

Report for the 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee (Riyadh, 10 September – 25 September 2023)

1. General information

Name of the Centre: The Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage

Address: P.O. Box 75553, Manama, Bahrain

Telephone: +97317001004

Name and contact information of the Acting Director/Head: Ebrahim Alkhalifa

Designated Focal Point(s) (name, title and contact information): Ebrahim Alkhalifa Acting Director
e.alkhalifa@arcwh.org

Website of the Centre (if available): www.arcwh.org

2. Institutional and operational structure of the Centre (Governing Board, Staffing, Operational funding and premises)

The Arab Regional Centre for World Heritage (ARC-WH), based in the Kingdom of Bahrain, is an autonomous and independent legal entity at the service of the Arab States. The ARC-WH is guided and supervised by a Governing Board which is renewed every two years. The Board meets in ordinary sessions at regular intervals, at least once per calendar year. The Governing Board is chaired by the President of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities H.E Sh. Khalifa Bin Ahmed Alkhalifa, members of the board include the following: a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain, a representative of the Arab Member States to the World Heritage Committee, a representative of the Director General of UNESCO, a representative of each of the Advisory Bodies to the Committee ICOMOS, IUCN and ICCROM and the African World Heritage Fund. The current secretariat of ARC-WH comprises 12 permanent staff members which includes the Director, Assistant Director, Programme Specialists for both Cultural and Natural Heritage and a Technical Assistant for Programmes. The staff also includes a Communication and Information Officer, Admin and Logistics Officer as well as Logistical Support Coordinator and a Finance and Human Resources Officer. The activities of the Centre and its operations is mainly funded by the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, some of the activities are occasionally co-funded by external partners according to ARC-WH agreements on joint projects.

3. Updates on the management of the Centre – particularly on meetings of the Governing Board and key decisions adopted:

The Governing Board of ARC-WH met on the 13th of February, 2023 and was presented with the report on the activities of the centre in 2022. The board also adopted the proposed action plan of 2023, which focused on the priorities derived from the Periodic Reporting action plan for the Arab region (2021-2027) with 3 main strategic objectives highlighted A) Contribute to a representative and balanced World Heritage List in the Arab States, reflecting the cultural and natural diversity of the region B) 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. C) Improve the integration of sustainable development policies in the management of World Heritage sites.

The Governing Board of ARC-WH highlighted the importance of collaboration between all relative stakeholders in the implementation of the action plan.

4. Main programmes and activities implemented since July 2021 and planned for the current year:

No.	Title of the Activity	Reference to WHCBS
1.	BETTER REPRESENTATION OF THE ARAB REGION ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST AND UPSTREAMING PROCESS	
1.1.	Training workshop on mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention and the nomination process for the State Party of the United Arab Emirates (Online)	1.1, 2.2
1.2.	Sub- Regional Workshop on Mechanisms of the World Heritage Convention and the Nomination Process (Manama, Bahrain)	1.1, 2.2
1.3.	Training Workshop on the Mechanisms and Concepts of the World Heritage Convention for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Manama, Bahrain)	1.1, 3.4
1.4.	Training workshop on the World heritage convention and the statement of the OUV of the natural components of the Ahwar World Heritage property (Baghdad, Iraq)	1.1, 2.2
1.5.	Technical Assistance in the preparation of the Management Plan for the Archaeological sites of the Ancient Marib oasis, Yemen	3.3, 4.3
1.6.	Capacity Building Programme on the preparation of a transnational management plan for the Hajj pilgrimage routes: Darb Zubaydah (Saudi Arabia, Iraq)	2.5, 2.6, 3.3, 3.4
1.7.	Regional Workshop in Collaboration with IUCN ROWA on "Natural and mixed world Heritage Sites in the Arab States: Listing implications and synergies with the IUCN's Green List".	1.1, 2.2, 2.4
1.8.	Revision of Palestine Tentative list (Online- Palestine)	2.4
2.	MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF ARAB WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES	
2.1.	Training workshop on the preparation of the state of conservation reports and impact assessment studies for the State Party of Tunisia (Online)	1.6, 3.4, 3.6, 10.7
2.2.	Preparation of Management Systems and Plans for Cultural World Heritage Sites for Algeria (Online)	3.3, 3.4, 4.3

2.3.	Mission to the World Heritage site of the Baptism Site “Bethany Beyond the Jordan” (Al-Maghtas) (Jordan)	3.3, 4.3
2.4.	Regional Workshop: Implementation of a Workshop on Impact Assessment on World Heritage in Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia)	3.4, 3.6
2.5.	Strengthening Capacities for World Heritage Professionals for Cultural and Natural sites in the Arab Region in collaboration with ICOMOS (Aswan, Egypt)	1.1, 1.6, 3.4, 10.7
2.6.	First Workshop on Digital Documentation of World Heritage in the Arab region for ‘Dive into Heritage’ (Oman)	3.4, 5.2
2.7.	Building a Sustainable Future for the Traditional Crafts of Socotra – Project Partnership with the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh (Socotra Archipelago)	1.4, 5.2
2.8.	Capacity building workshop on geophysics analysis in conservation for the Arab States in collaboration with WMF (Manama, Bahrain)	3.3, 5.2
2.9.	Revision of Heritage Impact Assessment for the World Heritage site-Baptism Site (Al-Maghtas)	3.3, 3.4, 3.6
2.10.	Technical assistance/ Capacity building program in Sustainable Development Management of World Heritage Sites in Tunisia	3.3, 4.3, 6.3
2.11.	Regional Workshop for Arab States on Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Environment in collaboration with ICCROM (Manama, Bahrain)	3.3, 3.6
3.	THEMATIC PROGRAMS	
3.1.	The International Expert Meeting on Underwater Cultural Heritage and World Heritage Sites (Manama, Bahrain)	1.4, 7.2
3.2.	Regional Workshop: Capacity building in the field of Marine Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage (Jeddah, Saudi Arabia)	1.4, 5.2
4.	EMERGENCY AND RISK MANAGEMENT	
4.1.	International Conference on Integrated Reconstruction and Post-Trauma Impact on Communities and the Socio-Economic Aspects of Recovery (Online)	3.6, 4.5, 7.2
4.2.	Workshop: Capacity Building on World Heritage Risk Management in the Arab Region (Manama, Bahrain)	3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 4.5
4.3.	Impact assessment workshop in the context of World Heritage sites for Arab experts in cooperation with ICCROM and IUCN (Online)	3.4, 3.6
4.4.	Regional meeting to strengthen capacities of heritage specialists in the Arab World in the face of challenges to develop risk management actions for their heritage sites in cooperation with the World Heritage Leadership Program (Online)	3.6, 4.3, 4.5
4.5.	Advanced Workshop on Risk Management in World Heritage Sites in the Arab States Region in cooperation with ICCROM (Manama, Bahrain)	3.4, 4.5
5.	PROMOTION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION	
5.1.	World Heritage Days in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Centre and the 50th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention (Manama, Bahrain)	1.1, 8.2
5.2.	Launch of the Second Edition of the book “World Heritage of Arab Countries”	
5.3.	Launch of “World Heritage Sites in Bahrain” book	
5.4.	Translation to Arabic the manual “Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context”	3.6, 4.3, 7.2, 10.5
5.5.	Publication of “Safeguarding and Developing Urban Heritage of the Arab States in the 21st Century”	7.2, 8.1
5.6.	Publication of “Exploring Cultural Heritage of the Arab Region: Potential offered for a more balanced World Heritage List” with ICOMOS	1.2, 2.4, 3.1
5.7.	Publication “Tab’e III report: Conflict and climate change pressures on natural World Heritage in the Arab region” with IUCN	1.2, 2.4, 4.5