A Comparative Mapping of Forms and Models for Use of Advisory Services by International Instruments and Programmes

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Prepared by:
Hir Purkait
Dawn Clemitson
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Advisory Findings

This IOS study reviewed the forms and models for the use of advisory services by similar international instruments and programmes.

IOS concluded that currently the services obtained by the World Heritage Committee from Advisory Bodies (IUCN, ICCOMOS and ICCROM) constitute 75 per cent of the total budget from the World Heritage Fund, leaving very little for other key tasks such as providing international assistance to the State Parties.

The current practices for assessing nominations to the World Heritage List by the Advisory Bodies are heavy and costly when compared with those of similar international instruments and programmes. There is an opportunity to revisit the working methods and adopt practices from other international instruments and programmes. Further, some advisory services such as assessing requests for international assistance and reactive monitoring missions can be sourced differently, e.g. from a panel of experts established by the Committee.

Background

1. The World Heritage Committee at its 40th session adopted Decision 40 COM 15, which emphasises ‘the importance of securing value for money in the commissioning of advisory services in view of optimisation of the use of resources of the Fund’. The Committee requested ‘the Secretariat to prepare (…) a comparative mapping of forms and models for use of advisory services (such as evaluation, technical services, etc.) by other international instruments and programmes as a means of benchmarking the price of services, including but not limited to UNESCO site-based conventions and programmes, for consideration by the ad-hoc Working Group at the earliest opportunity and examination by the Committee at its 41st session’

2. Currently the Advisory Bodies to the World Heritage Committee are understood to be ICCROM (the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites), and IUCN - the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

3. The roles of the Advisory Bodies as per paragraph 31 of the 2016 Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention are to:

   a) advise on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the field of their expertise;

   b) assist the Secretariat, in the preparation of the Committee's documentation, the agenda of its meetings and the implementation of the Committee's decisions;

   c) assist with the development and implementation of the Global Strategy for a Representative, Balanced and Credible World Heritage List, the Global Training Strategy, Periodic Reporting, and the strengthening of the effective use of the World Heritage Fund;

   d) monitor the state of conservation of World Heritage properties (including through Reactive Monitoring missions at the request of the Committee and Advisory missions at the invitation of the States Parties) and review requests for international assistance;

   e) in the case of ICOMOS and IUCN evaluate properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List, in consultation and dialogue with nominating States Parties, and present evaluation reports to the Committee; and

   f) attend meetings of the World Heritage Committee and the Bureau in an advisory capacity.
4. Article 7 of the Convention emphasizes that the purpose of the Convention is international protection of the world’s cultural and natural heritage and the establishment of a system of international cooperation and assistance designed to support States Parties to the Convention in their efforts to conserve and identify that heritage. Further, Article 15 of the Convention also specifies that the Committee is responsible for defining the use of the World Heritage Fund.

5. While all other budgets have shown significant compression, the Advisory Bodies’ funding has remained more or less constant from 2010 onwards. The 2016-2017 budget for the Advisory Bodies represents more than 75 percent of the total allocation of the Expenditure Plan. Twenty years ago, Advisory Bodies’ budgets represented only 20 percent of the World Heritage Fund budget.

6. Figure 1 shows the World Heritage Fund budget evolution since 1978 – 2015. International assistance has been the main casualty of the World Heritage Funds’ reduction in expenditure. From its peak of US$ 5.5 million in 1998 - 1999, the budget for international assistance has shrunk to less than US$ 1 million in 2014 - 2015.

Figure 1 Evolution of the World Heritage Fund Budget by Biennium (1978 – 2015)

source: WHC-15/39. COM/15

Study objective, scope and methodology

7. The IOS study undertaken at the request of the World Heritage Convention’s Secretariat aimed at mapping forms and models for the use of advisory services by various international instruments and programmes, including but not limited to UNESCO site-based conventions and programmes. The study covered the period 2012 – 2015 (i.e., two biennia) and included the following conventions and programmes:

- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)
- Man and the Biosphere Programme (1971)
- Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention (1971)
- UNESCO Global Geoparks (current label ratified in 2015)

To understand the evolution of the Advisory Bodies’ roles and responsibilities, historical documents also formed part of the research.

8. IOS performed the study in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing. IOS and WHC agreed on the Advisory Terms of Reference as set forth in
Annex VII prior to commencing work. Preliminary work included the review of the IOS 2013 Audit of the Working Methods of Cultural Conventions. The study included review of Conventions texts and Operational Guidelines, Conventions and Programmes Governing Bodies’ decisions where relevant, interviews with staff of the Convention/Programme Secretariats and the Advisory Bodies/experts who provide advisory services to Conventions and Programmes.

9. IOS contracted the services of two consultants, namely Mr Natarajan Ishwaran and Ms Maider Maraña to assist in study and provide expert advice during the steering body meetings.

10. IOS and the consultants, using best available data, identified elements of the international instruments and programmes that lend themselves to mapping. The study team concluded that inscription / listing processes, field missions and international assistance were the core processes that will be subject to mapping and comparison.

**Principal Conclusions**

11. The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) and the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention assigns advisory services an integral role, which over the years has evolved. Other international instruments and programmes use advisory services for specific purposes and generally the level of advisory services required and roles played are less intense when compared to Advisory Bodies to the 1972 Convention.

12. In respect of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the growth of the use of advisory services at the expense of other budget lines has reached a level difficult to sustain and results in crowding out of other activities like international assistance.

13. Current Advisory Bodies’ practices for assessing nominations to the World Heritage List are heavy and costly when compared with other international instruments and programmes. Other international instruments and programmes have less intensive practices; however, their nomination assessment is not comparable to the effort required to assess the 1972 Convention’s inscription benchmark of Outstanding Universal Value.

**Table of Recommendations:**

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<tr>
<th>Recommendation 1:</th>
<th>World Heritage Committee to review the overhead costs (project administration and contingency fund costs) charged by the Advisory Bodies with the view to eliminate them from the budget, since these charges are not supported by direct costs associated with the work performed by the Advisory Bodies.</th>
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<td>Recommendation 2:</td>
<td>WHC Secretariat to obtain legal advice on sourcing advisory services, i.e., definitive legal opinion on whether the Committee is compelled to use only ICCROM, IUCN and ICOMOS to provide advisory services.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 3:</td>
<td>World Heritage Committee to identify the root cause(s) for Committee decisions deviating from Advisory Bodies advice, procured at a significant cost to the World Heritage Fund, and take action to address them.</td>
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<td>Recommendation 4:</td>
<td>World Heritage Committee to take the opportunity to envisage changing working methods and incorporate practices of other international instruments / programmes to generate efficiencies.</td>
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