



TERMS OF REFERENCE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES IUCN-WCPA World Heritage Network

Background

The IUCN-WCPA World Heritage Network will:

- Help ensure that IUCN-WCPA has a highly-experienced group of experts available on a regular basis to assist with the full range of IUCN roles on World Heritage, including monitoring, but also including nomination evaluations and upstream processes.
- Help meet an increasing demand for technical assistance and information gathering as the IUCN WH Programme implements the World Heritage Outlook, and to meet this demand in a more systematic manner.
- Encourage diversity among WCPA experts working on World Heritage.
- Leverage WCPA membership capacity for research and advocacy, which is increasingly necessary to help uphold the credibility of the World Heritage Convention (“the Convention”) and to help address the proliferation of threats to World Heritage properties.

Purpose of Task Force/Specialist Group

The purpose of the IUCN-WCPA World Heritage Specialist Group is to:

- (1) Help ensure that a diverse and representative group of IUCN WCPA members provides the full range of technical expertise (site specific, thematic, etc.) in support of IUCN’s core functions as an official Advisory Body to the World Heritage Convention, including:
 - a. Evaluation of nominations for natural and mixed natural-cultural sites and cultural landscapes.
 - b. Monitoring of World Heritage properties.
 - c. Assistance with “upstream processes” including developing thematic guidance documents, regional activities designed to identify and help fill gaps on the World Heritage list, capacity building at regional levels and at global meetings etc.
- (2) Facilitate structured and effective contributions from IUCN-WCPA to the World Heritage Outlook assessments undertaken by IUCN and WCPA for all natural World Heritage Sites.
- (3) Encourage IUCN-WCPA members to engage in research and advocacy to support the credibility of the World Heritage Convention i.e. adherence to the Operational Guidelines, and to the technical guidance provided by the Convention’s Advisory Bodies). Advocacy work conducted under the name of the IUCN-WCPA WHSG will be to present technical findings and analysis rather than to participate in “campaigning” activities per se, and be consistent with the role of WCPA in the overall IUCN Programme, including IUCN’s resolutions and recommendations on World Heritage, as approved at the World Conservation Congress, and with positions taken by IUCN. This function will be ensured as a result of the following activities:
 - a. Research: developing and publishing research and analysis of the highest quality.
 - b. Presenting publications and research products at international meetings and at national/regional levels.
 - c. Liaising with NGO networks formed to support the World Heritage Convention.

- (4) Make transparent IUCN's expert network in WCPA, ensure that necessary standards and procedures for IUCN's work on World Heritage are followed by WCPA, recognize WCPA members who are appropriately trained, experienced and skilled, and actively develop and train a diverse group of experts (region, languages, gender, youth) within WCPA. This role may also include recommending WCPA members for particular roles within the IUCN Programme.

Structure

The WHSG will be structured as follows:

- (1) Chair: The WHSG will be chaired by the IUCN-WCPA Vice-Chair for World Heritage. A Deputy Chair may be appointed.
- (2) WHSG Regional Focal Points: each WCPA region will have a World Heritage focal point appointed by the Regional Vice Chair in consultation with the WHSG Chair. The Regional Vice Chair may serve as WHSG Regional Focal Point.
- (3) WHSG Thematic Focal Points: Thematic focal points will be appointed as necessary subsequent to discussions between the WHSG Chair and Thematic Vice Chairs.
- (4) Regional working groups: WHSG Regional Focal Points may choose to form regional working groups to assist in their work at regional levels.

Membership: Membership will be open (though members will be asked to fill out a detailed survey to activate their membership) and the Chair will work with focal points to ensure a diverse and representative membership. All members will be required to complete a questionnaire identifying their experience and expertise related to:

- (1) A particular World Heritage site or sites;
- (2) The World Heritage Convention;
- (3) Thematic issues of relevance to the World Heritage Convention's work.

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