



Arab Republic of Egypt  
Ministry of Higher Education  
The Egyptian National Commission for Education, Science and Culture  
(UNESCO – ALECSO - ISESCO)  
In collaboration with the  
The African World Heritage Fund

# **WORKSHOP ON HARMONIZATION OF THE AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE TENTATIVE LISTS**

**Cairo:  
March 16-18, 2010**

## **REPORT**

Under the auspices of Professor Doctor / Hany Helal, Minister of Higher Education and  
Minister of State for Scientific Research  
Chairman of the Egyptian National Commission for Education, Science and Culture  
Arab Republic of Egypt.

The African Workshop for the Harmonization of African World Heritage Tentative Lists was held in Cairo on Tuesday, March 16-18, 2010.

**Venue:** Hotel Sonesta - Nasr City - Cairo.

**Working languages:**

Arabic and English

**Organizers:**

The Egyptian National Commission for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO - ALECSO - ISESCO) in cooperation with the African World Heritage Fund, within the activities of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention

**Objectives of the Workshop:**

- 1 Encourage and promote cooperation between African countries and improve the chances of the success of nomination files of African WH sites for inscription on the World Heritage List.
- 2 Prioritization of these sites on the basis of objective scientific principles, and ensure that there is probability of redundancy with each other and try to avoid it on the basis of sound science principles.

**Participating States:**

Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Morocco, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania Tunisia - and an expert from the African World Heritage Fund in South Africa

## **Proceedings of the Workshop**

**Opening:**

The ceremony opened with the fully ten o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, 16 March 18, 2010 Sonesta Hotel Iris Hall recital of verses from the Holy Quran.

In the presence of:

His Excellency Ambassador of Spain (attended on his behalf by Dr. Ana Maria, (Cultural Counselor, Spanish Embassy in Cairo).

HE Ambassador Maher Al-Adawy, Deputy-Secretary-General, the African Cooperation Fund.

Dr. (Ms.) Wafaa Amer , Director, Nature Protection Sector, Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (attended on her behalf by Eng. Atef Darwish)

Dr. (Ms.) Prof. Gihane Zaki, Director-General of International Relations, the Supreme Council of Antiquities

Eng. Mohamed Safwat Salem, Secretary-General of the Egyptian National Commission for UNESCO

Dr. Samir Ghabbour, Chairman of the Egyptian National Committee for the UNESCO Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme, Egyptian National UNESCO Commission, and Workshop Coordinator.

Ms Mona Allam, Assistant-Secretary-General of the Egyptian National UNESCO Commission.

Mr. Jacob Niyangila, representing the African World Heritage Fund.

And many experts and participants.

## **OPENING SPEECHES**

At the opening session the following speeches were given:

Dr. Ana Maria Alonso, Cultural Counselor at the Spanish Embassy in Cairo gave a speech on behalf of HE the Ambassador of Spain. She welcomed the participants and thanked the National Egyptian UNESCO Commission for the well-organized Workshop significant, and highlight the importance of the workshop to draw a streamlined list of the heritage of the African countries to be submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Center and Committee, and emphasized the need to preserve this heritage for future generations.

Speech by HE Ambassador Maher Al-Adawy, Deputy Secretary General of the African Cooperation Fund Progress thanked the organizers for their

invitation to attend this workshop, for which he was happy to support because of its importance, and talked about the importance of harmonization of lists of world heritage sites at the African level, and stressed again the importance of the workshop saying that it is timely.

In his statement, Dr. Jacob Niangyla, Programme Specialist and representative of the African World Heritage Fund, said that the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) has embarked on encouraging African State Parties to develop and update their Tentative Lists (TLs). To achieve this, Regional Harmonization of Tentative Lists training workshops are being organized. The first workshop was held in Sao Tomé in March 2009. Eight French and Portuguese speaking countries attended the workshop to work on their lists. The second workshop was held in Nigeria in May 2009. Six English speaking countries in West Africa attended the workshop. Another workshop is planned to take place in Central Africa in October this year. The idea is to come up with an inventory of sites which State Parties to the World Heritage Convention intend to consider for nomination in the near future. The overall objective of these workshops is to harmonize World Heritage Tentative List for Africa in order to reduce duplication between countries, thus resulting to a higher success rate of inscription of sites into the World Heritage List. The World Heritage Committee encourages States Parties to harmonize their Tentative List at regional and thematic levels ..... And the main reason for doing this is to enable States Parties to collectively assess their respective Tentative List in order to identify opportunities and common themes. The outcome of harmonization can result in not only an improved Tentative List and new nominations from States Parties but also cooperation amongst groups of States Parties in the preparation of nominations. Therefore, at the end of this exercise we hope to have a document containing a draft harmonized Tentative List for African Countries. The African World Heritage Fund would like to call upon African States Parties and other partners to support the work of the Fund by making financial contributions to the endowment fund and programme activities. The returns from the Endowment Fund are already being employed to support strategic projects and programmes across the continent.

Dr. (Mrs.) Wafaa Amer, Director of the Nature Conservation Sector, State Ministry for Environmental Affairs (delivered on her behalf by Eng. Atef Darwish), said she was glad to convey to the participants her sincere compliments and wishes to build a fruitful conference and happy to present

her views on the natural and cultural resources that characterize the African continent. She said they are witnesses of the various civilizations shown by the ancient and modern excavations and large richness of biological diversity, indicating prosperity of the continent, the treasures of African heritage and knowledge are not rightly appreciate so far, and this diversity is clear in newly discovered marine organisms, coral reefs and wildlife, represent the strategic reserve of biodiversity resources of economic value, and represents a factor of top tourist attraction as one of the richest ecosystems in biodiversity, and should refer to the excursions of many scientists from developed countries to explore the uninhabited areas under the umbrella of tourism, collecting sources of unique genetic material that may have enormous economic value in the field of medicine or the various industries. They are taken free of charge in the absence of legislation governing the sharing of benefits. She went on to say that we have the pride of our civilizations on the continent and have to take care of biodiversity and development to meet the human needs of food, clothing and medicine. Over time, this continent's biodiversity was received from around the globe and its development for adaptation of environments to accommodate the dry and semi-arid desert to become an important component of the national natural heritage. The natural biodiversity and its development are a gift from God Almighty and are to be used by everyone alike and not by any one group alone.

More recently the exclusive intellectual property rights for creators of new strains of biodiversity have been granted, resulting in access to huge returns without the participation of countries of origin of the Third World. The Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994 was adopted and acceded to by 192 countries so far. We encourage the idea of the inevitability of the recognition of sovereignty of States over their biodiversity and traditional knowledge and sharing of benefits arising from the use of national biodiversity heritage and knowledge relating thereto, in return for facilitating access to as one of the three main objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The vision of Egypt's national environmental policies of biological diversity is to lay the foundations of good sustainable development and conservation of national natural resources, to remain valid for use, and able to bid to ensure that meet the needs of present and future generations, and harmonization of development plans of the State, and the various

components of agriculture and industry and petroleum, mining and tourism and housing.

The policy of biodiversity in Egypt is a serious policy to safeguard the wealth of biodiversity elements of a "the three levels of diversity: ecosystems, the diversity of flora and fauna and micro-organisms and genetic diversity", as a basis for economic and social development, and an ecological balance in favor of the citizen and to secure their own future.

The general principles of biodiversity in the policy:

- maintenance of national biodiversity.
- establish a network of natural reserves.
- efficient management of natural reserves.
- Activating the environmental legislation and international conventions and regional and awareness and environmental education.

The main objectives of the national strategy for biodiversity conservation till 2017 are:

- policy-making and management of national plans to protect and manage natural resources.
- Mobilization of national efforts for the maintenance of biological diversity and its elements of environmental biotechnology and genetics.
- Activating the legislation and environmental laws for the maintenance of biological diversity and natural reserves, biosafety and intellectual property and benefit sharing of genetic resources and others.
- Work to establish incentives, which are supported and achieved overall sustainable development.
- Develop and implement national action programs of biological diversity.
- the participation of government sectors and the private sector and NGOs and civil society, local communities and promote the role of women in conservation actions.
- Support the institutional system and the Executive and Coordinating and follow-up to implement the national strategy and programs and fulfill the obligations of Egypt international and regional conventions on Biological Diversity.

Among the landmarks on the path of biodiversity conservation in Egypt so far I may mention:

- Law 102 of 1983 regarding the establishment of nature reserves.

- Establishment of Ras Mohamed National Park as the first protected area in Egypt in 1983 and the start of its development in 1989.
- Egypt's accession to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992 and ratified in 1994.
- Law No. 4 of 1994 regarding the protection of the environment as amended by Act No. 9 of 2009.
- the addition of article 59 of the Constitution in 2006 that fact that environmental protection is a national duty binding on all.
- Adoption of the Strategic National biodiversity conservation and plan operations in 1997 to 2017 and the National Strategies for Wetlands, 2005, eco-tourism 2005, medicinal plants, 2009.
- The decision of the President of the Republic No. 154 of 2001 to use the territory of the State Nature Reserve in current and future development plans.
- Ratifying the Intellectual Property Law and the Biosafety Protocol in 2003.
- Declaration on the heart of the Saint Catherine protectorate of World Cultural Heritage site, 2003.
- the declaration of the whales and led the first region in the global natural heritage of Egypt 2005.
- Declaration of the largest nature reserve in Egypt 2007, the Gilf Kebir, area of 48,523 km<sup>2</sup>.
- Reaching a network of nature reserves to the equivalent of about 15% of the country's area, by declaring the latest 28th protected marine area at Salloum, in March 2010.
- The continuation of Egyptian-European cooperation in the development of South Sinai reserves since 1989 to 2010.
- Cooperation with the U.S. Agency for International Development in the development of the Red Sea reserves from 2000 to 2008.
- The Egyptian-Italian cooperation multidisciplinary agreement for Fayoum reserves from 1996 to 2009.
- Bio-safety bill on the of the People's Assembly.
- Establishment of a clearing house for biological and national and international environments, and a map of Egypt and method for predicting biological events in 2008.
- The introduction of economic management approach and sustainable development of natural reserves in 2008.
- Develop and implement national indicators for the diagnosis of status and trends of biodiversity 2009.
- Cooperation with the private sector for the propagation of endangered species since 2003.

- Taking into account economic and social development and environmental tourism as main themes in the management of protected areas.
- Cooperation and integration of the national implementation of the obligations of international conventions for biodiversity and climate change and fight desertification.
- Dealing with a serious invasive species from bird flu since 2006.

The number of employees working in natural reserves are currently to 700; more than 60% of them from local communities in the environment of nature reserves and 15 of them hold Doctorate degrees and more than 30 have a Master's degree and more than 230 are university graduates.

World Heritage Sites offer a thriving business culturally and nationally, so it is necessary to work on increasing their numbers and improve their conservation to the extent appropriate for our civilization, and the number of heritage sites present in the African continent is not commensurate with the historical values and the area's natural richness, and require intensive efforts and self-funding to lift the burden on governments by the private sector and environmental investment site levels, to allow for sustainability in the financing and maintenance of these sites.

The challenges facing the world can be overcome through the protection of natural resources and achieving sustainable development objectives that are means in the fight against poverty and hunger and to narrow the gap between rich and poor and the maintenance of biological diversity and address climate change and global warming and the depletion of fish stocks and the fight against desertification and pollution of all kinds and to cope with globalization and the concomitant growth of an integrated world market and the movement of funds and the increase in investments and take advantage of them in achieving the goals of sustainable development and achieving food security and maximizing the role of women in development activities and strengthening the private sector and NGOs and human development and safety and human well-being and to maximize the sustainable production and rationalize consumption patterns, especially in the renewable energy resources and maximizing the role of young people and develop a global partnership for development and achieve universal education for every individual on our homelands.

We hope that the results of your Workshop will enhance the special positive information of partnership mechanisms and decisions and recommendations

to support the expansion of heritage sites in the African continent and managed efficiently. God's mercy and blessings.

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Speech of Mr. Mohamed Safwat Salem  
Secretary-General of the Egyptian National Commission for Education,  
Science and Culture  
(UNESCO - ALECSO - ISESCO)

It gives me a great pleasure to greet you and welcome you in your second home Egypt, in this important African Workshop that is conjointly organized by the African World Heritage Fund and the Egyptian National UNESCO Commission.

I am privileged to have been asked by HE Dr. Hani Helal, Minister of Higher Education and State Minister for Scientific Research and President of the Egyptian National UNESCO Commission, to convey to you his greetings and best wishes for a successful meeting that will advance the conservation of African Heritage for the generations to come. He would have much liked to come here and greet you himself, but unfortunately he had other urgent matters to deal with.

The aim of our Workshop, as you know, is to reach a consensus among Delegates of our African countries and our experts, on the principles upon which to submit proposals to the World Heritage at UNESCO for the inscription of the heritage jewels that we possess, on the World Heritage List.

As you have received in our invitation messages, we are here to encourage cooperation among African countries and improving the opportunities of success of recommendation of their Nomination Files for inscribing African sites on the WH List. This we think will need a specific activity that this Workshop is asked to proceed with, namely, prioritize these sites on sound scientific bases, to avoid repetition, so as to improve their chances of success when officially submitted to the World Heritage Center at UNESCO and when evaluated by the Advisory Bodies.

As we all know, World Heritage sites are sites of cultural or natural heritage with outstanding universal value, recommended by the World

Heritage Committee of UNESCO, upon the request of Member States – and inscribed in a list known as the World Heritage List, according to the rules of the World Heritage Convention.

I wish now to talk to you about the World Heritage Convention within which we move now, came into existence.

Interest in world heritage appeared when building the Aswan High-Dam in the late 1950's, and it was clear that it would create a permanent body of water that would cause inundation of sites of great importance, especially the Abu Simbel temple.

To avoid that, the Egyptian and Sudanese Governments issued an international call in which he asked for international cooperation to rescue that valuable heritage. He charged UNESCO with the task of preparing this mission scientifically and financially. UNESCO accepted the challenge and led a highly successful international campaign to protect and rescue Nubian monuments, and especially Abu Simbel Temple. As a result, those monuments were saved.

Rescue works have brought out to light that similarly many sites in many countries have a great importance and value as world heritage and that protecting them is a mission to be carried out not only by their countries, but also by the international community as a whole. Let us think of the Acropolis in Greece, the Taj Mahal in India, or the Great China Wall. And so UNESCO sponsored an international agreement concerning the conservation of the world's most valuable cultural and natural heritage, namely, the International Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, approved by the UNESCO General Conference in its seventeenth session in Paris on the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 1972.

This Convention is the international legal tool concerning the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, setting criteria for recommending sites qualified to be of outstanding universal value. It also determines methods of conservation and management of that heritage.

The process of a country recommending its site includes many steps. First of all, ratifying the Convention to get a membership therein. After that, the country prepares a Tentative List (TL) of the sites that it considers of outstanding universal value. Then, it chooses from time to time – from the

TL – one or more site(s) to be added to the World Heritage List, indicating its reasons for that. Also it indicates that the site is under legal protection by national laws to guarantee its authenticity and its integrity, its safety, and that it has an effective management plan and suitable administration. In addition, it presents a comparative analysis of that site with other ones of the same type in the same country or in other countries. Approval for inscription of the site in question is conditioned by applying – at least – one of the ten criteria mentioned the Convention which emphasize the site's outstanding universal value. The number of sites in the World Heritage List is increasing every year. Now, it has become 890 sites.

Listing a site does not mean that UNISCO is managing its matters itself; it remains kept under the control of its owning country and under its protection and management. The idea is that the site can benefit from the attention of the international community which cooperates with that country in protecting it in case of danger or damage, by presenting technical help or financial support or both of them, upon need. Countries try to list their sites in the List as this means a global recognition of the value of this country's cultural and natural heritage, and attracts touristic importance.

In 2005, African countries felt that their contribution in and benefit from the Convention is less than they expect. As a result, the Republic of South Africa has thankfully called for a meeting for the experts of African countries in which they decreed forming a fund for African heritage, which would contribute in enhancing African heritage and increasing the participation of African countries, to benefit thereof. Indeed, the fund was established in 2006. Egypt and some other European countries and foundations contributed in its budget. Egypt was elected as a member of its Board of Directors to represent North Africa. The Board has held a meeting in Cairo in 2008.

The fund has started its activity by holding expert meetings for different areas of Africa to study the problems of its World Heritage sites, so that African countries would not compete with each other in recommending similar sites. This situation is removed by the experts coming together to study the submitted Tentative Lists, to achieve harmony amongst them, to prioritize them, and to set common plans to manage them. During the last two years, the fund has contributed in holding regional workshops for different African countries that ended with recommendations to be viewed by decision makers in those countries.

Through the Fund's programme, Egypt has called for a workshop including countries for countries of North Africa for the same purpose. A few countries from East Africa were also invited to harmonize with their TLs.

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Speech by Dr. Samir Ghabbour  
Chairman of the Egyptian National Committee for the UNESCO Man and  
Biosphere Programme (MAB)  
and Workshop Coordinator

The speaker reminded participants that the years 1970-1972 marked a historic turning point in humankind's long march towards a better future. Aspirations all over the world shifted from wealth procurement to the quest for health. The preparations for the Stockholm Conference of 1972 obliged many organizations to revise their mandates and their plans<sup>1</sup>. New organizations sprang up<sup>2</sup>. New international agreements and programmes were discussed and launched<sup>3</sup>. Two of these were within UNESCO: The Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), launched in 1971, and the World Heritage (WH) Convention, launched the year after.

Fortunately for the WH Convention, its founding fathers treated natural and cultural heritage on the same footing. However, a larger number of cultural sites were submitted for inscription on the WH List than natural ones. The very word "property" used in the Convention text, reveals that innocent bias. States Parties to the Convention cherished cultural creations by their ancestors more than God's natural creation. This attitude is still making natural sites a minority on the WH List.

For us in Egypt, boasting to harbour one third of the world's antiquities, every one understood that we should submit cultural sites in the first place, and so Egypt submitted 5 of her cultural jewels to the third session of the WH Committee, during its third meeting in Luxor, namely:

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO in particular

<sup>2</sup> UNEP, SCOPE, *inter alia*

<sup>3</sup> Ramsar, MAB, *inter alia*

1. The ancient Abu Mena Monastery, west of Alexandria (on the Danger List since 2001)
2. The Pyramids area
3. Islamic Cairo
4. Luxor, and
5. Nubia from Aswan to Abu Simbel

These 5 sites were deliberately and intelligently chosen to be on a line from the Mediterranean to the Sudan border, and represent the 3 civilizations that came over Egypt in the 7 millennia of her existence: the Pharaonic, the Coptic, and the Islamic. They were thus comprehensive of both Egypt's geography and her history.

In the year 2000 Egypt submitted a sixth site, St. Catherine area in South Sinai, which was inscribed in 2002 as a cultural site only. And in 2003 Egypt submitted her first natural site of Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) which was successfully inscribed in 2005 in Durban.

We are now in the process of preparing two Nomination File for another site of two contiguous areas, one natural (fossils) and the other cultural (the Pharaonic basalt quarries). Both are in the Faiyum Province, north of Lake Qaroun.

The other Nomination File concerns the natural Dababiya site south of Luxor, where scientists discovered the best example of the Paleocene/Eocene boundary, showing what had happened on our planet during what they call the "Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM)". Its thorough study should indicate what may happen to us in the coming Global Warming.

The speaker then went on to deal with the difficulties encountered in the exercise of comparative assessments of sites proposed in Tentative Lists are due to the following four main defects:

- The structure of the Tentative List does not encourage inclusion of a full description of the site,
- The absence of a clear purpose sought from the comparative assessments of sites,
- Lack of an internationally approved methodology for comparative assessments, and

- Criteria and indicators of biodiversity to be used in comparative assessments are not agreed upon, or even utilized.

Consequently, the structure of Tentative Lists has to be improved so that they could be amenable to comparative assessments of sites. Otherwise, the assessment has to be deferred until *Draft Nomination Files* are presented by States Parties, or a Tentative List should be modeled after a template Draft Nomination File from the very beginning. The World Heritage Center, in collaboration with the World Heritage Committee, IUCN, and ICOMOS, ought to fill out these four main defects in order to promote serious and effective comparative assessments of sites proposed in Tentative Lists at the regional or at the international levels. Until then, comparative assessments are bound to be of only a general character.

What can we do then under the present circumstances of the inadequacy of data and information contained in Tentative Lists? Perhaps the best thing to do would be to classify the proposed sites according to their primary types of habitats, as was done in 2003 (see below). We can arrange sites, moreover, in the order of how many criteria are applicable to each site. Here fossil sites will be at a disadvantage because they may have only the one criterion of showing stages in the earth's history, which is quite important on its own, but that can rarely be associated with criteria of biodiversity or landscape beauty. We may also arrange them in the order of the number of attributes they possess, e.g., how many secondary habitat types does each site include? Fossil sites in this case, will again falsely seem at a disadvantage, and this should always be borne in mind when examining, classifying, comparing, or assessing Tentative Lists. Eventually, with better and more detailed data and information on proposed natural heritage sites, of the level of elaboration required in Nomination Files, comparative assessments can be usefully made by using suitable statistical methods. These methods range from the simple discriminant and principal component analyses, to the more complex correspondence analysis and ascending hierarchic classification. These analyses can give clear and more accurate indications of the comparative quality of sites and of their resemblances (or similarities), provided the classification criteria and the conceptual assumptions are objectively identified from the start, as much as possible.

Finally, the speaker pointed out the inadequacy of training programmes at present and proposed the establishment of a special Diploma Degree on the

Management of World Heritage sites. He pointed out that all world continents have such degrees, except Africa.

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Dr. Nyangila took the floor and said he would take that proposal as one of the recommendations to submit to the AWHF. He also said that programmes for capacity building are being carried out as student programmes, as part of the new strategy they are implementing.

Afterwards, the presentations were made according to schedule, with a few exceptions.

After all national reports and scientific presentations had been made on the first and second days.

On the third day, the participants visited the Great Pyramid area at Giza, the Egyptian Museum (King Tut's treasures) and the Geological Museum.

After they returned to the Workshop hall, the proposal of an African World Heritage Action Plan was shown. It was decided that the participants would have the opportunity to study and comment on it within a week. It would be declared adopted after that period of commenting, by e-mail.

Annexes are attached for:

1. List of Participants
2. List of Presentations
3. New Tentative Lists proposed by some Delegations.
4. African World Heritage Action Plan
5. Programme of the Workshop