

ACTION PLAN FOR WORLD HERITAGE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN 2014–2024

The current Regional Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean has been elaborated by the State Parties of the Region in close collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, the Category 2 Centers of the Region and the World Heritage Center issued on the outcome of the Regional meeting “Towards an Action Plan for World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean”, Brasilia (Brazil), 23-25th April 2014. This document responds to the request made by **Decision 37COM.10A**, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in its 37th session in Cambodia in June 2013.

The Action Plan constitutes a specific agenda that will serve mainly to promote regional cooperation, to reinforce synergies and to strengthen coordination of LAC World Heritage Community’s efforts.

This action plan has been designed in response to the specific context of Latin America and the Caribbean and the needs identified by States Parties, translated in terms of priority actions and activities for the next decade 2014-2024.

This Plan provides a common framework on the priority actions and activities of the region as a whole thus it might not necessarily reflect the position and the needs of each State Party”.

I. REGIONAL CONTEXT

So far, 32 countries in the region have ratified the World Heritage Convention and there are 129 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List: 90 cultural properties, 36 natural properties and 3 mixed properties recognized by their Outstanding Universal Value. Latin America and the Caribbean Region possess a rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage.

Social, political and economic conditions are also diverse. The same can be said even in a context of economic growth for many of its countries, poverty and unequal income distribution affect the Region. The same can be said of the diversity of institutional situations concerning heritage policies.

II. OBJECTIVES

The Action Plan for World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean Region is structured around the strategic objectives for the implementation of the Convention, synthesized in the Budapest Declaration on World Heritage (adopted in 2002), which were reaffirmed and completed in 2007:

- strengthen the **Credibility** of the World Heritage List, as a representative and geographically balanced testimony of cultural and natural properties of outstanding universal value;
- ensure the effective **Conservation** of World Heritage properties;
- promote the development of effective **Capacity-building** measures, including assistance for preparing the nomination of properties to the World Heritage List, for the understanding and implementation of the World Heritage Convention and related instruments; increase public awareness, involvement and support for World Heritage through **Communication**.
- Enhance the role of **Communities** in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The overall goal that bring together all the others is that heritage might be a factor of sustainable development that contribute to improve the quality of life of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, poverty reduction , gender equality and promote cultural and natural diversity.

III. GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Cooperation:

Cooperation is an essential guiding principle for the implementation of the Plan. This includes the development of priority activities in the regional framework, including not only the development of nomination propositions, but also the implementation of conservation and management projects of linked biodiversity sites to promote integrated approaches, the development of transnational and transboundary biological corridors, cultural itineraries, etc.

Funding:

In order to make this Action Plan possible it is necessary to use mechanisms that integrate expected actions in governmental, intergovernmental and other agencies' agendas, articulating national, regional and international strategic partnerships.

Pilot projects:

The plan proposes the development of pilot projects that reflect the priorities of the region. These are seen as a strategy for cooperation and as a chance to implement its strategic objectives. The pilot projects would be selected by taking into consideration general criteria , including: to meet needs of one of the prioritized categories, to consider the agreed principles of the Plan, to contribute to the development of the five strategic objectives of the Convention and to count on an effective participation of the State Party for its implementation. Specific criteria will be defined at a sub-regional level and must correspond to the defined prioritized categories and to rely on the World Heritage Programs already in place.

Monitoring:

The implementation of the Action Plan will be monitored by the State Parties themselves at a subregional level every three years, in order to identify the current strengths and weaknesses and to propose the necessary adjustments to achieve the objectives.

IV. REGIONAL PRIORITIES

The purpose of this part is to enumerate the identified challenges considered as regional priorities for the State Parties in one or more sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, a limited number of particularly relevant categories related to heritage had been proposed, special attention will be given to them in the next decade.

1. Education, communication and information

Education in a very large sense has been identified as a necessity to improve the comprehension, conservation and management of the cultural and natural heritage. Therefore, it is essential to develop outreach activities at all levels and particularly to society (civil society, including children and young, local, traditional and indigenous communities, managers and political decision makers, etc.), with the purpose of raising awareness on the sense and the value of cultural and natural heritage as an identity factor and a development vector.

2. Integrated heritage management

State Parties in the Region have identified the urgent need to establish and improve mechanisms that contribute to efficient and sustainable heritage management based on an integrated model. Questions related to management indicators, integrated management approaches for natural sites containing cultural components or vice versa, and governance are joined by another fundamental element: that of disaster risk management (analysis, prevention and mitigation).

The region is subject to high geographical and climatic vulnerability which has considerable effects on World Heritage. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, torrential rains, fires, among others, have had significant impacts on several World Heritage properties in the region. This highlights the existence of limited mechanisms to assess, prevent and mitigate impacts. Furthermore, human-induced hazards such as armed conflict were also considered important.

Priority actions regarding these issues will be addressed through capacity building activities for disaster risk management, particularly concerning the increase of phenomena derived from **climate change**. Furthermore it is necessary to take measures not only to know how heritage can be preserve but also take into account the way in which heritage can be use to improve resilience to disasters.

3. Sustainable tourism in World Heritage sites

Although tourism is considered as an opportunity to develop and conserve the World Heritage of the Region, the current context reveals that increasing tourism is one of the important threats that should be consider in management and conservation of World Heritage sites in the Region. A significant number reports a spectacular increasing flow of visitors without having appropriate planning mechanisms to deal with its effects, as well as an increasing of threats related to the infrastructure and development services to satisfy the tourism demands. Increasing tourism has also lead, in some cases, to gentrification and other social impacts and in several World Heritage properties, the benefits of tourism have not lead to an improvement of the local population living conditions nor to the creation of sustainable means of subsistence.

However, efforts that could provide valuable lessons concerning challenges to improve tourism management and to develop it as an activity that contributes effectively to sustainable development are underway in the region. Efforts for that matter will progressively reinforce local participation as well as the capacities of all actors so tourism could be a factor participating to heritage conservation and sustainable development of local, traditional and indigenous communities.

4. Categories of Heritage

Urban Heritage

Population growth and densification present a challenge for the Urban Heritage of the region due to its impact on quality of life and, especially, on certain vulnerable groups. It is necessary to cope with urgent pressure and, in particular, potential impacts of development projects.

Although much progress has been made in terms of properties, the articulation of conservation schemes with comprehensive, urban and territorial planning, it is considered a priority for the region as well as the coordination of management areas and joint responsibility to urban and heritage management.

Natural Sites

The immense wealth of Natural Heritage in the region is currently not enough represented in the World Heritage List. However, recent studies indicate that the region has great potential to fill the gaps regarding this category of property in the List, ensuring its credibility, and World Conservation. Marine Sites are a very important category in this context; there is a dedicated World Heritage Program that can contribute to address this gap.

Moreover, management mechanisms for Natural Sites have to be improved to ensure its conservation and a better awareness of their Outstanding Universal Value to the general public and, in particular, to local, traditional and aboriginal communities.

Cultural Landscapes

Like Natural Sites, there are only 8 Cultural Landscapes inscribed in the World Heritage in LAC and do not reflect the region's diversity. It is necessary to generate knowledge for improving understanding, conservation and management in this heritage category, as well as identifying possible nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List. Similarly, this category shares many challenges with the other priority categories in identifying appropriate management mechanisms.

Archeological heritage

Sites with archeological remains in the region are also facing a series of challenges from conservation to multidisciplinary management, and in particularly issues concerning tourism and big infrastructural endeavors. Furthermore, it is very vulnerable kind of heritage if it is not of a monumental nature because of the lack of recognition of its importance. Several World Heritage sites lack established general-planning tools to allow decision making. Therefore, the development of National Conservation Plans (or international, depending on the sites) has been requested through multidisciplinary criteria.

V. ACTION PLAN

Objective 1: Strengthen the CREDIBILITY of the World Heritage List					
<p>Expected outcome:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved implementation of the World Heritage Convention • Strengthened State Parties' involvement in processes of the World Heritage Convention • Updated and harmonised Tentative Lists that reflect regional contributions in relation to the Global Strategy 					
Actions	Lead by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Improve implementation of the World Heritage Convention					
1.1.1- Develop education and outreach strategies at regional, subregional and national levels in relation to duties and benefits under the World Heritage Convention and the World Heritage concepts	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.2- Review of legislative and institutional frameworks and policies to determinate their effectiveness and appropriateness for cultural and natural heritage conservation and management, and for their improvement and harmonisation with the other national laws of each State Party	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.3- Develop/ update tools to integrate World Heritage conservation into larger political and development agendas at the State Party and international levels.	SP	WHC AB			
1.1.4- Improve inter-institutional and inter-sectoral cooperation and involve non-governmental organizations and community organizations in heritage conservation and management.	SP	WHC			
1.1.5- Promover la Convención del Patrimonio Mundial como una herramienta para el respeto de la diversidad cultural y natural en la región	SP WHC AB C2C UFO				
Action 2: Improve participation of the LAC region in the processes of World Heritage Convention					
1.2.1- Promote the establishment and functioning of mechanisms for larger coordination and collaboration amongst agencies and sectors associated with World Heritage, in accordance with the conditions of each State Party.	SP				

1.2.2- Promote effective coordination and communication between focal points and related agencies of each State Party to assure actively participation in World Heritage programmes	WHC	SP UFO			
Action 3: Update and harmonise tentative lists and improve nomination processes					
1.3.1- Complete and update national inventories and Tentative Lists to duly attain a larger representativity of categories and types of properties	SP	WHC AB			
1.3.2- Promote regional cooperation and integration through trans-boundary and serial properties for larger understanding of significance and authenticity of properties and for revitalising relationships that contribute to their sustainability.	SP	WHC AB			
1.3.3- Identify gaps in the region for the development of thematic studies and comparative studies	WHC AB	C2C			
1.3.4- Implement regional and sub-regional workshops for the harmonization of tentative lists	WHC AB	C2C			
1.3.5- Prioritise nominations of properties in under-represented categories that contribute to a balanced representation of the cultural and natural diversity of the region	SP				

Objective 2: Ensure the effective CONSERVATION of World Heritage properties

Expected outcome:

- World Heritage sites as examples of best practices and methodological approaches.
- Improvement and implementation of legal frameworks and managements systems
- Definition of clear property boundaries and buffer zones
- Consolidation of the existing properties through the development, review and implementation of management plans for the LAC region, ensuring that the arrangements for the maintenance of the OUV are in place.
- Sustainable development as part of the management of World Heritage properties

Actions	Leads by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Improve conservation and management of World Heritage properties					
2.1.1- Implement regional training workshops on disaster risk preparedness for World Heritage	WHC AB	C2C			
2.1.2- Finalise the review of boundaries and establishment of buffer zones and regulatory measures for properties in the region	WHC AB				
2.1.3- Develop a database for the properties in the region including cartographic data and make it available on the website platform	WHC SP				
2.1.4- Promote the integration of World Heritage management on the different levels of planning	SP	AB C2C			
2.1.5- Improve management plans and systems, including specifics provisions for the protection of the OUV and key indicators for the monitoring	SP	AB C2C			
2.1.6- Develop/ update tools to integrate sustainable development on the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP WHC AB	C2C			
2.1.7- Develop/ update tools to assure the integration of sustainable tourism on the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP WHC AB				
Action 2: Recognize the role of World Heritage as model for best practices in conservation and management					
2.2.1- Promote networking among heritage professionals for the exchange of lessons learned	WHC SP	AB			

2.2.2- Encourage the participation of the sciences and the technology in heritage conservation	SP				
2.2.3- Identify, analyse, systematise and disseminate best practices in conservation and management of cultural and natural heritage.	AB	WHC SP			
Acción 3: Improvement of management arrangements					
3.3.1- Generate and strengthen existing financial mechanisms and tools and explore new forms of financing for sustainable heritage conservation and management.	SP				
3.3.2- Develop agreements and promote cooperation amongst diverse government agencies, site commissions and universities for the implementation of management plans	SP				
3.3.3- Strengthen human resource capacity to improve heritage conservation and management practices	SP	AB C2C WHC			

Objective 3: Promote the development of effective CAPACITY BUILDING in the State Parties

Expected outcome:

- Development of a regional strategy for capacity building on World Heritage conservation and management
- Consolidation of the C2C as a regional reference
- Establishment of databases in the regional languages as a basic tool to enhance conservation and management capacities in the region
- Improvement of the existing networks for World Heritage
- Increase in collaboration between relevant national and international organisations
- Endorsement of the integration of Capacity Building programme tools into the mechanisms of national cultural institutions.

Actions	Lead by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Organise and develop information about conservation and management of World Heritage properties in the region.					
3.1.1- Ensure the translation of guidance materials into Spanish, Portuguese, French and English	SP WHC AB	C2C			
3.1.2- Maintain up to date information on key issues related to World Heritage conservation and management	SP WHC AB	C2C			
3.1.3- Development of online modules to strength capacity building in World Heritage management and conservation	AB	WHC C2C			
Action 2. Develop a capacity building strategy					
3.2.1- Develop sub-regional capacity building programmes	C2C SP	WHC AB			
3.2.2- Identify existing institutions, facilities, expertise and networks involved in capacity building for heritage conservation and management	SP C2C	AB WHC			
Action 3. Strengthen institutional capacity for heritage conservation					
3.3.1- Organise exchanges, conferences, field visits on World Heritage for decision-makers	SP	WHC AB			
3.3.2- Systematize existing information about benefits of World Heritage conservation to support the decision-making process	SP	WHC AB			
3.3.3- Develop pilot twining project for site managers	SP	C2C			

Action 4: Promote the diffusion of knowledge on World Heritage					
3.4.1- Develop courses, workshops and other training activities according to the need of the region	AB C2C	UFO SP			
3.4.2.- Strengthen and stimulate the role of Category 2 Centres and other training centres in Capacity Building	WHC AB SP	C2C UFO			
3.4.3.- Promote research on management and conservation and the identification of academics centers offering programs on heritage	SP	C2C			

Objective 4: Increase public awareness, involvement and support to World Heritage through COMMUNICATION

Expected outcome:

- **Broaden access to information about World Heritage**
- **Improvement of participatory communication through appropriate national mechanisms to enhance collaboration among national and private institutions.**
- **Creation/consolidation of regional heritage networks for sharing best practices regarding communication of heritage.**
- **Involvement of academic and research institutions in the communication, conservation and development of World Heritage**

Actions	Leads by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Develop strategies for heritage communication through appropriate mechanisms that enhance collaboration among national and private institutions:					
4.1.1- Promote dialogue between UNESCO, Advisory bodies, national, regional, local agencies and organisations	SP	C2C UFO AB WHC			
4.1.2- Strengthen communication about the properties' OUV and the importance of boundaries and buffer zones	SP	C2C WHC			
4.1.3- Compile and disseminate best national practices in conservation and management of heritage	SP	C2C			
4.1.4- Encourage the participation of the academia in World heritage conservation and promote the dissemination of research results	SP	WHC C2C			
4.1.5- Develop awareness raising and outreach activities for targeted ages and socio-cultural groups, particularly youth, and articulate them with the existing UNESCO education network (ASPnet, World Heritage in young hands...)	SP UFO	CPM			
4.1.6- Involve different media (conventional, traditional and new media) to World Heritage raising awareness and dissemination	SP	CPM			
Action 2: Create/consolidate regional heritage networks to enhance information sharing					
4.2.1- Promote regional periodic meetings and workshops for sharing experiences and ideas	SP	WHC C2C			
4.2.2- Encourage the exchange of information through networks, twinings, workshops, electronic platforms	SP	WHC C2C			

Objective 5: Enhance the role of COMMUNITIES in the identification and management of World Heritage.

Expected outcome:

- Involvement of local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples in the management and conservation of World Heritage properties
- Development of a programme for raising awareness about World Heritage
- Development of sustainable opportunities for local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples to benefit from World Heritage
- Promotion of the World Heritage social appropriation

Actions	Lead by	Partners	2014-2018	2018-2021	2021-2024
Action 1: Involve local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples in all processes of conservation and management of World Heritage properties					
5.1.1- Promote dialogue between the various stakeholders involved in the World heritage management and conservation	SP	C2C UFO			
5.1.2- Develop management models focussing on successful community participation that ensures the sustainable conservation of the World Heritage and the protection of local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples' interests	SP	WHC AB C2C			
5.1.3- Ensure the involvement of local communities in addressing the impacts of development	SP UFO	WHC AB C2C			
5.1.4- Promote strategic partnerships between the communities involved, the different levels of government, the private sector and other actors of civil society to generate funding that will benefit communities and contribute to the conservation of heritage	SP	WHC			
Action 2: Develop of sustainable opportunities for local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples to ensure that they benefit from development activities in the sites					
5.2.1- Create mechanisms and instruments to ensure the participation of involved local communities, traditional and indigenous peoples in the sharing of costs and benefits regarding the conservation and management of World Heritage	SP	WHC C2C			
5.2.2- Promote actions to provide improved information and greater understanding to local and traditional communities and indigenous peoples concerning their rights and their obligations in relation to the World Heritage Convention.	SP	WHC C2C			

SP=States Parties

WHC=Wolrd Heritage Center

AB=Advisory Bodies

C2C= Category II Centers

UFO= UNESCO Field Office