

The Strategic Importance of the World Heritage Convention

- A litmus test for the conservation community: if we cannot protect the most iconic natural and mixed natural-cultural sites on Earth, of importance to all of humanity, we will have failed!
- The only international convention to link nature and culture explicitly.
- A convention specifically designed to offer protection to unique places that are under threat.
- 228 sites but 8% of the global PA estate.



Recommendation 1:

- A global priority is agreed to assure World Heritage Sites serve as models for integrated, effective and enduring natural and cultural conservation, and have a good and improving Outlook, as a litmus test of the success of Protected Areas globally.
 - Help ensure WH sites are models of good management and in particular that plans are in place for moving sites off the in-danger list.
 - World Heritage Outlook is a useful tool in this respect.



Recommendation 2:

- A credible World Heritage List fills the gaps in conserving biodiversity, wilderness, spectacular natural features and geodiversity, in all regions of the globe.
 - World Heritage and wilderness a special focus for WCPA over next year.



Recommendation 3:

- The credibility and integrity of the World Heritage Convention is restored and retained.
 - Need to return to a credible level of agreement between technical advice provided by the advisory bodies and World Heritage committee decisions (“improved concordance factor)



Recommendation 4:

- A decisive increase in Civil Society and Community engagement, benefitting and supporting World Heritage and the communities that depend on them should be achieved.
 - A number of WH NGO networks forming;
 - Next year we are launching the IUCN-WCPA World Heritage Specialist Group.



Recommendation 5:

- Global standards for rights and for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage should be adopted and implemented in the World Heritage Convention, ensuring the full involvement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in accordance with a rights-based approach.
 - Fortunately a lot of work being done on this topic both by IUCN's World Heritage Programme, IUCN Commissions, work with ICOMOS and other partners.

