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Natural Heritage Bulletin

Information and Updates from World Natural Heritage Sites in Asia and the Pacific Region

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Convention.

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre (WHC) has been active in commemorating World Days on Water, Wildlife, Wetlands and Forests that signify its commitment to key causes for sustainability of the planet. The WHC also continues to ensure that its processes for developing various thematic and policy documents are participatory, transparent and consultative in character, while maintaining the global perspective of the

The UNESCO C2C at Wildlife Institute of India conducted training programmes on OUV monitoring at several World Heritage Sites across India and also hosted community representatives of another site at its Centre in Dehradun. The Director of UNESCO C2C at WII attended the Joint Management Manual Workshop at IUCN Headquarters, Gland, Switzerland which was organized to develop an action plan for producing the integrated management manual for culture and nature under the World Heritage Leadership Programme. A landmark event for the Centre was the inauguration of its exclusive office building within the premises of the Wildlife Institute of India in Dehradun.

**UNESCO Category 2 Centre for World Natural Heritage
Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region,
Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India**

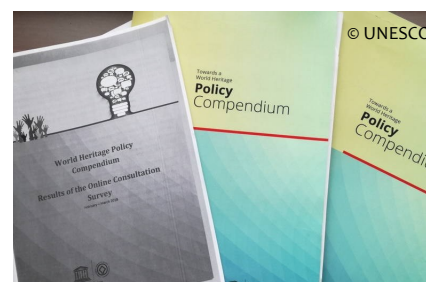
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UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE NEWS

Towards a World Heritage Policy Compendium

In February and March 2018, the World Heritage Centre carried out an online consultation with key World Heritage stakeholders on the first draft of the World Heritage Policy Compendium. For the first time, the online consultation included also UNESCO Category 2 Centres specializing in World Heritage and civil society organisations from all regions with activities in the fields covered by the *World Heritage Convention*. The inclusive nature of the consultation and the wealth of feedback it has gathered will contribute to the elaboration of an accessible and user-friendly final Policy Compendium, which is foreseen as a centralized source of World Heritage policies to inform future decision-making and act as a catalyst to best practice World Heritage conservation. The results of the consultation were examined by the Policy Compendium Working Group during its last meeting (13th – 15th of March 2018, UNESCO headquarters, Paris) and are being taken into account in the preparation of the first draft Policy Compendium - to be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its 42nd session (Manama, Bahrain, 24 June – 4 July 2018).

Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1803>



Compendium of Policy for the World Heritage Convention ('Policy Compendium')

World Water Day 2018: Nature for Water

Water is essential to life; no living organism can survive without it. We need water for human survival, and water is critical for sustaining healthy ecosystems, which provide a wide range of benefits to people. The UNESCO World Heritage Centre theme for this year's World Water Day on 22nd March is 'Nature for Water'. World Heritage Sites include a large variety of landscapes, from wet tropical rainforests to arid deserts and mountain ecosystems. Sites such as Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries (China), Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex (Thailand) and the terraced rice fields of Ifugao (Philippines) are all testimony to our primal need for water, to our interaction with the earth, and our need to coexist respectfully and harmoniously together.

Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1798>



Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiayin Mountains (China)

World Wildlife Day 2018: Protecting Big Cats

Natural World Heritage sites are home to a great many species, which makes taking care of these sites even more important. This year for World Wildlife Day on 3rd March, UNESCO World Heritage Centre celebrated the 'big cats', predators that play a primordial role in the ecosystems in which they live, and many of whom are under threat. Of the 36 wild species of cat that exist in the world, 35 occur in at least one World Heritage site, making the Convention an important instrument for their conservation. Some of the endangered and vulnerable big cat species in World Heritage Sites include the Jaguar, Puma, Iberian Lynx, Amur Tiger, Sumatran Tiger, Persian Leopard among others.

Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1789>

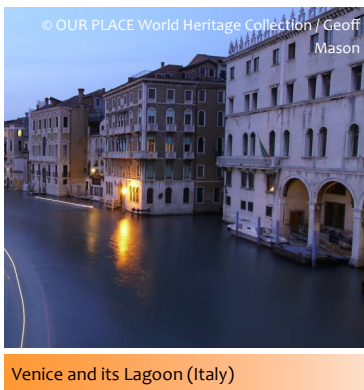


Mechtild Rössler
Director
UNESCO World Heritage Centre



Marine World Heritage Report 2018

‘Spearheading a Global Conservation Movement: Marine World Heritage 2018 Annual Report’ was released by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in February 2018. On the heels of one of the hottest years on record, the protection of the precious ocean gems is more urgent than ever. Over the past year, governments, non-profit leaders and experts from across the planet are increasingly working together to safeguard World Heritage marine sites. Over the past twelve months, the World Heritage Centre and partners have secured new protections for the Philippines’ Tubbataha Reefs National Park, substantially decreasing the risk from ship strikes and pollution. The WHC collaborated with NOAA coral reef watch to study the climate impacts on World Heritage-listed reefs.



World Wetlands Day 2018: Wetlands and Cities

In focusing on the theme “wetlands for a sustainable urban future”, this year’s World Wetlands Day sheds light on the importance of wetlands for cities. On the occasion of the World Wetlands Day 2018 on 2nd February, the World Heritage Centre welcomes the close collaboration between the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention. As of today, more than 95 Ramsar Sites of International Importance overlap with more than 69 World Heritage properties. The Day highlights the need for effective conservation of urban wetlands to facilitate an urbanization that is sustainable and that makes cities liveable.

Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1778>



World Rowing Commitment to World Heritage

The World Rowing Federation, FISA, is the first global sports body to pledge a commitment to protecting World Heritage Sites. The commitment has developed out of World Rowing’s Clean Water partnership with WWF International and is part of WWF’s global campaign to strengthen the protection of natural World Heritage sites. Mechthild Rössler, Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre said, “We look forward to other sport federations and organizations in charge of large sports events, such as the International Olympic Committee, also taking on a similar commitment and putting such policies into practice.”

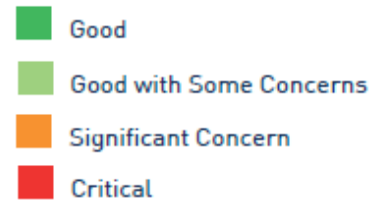
Source: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/news/1775>

WORLD HERITAGE OUTLOOK 2

IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2 released in 2017, marks the first update of the original 2014 IUCN World Heritage Outlook which summarises the key trends in the state of conservation of natural World Heritage sites, the threats and pressures they are facing, and the effectiveness of their protection and management. In the Asia-Pacific Region, results of the 2017 assessment show that, of all natural and mixed (both natural and cultural) World Heritage Sites in Oceania, for 81% the conservation outlook in 2017 is either “good” or “good with some concerns”, for 14% it is of “significant concern” and for 5% the outlook is “critical”. There was no change in the conservation outlook status of any site in Oceania from 2014 to 2017.

Invasive species and climate change are the two most significant current threats to natural World Heritage sites in Oceania, followed by tourism impacts and fishing. Protection and management of natural World Heritage sites in Oceania are overall effective, with only 5% of sites whose protection and management were assessed as being of serious concern and the rest of sites having highly or mostly effective protection and management in place.

* Source: Osipova, E., Shadie, P., Zwahlen, C., Osti, M., Shi, Y., Kormos, C., Bertzky, B., Murai, M., Van Merm, R., Badman, T. (2017). IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2: A conservation assessment of all natural World Heritage sites. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. 92pp.



Source: Osipova et al. 2017 *

UNESCO C2C INDIA: CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Training Programme on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Values of Natural World Heritage Sites in India

A series of training programmes on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Values of Natural World Heritage Sites in India were organised during January – February, 2018 with the overall objective to build capacity and sensitize frontline staff and other stakeholders of World Heritage Sites with the best OUV monitoring techniques such as wildlife monitoring, use of GIS application and socio-economic tools to assess and manage the OUV of the natural World Heritage Sites. Over 100 frontline staff of World Heritage Sites in India participated in these programmes at:

- Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala (19-20 January 2018)
- Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala (22-23 January 2018)
- Anamalai Tiger Reserve (Topslip), Tamil Nadu (24-25 January, 2018)
- WII, Dehradun, Uttarakhand (5-8 February, 2018)
- Manas Tiger Reserve, Assam (16-17 February, 2018)





Community Awareness Programme-The Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area

An exposure visit of 30 participants from the Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area (GHNPCA), a World Heritage Site in Himachal Pradesh, India comprising village residents, local village assembly (Panchayat) and ward representatives, and frontline staff of the State Forest Department was organised on 19th March, 2018 at UNESCO C2C, Wildlife Institute of India. The programme involved talks, film screening and interactive sessions on GHNPCA and World Natural Heritage issues. The objective was to enhance the awareness of community representatives to various dimensions of a World Heritage Site and the role of the local community in the efforts at conservation of the site and benefits for the people.



Participation in Joint Management Manual Workshop on World Heritage in Switzerland

Dr. V.B. Mathur, Director, UNESCO C2C at WII attended the Joint Management Manual Workshop from 30 January to 1 February 2018 at IUCN Headquarters, Gland, Switzerland. This workshop was organized to develop an action plan for producing the integrated management manual for culture and nature under the World Heritage Leadership Programme. The objective of the workshop was to review the existing WH management manuals, and set out a possible list of contents, plan of work and timeline for the production of an integrated management manual for World Heritage, relevant to all World Heritage Sites and their wider landscapes, whether listed as cultural or natural properties. The new manual will offer principles, methods and tools that will be applicable to wider management of cultural and natural sites with a people centred approach. It will also aim to improve the effectiveness of World Heritage sites management worldwide and promote good governance and strengthen local engagement in World Heritage including leading practice on engaging with communities, stakeholders and rights holders in culture and nature. 16 experts representing UNESCO, IUCN, ICCROM and ICOMOS attend this workshop.



Green Hub Assam Internship Programme

UNESCO C2C at WII is supporting the internship programme of a community-based organization, GreenHub Assam, which provides training on nature documentation to youths. During the second phase of this year's programme during January to March, 2018, the interns undertook photo and video documentation of Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan, a World Heritage Site renowned for its outstanding avifaunal and wetland values.

Inauguration of UNESCO C2C New Building at WII, Dehradun

A new building for the Centre was inaugurated by Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India at an event organized in the premises of the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun on 10th March, 2018. Addressing the large gathering of distinguished guests and staff, the Hon'ble Minister lauded the capacity and competence of WII to have achieved the prestigious recognition of the UNESCO C2C. He acknowledged the Centre's activities over the last three years of its functioning and urged the Centre to further strengthen India's leadership in the Asia and the Pacific region as per its mandate. On the occasion, Hon'ble Minister also unveiled an information plaque on the Centre and planted a sapling of *Magnolia champaca* to commemorate the event.

Shri Siddhanta Das, the Director General of Forests & Special Secretary to Government of India, gracing the occasion as Guest of Honour, recalled the support of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to this endeavour and expressed confidence that the Centre will successfully fulfil its mandate of natural heritage conservation both within India and its neighbourhood.

Dr. Mechtild Rossler, Director, Division for Heritage and World Heritage Centre, UNESCO, France shared her congratulatory message via recorded video stating that the operational activities of the Centre at WII has already had a very positive impact on the work of UNESCO to build capacities in the region for mixed and natural World Heritage, including cultural landscapes. Another video message from Mr. Tim Badman, Director, IUCN World Heritage Programme, Switzerland mentioned that the establishment of the Centre was a further example of the commitment of India and WII to supporting natural World Heritage and for the people responsible for protection of our most outstanding natural areas.

Dr. V.B. Mathur, the Director, Wildlife Institute of India and UNESCO Category 2 Centre highlighted the long journey in the process of approval and establishment of this Centre and the Ministry's generous support for the same. The Director reiterated the commitment to deliver high quality outcomes through activities of WII and the UNESCO Category 2 Centre.





Glimpses of inauguration of UNESCO C2C New Building at WII, Dehradun



COLLABORATIONS

- Forest Departments of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam: UNESCO C2C WII collaborated with Forest Departments of several World Heritage Sites of Western Ghats and Manas Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam to conduct training programmes for the frontline staff on Monitoring of Outstanding Universal Values of Natural World Heritage Sites in India during January - February, 2018.
- Forest Department of Himachal Pradesh: UNESCO C2C WII collaborated with the Himachal Pradesh Forest Department to organise an awareness programme for local community members inhabiting near Great Himalayan National Park Conservation Area, a World Heritage Site.
- Green Hub, Assam: UNESCO C2C supported two interns from Green Hub Assam, a community-based video documentation centre, for documenting OUVs of Keoladeo National Park, Rajasthan during January to March, 2018.



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