line with changing demographics and displacement.

Site managers have mostly identified the current impact of tourism and recreation as positive, although a large number expressed concerns and reported negative impact, such as in relation to commercial activities, and the challenges of managing increased tourist visitation. For several properties, the impact is widespread, for 25 properties the impact is significant, and for one property it is major. There is high to medium capacity to manage these activities, and the average trend of development is strongly increasing.

3.4.9. Other human activities

Factors falling under other human activities include illegal activities, deliberate destruction of heritage, military training, war, terrorism and civil unrest. According to the results, these activities are perceived as negative and trends indicate that they are static in some sites but may increase in others. Deliberate destruction of heritage is mainly perceived as static, with the possibility to increase, while war and civil unrest seem to be considered as having a tendency to increase. Although terrorism is viewed as static, in some cases it is decreasing. Deliberate destruction of heritage and illegal activities are more generally identified as originating within the boundaries of the property. War and civil unrest are originating both inside and outside, while terrorism gets more mentions as originating from outside than inside properties.



Factors affecting the property: other human activities

Several properties in the Region face challenges due to illegal activities, such as looting or illicitly excavated and trafficked objects, where its prevalence appears to be more common in conflict affected areas. Under this category, inappropriate restoration and reconstruction work was also mentioned, in addition to illegal constructions. Poaching is a concern in 2 natural sites, and 1 mixed site. The area of impact is usually restricted or localised. Nevertheless, for few ones, they are widespread or extensive, and sometimes with a major impact. While most of the respondents reported having some capacity of management to respond, in two sites this capacity is absent. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Challenges regarding the deliberate destruction of heritage were mentioned by several site managers in conflict affected areas, such as shelling, bombing, and burning. In addition, graffiti and vandalism were mentioned in relation to properties in conflict and non-conflict affected areas.

Deliberate destruction of heritage appears to be a recurring phenomenon, although in most cases, its area of effect is restricted and localised. Although in terms of occurrence, it appears to be rare, for 2 properties, it was reported as ongoing. The impact is insignificant or minor for the majority, except in 11 cases, where it is considered significant or major. Some sites reported that they have no capacities to respond to the arising threats, notably in the case of properties in conflict affected areas. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly decreasing, noting that it was not only considered as having an impact in properties located in conflict areas.

Military training has a current negative impact on 2 natural properties and 4 cultural properties. Although it has been rarely mentioned, the area of effect was considered extensive in 4 cases. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly increasing.

Properties currently affected by war and conflict are all cultural sites, and are currently on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The impact of war has been noted at several levels: social, economic, financial, and availability of resources (in terms of qualified personnel and restoration materials). Important monuments were damaged or destroyed, and the affected area is extensive, widespread or ongoing, with a significant or major impact at a number of properties. For 8 properties, there is low or no capacity to respond. The trend of development of this factor is for some sites is considered as increasing.

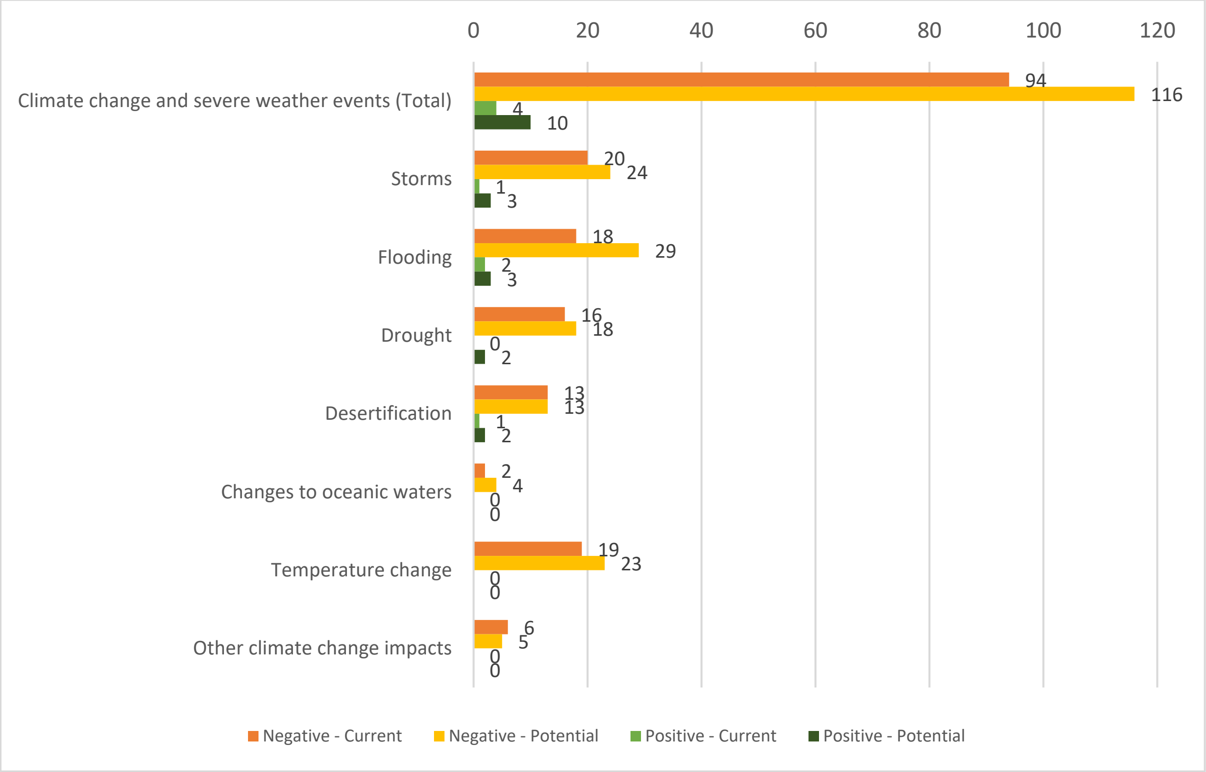
Terrorism is reported at 5 cultural sites, which are currently on the List of World Heritage in Danger. It is also considered to be of potential negative impact at 6 other properties. The impact of terrorism is reported as significant in some properties, and for 5 properties management capacities are low or absent. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly decreasing, although for some properties it is increasing.

Civil unrest is considered to have a current negative restricted impact in 2 cultural sites, and is ongoing in 1 natural site.

3.4.10. Climate change and severe weather events

The factors that fall under climate change and severe weather events include storms, flooding, drought, desertification, changes to oceanic waters, temperature change, and other climate change impacts. Climate change and severe weather conditions are predominantly considered to be negatively impacting World Heritage properties in the Region, and a potential threat in the future. For natural sites, reference was made to specific weather events, such as cyclones, tornadoes and flooding from extreme tide. Drought and desertification appear to affect the 3 mixed properties in the Region. A considerable number of site managers noted the increase in incidents of severe weather conditions such as flooding or desertification in recent years. As expected, the trends anticipate an overall increasing potential negative impact, except in some cases.

Although the effect of storms is seen generally as restricted or localised in the majority of implicated World Heritage properties in the Region, it is extensive or widespread in 9 properties, while its impact is significant in some of them. There are low or no capacities to respond to storms in 13 properties.



Factors affecting the property: climate change and severe weather events

Floods were largely stated to be an issue at several properties, being extensive or widespread in 8 properties, and frequent in 6 properties. The impact of flooding is significant or major in 9 properties. The trend is generally static but increasing in 7 properties.

Droughts are frequent or ongoing in 9 properties, their impact is significant in 6 properties, and capacities are low or non-existent in 11 properties. While droughts are considered as generally static, they are increasing in 6 properties. For the most part, desertification and drought are affecting the same properties in terms of scope and frequency, with a somewhat similar level of impact. Desertification is viewed as increasing by the majority of implicated properties.

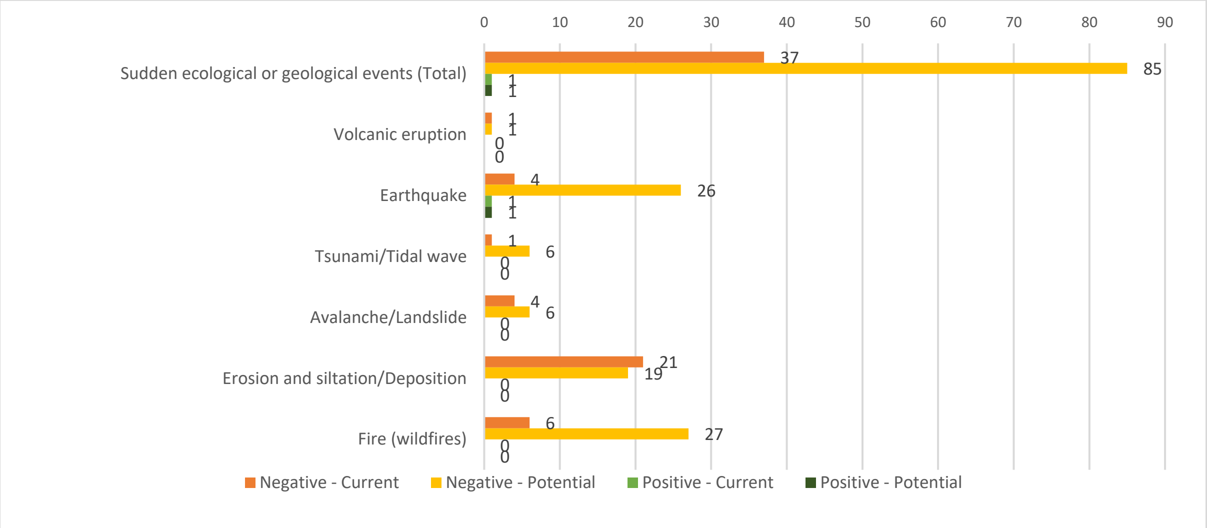
Changes to oceanic waters were noted for just a handful of World Heritage properties in the Region. Their occurrence is generally rare and intermittent or sporadic. It is on-going with significant impact on one property.

Temperature changes affect several properties in the Region, and are extensive or widespread in 13 properties. This occurrence is considered as frequent at 10 properties, and ongoing in the case of 6 properties. Its impact is significant or major in 7 properties, while capacities/resources to manage are low in 11 properties, and non-existent in 8 properties. The trend is mostly static, but increasing in the case of 12 properties.

Other climate change impacts, which were not specified in comments, were considered extensive in two properties, and they are frequent in three properties.

3.4.11. Sudden ecological or geological events

Factors falling under sudden ecological or geological events include volcanic eruption, earthquake, tsunami/tidal wave, avalanche/landslide, erosion and siltation/deposition and fire (wildfires).



Factors affecting the property: sudden ecological or geological events

Earthquakes are considered to have a negative potential impact on 26 cultural properties, while for 3 cultural properties and 1 mixed site, they have a current negative impact. A few site managers referred to earthquakes that previously occurred at the respective properties. The data indicates that earthquakes are prevalent in the Region, but generally perceived as restricted. Nevertheless, they are considered to have an extensive or widespread impact in 5 properties, and for 1 property, their occurance is frequent. The impact of earthquakes is considered significant or major in 5 properties. At 12 properties, the capacities/resources to respond to this factor are low, and in the case of 6 properties, they are not available. The trend of earthquakes was reported as decreasing in 4 properties, but increasing in 2 properties.

Erosion and siltation or deposition, a factor which is closely linked to the geographical context and environmental conditions, was evaluated as having a current negative impact on several properties in the Region. At present, 19 cultural properties (located in 12 different countries) and 2 natural properties have concerns relating to erosion/siltation or deposition. An additional number of properties underscored their potential impact in the future. This phenomenon is regarded as extensive in 3 properties, widespread in 2 properties, and is on-going in 3 properties. Its impact is significant in 7 properties, and major in 1 property. Capacities to respond are low or non-existent in 11 properties. For 17 properties, the trend is static, it is decreasing in 2 properties, and is increasing in 6 properties.

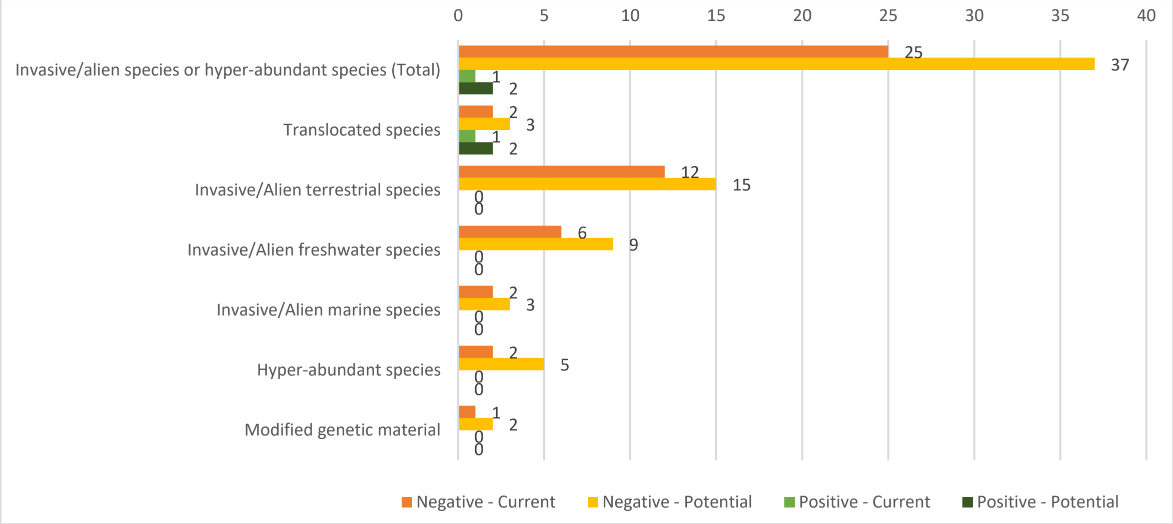
Fire (wildfires) do not currently affect many World Heritage properties in the Region (only 6 properties). Nevertheless, there is an evident consideration of fires as a potential threat by 27 site managers. This factor is largely restricted or localised, but extensive or widespread in 2 of the concerned sites. Its impact is significant in 5 properties and major in 1 property. Capacities to respond to fires are low in 11 properties.

Volcanic eruptions were reported to have a current negative impact on 1 property and of a potential negative impact on another property. Tsunamis and tidal waves were recognised as having a potential negative impact at a few properties, and are considered as one off or rare events. Nonetheless, the impact of tsunamis and tidal waves would be major in the case of 2 properties. Capacities are low to respond at 2 properties, and there are no capacities/resources in 2 others. Although the trend was mostly indicated as static, for 2 properties, it is considered as increasing. All properties concerned by this factor are located in coastal areas.

Landslides are currently affecting four properties in the Region. Avalanches/landslides are uncommon, nevertheless, where they may occur, the effect is localised. It was considered as frequent in only one property, and its impact is major in another. The trend is static in 4 properties, and increasing in 3 properties.

3.4.12. Invasive/alien species or hyper-abundant species

Factors that fall under invasive/alien or hyper-abundant species include translocated species, invasive/alien terrestrial species, invasive/alien freshwater species, invasive/alien marine species, hyper-abundant species and modified genetic material. Generally, Invasive/alien, or hyper-abundant species are assessed as negative.



Factors affecting the property: invasive/alien species or hyper-abundant species

Invasive terrestrial species are located both inside and outside the properties in the same way. Although the difference in responses is insignificant, invasive/alien freshwater and marine species, and hyper abundant species originate more commonly from inside the properties. Translocated species and modified genetic material have more responses indicating those originating from outside the property. It seems that invasive or hyper-abundant species have a greater impact on natural areas.

Translocated species have been reported at a limited number of properties (2 properties with current impact). The area of their impact ranges between restricted and localised and all sites report having some capacity of management to respond. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and decreasing.

Invasive/alien terrestrial species are considered as being a one off or rare event, and its area of impact is mostly restricted or localised. For only 1 property this issue is considered as ongoing, and for 2 properties the impact is significant. While many of the sites have high to medium capacity to respond, for 4 properties, there is a lack of capacities. On average, the trend of development of this factor is between static and decreasing.

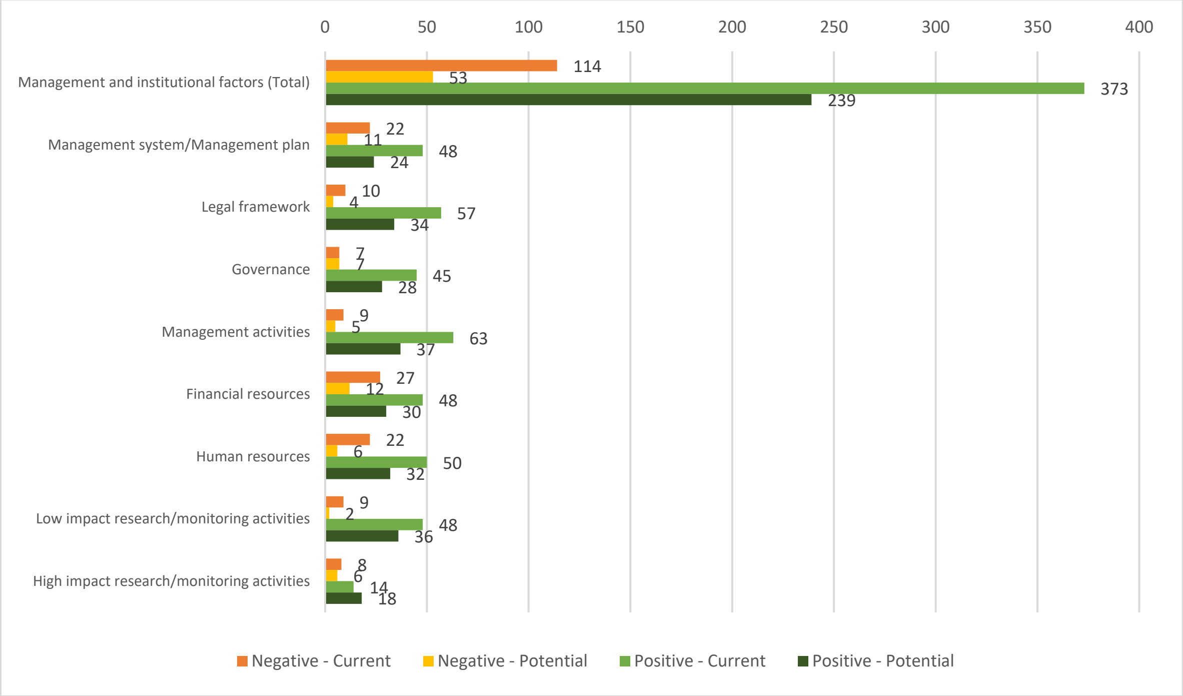
Invasive/alien freshwater species are reported to be currently affecting 4 cultural and 2 natural properties. The area of effect is restricted or localised. None of the sites considered the issue as widespread, ongoing, or major. The capacity to manage is usually medium to low, and for only 1 property, there is a lack of capacity to respond. The average trend of development of this factor is mostly decreasing. Moreover, the impact of invasive/alien marine species appears to affect a very limited number of sites bordering a marine area. The area of effect is restricted or localised, and the impact is insignificant or minor. The capacity to manage is medium to low.

Hyper-abundant species appear to be currently negatively impacting 2 properties, and potentially 5 properties, mostly consisting of extensive landscapes. The average trend of development is between static and increasing. Moreover, modified genetic material was reported as negatively impacting only 1 property, and potentially impacting 2 properties. The area of effect is between restricted and localised, with insignificant or minor impact.

3.4.13. Management and institutional factors

The factors that fall under management and institutional factors include management systems/plan, legal framework, governance, management activities, financial resources, human resources, low impact research/monitoring activities and high impact research/monitoring activities. This group of factors has a foremost impact on properties in the Region, mostly identified as being positive, both inside and outside the properties. The most common positive factors originating inside the property are management activities and legal frameworks, while the most prevailing negative factors originating from inside the property are financial and human resources, in addition to management system/management plan. Financial and human resources are typically viewed as a factor that will continue to increase and have a negative impact. Moreover, it is noteworthy that some of the factors are closely interrelated and are often part of a unified management system. A fully functional management system requires the functionality of each of its components, which has been reflected in specific comments of site managers that draw links between the management issues they are facing.

Properties in conflict affected areas, appear to be facing a higher number of issues with regard to management systems, legal frameworks, management activities and human resources.



Factors affecting the property: management and institutional factors

Management systems and management plans are currently considered as having a predominantly positive impact (48 properties), while for 24 properties, they have the potential to be of positive impact. Nevertheless, for 22 properties, the management system/plan has a current negative impact, while a potential negative impact is recorded for 11 properties. Comments on the negative impact were related to the current lack of a management plan, or the fact that management system is not adapting to growing risks. While for the vast majority of properties, the impact of management systems/management plans is significant or major, for 3 properties, the impact is considered as insignificant. The vast majority of site managers reported a high or medium capacity/resources to deal with this factor, except in 2 case where capacities appear to be lacking, both of which are located in conflict areas. The trend of development of this factor is strongly increasing.

Legal frameworks are perceived largely as having a positive impact (57 properties), while for another 34 properties, it has a potential positive impact. Nevertheless, for 10 properties this factor has a current negative impact. Some site managers reported on legal frameworks that have been recently adopted or are in the process of being adopted. Other respondents mentioned the need to strengthen such frameworks. For the majority of properties, the impact of legal frameworks is considered as significant or major, while for a few others, it is minor or insignificant. The capacities of management are usually high or medium, with 6 sites mentioning low capacity and 3 sites informing of its absence. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

As regards governance, it is considered of a current positive impact (45 properties), and of a potentially positive impact for 28 properties. It has a significant or major impact on most of the properties, while for 10 properties, the impact is minor and for 2 properties, it is insignificant. For most of the properties, there is high to medium capacity to manage, while for 9 properties, it is considered low and it is absent for 2 properties, which can be attributed to the conflict situations. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

For the majority of properties, the impact of management activities is ongoing (40 properties) and significant (50 properties). For 10 properties, the impact is major, and for 3 properties, it is insignificant. Most of the properties have high and medium capacities for management (35 and 27 properties respectively). For 3 properties in conflict affected areas, capacities to manage are absent. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Site managers' responses concerning financial resources indicate a current positive impact (48 properties), while other site managers noted its potential positive impact in 30 properties. Nevertheless, for 27 properties financial resources, or lack thereof, are currently considered to have a negative impact. In commentary, financial and human resources were often mentioned simultaneously. All of the natural properties in the Region indicated that the main issue they face in the institutional sphere is related to financial resources, and the need to have stable funding resources. For the majority of properties, the impact is significant or major, highlighting the crucial role of having adequate financial resources. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Similarly, human resources are generally perceived as having a current positive impact (50 properties), with many noting its potential positive impact (32 properties). On the other hand, a number of site managers highlighted the negative impact, or lack thereof, of human resources (22 properties). For 3 properties, the impact of human resources is insignificant. On average, the trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

Site managers of all of the natural sites reported the usefulness of having low impact research and monitoring activities, which on the whole received a significant number of positive mentions (84 properties), in comparison to the overall number of negative mentions (11 mentions). For 5 properties, the area of their effect is considered as widespread. For 10 properties, the capacity for management is low and for 2 properties it is absent. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

On the other hand, high impact research/monitoring activities have been reported less often, and are widespread in only 2 properties. For 14 properties, the impact is considered as major or significant, while for 12 properties it is minor or insignificant. The average trend of development of this factor is between static and increasing.

3.4.14. Other factors

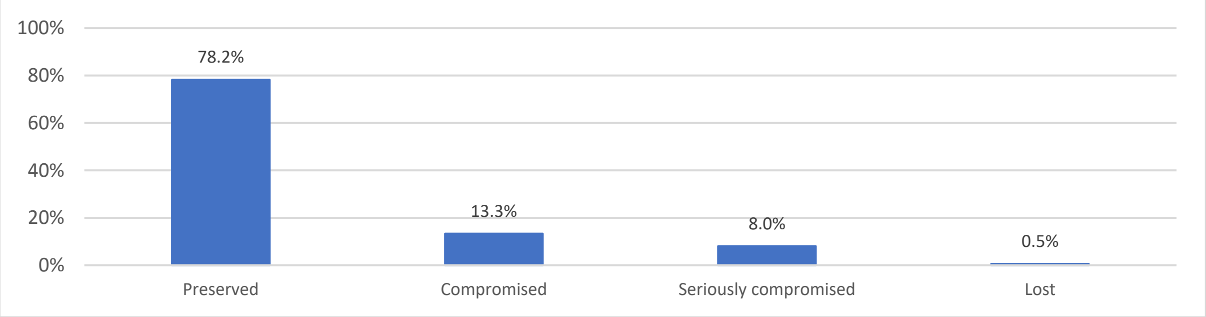
Additional input concerning other factors was provided by some site managers, such as in relation to the role of the local community in managing factors, coordination issues between different actors, difficulties in monitoring and application of regulatory provisions, and changes in activities resulting in abandonment and migration of the indigenous population. In addition, positive commentary was provided, such as in relation to management, capacity building, and rehabilitation work.

3.4.15. *Serial inscriptions (national or transnational)*

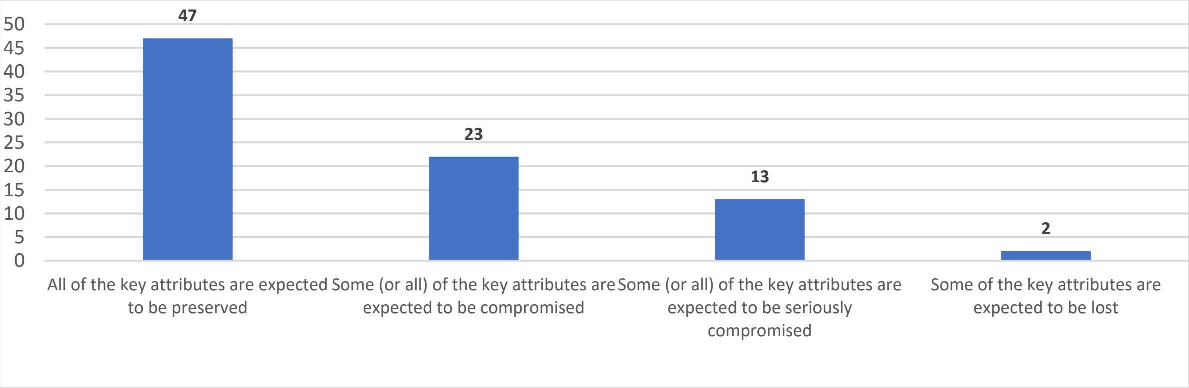
Considering that the factors addressed in previous questions could affect the multiple components included in a serial site in different ways, for some properties, all of the components could be affected by the factors, and there is no specific impact on individual components, but some factors are more relevant to certain components. Additional information was provided regarding specific impacts on certain components of serial properties.

3.4.16. *Prediction of the state of conservation at next cycle of Periodic Reporting*

While noting that for 7 cultural properties, no information was provided regarding the prediction of the state of conservation at the next cycle, overall, site managers consider that the majority of the key attributes of the properties (78.2%) will be preserved for the next cycle of Periodic Reporting. However, only slightly more than half (47) of the site managers considered that all of the attributes of the respective properties will be fully preserved. For 13 properties, 8 of which are on the list of World Heritage in Danger, key attributes might be seriously compromised, and for two properties, key attributes might be lost.



Prediction of state of conservation per percentage of overall attributes

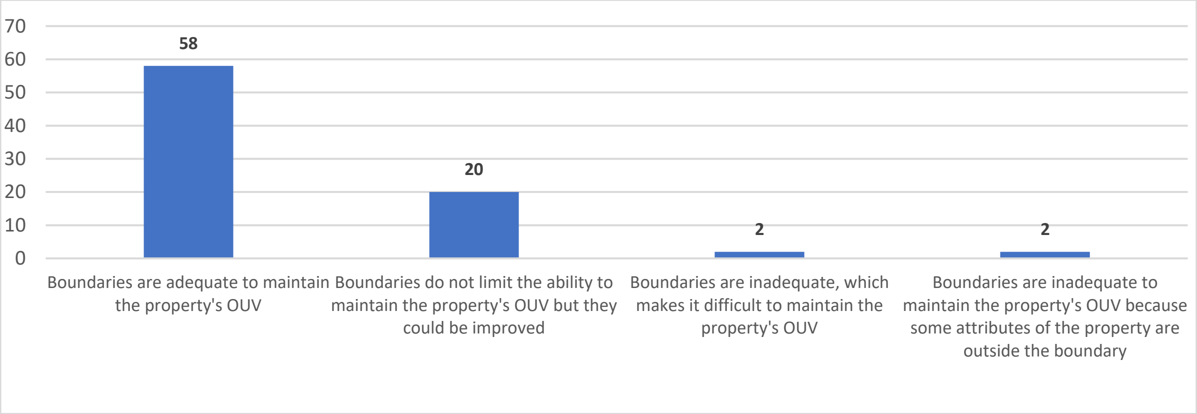


Prediction of state of conservation per number of site manager responses

3.5. Protection and Management of the Property

3.5.1. *Boundaries and buffer zones*

Boundaries have been considered as adequate for 58 World Heritage properties in the Region, including the 3 mixed and 5 natural sites. On the other hand, for 20 cultural properties, the designated boundaries could be improved although they do not limit the ability to maintain the property's OUV. Moreover, most site managers considered that the boundaries of their sites were clearly known by both the management authorities and the local communities (64 sites, 78% of sites), while for 17 sites (21%) knowledge of the boundaries by the local community needs improvement, and for 1 site, neither the authorities nor local community had a clear knowledge of these boundaries.



Adequacy of boundaries to maintain the property's OUV

With regard to buffer zones, 7 sites are considered to be still in need of a buffer zone, while for more than half of the sites (45 sites) the buffer zone is considered adequate, for 17 sites (21% of respondents) it could be improved, and for 5 sites there are inadequacies in the buffer zone, which make it difficult to maintain the property's OUV. Some respondents considered that in areas adjacent to the buffer zone, there is an evident risk for the OUV due to new developments, urban expansion, high-rise buildings and constructions. These comments indicate that the buffer zone is a useful and necessary tool, but does not fully guarantee the maintenance of the OUV of the property. Nevertheless, some comments referred to adapting special urban regulations and protection beyond the buffer zone.

Regarding knowledge of the buffer zone, overall, authorities are well aware of the delimitation of the property and its buffer zone, but there is room for improvement concerning the knowledge of the limits by the local community and landowners. Furthermore, several site managers expressed their intention to update the limits and boundaries and/or buffer zones of their sites.

3.5.2. Protective measures

The current legal framework is considered as adequate for 44 properties, including 3 natural and 2 mixed sites, providing a satisfactory basis for effective management and protection. For 30 properties, the legal framework is considered adequate, but there are deficiencies in application, and for 7 sites the framework is inadequate to maintain the OUV. Most of the properties where the framework is considered as inadequate are in conflict affected situations.

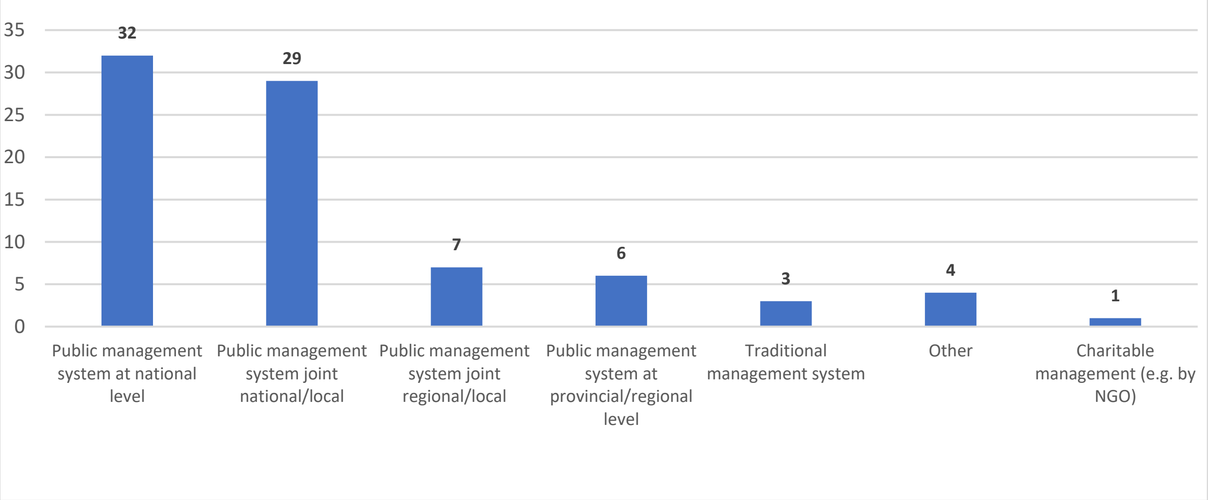
Regarding legal protection measures for buffer zones, for 29 properties the framework is adequate with some deficiencies in implementation, for 11 properties the legal framework for the buffer zone is inadequate, and for one property there is no legal protection for the buffer zone. As previously mentioned, for some properties, there are issues concerning the wider setting of the property, mainly in relation with development and urban encroachment. In this regard, the legal framework in the broader setting is considered adequate for 46 properties. On the other hand, for 5 properties, the existing regulation is considered inadequate and for 4 properties there is no legal framework for maintaining the OUV in the wider setting of the property.

As regards the enforcement of the legal framework, they are considered acceptable in more than half of the properties (48 properties) and adequate (19 properties). However, for 13 properties there are major deficiencies and for 2 properties there is no capacity/resources to enforce the regulation.

Despite the overall positive feedback, comments highlighted difficulties in coordination among various levels of authority, which result in situations where authorisations for development and urban planning do not necessarily comply with the heritage-related regulations. Other cases underscored the existence of adequate regulations, while highlighting that deficiencies in implementation are due to external factors. Some sites located in conflict areas, mentioned this situation as deterring the implementation of the legal frameworks.

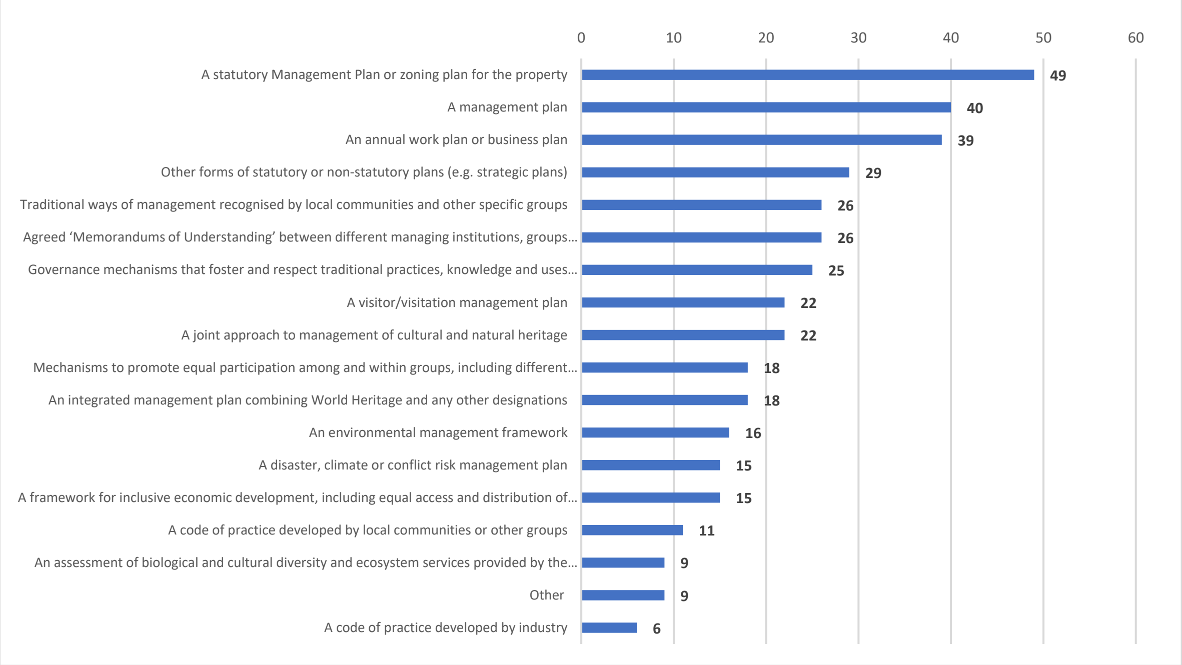
3.5.3. Management system/Management plan

The majority of properties are regulated under a public management system at the national level and/or coordinated between the national and local levels, and 13 properties fall under public management, related to provincial, regional and local levels. Therefore, in total, 74 of the 82 sites are managed by public institutions. At the same time, there is no property in the Region managed by private ownership or by the local community.



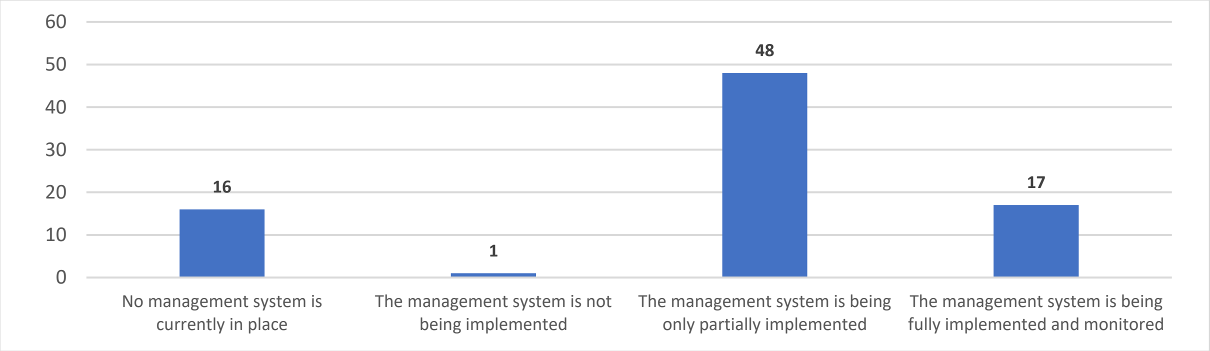
Governance and management system of the property most match the World Heritage property

Concerning the existence of a management plan or a management system, such an instrument was confirmed for 64 properties, with the most widespread systems being the statutory Management Plan or Zoning Plan (49 properties) and/or Management Plan (40 properties), in addition to other forms of plans (29 properties). Moreover, for 18 properties there is an integrated management plan with other international designations.



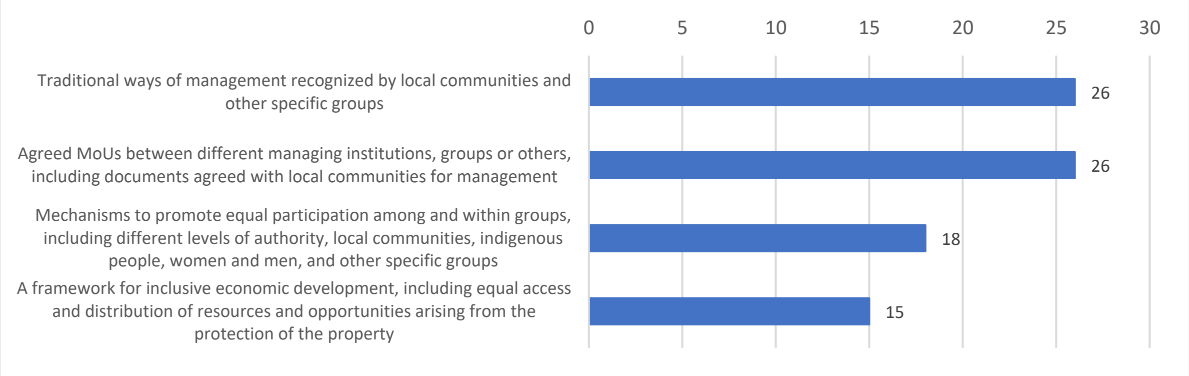
Management tools being used to help to protect the property

In addition, for 26 properties, there are traditional ways of management recognised by communities and other specific groups, and for 25 properties, the established governance mechanisms foster and respect traditional practices, while for 11 properties, a code of practice was developed by local communities.



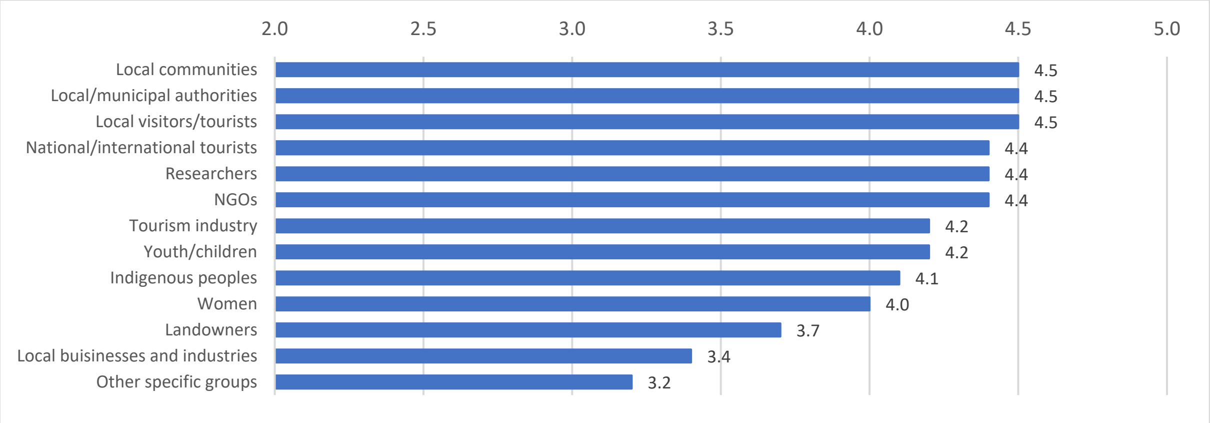
Implementation of management system

In terms of implementation of management systems, the majority of properties confirmed that it is partially implemented (48 properties). Moreover, the participation of local communities in site management is relatively poor, with only 15 properties having some type of instrument to guarantee inclusive economic development and the distribution of resources and opportunities derived from the site being inscribed as World Heritage. For only 18 properties the participation of diverse groups, including different levels of authorities, local communities, indigenous people, women and men, and other specific groups, is being promoted through different mechanisms.



Local communities in management

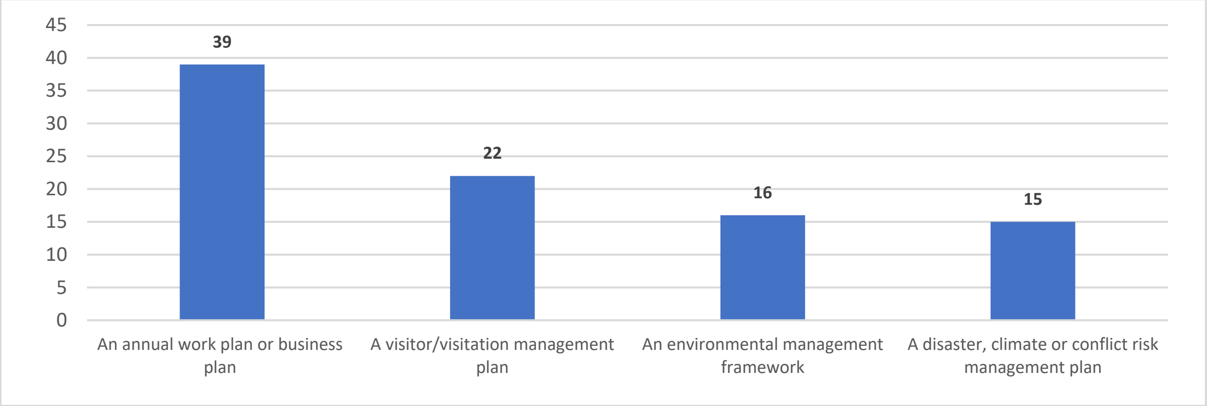
Generally, the management systems that are in place do not systematically integrate mechanisms to promote effective participation of different stakeholders living within or near the World Heritage property or its buffer zone. They also tend to include more formal procedures for the participation of local authorities, followed by the local community and indigenous people, women and landowners.



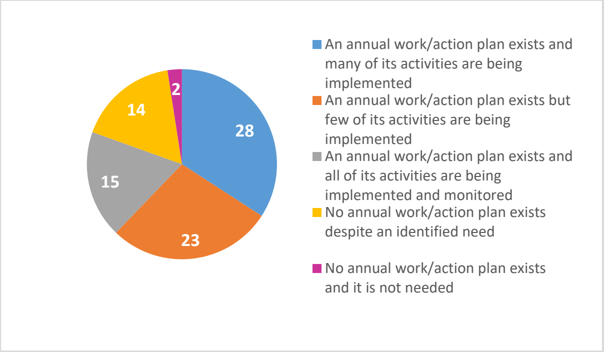
Rating of cooperation levels with different stakeholders, from a scale of 2 (non-existent) to 5 (good).

Concerning the level of cooperation with other groups, the relationship with local authorities and local communities is rated between fair and good. Levels of cooperation with local visitors and tourists, national and international tourists, researchers, NGOs and the tourism industry have been rated similarly. The relationship with landowners and local business received lower ratings. When it comes to specific social groups, the highest score was given to youth and children, followed by indigenous peoples and women.

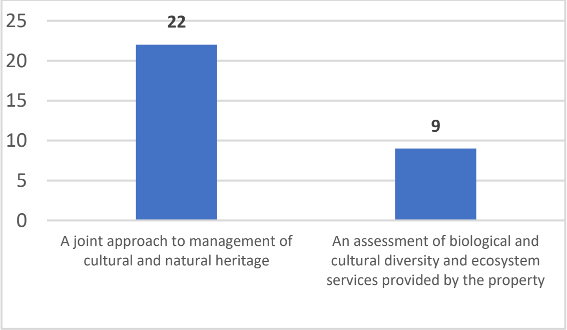
As regards management instruments, an annual work plan or business plan is present for at least 39 properties in the Region.



Other management instruments



Implementation of an annual plan



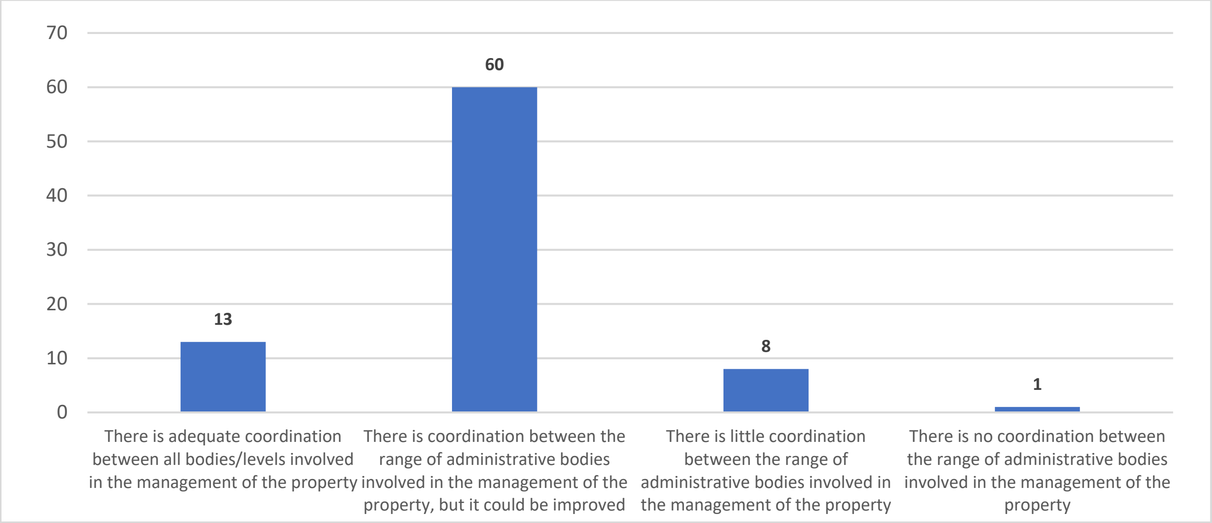
Joint approach to cultural and natural heritage

On the other hand, among the sites adopting an annual work plan, for only 15 properties, there is confirmation that all of its activities are being implemented and monitored. There are 14 properties that do not have an annual plan, while their site managers do consider that there is a need for this type of instrument. For 22 properties, there is a visitor management plan, which is one of the key elements recommended when a site is inscribed on the World Heritage List. It is to be noted that environmental management frameworks and disaster risk management plans are limited in the Region.

Among the multiplicity of existing formulas for the adequate management of the site, a few sites also have codes of practice, with 11 properties that have a code established and applied by the local community, while 6 properties have such codes developed with the help of industries.

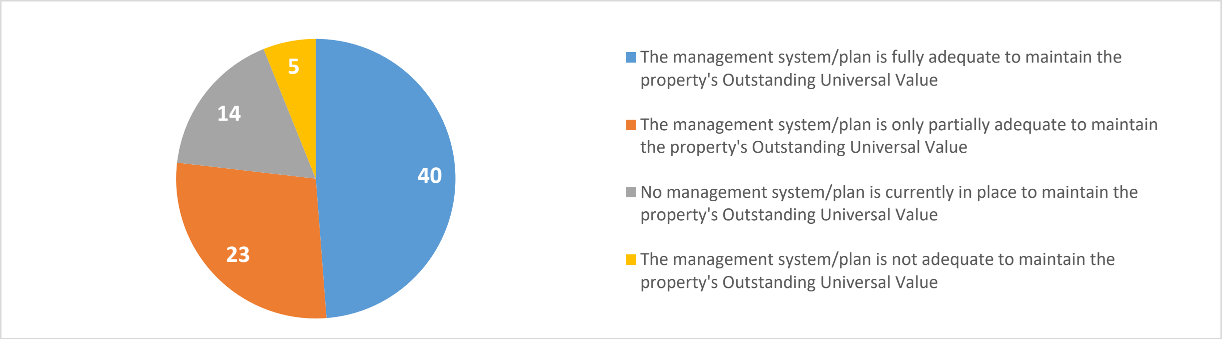
Moreover, for 22 properties, there is a joint approach for managing the cultural and natural heritage, and only 9 site managers mentioned that an assessment of biological and cultural diversity and ecosystem services is provided. Nevertheless, such results could be explained by the low number of natural and mixed sites in the Arab States.

In terms of the adequacy of coordination among the different administrative bodies, for the majority of properties, there is coordination, but it could be improved, while for only 13 properties it is considered as adequate.



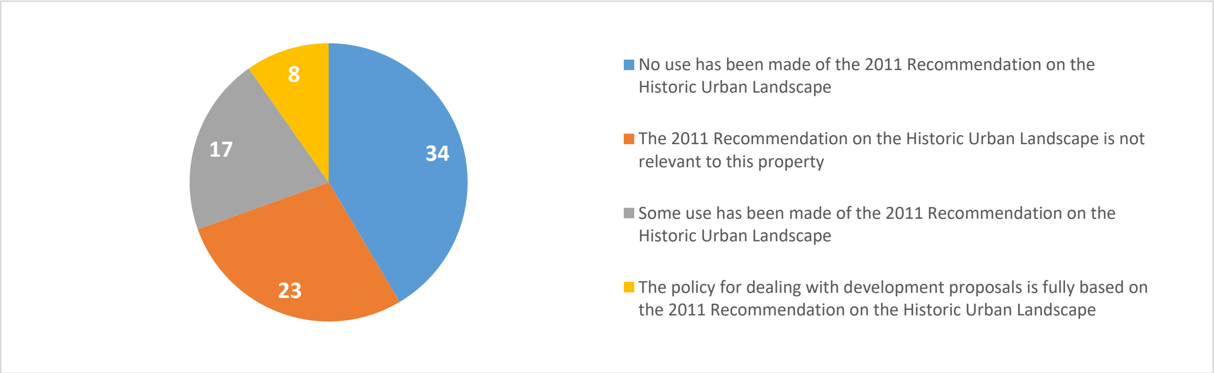
Adequacy of coordination among the different administrative bodies involved in the management of the property

Furthermore, the management system is considered to be fully adequate to maintain the property's OUV for nearly half of the sites (48%, 40 sites), while for 23 properties, it is only partially adequate. Properties where the management system is considered as inadequate to maintain the OUV, are either urban centres or those located in conflict affected areas.



Adequacy of management system/plan to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value

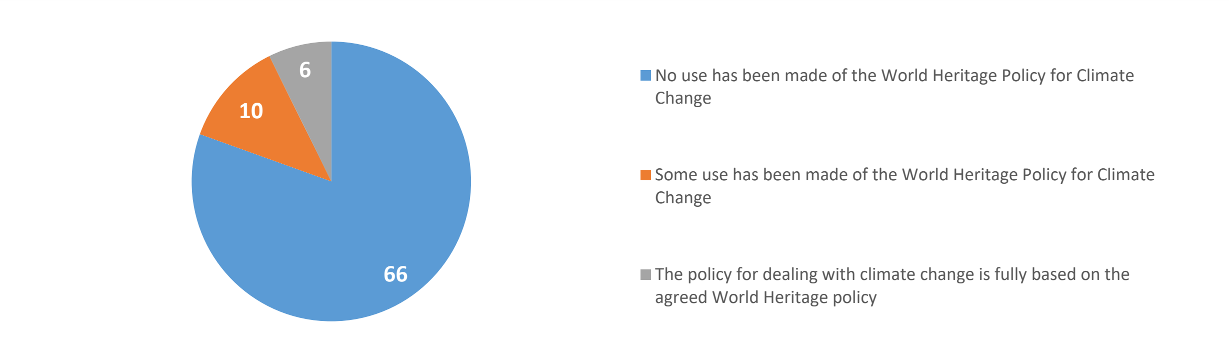
As regards to whether the management system contributes to achieving the objectives of the 2015 World Heritage Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the *World Heritage Convention*, the overall results show that management systems in place contribute to fostering inclusive local economic development and to social inclusion and equity in a significant way. These systems are also perceived to be contributing to conflict prevention, including respect for cultural diversity, and the integration of a human rights-based approach, to be followed by the provision of ecosystem services and benefits to the community, and the contribution to gender equality.



Use of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape in developing policies and best practices for the protection of this property.

On the other hand, for 34 properties, the 2011 HUL Recommendation has not been used for developing policies and best practices for protection, and for 17 properties some use of the document has been reported. For only 8 properties the policy for dealing with development proposals is fully based on the 2011 Recommendation.

Similarly, the use of the Policy Document of the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties appears to be not widespread across the Region, with the vast majority of properties (66 properties) not making use of it. Only 1 natural and 1 mixed site mentioned some use of this document, in addition to 8 cultural sites. Five cultural and 1 natural site confirmed that this document is fully integrated into their policy of dealing with climate change. Nevertheless, the future development of different instruments related to climate change was mentioned.

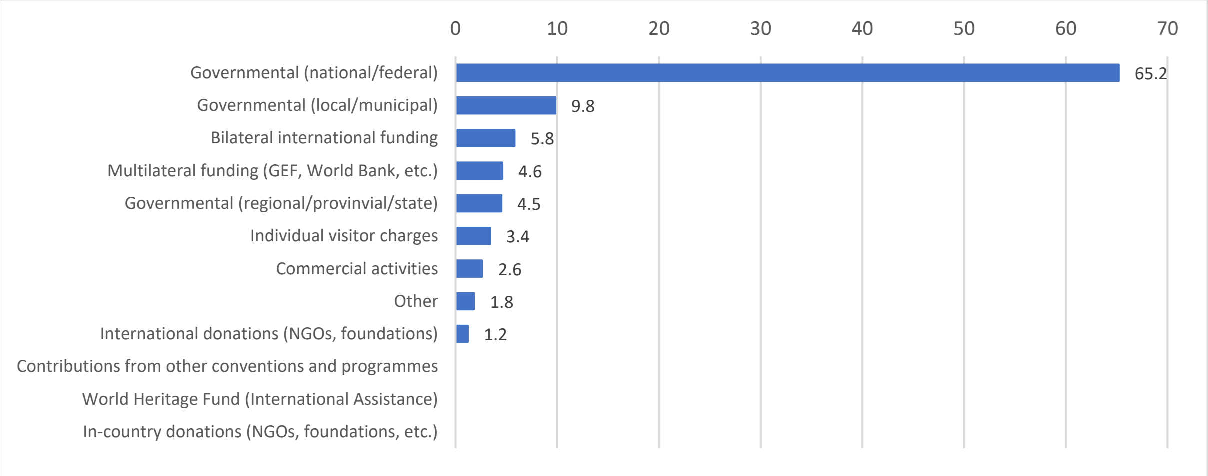


Use of the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties at the property.

Moreover, the Strategy for reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage properties appears to be better known in the Region, although site managers of 49 properties noted that no use has been made of the strategy, while 29 properties have made use of it. It is noteworthy that full implementation of strategy has not been achieved for any of the 5 natural sites, and for only 1 mixed and 1 natural site there was some use.

3.6. Financial and Human Resources

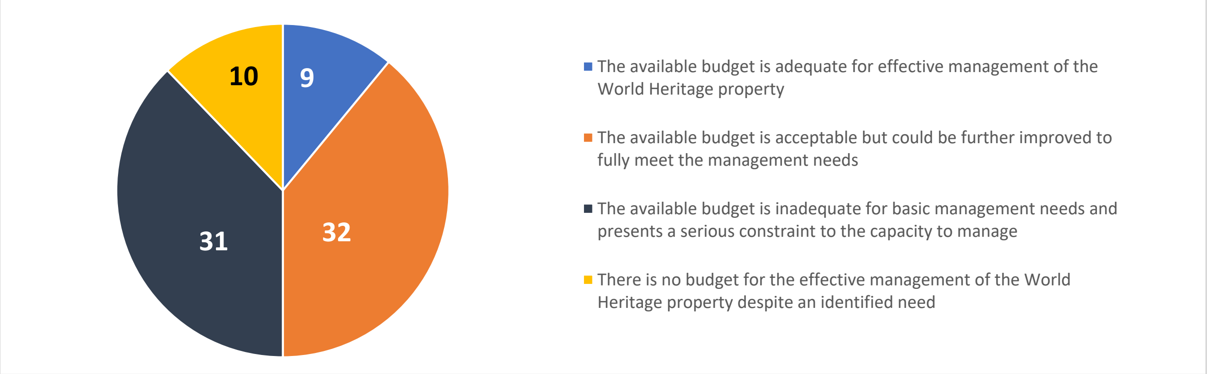
Primarily, properties in the Region receive funds for project costs from public institutions, mainly from governmental institutions at the national and federal levels. Bilateral international funding agreements come second in terms of funding resources, while governments at the local or municipal levels come third, but with comparatively less significant contribution. The commercial use of the sites appears to be minimal.



Sources of funds - running costs.

Concerning running costs, the funding sources are very similar to the ones for projects, the vast majority of which is from the governments at the national and federal levels. Funds from individual visitor charges and commercial activities appear slightly higher than in the case of project costs, but they remain low. It is noteworthy that the budget is considered as adequate for the effective management of the World Heritage property for only 9 properties. For 10 properties, most of which are in conflict affected areas, the budget has been reported as absent.

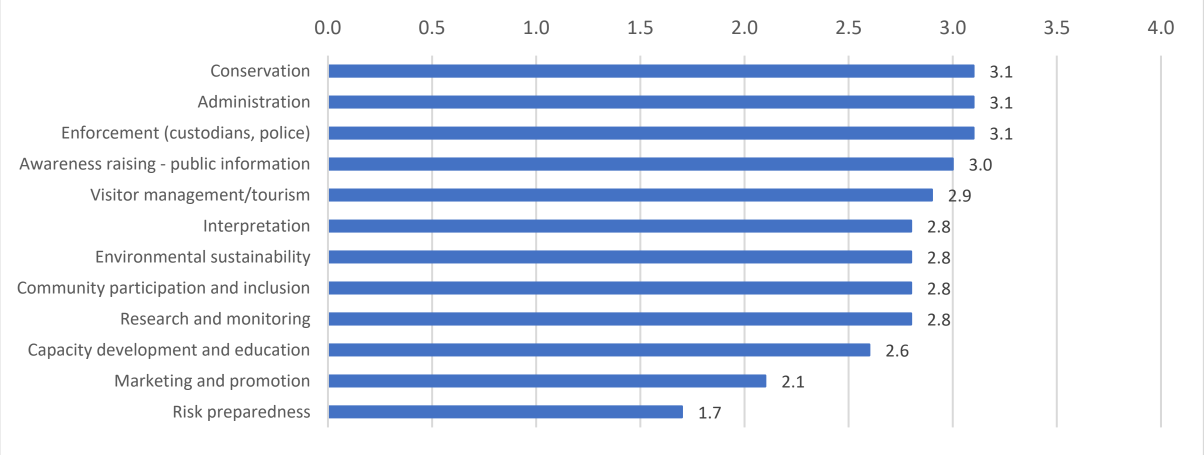
Moreover, for 22 properties, sources are secure for the medium and long terms, while for 35 properties the sources of funding are considered secure over the medium-term and planning is underway to secure it in the long-term. Nevertheless, comments have highlighted the lack of conservation and restoration activities due to limited resources or the impossibility to secure funds to develop projects and initiatives in previously identified needs. In addition, for 25 properties, sources of funding are not considered as secure, the majority of them located in conflict affected areas (18 properties). The impact of conflict and instability on securing funds appears to be substantial, and site managers mentioned in their comments the importance of further support from the international community.



Availability of current budget sufficient to manage the World Heritage property effectively.

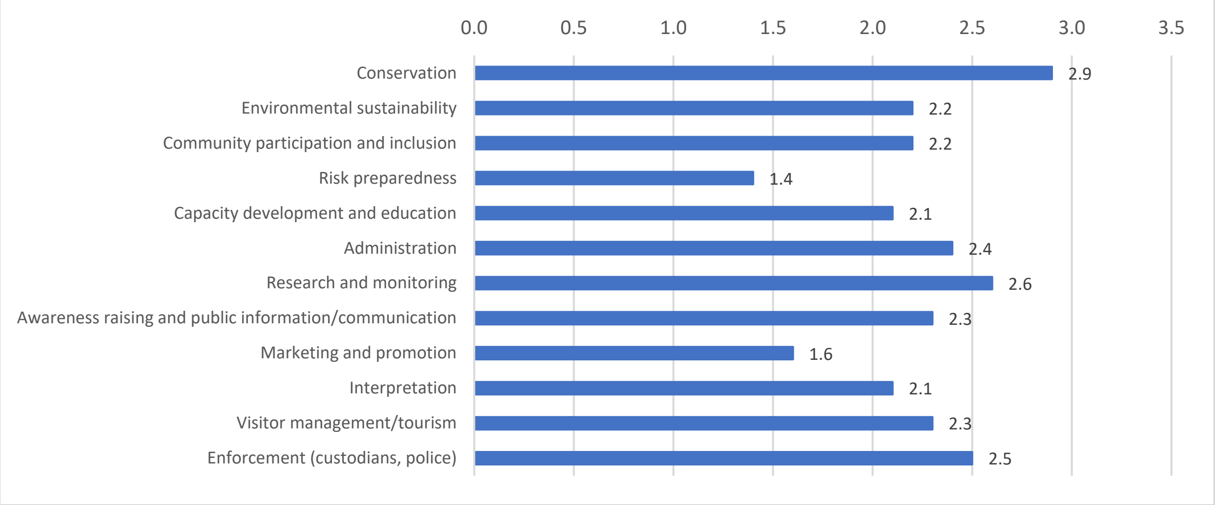
Together with financial resources, human resources are an issue of concern for the Region. For more than half of the properties (46), the available human resources only partly meet the management needs, and for 21 properties resources were reported as inadequate. Women's participation in the management, conservation and interpretation of the site was reported as lower than men's involvement. This difference is higher among the participants from the local community, where just 32.4% of the people involved are women. Among the persons involved from outside the local community, women add up to 42.4% of the total.

Concerning the availability of professionals for the management needs of sites, capacities in conservation, administration and enforcement have been ranked highest. These were followed by awareness-raising, and, visitor management and tourism. The availability of professionals in risk preparedness received the lowest ranking.



Rating of the availability of professionals in each mentioned disciplines. Scale from 1 (not available) to 4 (good).

As regards training opportunities, none of the proposed categories reached the rating of fair, and all the answers scored the training opportunities between fair and poor or even non-existent. The results are broadly in line with the already identified professional availability, and respondents inform that there are more training opportunities in conservation, than in risk preparedness or marketing. Moreover, the World Heritage Strategy for Capacity Building document does not seem to be widely used in the Region. For 47 properties, the strategy has not been implemented in any way, for 28 properties, there is some use, and for 7 properties capacity building is fully based on the strategy.

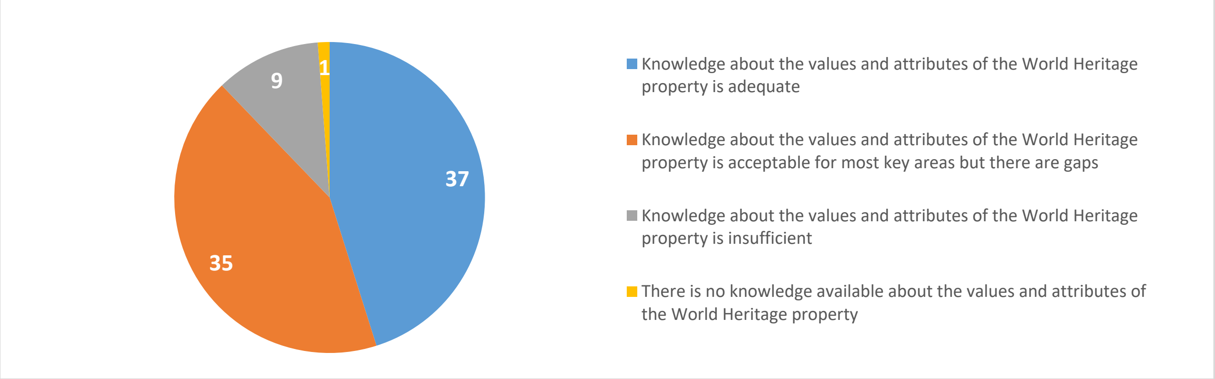


Rating of the availability of training opportunities in each mentioned field. Scale from 1 (not available) to 4 (good).

Concerning site-specific capacity-building plans and programmes, only 10 properties have a fully operational capacity-building programme and 30 properties have this programme partially implemented. Another 30 properties do not have a plan, and 12 properties have a plan which is not being implemented. Overall, this reflects the relatively low priority given to training. The need for more training programmes to improve skills in management and conservation was highlighted in specific commentary.

3.7. Scientific Studies and Research Projects

The majority of respondents consider that there is sufficient knowledge about the values and attributes of the World Heritage property: for 37 properties it is adequate and for 35 other properties, available studies and knowledge were acceptable, but that there were gaps in this knowledge. Notably, for 4 out of the 5 natural sites, it was reported that there were still gaps in scientific and traditional knowledge. For 9 properties, knowledge about the attributes and values is insufficient, and for 1 property it is not available.



Adequacy on the knowledge about the values and attributes of the World Heritage property.

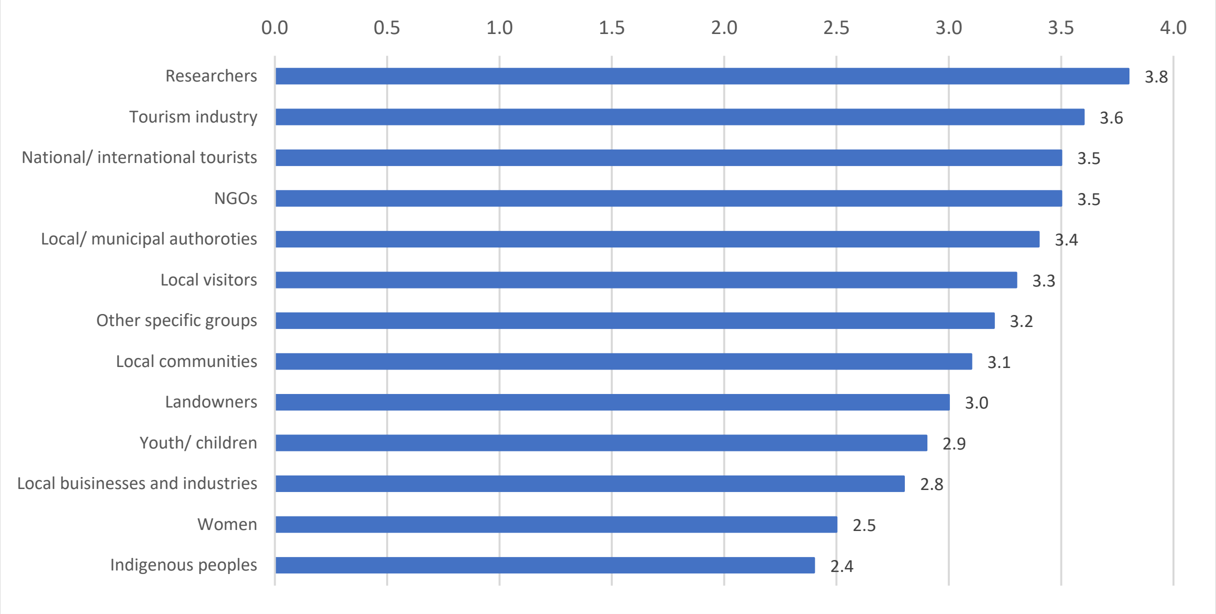
On the other hand, only 19 properties count on a comprehensive and integrated programme of research, and the biggest number of responses highlighted that, while there is considerable research, it is not directed towards management needs or the improvement of the understanding of the OUV (31 properties). It is noteworthy that for 14 properties, there is no research taking place despite and identified need, and for 18 properties, the amount of research is small and not planned.

For some properties, there are existing partnership programmes with universities and academic centres. The need to develop partnerships and funds to establish an integrated and sustainable research programme was highlighted. Furthermore, research results are widely shared among local communities and partners in the majority of properties (72 properties). However, 34 properties among them do not have active outreach to national or international agencies, while for 20 properties the research results are shared with communities and some national agencies, and for another 20 properties there is also international outreach. For 10 properties, some of which are in conflict affected areas, the results are not shared.

3.8. Education, Information and Awareness Building

Awareness and understanding about the existence and justification for inscription is higher among researchers, tourism industry, national and international tourists and NGOs, than among local authorities, local communities and landowners. Youth, children, women and indigenous peoples are reported to have less awareness and understanding of the topic.

Additionally, for 6 properties, there is a planned and effective education and awareness programme for children and youth that contributes to the protection of the World Heritage property, and, for 21 properties, such a programme only partially meets the needs. For 33 properties these programmes are limited and on ad hoc basis, and there are no such programmes in the case of 22 properties. It is noteworthy that the properties having no programme at all are cultural sites. Moreover, most of the available educational programmes primarily target local communities, youth and children, followed by local authorities and local visitors. Women are considered as a target audience at 48 properties, amounting to more than half of the properties in the Region.

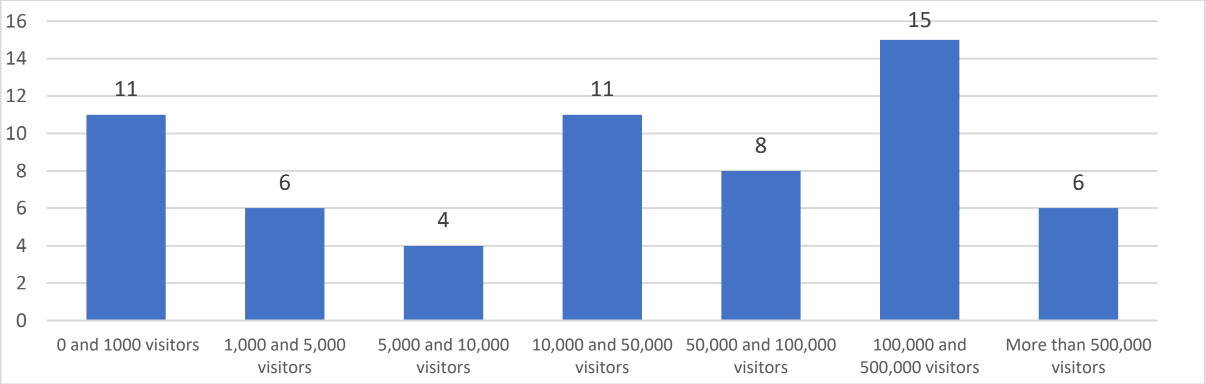


Awareness and understanding about the existence and justification for inscription. Scale from 1 (non-existent) to 4 (good).

Overall, trails/routes, guided tours, and printed information are mostly rated as fair in providing education, information, interpretation and awareness building, with guided tours and trails apparently more developed in natural and mixed sites. Site museums, visitor centres and online information services follow, rated between poor and fair, while transportation facilities and information booths are mostly rated as poor.

3.9. Visitor Management

The annual number of visitors varies significantly from one site to another, with some sites receiving hundreds of thousands of visitors, while other sites in the Region barely receive hundreds of visitors per year or even less.



Range of number of visitors in the World Heritage properties

Some properties reported that there is no system in place for measuring the number of visitors, and several properties located in conflict affected areas, have not been receiving visitors. The majority of properties (53 properties) rely on entry tickets and registries to collect visitor statistics. Moreover, in the case of 38 properties, tourists and visitors usually spend no more than 3 hours, and for 19 properties tourists spend the whole day, without overnight stay.

For 8 properties only, there is a planned and effective strategy to manage visitors, tourism activity and its derived impacts, while for 31 cultural properties, a strategy does not exist. For 27 properties, there is a strategy, with some deficiencies in implementation, and for 16 others there is no implementation of the adopted strategy.

The use of properties by visitors is considered to be effectively managed in only 16 properties, while for 35 properties there is room for improvement. On the other hand, there are 20 properties with no management of visitor use, despite it being considered a need. In addition, the effectiveness of tourism management is not regularly monitored in 50 properties, while in 6 properties monitoring is done through the UNESCO Tourism Management Assessment Tool, and in 25 other properties, it is done using other systems.

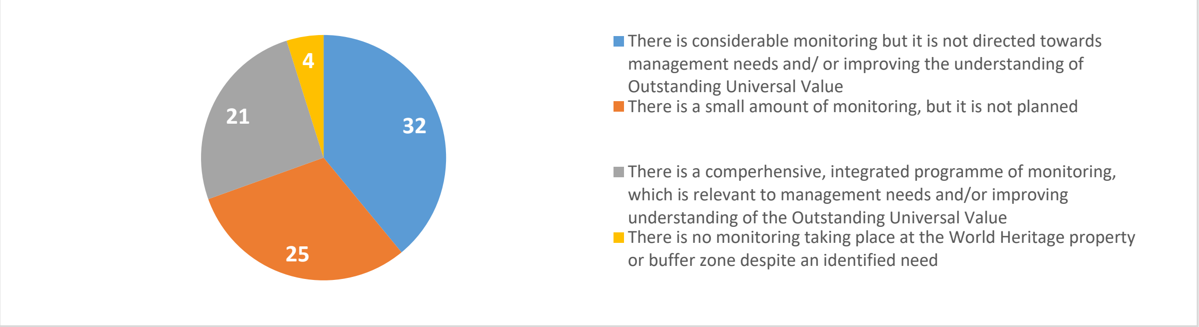
Cooperation with the tourism industry to present the OUV and increase appreciation is not widespread in the Region, whereby it has been reported to be good for 15 properties, while for 27 properties it appears to be limited, and for 25 properties it is confined to administrative or regulatory matters.

In terms of tourism revenue, it is collected in the case of 50 properties, but in only 5 of them, it makes a substantial contribution to the management of the property. For 32 properties, fees from visitors are not collected at all.

Furthermore, for only 10 properties, the OUV of the property is adequately presented and interpreted. Information concerning the OUV could be improved in the case of 40 properties, and for 19 properties, the presentation and interpretation of the OUV are not considered adequate, while for 13 properties, there is none. Site presentation seems to be much better for natural and mixed sites than cultural ones. The large majority of properties display the World Heritage emblem, with 16 properties without any visible emblem.

Concerning locally driven sustainable tourism initiatives, for 31 properties, there are such initiatives, for 35 properties none have been identified, while for 15 properties, such initiatives are reported as not applicable. A significant number of properties (35 properties) do not have specific mechanisms to ensure that benefits from tourism activities are shared with local communities.There are 29 properties where the local community directly benefits from such activities at the site, while for 17 properties, this was considered as not applicable.

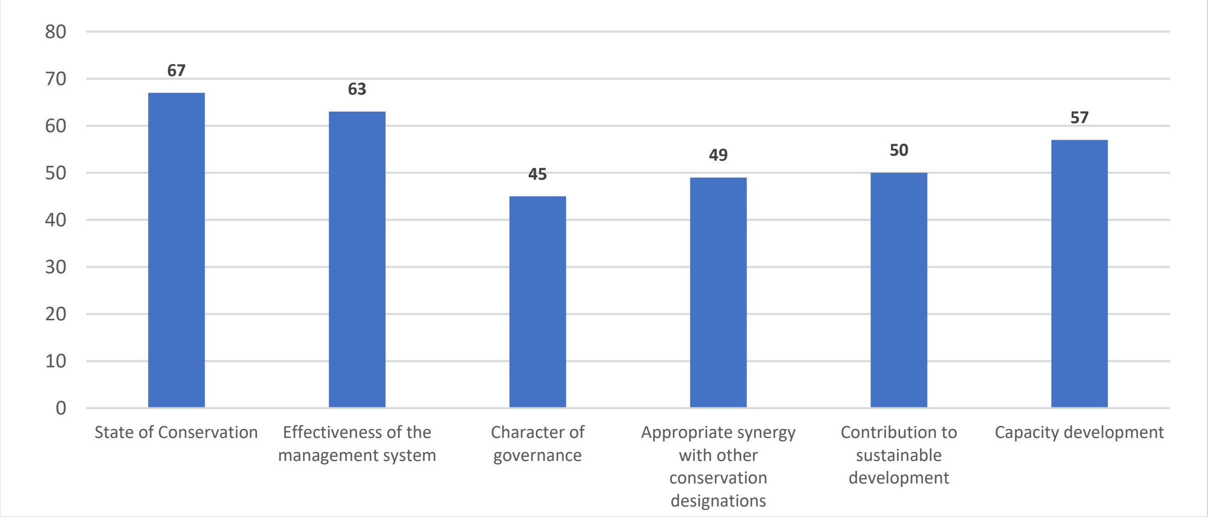
3.10. Monitoring



State of monitoring at World Heritage properties.

Monitoring activities appear to be relatively widespread in the Region, whereby for only 4 properties, it is reported that there is no monitoring taking place, neither at the property nor the buffer zone despite an identified need. Notably, these are all cultural sites, the majority of them being in conflict affected areas. There is a comprehensive integrated programme of monitoring, which is relevant to management needs and/or improving the understanding of the OUV for 21 properties. As for the remaining 57 properties, there is either considerable monitoring but not directed towards management needs and/or towards the improving the understanding of the OUV, or there is only little monitoring. It is noteworthy that all of the natural and mixed sites have monitoring programmes in place.

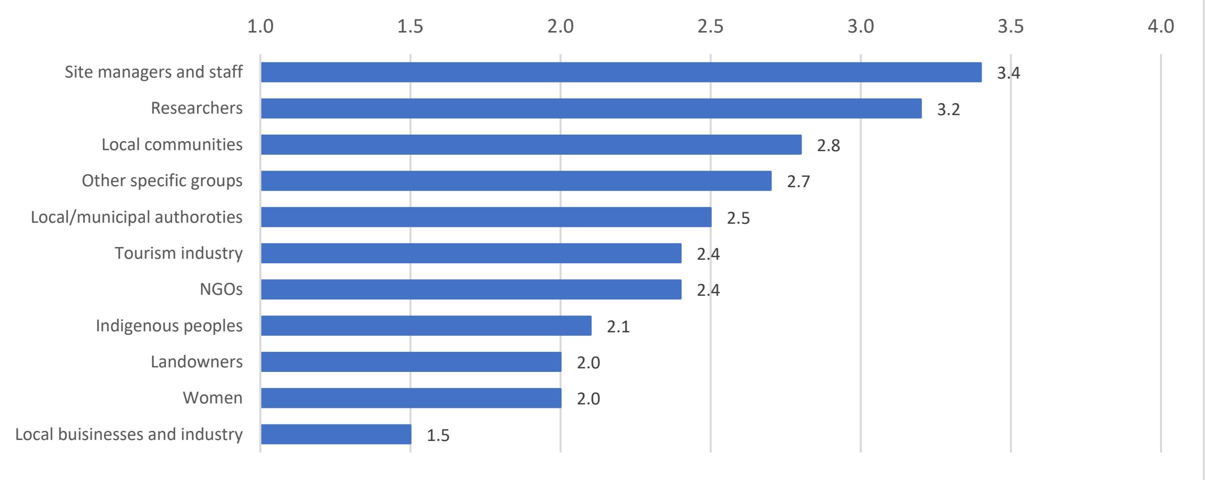
Concerning whether necessary information is available to define key indicators for measuring the state of conservation and whether these indicators are used in monitoring how the OUV of the property is being maintained, for 49 properties the information is adequate and key indicators have been defined but could be improved. For 11 properties, the defined key indicators are being used in monitoring of how the OUV of the property is being maintained. On the other hand, for 12 properties, although information of the values of the site is sufficient to define key indicators, it has not been done, and for 10 properties, there is little or no information to work towards monitoring indicators, 8 of them being in conflict affected areas. Additionally, in the case of 43 properties, indicators were reported as defined and in use, while for 27 properties, indicators have been identified and defined, but have not been used.



Key monitoring indicators defined and in place for the principal aspects of the property.

Moreover, properties tend to have more indicators to monitor the state of conservation and the effectiveness of the management system than the character of governance, synergies with other conventions and designations, and the contribution to sustainable development.

The information provided on relevant key indicators adopted at properties varied, comprising indicators to monitor the buffer zone and beyond through permit control, heritage sustainability, inclusive and multilingual education, visitor infrastructure, development of policies and institutional framework, property protection in the context of war, focus on the state of conservation and implementation of the management plan, and sustainable tourism. Moreover, World Heritage managers/coordinators and staff and researchers are generally the most involved in monitoring, while most of the other groups are less involved in such activities. Regarding the status of implementation of the relevant World Heritage Committee recommendations, for 51 properties, it was confirmed that implementation is underway, while for 12 properties, it was reported that implementation is planned and for 4 properties, the implementation is complete. Some of the recommendations that were highlighted concern the elaboration of a management plan, creation of a boundary/buffer zone and other recommendations related to conservation and restoration works. Furthermore, it was underlined that some properties that are in conflict affected areas are facing challenges in monitoring. Overall, site managers showed a commitment to address recommendations by the World Heritage Committee.



Involvement of different groups in monitoring on a scale from 1 (non-existent) to 4 (good).

3.11. Identification of Priority Management Needs

This section of the report highlights the main areas related to management needs as identified by the respondents.

- <u>Boundaries and buffer zones</u>
  Based on the reported data, boundaries of 4 World Heritage properties and those of 5 Buffer zones have been reported as inadequate to maintain the OUV . In the case of 7 properties, it was reported that the respective properties have no buffer zone, but there is a need for one, while for 8 other properties, there is no buffer zone and there is no need for one.

  In addition, in the case of 17 properties, the boundaries are not known by the local communities/landowners. Buffer zones of 3 properties are not known and recognised by the management authority or local communities/landowners, while for another 24 properties, they are not known by the local communities/landowners.

- <u>Legal framework</u>
  For 1 property, it has been reported that there is no legal framework, while for 7 properties, the legal framework is inadequate to maintain the OUV. In addition, for 11 properties, the legal framework in the buffer zone is inadequate, while in relation to the broader setting, 4 site managers reported that there is no legal framework for controlling use and activities and 5 site managers reported that the legal framework is inadequate.

- <u>Use of the UNESCO 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)</u>
  In relation to the 2011 HUL Recommendation, in the case of 34 properties no use has

been in developing policies and best practices for protection, while for properties some use has been made.

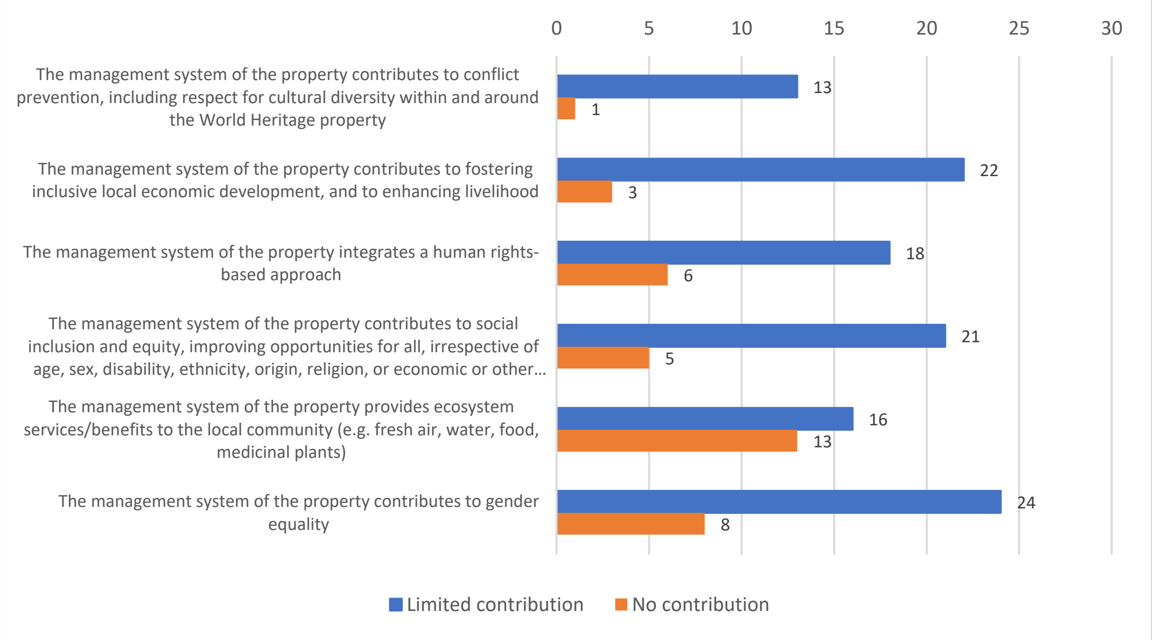
- <u>Use of the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties</u>
  Regarding whether any use has been made of the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties, 66 site managers reported that no use has been made, while 10 site managers confirmed that some use has been made.

- <u>Use of the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties</u>
  For 49 properties, no use has been made of the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties, while for 29 properties, some use has been made.

- <u>Coordination between various levels of administration involved in the management of World Heritage properties</u>
  For the vast majority of properties, there is coordination between the various levels of management, but needs improvement, while for 1 property, there is no coordination, and for 8 properties, there is little coordination.

- <u>Management systems and management plans</u>
  The management system/plan is partially adequate for maintaining the OUV in the case of 23 properties. For 14 properties, it was reported that there is no management system/plan currently in place, and for 5 properties, it is not adequate. The management system is only being partially implemented in 48 properties. An annual work/action plan does not exist for 14 properties despite an identified need, and for <u>2</u> properties, it is considered not needed.

  The extent to which the management system of the properties contributes to achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Committee's Policy for the Integration of Sustainable Development Perspectives into the Processes of the *World Heritage Convention*, appears to be limited at a number of properties.



Extent to which the management system of the properties contributes to achieving the objectives of the 2015 the Integration of Sustainable Development Perspectives into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention

- <u>Budget, funding and human resources</u>
  For 10 properties, it was reported that there is no budget to ensure effective management, while for 31 properties the available budget is inadequate, and for 32 properties the budget could be improved. Furthermore, 25 site managers reported that the existing sources of

funding are not secure. In addition, for four properties, there are no human resources dedicated to managing the property despite an identified need, for 21 properties they are inadequate and for 46 properties human resources partly meet the needs of the property.

- Capacity building
  The World Heritage Strategy for Capacity Building is not being used at 47 properties, while for 28 properties, only some use has been made. In relation to site specific capacity building plans/programmes, 30 site managers reported that there are no such plans or programmes, and that management is implemented by external staff, while 12 site managers noted that a plan or programme has been developed but is not being implemented, and skills are not being transferred. For 30 properties, a site-based capacity building plan or programme is in place and is partially implemented with some skills being transferred to those managing the property.

- Research programmes
  For 14 properties there is no research taking place directed towards management needs and/or improving understanding of the OUV , despite an identified need. For 18 properties, there is a small amount of research, and for 31 properties, there is considerable research taking place at the property but not directed at management needs and/or improving the OUV .

- Heritage education programmes
  For several properties, there is no heritage awareness programme for children and/or youth, while for some it exists, but is limited (respectively 22 and 33 properties). Only for 6 properties there is a planned education and awareness raising programme, and for 21 properties it only partly meets the needs.

- Visitor management and tourism strategies
  For the majority of properties there is no strategy that is being fully implemented to manage visitors, tourism activity and its derived economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Visitor use is also not effectively managed to maintain the OUV in a number of properties, and there is no sufficient cooperation between the tourism industry and the site management to improve visitor experiences and maintain the OUV.

- Interpretation of Outstanding Universal Value
  For a number of properties, the OUV of properties is not adequately presented, or, is in need of improvement.

- Monitoring programmes and key indicators
  A monitoring programme directed towards management needs and/or towards improving the understanding of the OUV, does not exist at 4 properties, and is limited at 25 properties. For 32 properties, although there is considerable monitoring, it is not directed towards management needs and/or improving the understanding of OUV . In addition, the availability of the information needed to define key indicators can be improved at a number of properties.

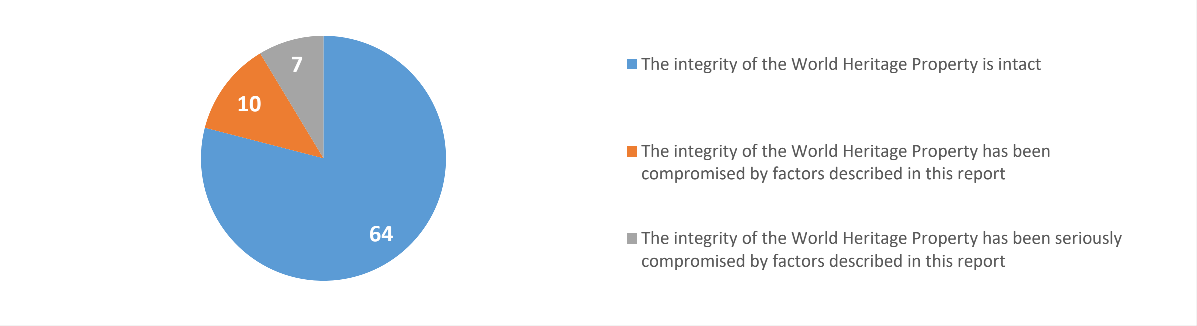
3.12. Summary and Conclusions

A number of actions were provided by site managers as regards addressing the factors affecting properties. Some of these actions include increased monitoring, conservation and management planning, tourism planning, budget allocations, recovery of the social fabric, awareness raising, establishment of policies and legislations, environmental impact studies, and activities linked to community development and the improvement of livelihoods.

As regards addressing management needs, among the actions that were mentioned, there are activities related to improving legislations, capacity building, coordination, awareness raising, implementation of risk management plans, monitoring, human resources, research, and communicating about boundaries.

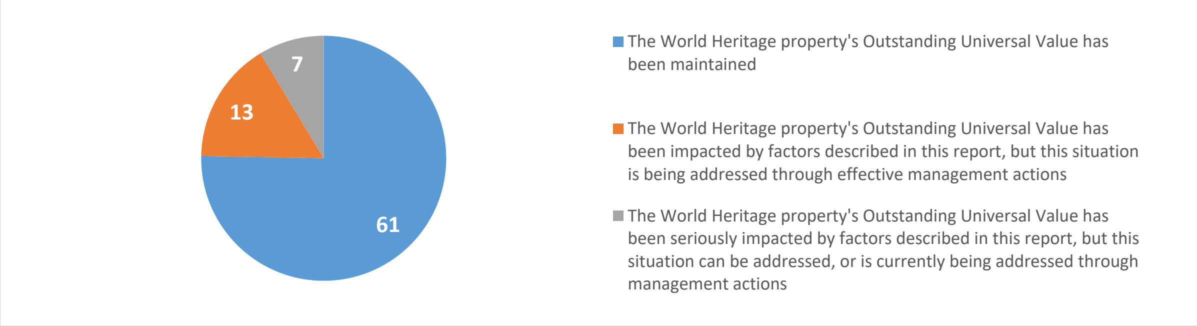
3.12.1. Conclusions on the state of conservation of properties

The majority of site managers confirmed that the authenticity of the respective World Heritage properties has been preserved. For 62 cultural properties, authenticity was reported preserved, for 11 cultural properties, it was reported as compromised, and in the case of 3 properties, it was reported as seriously compromised. In relation to the integrity of World Heritage properties, 64 site managers noted that the integrity of the respective properties is intact. Nevertheless, for 10 properties, the integrity was reported as compromised, while for 7 properties, the integrity is seriously compromised.

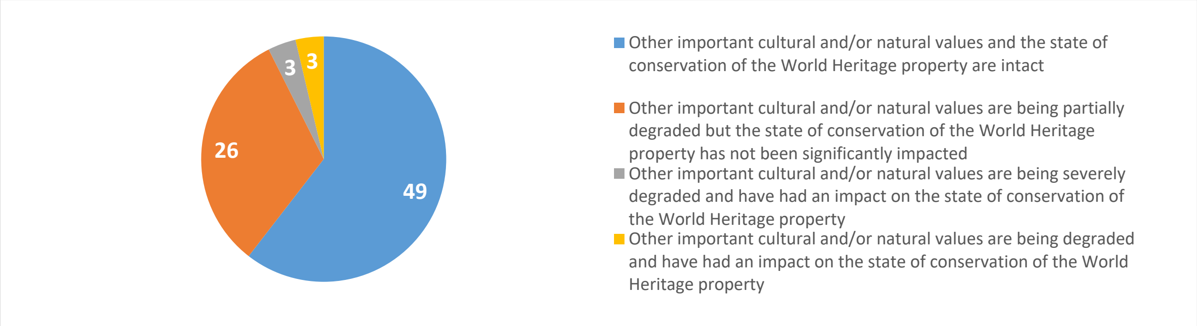


Status of integrity of World Heritage properties.

Moreover, for 20 properties, the OUV was impacted, or seriously impacted, by factors described in this report, but the situation can or is being addressed. In terms of other cultural and/or natural values of the state of conservation, in the case of 49 properties, they are considered intact, while for 26 properties they are being partially degraded without significantly impacting the state of conservation of the properties. On the other hand, 6 site managers expressed concern that other important cultural and/or natural values are being either degraded or seriously degraded, impacting the state of conservation.



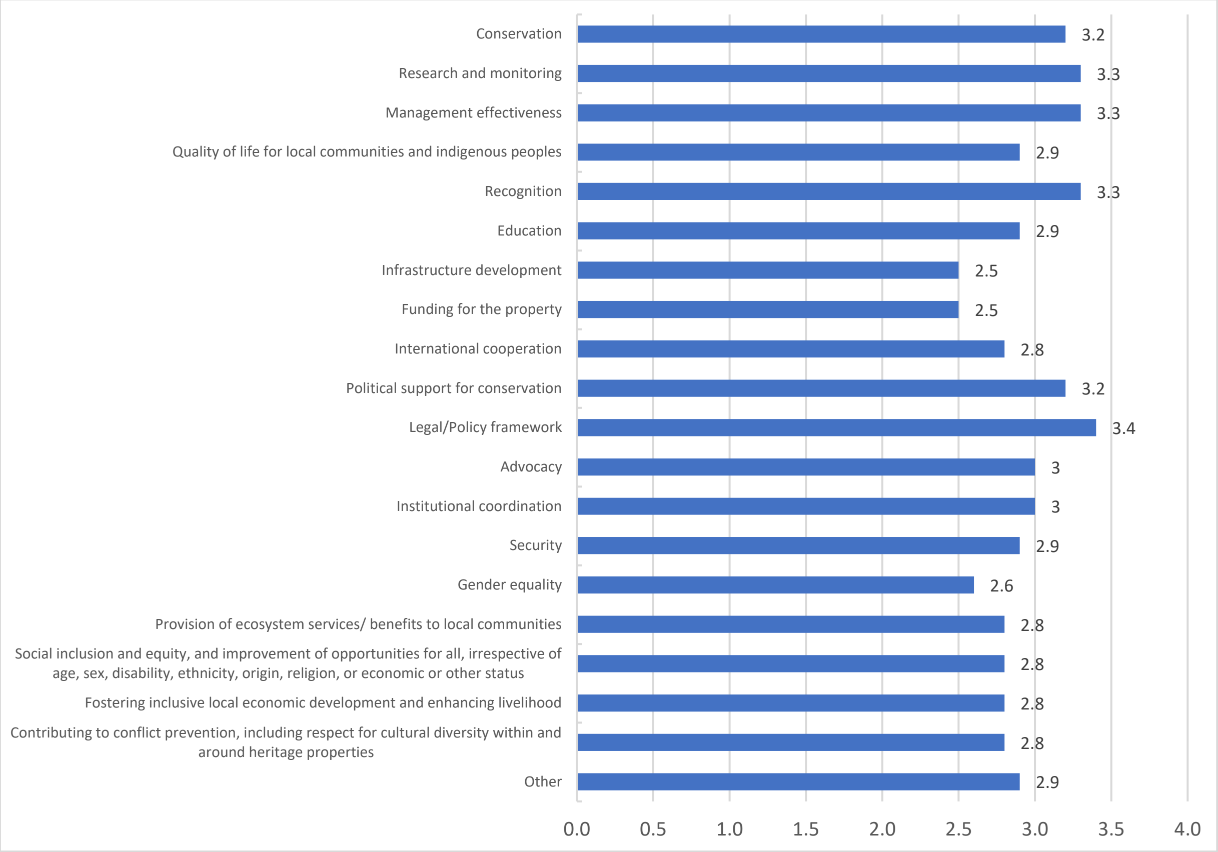
Status of Outstanding Universal Value.



Status of other cultural and/or natural values.

3.13. Impact of World Heritage Status

In rating the impact of World Heritage status on various areas, overall, the majority of the site managers agreed that legal/policy framework, conservation, research and monitoring, management effectiveness, recognition, political support for conservation, advocacy and institutional coordination have had an overall positive impact. On average, the lowest ranked areas were infrastructure development, funding for the property and gender equality.

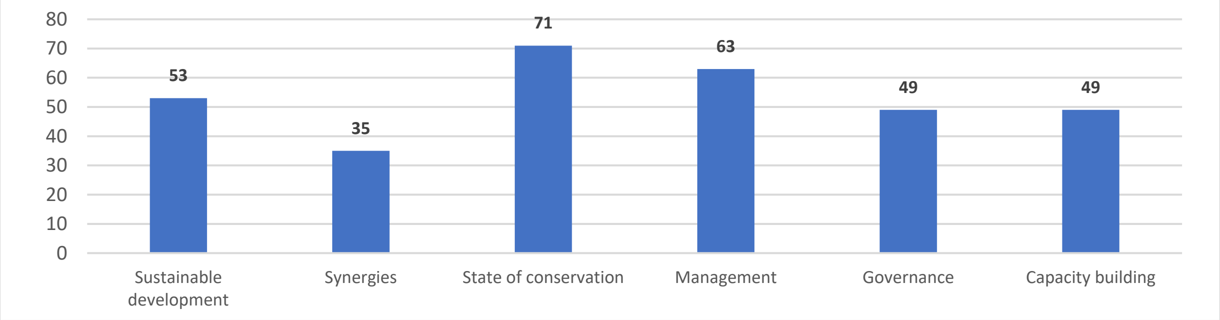


Impact of World Heritage status on various areas. Scale form 1(negative) to 4 (very positive).

The results are based on averages, so aspects such as quality of life for local communities and indigenous peoples, education, international cooperation, and security amongst others were still rated by site managers as having a positive impact, however, many site managers may have rated these areas as ‘no impact’ or did not respond to the question, thus bringing the average down. Moreover, specific remarks in commentary have indicated that although there is an acknowledgement of the benefit of World Heritage status, additional work needs to be undertaken to manage various areas, including urban development and population growth, education/awareness, security, community engagement, tourism management, and strengthening of legal framework/regulation.

3.14. Good Practice in the Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*

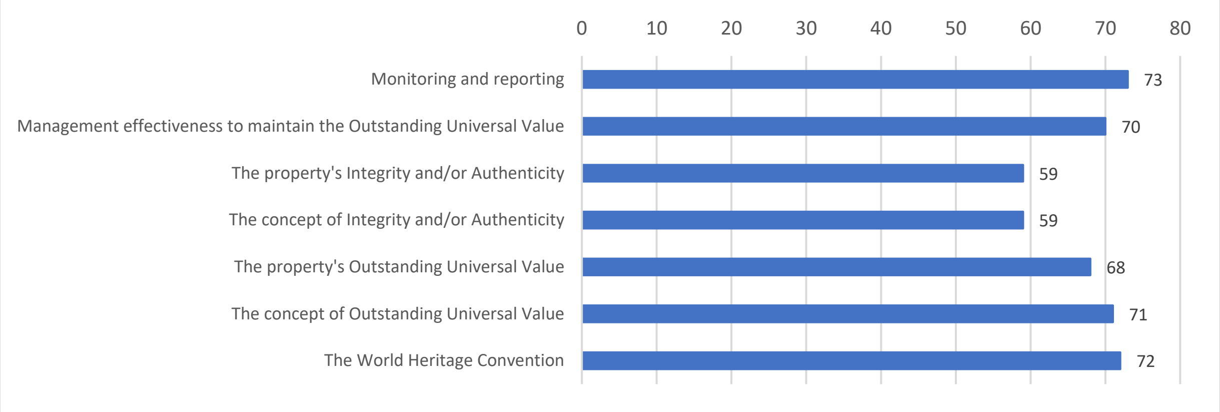
Site managers provided a list of good practices implemented at the property level. The examples provided shared activities specifically in the field of conservation and management. Several respondents also provided good examples of activities related to sustainable development, governance and capacity-building. From among 6 topics, respondents selected the ones they considered as part of good practices at the property.



Topics selected as part of good practice examples provided by site managers.

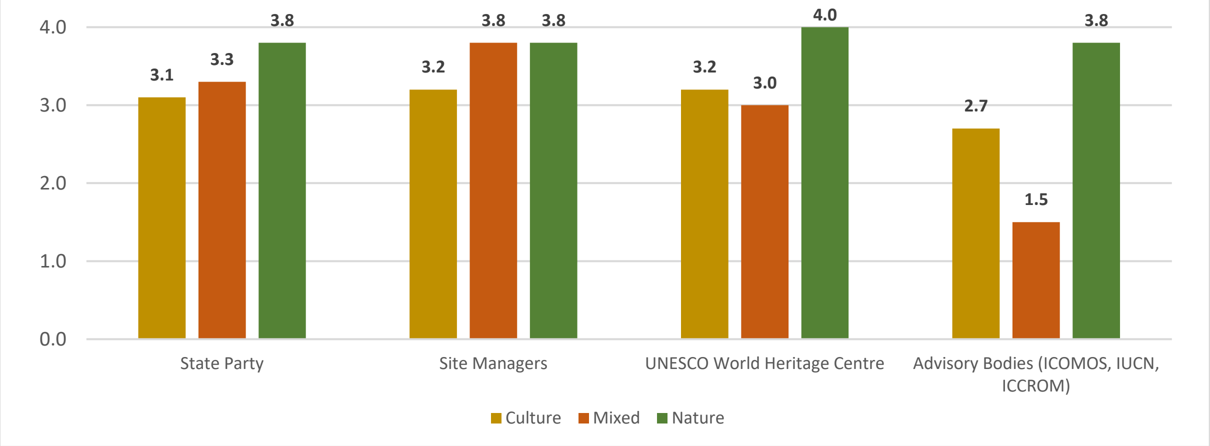
3.15. Assessment of the Periodic Reporting Exercise

The Periodic Reporting exercise appears to have contributed to deepening the overall knowledge of the participants on the *World Heritage Convention*. Participants reported a better understanding of the *Convention* (88% of respondents), in addition to the importance of monitoring and reporting. Most of the respondents also indicated an improved understanding of the concept of OUV as well as effective management to maintain that OUV (86%).



Contibution of the Periodic Reporting exercise in improving of the understanding of the World Heritage elements.

In terms of follow-up of the recommendations from previous cycles, the results demonstrate that site managers have the highest overall score, with 3.6 out of 4 points, which reflects the consideration for the feedback received through the exercise.

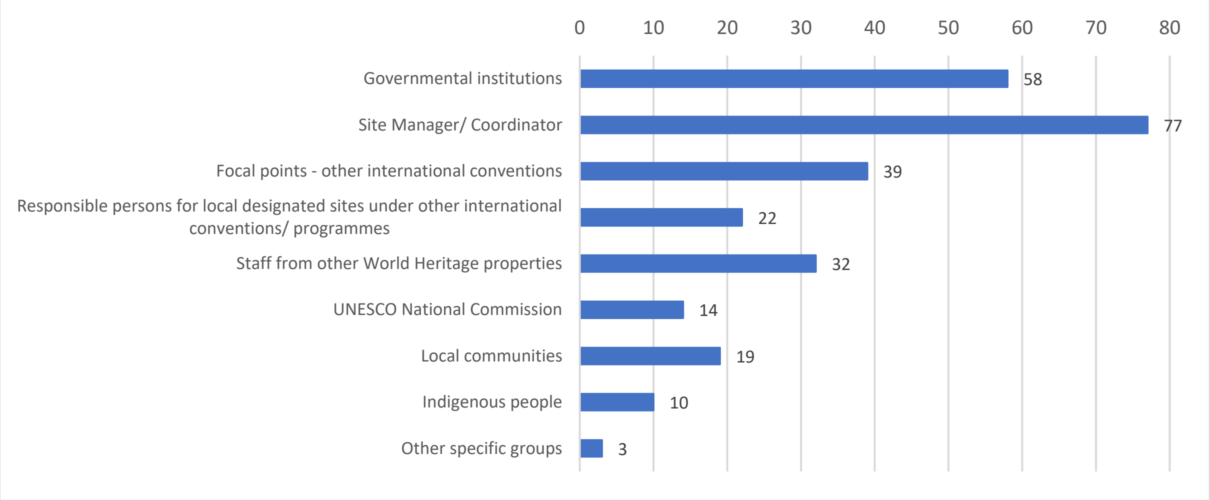


Follow-up of recommendations from previous cycles. Scale from 0 (no follow-up) to 4 (good).

Moreover, most site managers (76) informed about the use of the recorded data for the revision of priorities, strategies and policies for protection, management and conservation, and that the information is foreseen to promote awareness raising (64), update management plans (52) and promote advocacy (49).

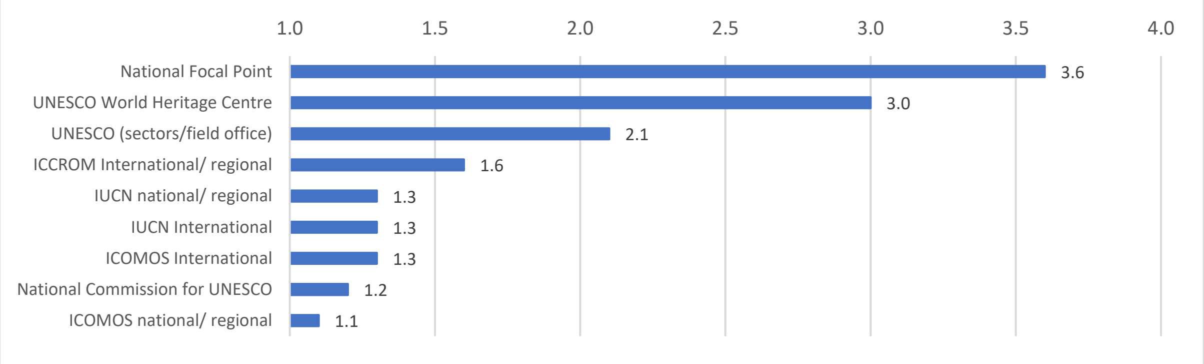
Overall, the majority of participants reported that the data required for the completion of the questionnaire helped them to gain a better understanding of the state of conservation of properties, and provided insight into specific management needs. The process of collecting data promoted a more integrated view of the properties, and helped to identify awareness raising possibilities. On the other hand, the information gathered seems to be less useful in relation to fundraising activities (39). Other possible uses included improving coordination between various stakeholders.

Entities that participated in the exercise were primarily governmental institutions, which came after the site managers. The participation of local communities was highlighted by only 19 respondents, and indigenous people by only 10 respondents.



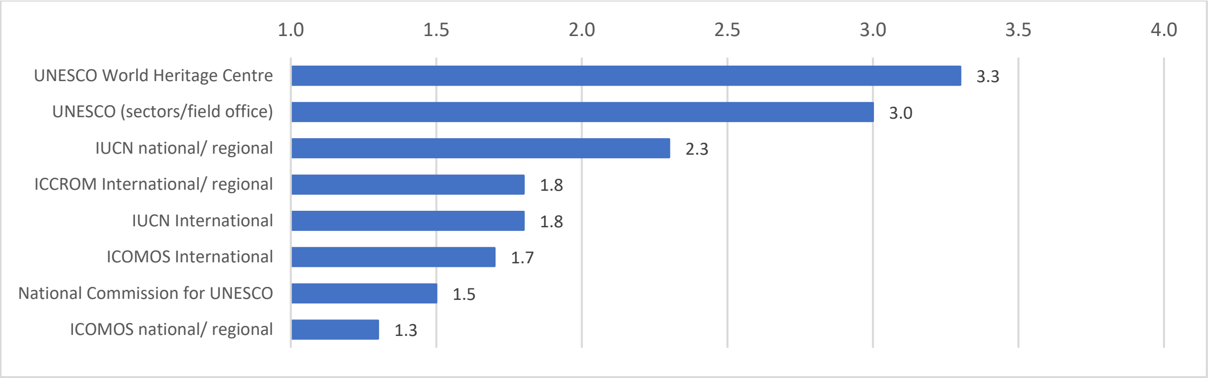
Entities involved in the Third Cycle Periodic Reporting exercise.

Moreover, for 41 properties, additional human resources were needed for the completion of the questionnaire, and for 26 properties, additional financial resources were allocated for the organisation of consultation meetings/trainings. The participation of other professionals and experts was poor overall. For 23 properties, gender balance has been taken into consideration in the process. Moreover, most site managers agreed that they had been given adequate time to gather the necessary information and to fill in the questionnaire, while 26 site managers reported that it was not adequate. Overall, they considered that they received support from the World Heritage Centre, both in terms of training and guidance, and in supporting the completion of the questionnaire. UNESCO offices in the field were also rated as providing fair support for training and guidance but were considered to have limited participation regarding filling in the questionnaires.



Level of support received in completing the questionnaire. Scale from 1 (no support) to 4 (good).

The new online tools provided by UNESCO were generally considered to be useful. Suggestions for improvement, included making the training resources available in the Arabic language, and simplification of the educational videos. Several respondents highlighted the need for more training during the exercise, and on a broader scope to comprise all relevant stakeholders. In addition, they indicated a preference for the traditional face-to-face training sessions and workshops rather than through online tools. Participants from conflict affected countries requested special consideration to be given with regards to training opportunities.



Rating the level of support received in terms of training and guidance. Scale from 0 (no support) to 4 (good).

Regarding accessibility of the required information, 13 respondents reported that all the information was accessible, 48 reported that most of the information was accessible, while 21 reported that little or not all information was accessible.

As regards the questionnaire itself, and while it has mostly been reported as being easy to use , the ratings were slightly lower concerning the clarity of questions, suggesting some room for improvement. Some respondents indicated that the questionnaire is too long and that some of the questions were redundant. It was suggested to make it available online in the Arabic language.

Conclusions on Section II

The regional report presents an overview of World Heritage properties in the Arab States and provides an assessment of their state of conservation. It also refers to the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*, the 2011 HUL Recommendation, and the World Heritage policy documents, by the respective site managers.

Although most, or all attributes of properties were considered as preserved, some elements were noted as compromised or seriously compromised, while a very small percentage of loss was indicated. Insight into issues which potentially played a role in compromising attributes were mentioned in commentary, such as those related to conflict situations. Although for 20 properties, the OUV was considered as impacted or seriously impacted by factors described in the Report, nevertheless, site managers indicated that the situation is either being addressed, or it can be addressed.

The analysis of factors affecting properties provided information on local conditions and specific situations. It was possible to identify the challenges faced by site managers, and the prevalent factors that have a positive or negative impact. It is noteworthy that a number of factors having a negative impact on properties, correlate with threats pertaining to state of conservation reports. Although management and institutional factors were mentioned as having positive and negative impact in the present Report, statistically, these factors are the highest mentioned threats in state of conservation reports. Other factors that have been considered as negatively impacting properties in the present report, and are at the same time also some of the most mentioned threats in state of conservation reports, are related to housing, transportation infrastructure, war, deliberate destruction, illegal activities, tourism impact, and land conversion. On the other hand, factors with clear negative impact, such as in relation to local conditions affecting the physical fabric, social and cultural uses of heritage, climate change, and pollution, are not among the main threats outlined in state of conservation reports.

The identified priority management needs for the Region as a whole are related to boundaries and Buffer Zones in terms of delineation and communication, in addition to needs pertaining to legal frameworks, and, the use of the UNESCO 2011 HUL Recommendation, the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties, and the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties.

In addition, priority needs were also highlighted regarding coordination in the management of World Heritage properties, effective implementation of management systems and management plans, and ensuring the contribution of management systems to achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Committee's Policy for the Integration of Sustainable Development Perspectives into the Processes of the *World Heritage Convention*.

Sufficient funding and human resources, and capacity building were also noted as priorities. The use of The World Heritage Strategy for Capacity Building, and the establishment of site-specific capacity building plans/programmes would need to be pursued, while research programmes directed towards management needs and improving understanding of the OUV, have been noted as a priority.

Moreover, heritage education programmes for children and/or youth can be further improved, and visitor management and tourism strategies have been highlighted as a priority for several properties. This is also in relation to enhancing visitor experiences, as well as interpretation and presentation of OUV.

Finally, a monitoring programme directed towards management needs and/or towards improving the understanding of the OUV have been underlined as a management need.

Overall, the Periodic Reporting exercise was considered as a useful exercise by site managers, particularly in the context of enriching understanding of the *World Heritage Convention*, as well as identifying management and conservation needs at World Heritage properties. While it was agreed that the questionnaire is not difficult, participants nevertheless expressed that more training and support from UNESCO would be desirable.

4. MONITORING INDICATORS FOR THE ARAB STATES REGION

The World Heritage Committee agreed at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017) to include Monitoring Indicators to gauge the level of effective observance by States Parties of the *Convention* and of the 1972 Recommendation as recorded in the Periodic Report.

These indicators aim to reinforce the results reporting framework (Decision **41 COM 10A**). The use of the same indicators for all world regions will feed into the proposed Global World Heritage Report at the end of the Third Cycle and inform the future implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*, and provide a baseline to measure progress and improvements in the implementation of the *Convention.*

The 42 indicators are directly linked to the objectives of Periodic Reporting and are grouped into the six thematic areas of the Report: (i) State of conservation of World Heritage properties; (ii) Management; (iii) Governance; (iv) Synergies; (v) Sustainable development; and (vi) Capacity development. In turn, the thematic areas correspond with the specific objectives of the Periodic reporting:

1. To provide an assessment of the application of the *World Heritage Convention* by the State Party.
2. To provide an assessment as to whether the World Heritage values of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List are being maintained over time.
3. To provide up-dated information about the World Heritage properties to record the changing circumstances and state of conservation of the properties.
4. To provide a mechanism for regional co-operation and exchange of information and experiences between States Parties concerning the implementation of the *Convention* and World Heritage conservation.

Thematic areas		**Description of indicators**	**N° of indicators**	**Periodic Reporting Objectives**
I	**State of conservation of World Heritage properties**	Indicators to assess temporal patterns in the status and trends of the OUV and factors affecting the property; integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage properties.	5	2 and 3
II	**Management**	Indicators to measure the effectiveness of site management, and adequacy of financial and human resources and budget. The effectiveness of site management is measured through the existence of management plans or management systems and the extent of their implementation. There are questions about communication with other stakeholders, and the positive and negative impacts of management and institutional factors.	7	1,2,3 and 4
III	**Governance**	Indicators to measure the adequacy of the legal framework for heritage protection, nature and level of involvement of key stakeholders, including the transparency of the processes involved, and the adequacy of action plans to promote heritage.	4	1,2,3 and 4
IV	**Synergies**	Indicators to measure the existence of synergies with other cultural and biodiversity related conventions and normative instruments, and appropriate coordination and information-sharing between all these various instruments. This is a new theme for Periodic Reporting and the Third	5	1 and 4

		Cycle will establish the baseline for measuring the extent of these synergies in the future.		
V	**Sustainable development**	Indicators to measure whether the application of the *Convention* is contributing to environmental sustainability, inclusive social development, and inclusive economic development, as well as the fostering of peace and security. This cycle will set the baseline to measure the extent of States Parties implementation of the 2015 World Heritage Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention	13	1,2 and 3
VI	**Capacity development**	Indicators to measure the existence, effectiveness of and participation in capacity building strategies and programmes	8	1 and 4

4.1. Methodology

The indicators are in many forms. The results are presented in tabular form appropriate to each question, and with brief narrative commentary. As far as possible, the narrative in this summary has been consolidated into a conclusion for each thematic area. Many questions require a simple yes or no reply but many of them offer a range of options from which the national focal point (for Section I) and the site manager (for Section II) had to choose the most appropriate.

A number of questions require separate replies for many aspects of each World Heritage property. In these cases, it has been judged necessary to only record properties as fulfilling the indicator when they have reached the required standard in all aspects, as defined for each Indicator. In future Periodic Reporting cycles each Indicator will be compared to its baseline in the current Third Cycle. Further detail will be available from the quantitative annexes attached to each report.

Each indicator is presented in tabular form, after its written description. Results presented in the form x/y indicate that x States Parties/properties out of y reporting have met the required level. When an indicator has been used in both the Second and Third Cycles, the percentage change between the two cycles is normally noted. The percentage of States Parties/properties meeting each indicator is calculated according to the number of States Parties/properties reporting in each cycle (i.e. 15 States Parties and 59 properties in 2010, and 19 States Parties and 82 properties in 2019). The percentage difference is that between the respective percentages of States Parties/properties meeting the Indicator in the Second and Third Cycles.

The Arab States region is treated as a single unit in its Periodic Report, because of the comparatively small number of States Parties (19) and of World Heritage properties (82 submitting reports).

4.2. Results

The results of the Periodic Reporting Monitoring Indicators for the Arab States region in the framework of the Third Cycle are available at: http://whc.unesco.org/document/186901.

This link is also presented in Annex III of this document.

5. CONCLUSION

By compiling and analysing the data and information provided by States Parties in the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States, the following key conclusions could be reached.

➢ Synergies

There are positive levels of synergies between the World Heritage Convention and other international instruments and UNESCO programmes in terms to ratifications and communication. However, in relation to the Second Protocol of the 1954 Hague Convention, this does not seem to be the case, although substantial interest has been expressed by States Parties with respect to Enhanced Protection. As regards natural properties, the highest levels of cooperation are in relation to the Ramsar Convention and the MAB Programme, which may be a reflection of the relatively high number of site designations under these programmes for natural sites.

The results show that 2011 HUL Recommendation is the most followed document (74%), in comparison with the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties, and the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage Properties. However, at the property level, only 30% of the properties are making use of this recommendation, while 40% are making use of the risk reduction strategy, and 19% are making use of the climate change policy.

Moreover, achieving synergies with other conventions, programmes and recommendations, was among the top 10 priorities identified by States Parties, particularly in relation to the involvement of World Heritage focal points in the revision and implementation of national heritage strategies, policies and actions beyond the specific issues related to World Heritage. The other identified priority theme under synergies is in relation to the use of the 1972 Recommendation, as well as the 2011 HUL Recommendation, for setting policies and strategies. At the property level, the use of the 2011 HUL Recommendation, the climate change policy, and the disaster risk strategy, were identified among the top priority management needs. In addition, risk preparedness and disaster risk management were among the top capacity development needs for cultural and natural properties. For cultural properties, capacity development in management approaches (including HUL) was also rated high.

➢ Inventories, Tentative Lists and Nominations

Statutory processes (Tentative Lists; Nominations) were among the top capacity development needs of cultural and natural heritage, while the use of the Upstream Process for the preparation of Tentative Lists was among the 10 priorities (identified by 2 States Parties). In addition, the results also highlight that further priority be given to integrating a sustainable development perspective into the processes of compiling Tentative Lists. Furthermore, the use of inventories, lists, or registers for cultural and natural heritage for the identification of Tentative Lists was considered as a priority theme of 2 States Parties. In specific commentary, States Parties highlighted the need to update and enhance the diversity of cultural heritage inventories, and noted that natural heritage inventories should play a larger role in identifying potential World Heritage nominations.

➢ Sustainable Development

It is noteworthy that in terms of the contribution of inscriptions in achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the highest scores by States Parties were for protecting environmental and cultural diversity and ecosystem services and benefits, and, promoting economic investment and quality tourism. Lower scores were related to consulting and involving indigenous peoples and local communities, and, achieving gender equality, among others. The contribution to protection of heritage during conflict, and to conflict recovery scored slightly higher than the contribution to ensuring conflict prevention and promoting conflict resolution, which were rated the lowest.

As for effective integration of the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies, the policy areas with the highest level of integration are related to respecting, consulting and involving indigenous peoples and local communities, and promoting economic investment and quality tourism, followed by enhancing the quality of life and well-being, jointly with ensuring growth, employment income and livelihoods. Again, the lowest ratings were those related to conflict prevention, resolution and recovery, in addition to strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

In specific commentary, the focus on sustainable development comes out as a priority for the Region. Component themes such as sustainable tourism have been highlighted as a priority with the need for strategic planning strongly emphasized, in addition to training. Visitor management and visitor strategies have been marked among the priority management needs by site managers, noting that for the majority of properties there is no strategy to manage tourism and its derived economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Improving visitor experience and adequate presentation of the OUV of properties were also rated as a management need.

On the other hand, some of the sustainable development themes, such as gender and indigenous issues have received less specific feedback. With regards to communities, considerable efforts are being made to give heritage a function in the lives of communities, whether according to a strategy or on an ad-hoc basis, but less so in relation to participatory approaches to heritage governance and management.

Moreover, general policy development was highly rated as a priority theme, particularly in relation to coordination and integration of multilateral agreements, programmes, and World Heritage policies and strategies into the development of national policies, in addition to the effective integration of conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development strategies and policies.

➢ Financial Status and Human Resources

Financial status and human resources were another identified priority area by States Parties, particularly in relation to the adequacy of current budgets for effective conservation, protection and presentation of heritage. Current budgets and human resources were reported as being inadequate by several States Parties. On the other hand, at the property level, for 48 World Heritage properties, financial resources were reported as having a positive impact, while for 27 properties, they were reported as a negative factor. As regards human resources, for 50 properties, these were reported as having a positive impact, while for 22 properties, they were reported as a negative factor.

➢ Capacity Development

In terms of capacity building, this was the highest rated priority area, with 15 States Parties selecting the priority theme related to national training/educational strategies to strengthen capacity development in the field of heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management. Also, 13 States Parties selected the use of the World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy as a priority theme. More specifically, the highest rated capacity building needs are related to conservation and management of heritage sites, sustainable development, risk preparedness and disaster risk management and statutory processes (Tentative Lists; Nominations). For cultural heritage, capacity building in the development of inclusive, equitable and effective management systems, was also highly rated, in addition to management approaches and methodologies (including HUL). Regarding capacity building for specific groups, it is noteworthy that sustainable development was a top priority for: administrators and government bodies; communities, indigenous peoples, landowners, local businesses and other social groups; and universities and NGOs. For heritage practitioners, the highest capacity building need is in relation to implementation of the convention, in addition to statutory processes.

- **Policy and Resourcing of World Heritage Properties**

Moreover, concerning policy and resourcing, a national capacity building strategy was selected as a high priority theme for a number of States Parties. This is in addition to the requirement for the use of impact assessments, where only States Parties reported on effective implementation of regulatory frameworks that require th4e use of such assessments. Institutional capacities to conduct research specifically for World Heritage issues was also an identified priority area by States Parties, noting that such research programmes, which are directed at management needs and/or improving the OUV, were also selected among the priority management needs at the property level by the site managers.

- **Cooperation**

The promotion of international cooperation and the establishment of cooperation mechanisms for heritage was a main priority theme selected by 14 States Parties, while some States Parties also selected the cooperation of the different levels of government with all segments of the civil society as a priority, in addition to the cooperation between the different levels of government.

- **Education, Information and Awareness Building**

As for education, information and awareness building, priority themes focus on strategies to raise awareness among communities and stakeholders, in addition to heritage awareness programmes for children and youth. Heritage education programmes were also identified as a priority management need at the level of the property, noting that for only 6 properties, there is a planned education and awareness raising programme.

- **State of Conservation**

Concerning the state of conservation of individual properties, the number of properties with seriously impacted OUV has risen from 1 in 2010 to 7 in 2019, while overall, the number of properties with impacted OUV has almost doubled (from 11 to 20 properties) between the two cycles. This increase may be attributed to the conflict situation that has faced several cultural properties over the past years. Nevertheless, the situation is either being addressed or can be addressed, as reported by States Parties.

Factors that fall under ‘local conditions affecting the physical fabric’ have been rated as having the highest current and potential negative impact on properties in the Arab States region. These factors include wind, relative humidity, temperature, radiation/light, dust, water (rain/water), pests and micro-organisms. In addition, they have been extensively addressed in commentary, thus reflecting a clear concern by site managers. In fact, several site managers confirmed that local conditions are the greatest threat they face, with wind, humidity, and heavy rainfall contributing to the degradation of properties. Other factors with high negative impact are related to ‘climate change and severe weather events’, ‘social and cultural uses of heritage’, ‘management and institutional factors’ and ‘other human activities’. Concerns related to local climatic conditions, climate change and severe weather events have been reflected as well in some of the identified priorities for capacity building needs, and for the use of policies and strategies. Under ‘social and cultural uses of heritage’, the impact of tourism/visitation/recreation and ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses, as well as changes in traditional ways of life, and issues of identity, social cohesion, changes in local population and community, can be similarly taken into account as significant factors.

It is to be noted that the Periodic Report has highlighted the impact of conflict on the capacity of some States Parties to effectively protect and conserve heritage. The priority of protecting heritage in the face of conflict has been underlined by the interest in the added layer of protection offered by the Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention, with regards to World Heritage properties and properties on Tentative Lists. This also correlates with the responses indicating that the World Heritage inscription does not effectively contribute to conflict prevention and conflict resolution. For some properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, factors under 'other human activities', such as illegal activities, deliberate destruction of heritage, war, terrorism, and military training, were among the highest mentioned factors affecting those properties, after the 'management and institutional factors'.

➢ Protection and Management

As regards protection, boundaries and buffer zones have been identified as a main management need in terms of delineation and communication with local communities and landowners, in addition to legal frameworks and coordination. Boundary delineation and buffer zone designations are a priority, particularly in light of the need for boundary clarifications for several properties.

Since the Second Cycle, there has been an increase in the number of properties with management plans or management systems, as well as an increase in the number of properties with a management plan/system adequate to protect the Outstanding Universal Value. Nevertheless, for several properties, management plans are only partially implemented. In addition, the number of properties with formal monitoring programmes has not increased. Management systems/management plans, and monitoring programmes and key indicators, have also been highlighted as priority management needs.

Moreover, the extent to which the management system contributes to achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Committee's Policy for the Integration of Sustainable Development Perspectives in the Processes of the *World Heritage Convention* is limited.

At the property level, results concerning the impact of World Heritage status on various aspects showed that the highest ratings were for areas related to legal/policy framework, conservation, research and monitoring, and management, while the lowest ranked areas concern infrastructure development, funding for the property and gender equality.

➢ Concluding Remarks

To conclude, the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Arab States region has been generally well received by States Parties. Although the questionnaire was rated as being easy to use, it was rated slightly lower in terms of clarity, with some participants finding it lengthy or redundant in some questions. Suggestions were provided on the need for further clarifications and training on using the questionnaire, as well as with regards to simplifying it and having it in the Arabic language (online).

As a self-reporting mechanism, Periodic Reporting has succeeded in providing an overall view of the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in the Region, with insights into the conservation and management of World Heritage properties. As such, and to a certain extent, Periodic Reporting has fulfilled its main purpose of providing an assessment of the application of the *World Heritage Convention*, as well as an assessment concerning whether the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage properties is being maintained over time. Moreover, information has also been updated about the World Heritage properties, while the process itself has provided a platform for the exchange of information and experiences among States Parties concerning the implementation of the *Convention*.

Monitoring indicators have been included in the Report for the first time to measure the level of implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* and the 1972 Recommendation. For some questions, it has been feasible to measure change since the second cycle, while for several others, this has not been possible due to the newly introduced areas, and changes made to the questions themselves. Nevertheless, the monitoring indicators form a baseline to measure progress and improvements in the implementation of the *Convention* in the future.

PART II – FRAMEWORK ACTION PLAN AND PROCESS

6. DRAFT ACTION PLAN (2021-2027) FOR THE ARAB STATES REGION

6.1. Approach and elaboration

The proposed Action Plan for the Arab States is based on analyses of Sections I and II of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting questionnaire submitted by States Parties in the Region. It is an overall framework of actions, focusing on priority areas highlighted and recommended by the States Parties in the respective questionnaires as well as the outcomes of the online Meeting for the Preparation of a Regional Action Plan. The latter was a consultation meeting organised with national focal points and World Heritage site managers of the Arab States region, Advisory Bodies and World Heritage experts which took place on 20 and 21 July 2020. The Action Plan also takes into consideration the outcomes of the Meeting on properties inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger held on 23 November 2020, during which the outcomes of Periodic Reporting related to sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger were presented.

A synopsis of the priority areas that were identified for the development of strategic actions, whether through the questionnaires or during the meetings, can be found here: http://whc.unesco.org/document/186898.

In addition, the draft Action Plan was shared with the States Parties on 5 March 2021 for further contributions and feedback.

The proposed Action Plan framework is envisaged for the coming six years and is based on a set of three strategic objectives and two transversal thematic priorities that were discerned from the identified priorities. It comprises a set of actions in an overall framework that allows for the elaboration of sub-regional, country or site-specific action plans, taking into consideration specificities and potentially evolving situations.

During the preparatory meeting of July 2020, national focal points and World Heritage site managers underscored the necessity for focusing attention on the List of World Heritage in Danger, in addition to the need for improving disaster and emergency preparedness and response. They also highlighted a number of priorities, including in relation to increased focus on Tentative Lists, capacity building, increased engagement and awareness raising for stakeholders, including local communities, and enhanced collaboration in the Region, of which one component could be a regional expert network. The identified priorities also include support in the implementation of the 2011 HUL Recommendation, the Integration of the World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy in conservation and management, and the need to focus on tourism opportunities and challenges, as well as planning for sustainable tourism. Although at the time of filling in the Periodic Reporting questionnaire, COVID-19 had not yet emerged, during the meeting of July 2020, participants highlighted the impact of the pandemic on tourism, which resulted in impacting economies, particularly in relation to communities, and therefore the need for alternative sustainable solutions.

6.2. Objectives

Within the overarching goal of ensuring that tangible heritage is identified, protected, monitored and sustainably managed in the Arab States through the effective implementation of the *1972 Convention*, the Action Plan framework is based on three strategic objectives, which were deduced from the identified priorities, as follows:

- Contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States, reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region.

- Enhance the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage, particularly for sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including through emergency preparedness, disaster risk response, and planning for recovery.
- Improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites.

In addition, two transversal thematic priorities have been identified, and are mainstreamed under all strategic objectives. The two thematic priorities are:

- Strengthening capacities for the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage.
- Enhancing participation and engagement of all stakeholders, particularly local communities, fostering education and awareness building.

6.3. Structure and implementation strategy

The proposed Action Plan comprises a set of 35 actions, linked to the identified priorities and outlined under the three strategic objectives:

Strategic Objective 1:	Contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States, reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region.
Strategic Objective 2:	Enhance the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage, particularly for sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including through emergency preparedness, disaster risk response, and planning for recovery.
Strategic Objective 3:	Improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites

Collectively, these actions will contribute to achieving the ‘5Cs’ (Credibility, Conservation, Capacity-Building, Communication, Communities) of the *World Heritage Convention*.

- *Appropriation of the Action Plan by States Parties*

The Action Plan is an overall framework of proposed priority actions identified for States Parties in the Region for the coming six years. National focal points, along with World Heritage site managers and other stakeholders, are invited to appropriate the Action Plan and decide on the actions that would be relevant for implementation by the respective authorities. Noting that the issue of availability of sufficient funding resources has been highlighted by several participants in the Periodic Reporting exercise, the development of national funding strategies and partnerships for World Heritage site protection, conservation, and management, taking into consideration priorities identified in the Action Plan, is encouraged. Subject to funding availability, support by the World Heritage Centre, the Advisory and Bodies and ARC-WH may be provided.

Furthermore, the timeframe for implementation of the various actions is proposed for the coming two, four or six years, coinciding with the reporting timelines for the World Heritage Committee. This presents an opportunity to measure achievements in line with monitoring indicators, by the time of launching the Fourth Cycle of Periodic Reporting. When applicable, the monitoring indicators for each action have been selected among the Monitoring Indicators that have been adopted for the Third Cycle (using the Monitoring Indicator number). For actions where none of the Monitoring Indicators apply, a new indicator has been included preceded by (*).

- *Dissemination*

During the first step in the implementation the Action Plan, the framework Action Plan will be made available for download on the World Heritage Centre’s website (http://whc.unesco.org/en/arabstates/) and will be widely disseminated after its presentation and approval by the World Heritage Committee. This will involve the following actions:

- The Secretariat, UNESCO Field Offices in the Arab States, ARC-WH and States Parties in the Region, will ensure the dissemination of the Final Regional Report, the adopted Action Plan, as well as the related World Heritage Committee's Decision, to stakeholders at the national and regional levels.
- The World Heritage Centre will make available the detailed analytical results of the Third Cycle Periodic Report in the Arab States region online, and publish them in the World Heritage paper series, subject to the availability of funding resources. States Parties are invited to contribute for this purpose.
- The World Heritage Centre will monitor the implementation of the Regional Action Plan.

- *Monitoring of the Implementation*

In order to monitor the progress achieved in the implementation of this Action Plan across the Region, the World Heritage Centre proposes to carry out a mid-cycle assessment in the form of a very short and straightforward survey. For each action, focal points will be able to indicate whether it has become part of their national action plan. Should this be the case, a simple, quantifiable follow-up question will be asked, in order to track the Region’s progress in the implementation of the Action Plan over time. This process would avoid having to carry out a large-scale monitoring exercise.

The World Heritage Centre recommends, as it is a State-Party driven process, that States Parties integrate the Action Plan in their national action plans, and organise follow-up initiatives on its implementation with site managers, in order to maintain the synergies developed throughout the Periodic Reporting exercise. Furthermore, regional initiatives could also be conducted. Such initiatives would be a good occasion to exchange experiences, and to reflect on their progress in the implementation of priorities in-between cycles of Periodic Reporting.

6.4. Framework of the Third Cycle Draft Action Plan for the Arab States (2021-2027)

Priority	Action		Lead Implementation	Timeframe			Monitoring Indicators
				2021-2023	2023-2025	2025-2027	
Strategic Objective 1: Contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States, reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region.							
Enhancing the representation of the cultural and natural heritage in Tentative Lists, reflecting the diversity of heritage in the Region.	1.	Strengthen capacities in Tentative List preparation, illustrating the use of the Guidance on Developing and Revising World Heritage Tentative Lists.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies	X			*Number of States Parties using the Guidance on Developing and Revising World Heritage Tentative Lists.
	2.	Conduct appraisal of Tentative Lists in terms of potential for a representative World Heritage List, at the national and regional levels.	States Parties, Advisory Bodies, ARC-WH	X			*Number of States Parties who have conducted appraisals to ensure a more representative Tentative list.
	3.	Initiate thematic and needs assessment studies, for identifying specific categories of heritage for inclusion on Tentative Lists, particularly in relation to natural and mixed sites.	States Parties, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre	X	X		*Number of States Parties who have included unrepresented categories of heritage on their Tentative Lists.
	4.	Revise Tentative Lists, with enhanced participation of all stakeholders.	States Parties		X		*Number of States Parties who have engaged all stakeholders in the revision of Tentative Lists.
Enhancing awareness and use of Upstream processes	5.	Enhance awareness/knowledge of Upstream processes leading to requests related to the revision of Tentative Lists and preparation of World Heritage nominations.	World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies, ARC-WH	X			*Number of States Parties who have requested support of the Upstream process in the revision of Tentative Lists and preparation of nomination files.
Enhancing heritage inventories, particularly for natural heritage and conflict affected areas, with stakeholder participation.	6.	Appraisal and updating of current national inventories, especially in relation to natural heritage, as well as in conflict affected areas, with stakeholder participation.	States Parties	X			*Number of heritage inventories completed with stakeholder participation.

Strategic Objective 2: Enhance the protection, conservation and management of World Heritage, particularly for sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger, including through emergency preparedness, disaster risk response, and planning for recovery.

Enhancing synergies between the *World Heritage Convention* and other conventions and programmes, particularly with regards to sites under threat, and those experiencing loss of intangible cultural heritage practices.	7.	Ensure synergies with the 1954 Hague Convention, through its Second Protocol and Enhanced Protection list.	States Parties	X	X		**Indicator 17**: Number of States Parties that have ratified/joined Multilateral Environmental Agreements, UNESCO Conventions and programmes, that maintain communication between World Heritage focal points and the focal points of other conventions/programmes. **Indicator 18**: Number of World Heritage Properties with multiple designations. **Indicator 18 (a)**: Percentage of properties with communication on a regular basis between World Heritage site manager and the focal point of other designations/programmes. **Indicator 18 (b)**: Percentage of such properties with an integrated management plan combining World Heritage and any other designations.
	8.	Foster synergies with the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.					
Ensuring the definition of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), attributes, and boundary clarifications for effective protection and management	9.	Enhance capacities in the elaboration and understanding of OUV and attributes.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies, ARC-WH	X			**Indicator 1:** Number of properties considering that Outstanding Universal Value is maintained. **Indicator 2:** Percentage of properties (of total) considering that OUV has been maintained in the current vs previous cycle. **Indicator 4:** Number of properties considering that integrity is intact. **Indicator 5:** number of properties considering that authenticity is intact. *****Number of properties with clearly defined attributes of the **OUV**.
	10.	Finalize pending retrospective Statements of OUV for adoption by the World Heritage Committee.	States Parties, Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre	X	X		*Number of retrospective Statements of OUV adopted by the World Heritage Committee.

	11.	Finalize pending boundary clarifications and minor boundary modifications; assess the adequacy of existing buffer zones where necessary, and ensure communication with stakeholders.	States Parties	X	X		**Indicator 33:** Number of properties where the boundaries are clearly known by the authorities and the local communities. **Indicator 34:** Number of properties where the buffer zones are clearly known by the authorities and local communities. *Number of boundary clarifications/minor boundary modifications presented to the World Heritage Committee.
Ensuring the conservation of sites inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger.	12.	Pursue innovative approaches in the preparation of proposals for Desired state of conservation for the removal of properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger (DSOCRs) and corrective measures for adoption by the World Heritage Committee	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, Advisory Bodies	X	X		*Number of Properties on the List of World Heritage in Danger with completed DSCOR process and established corrective measures for adoption by the World Heritage Committee. *Number of properties removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.
	13.	Establish strategies and actions for post-conflict recovery of World Heritage sites.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies	X	X	X	**Indicator 24:** Number of States Parties considering that inscription of properties on the World Heritage List contributes to achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. *Number of properties with integrated strategies and actions addressing post-conflict recovery.

Enhancing legal frameworks for effective conservation and management of heritage.	14.	Assess and enhance the implementation of legal frameworks by identifying gaps	States Parties	X	X	X	**Indicator 13:** Number of States Parties considering that the legal framework is adequate for the identification of the State's Party's cultural and/or natural heritage. **Indicator 14:** Number of States Parties considering that the legal framework is adequate for the conservation and protection of the State Party's cultural and/or natural heritage. **Indicator 15:** Number of States Parties where effective cooperation mechanisms between stakeholders are established in the identification, protection, conservation and/or presentation of the State Party's cultural and/or natural heritage.
	15.	Integration of Impact Assessments in regulatory frameworks.	States Parties	X	X	X	*Number of States Parties who regularly use Impact Assessments for effective conservation and management of heritage.
Enhancing resilience to natural hazards, and management of risks	16.	Enhance capacities in emergency preparedness, risk management and Disaster Risk Response, as integral part of site management planning.	World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies	X	X		*Number of management plans/systems with integrated strategies for management disaster risk response and emergency preparedness.
	17.	Establish strategies for emergency preparedness, risk management and Disaster Risk Response at selected sites.	States Parties	X	X		**Indicator 20:** Number of States Parties using the Strategy for Reducing Risks at World Heritage Properties to set national policies or strategies for the protection of their cultural or natural heritage.
Effective implementation of Environmental and Heritage Impact Assessments (EIAs, HIAs).	18.	Enhance capacities in the preparation of EIAs and HIAs.	World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies	X	X		*Number of training activities that address impact assessments.
	19.	Prepare EIAs/HIAs for development projects.	States Parties	X	X	X	*Number of States Parties who have submitted EIAs/HIA's for development projects.

Enhancing implementation of the 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) in the management of World Heritage, particularly World Heritage Cities and historic urban centres.	20.	Enhance awareness and capacities with regard to the HUL Recommendation for effective integration in city master planning process and site management planning.	World Heritage Centre	X	X		**Indicator 19:** Number of States Parties using the provisions of the HUL Recommendation to set policies or strategies for the protection of cultural and natural heritage
Strengthening Management Systems at World Heritage sites.	21.	Develop funding strategies, partnerships and human resources for effective conservation and management of World Heritage.	States Parties		X	X	**Indicator 6:** Percentage of States Parties that consider that the available budget for World Heritage is adequate to meet current conservation, protection and presentation needs. **Indicator 7:** Percentage of States Parties that consider that the available human resources are adequate to meet the current needs of cultural and/or natural heritage conservation, protection and presentation. **Indicator 9:** Number of properties where there is adequate coordination between all bodies/levels involved in the management of the property
	22.	Enhance research on management needs and understanding of OUV of properties	States Parties, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre	X	X		**Indicator 11 (a):** Number of properties where management activities are having a positive current impact **Indicator 11 (b):** Number of properties where management activities are having a negative impact. *Number of properties with a research programme focusing on management needs and understanding of OUV .
Effective monitoring of World Heritage sites, including tourism monitoring.	23.	Establish monitoring programmes and key indicators, with the engagement of local communities, NGOs and other groups.	States Parties	X	X	X	**Indicator 10 (a):** Number of properties with a formal programme of monitoring. **Indicator 10 (b) i:** Number of properties where indicators have been defined. **Indicator 10 (b) ii:** Number of properties where indicators have been defined and are in use.

Integrated Implementation of capacity building programmes.	24.	Define and implement national/site-specific capacity building strategies and programmes on the *Convention,* the *Operational Guidelines* and associated processes, as well as conservation and management; enhancing the use of the 2011 World Heritage Capacity Building Strategy	States Parties, Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre	X	X		**Indicator 35:** Number of properties having site-specific capacity building plans or programmes that develop local expertise and that contribute to the transfer of skills for the conservation and management of the World Heritage property. **Indicator 36:** Number of States Parties having a national capacity building strategy for World Heritage conservation, protection, presentation and management. **Indicator 37:** Number of States Parties having an implemented national strategy of capacity development.
Strengthening communication, international and regional cooperation for ensuring best practices in conservation and management.	25.	Establish a regional expert network for sharing expertise and best practices; foster collaboration and information sharing.	ARC-WH, States Parties	X			*Number of States Parties who are regularly engaged and consult a regional network for sharing expertise and best practices.
Strategic Objective 3: Improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites.							
Mainstreaming various dimensions of sustainable development in the conservation and management of World Heritage.	26.	Prepare or update management plans, through participatory processes and by integrating, where appropriate, policies relating to the HUL Recommendation, Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, and inclusive social and economic development (exploring alternative sustainable livelihood opportunities).	States Parties	X	X	X	**Indicator 8 (a):** Number of properties with a management plan or appropriate management system. **Indicator 8 (b):** Number of properties where a management system is being fully implemented and monitored. **Indicator 8 (c):** Number of properties where management system/plan is adequate to maintain the site's OUV. **Indicator 16:** Number of properties with clear definition of roles and responsibilities within the management system

	27.	Enhance awareness and knowledge about the 2015 Policy Document for Sustainable Development, including in relation to fostering peace and security.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH	X			**Indicator 24:** Number of States Parties considering that inscription of properties on the World Heritage List contributes to achieving the objectives of the World Heritage Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development *Number of States Parties using the 2015 Policy Document for Sustainable Development
	28.	Enhance awareness and knowledge about the updated Policy Document on the impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties.	States Parties, Advisory Bodies, ARC-WH	X			**Indicator 21:** Number of States Parties using the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage properties to set national policies or strategies for their cultural or natural heritage.
	29.	Contribute to strengthening resilience to climate change by adopting monitoring, mitigation and adaptation measures.	States Parties, ARC-WH, Advisory Bodies, World Heritage Centre		X		*Number of States Parties who have adopted monitoring, mitigation and adaptation measures.
	30.	Integrate conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage, and World Heritage policies and strategies, in national sustainable development policies and strategies.	States Parties		X	X	**Indicator 25:** Number of States Parties that effectively integrate the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies.
Ensuring sustainable management of World Heritage sites.	31.	Enhance capacities in sustainable tourism planning, particularly through the use of UNESCO's Sustainable Tourism Tools.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre, ARC-WH	X			*Number of States Parties using the UNESCO Sustainable Tourism Toolkit as a guide for best practice approaches for economic sustainable development for tourism.
	32.	Establish sustainable tourism policies, strategies and plans, including for presentation and interpretation, through participatory processes and the engagement of local communities.	States Parties		X	X	**Indicator 22:** Number of properties where the management system/plan for the World Heritage property includes a strategy with an action plan, to manage visitors, tourism activity and its derived economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. **Indicator 23:** Number of properties where the benefits of tourism are shared with the local communities.

	33.	Establish frameworks for ensuring the engagement of communities, including women and youth, in all processes (Tentative Lists, nominations, inscriptions), and their participation in management.	States Parties	X			**Indicator 31:** Number of States Parties recording effective involvement of communities and indigenous peoples in the whole process (tentative lists, nominations, inscriptions). **Indicator 31(a):** effective involvement of communities. **Indicator 31(b):** effective involvement of indigenous peoples. **Indicator 28:** Number of States Parties where an explicit gender balance contribution has been considered in the entire process (Tentative Lists, nominations, inscriptions). **Indicator 29:** Number of properties with a management system comprising of a formalized framework for women's participation. **Indicator 30:** Number of properties with education and awareness programmes targeting women.
	34.	Foster awareness raising strategies among communities and various stakeholders about protection, conservation, and presentation of World Heritage.	States Parties	X	X	X	**Indicator 32:** Number of properties with a Management Plan comprising a formalized framework for community participation. *Number of properties with awareness raising programmes on the protection, conservation and presentation of World Heritage**,** targeting all stakeholders
Expanding heritage educational programmes for children and youth to contribute to improving understanding of heritage, promoting diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue.	35.	Encourage participation and support educational initiatives, including by: • Engaging children in the World Heritage in Young Hands Kit. • Participation in Youth Forums organized by the World Heritage Centre. • Encouraging participation of youth and youth organizations in the World Heritage Volunteers programme. • Integrating heritage in school curricula. • Developing site specific educational programmes/activities.	States Parties, World Heritage Centre	X	X	X	**Indicator 40:** Number of States Parties with heritage education programmes implemented. **Indicator 41:** Number of States Parties participating in World Heritage in Young Hands programme. **Indicator 42:** Number of properties with (a) an education and awareness programme and (b) an education and awareness programme directed towards children and youth.

7. DRAFT DECISION

***Draft Decision*: 44 COM 10A**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. *Having examined document WHC/21/44COM/10A,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **41 COM 10A, 42 COM 10A** and **43 COM 10B** adopted at its 41st (Krakow, 2017), 42nd (Manama, 2018), and 43rd (Baku, 2019) sessions respectively,*
3. *Commends the efforts of States Parties in the Arab States region in the completion and submission of Section I, and the very high level of completion and submission of Section II of the Periodic Reporting questionnaire;*
4. *Expresses its sincere appreciation to the authorities of Bahrain and Egypt for hosting training workshops, in collaboration with the World Heritage Centre and the Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), in the framework of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting exercise;*
5. *Also expresses its sincere appreciation to the significant support provided by ARC-WH in facilitating the Periodic Reporting exercise in the Region;*
6. *Welcomes with satisfaction the Third Cycle Regional Report in the Arab States region and encourages the States Parties to widely disseminate it among all relevant stakeholders in the Region;*
7. *Takes note of the planned publication of the Third Cycle Periodic Report in the Arab States region in the World Heritage paper series, subject to the availability of funding resources, and invites States Parties to contribute financially for this purpose;*
8. *Endorses the Third Cycle Regional Action Plan and its three Strategic Objectives, and takes note with appreciation of the joint efforts by the World Heritage Centre, the World Heritage national focal points and sites managers, ARC-WH, and the Advisory Bodies to produce an Action Plan framework in adaptable format, in order to facilitate its appropriation and integration by the States Parties;*
9. *Also encourages the States Parties to appropriate the Action Plan and integrate relevant actions in country or site-specific action plans, as well as to collaborate to ensure the implementation of joint actions;*
10. *Requests the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, ARC-WH, and other relevant partners, to provide technical support to States Parties in implementing the Action Plan, when feasible;*
11. *Also requests the World Heritage Centre to monitor the implementation of the Regional Action Plan in view of preparing a mid-cycle assessment report to be presented to World Heritage Committee after three years;*
12. *Further requests the World Heritage Centre to prepare a progress report on the follow-up of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting in the Region for examination at its 46th session.*

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Quantitative Summary of the Outcomes of Section I

http://whc.unesco.org/document/186899 (PDF)

Annex 2: Quantitative Summary of the Outcomes of Section II

http://whc.unesco.org/document/186900 (PDF)

Annex 3: Results of the Monitoring Indicators for the Arab States

http://whc.unesco.org/document/186901 (PDF)