

Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting

Europe and North America

(2022-2024)

*Overview of the outcomes of the analysis of the Periodic Reporting questionnaires
to inform the development of the Regional Action Plan*

INTRODUCTION	2
1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION BY THE STATES PARTIES IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA	2
1.1. Synergies with other conventions, programmes and recommendations for the conservation of cultural and natural heritage.....	3
1.2. Tentative Lists.....	3
1.3. Nominations.....	4
1.4. General policy development	4
1.5. Financial status and human resources	6
1.6. Capacity development	6
2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION AT WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA.....	6
2.1. World Heritage property data	6
2.2. Other conventions/programmes under which the World Heritage property is protected	7
2.3. Statements of Outstanding Universal Value.....	8
2.4. Factors Affecting the World Heritage Properties	9
2.4.1. <i>Factors that negatively affect properties</i>	11
2.4.2. <i>Factors that positively affect properties</i>	12
2.5. Protection and Management	13
2.5.1. <i>Boundaries and buffer zones</i>	13
2.5.2. <i>Protective measures</i>	14
2.5.3. <i>Management system/management plan</i>	16
2.5.4. <i>Financial and Human Resources</i>	17
2.5.5. <i>Visitor Management</i>	17
2.5.6. <i>Monitoring</i>	18
2.5.7. <i>Identification of Priority Management Needs</i>	18
3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE PERIODIC REPORTING EXERCISE.....	19

INTRODUCTION

This report presents an overview of the outcomes of the analysis of Sections I and II of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting questionnaires, which was completed by the States Parties in Europe and North America between September 2022 and July 2023. The purpose of this document is to inform the discussions during the consultation workshop with the national focal points implementing the World Heritage Convention in the region, for the development of the Regional Action Plan (to be held from 19 to 21 December 2023, at UNESCO Headquarters). The findings and conclusions included in this document are based on the datasets produced from analysis of the questionnaires.¹

Periodic Reporting is one of the monitoring tools of the World Heritage Convention, that includes the self-assessment of all World Heritage properties (the other being Reactive Monitoring, which only include properties that are threatened by specific factors). Periodic Reporting is an exercise conducted largely by the national focal points for the implementation of the Convention and the site managers of World Heritage properties in each State Party, and therefore reflects their perspectives at national and/or local levels. This type of report implies a degree of subjectivity. Given the nature and size of the questionnaires, inconsistencies between answers to similar questions are to be expected. In addition, the way questions were formulated by developers of the questionnaire, and the intentions behind it, may differ from how the questions were understood by the people answering those questions, and subsequently influence the outcomes of the reporting. For analytical purposes, the validity of the data and conclusions drawn from them must be considered carefully. Caution is required when analysing how multiple responses were aggregated for certain statistics but also how they reflect what the responders considered applicable or not.

Within the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting as a whole, Europe and North America is the last region to undertake the self-assessment. All States Parties in the region participated in the reporting, and questionnaires were submitted for a total of 544 World Heritage properties, compared with 466 in the Second Cycle, namely an increase of almost 17% in the sample of properties undertaking the Periodic Reporting exercise.

Before proceeding to the details of the outcomes, it is useful to note that this region has the highest number of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, and 85% of the total number of properties are cultural properties (464). There are more cultural properties in this region alone than in all the other regions combined (Africa: 53 cultural properties; Arab States: 75; Asia and the Pacific: 187; Latin America and the Caribbean: 100; for a total of 415 cultural properties in the rest of the world compared to the 464 in this region). Therefore, the overall trends for all properties in the region are largely influenced by the high proportion of cultural versus natural properties. In addition, the Tentative Lists of States Parties in the Europe and North America region currently include a total of 533 sites.²

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION BY THE STATES PARTIES IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

Government institutions led the completion of the questionnaire for Section I of the Periodic Reporting with strong support from World Heritage site managers/coordinators (in 31 out of the 51 States Parties involved), UNESCO National Commissions (in 28 States Parties), and Focal Points of other Conventions (in 25 States Parties).

¹ Some of the graphs and tables included in this document, while based on reliable data, are provisional graphics that will be perfected for the final report on the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting.

² Data from December 2023.

1.1. Synergies with other conventions, programmes and recommendations for the conservation of cultural and natural heritage

In terms of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, a large proportion of the States Parties (98%) are a party to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) as well as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species in Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) (94%).

There is a high adherence to most cultural heritage related conventions except for the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage – only 39% of States Parties are a party to this Convention.

The national focal points for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention communicate the most with their counterparts responsible for the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, followed by those responsible for the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. This is partly to be expected, given the high proportion of cultural World Heritage properties in Europe and North America. Nevertheless, over half of the States Parties in the region report communicating with their counterparts responsible for the Ramsar Convention (28 States Parties) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (26 States Parties).

1.2. Tentative Lists

Most States Parties report using ICOMOS thematic studies in the process of developing their Tentative Lists, as well as the UNESCO’s ‘Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List’ and the World Heritage Resource Manual ‘Preparing World Heritage Nominations’. Only 15 States Parties used meetings to harmonise Tentative Lists at the regional or sub-regional level.

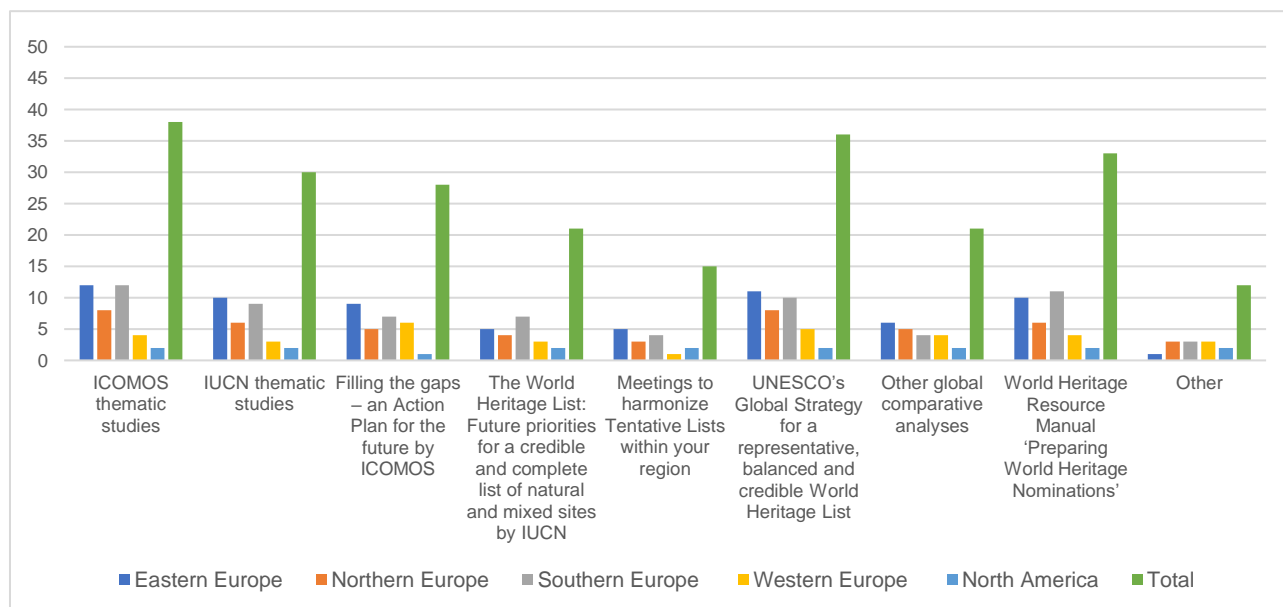


Figure 2.1 Tools used in the preparation of the Tentative List

While few States Parties (16%) have used the Upstream Process to support the revision of their Tentative Lists to date, 47% replied that they intend to use it in the future. Thirty States Parties (59%) report that properties on their Tentative Lists have the potential to generate dialogue and cooperation among competent authorities at national level and communities. The development of the regional Action Plan should take into consideration the adoption of the Preliminary Assessment by the World Heritage Committee in 2021, as well as the Upstream Process.

Thirty-two States Parties reported frequently using inventories for the identification of cultural heritage sites for their Tentative Lists and eleven more to do it sometimes. For the identification of natural and mixed sites, inventories are only used by half of the States Parties (26 and 25 respectively).

1.3. Nominations

Site managers/coordinators were involved in the preparation of nomination dossiers in 40 States Parties. Involvement of local authorities within or adjacent to the property and of local communities/residents was also reported by approximately two-thirds of the States Parties (38 and 33 States Parties respectively).

Enhanced honour/prestige is considered as the highest perceived benefit of inscribing properties on the World Heritage List by most of the States Parties, followed by the improved presentation of sites. Other perceived benefits are: strengthened protection and conservation of heritage; enhanced wider community appreciation and participation in heritage processes; and increased number of tourists and visitors. Fewer States Parties consider that inscription contributes to fostering security, inclusive economic development, and increased funding.

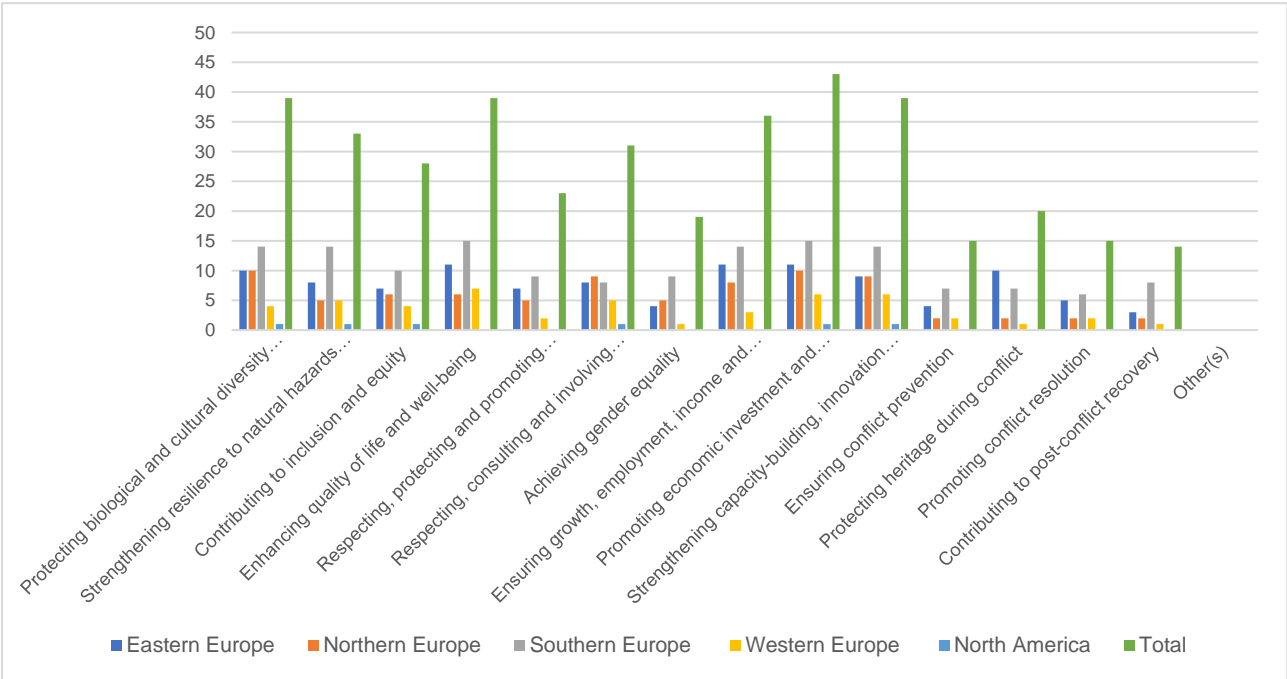


Figure 2.2 Contribution of World Heritage properties to achieving the objectives of the 2015 World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

As shown in Figure 2.2., the inscription of World Heritage properties is perceived as contributing to the objectives of the 2015 World Heritage and Sustainable Development Policy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development mainly by: promoting economic investment and quality tourism; enhancing quality of life and well-being; and strengthening capacity-building, innovation, and local entrepreneurship.

1.4. General policy development

Most of the States Parties in the region consider the legal framework for the identification of both their cultural and natural heritage as fully adequate (94% and 92% respectively). All other States Parties considered that their legal frameworks are partially adequate. At the sub-regional level, the legal framework for natural heritage is considered the least adequate in Eastern Europe (83%) and Western Europe reports the lowest rates of adequacy for cultural heritage (88%).

Legal frameworks are considered slightly less adequate for the *conservation and protection* of cultural and natural heritage (76% and 82% respectively). At the sub-regional level, 30% of the States Parties in Northern Europe consider their legal frameworks to be only partially adequate for cultural heritage and 22% of those Southern Europe report the same for natural heritage. Only one State Party reported that its legal framework is inadequate for the conservation of its cultural heritage.

Most States Parties consider that there is sufficient capacity to enforce legal frameworks for cultural heritage and natural heritage. However, almost half (23) of the States Parties considered that existing capacity/resources to enforce the legal framework could be strengthened both for cultural and natural heritage.

On the question of whether the State Party integrates the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies, a high percentage of States Parties declared that it did so to some or to a high extent.

Main focus of the national sustainable development policy and/or strategy	Sub-Region					Total
	Eastern Europe	Northern Europe	Southern Europe	Western Europe	North America	
Protecting biological and cultural diversity and providing ecosystem services and benefits	11	10	16	7	2	46
Strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change	11	9	15	7	2	44
Contributing to inclusion and equality	7	6	15	3	1	32
Enhancing the quality of life and well-being	9	10	17	8	1	45
Respecting, protecting and promoting human rights	8	7	16	3	2	36
Respecting, consulting and involving indigenous peoples and local communities	8	8	13	4	2	35
Achieving gender equality	6	7	13	2	1	29
Ensuring growth, employment, income and livelihoods	8	9	16	5	1	39
Promoting economic investment and quality tourism	10	9	17	7	2	45
Strengthening capacity-building, innovation and local entrepreneurship	11	8	16	4	1	40
Ensuring conflict prevention	7	3	10	1	0	21
Protecting heritage during conflict	6	2	13	1	0	22
Promoting conflict resolution	4	2	11	0	0	17
Contributing to post-conflict recovery	6	2	11	1	0	20
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2.1 Integration of the conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage as a strategic element in national sustainable development policies and strategies

A total of 45% of the States Parties in the region report effectively integrating conservation and protection of cultural and natural heritage into comprehensive/larger-scale planning programmes. In addition, 47% of the States Parties have policies in this regard but experience some deficiencies in their implementation.

The World Heritage Sustainable Development Policy is the most widely used policy across the

Europe and North America region to set national policies or strategies for the protection of cultural and natural heritage. The same can be said at the sub-regional level for Eastern Europe, Northern Europe and Western Europe. Instead, in Southern Europe, the Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters at World Heritage properties is the most widely used policy. The States Parties in North America report that they do not use any of these policies.

1.5. Financial status and human resources

Few States Parties consider the current budgets for cultural and natural heritage as adequate (9 and 11 respectively). Four States Parties consider it inadequate for basic conservation, protection, and presentation of cultural heritage; only one State Party reports the same for natural heritage. On average, 0.8% of total annual public expenditure is spent on the identification, conservation, protection, and presentation of heritage. The percentage is the same for cultural and natural heritage. It is noted that a significant number of States Parties did not answer this question (19 States Parties in relation to cultural heritage and 22 in relation to natural heritage). The reasons for this must be reflected upon when developing the regional Action Plan since the indicator for target 11.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals 'Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage' relates to the total per capital expenditure on the protection and conservation of cultural and natural heritage.

When it comes to human resources, only 13 States Parties consider that they have adequate resources for cultural heritage. For natural heritage, 16 States Parties responded in the same manner. In addition, 4 States Parties reported that human resources are inadequate for cultural heritage and 1 State Party stated the same for natural heritage.

1.6. Capacity development

Concerning capacity development, the highest priorities concerning both cultural and natural heritage sites are:

- sustainable development,
- sustainable resource utilisation and management,
- strengthening resilience to natural hazards and climate change: adaptation and mitigation,
- sustainable tourism use and management,
- impact assessment,
- conservation and management of heritage sites.

In addition, for cultural heritage specifically, the following needs were observed:

- risk preparedness and disaster risk management,
- management approaches and methodologies,
- heritage interpretation/ communication of World Heritage properties.

For natural heritage these demands were also noted:

- protection and integration of biological and cultural diversity in management systems,
- management effectiveness assessment,
- awareness raising and outreach.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION AT WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

2.1. World Heritage property data

With regard to the geographic information, the managers of 112 (21%) properties (51 cultural, 55 natural and 6 mixed) considered that the information available at the World Heritage Centre needs some corrections.

The high percentage of cultural heritage in the region was already noted. Fifteen (29%) States

Parties – Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, the Holy See, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, and Serbia – only have cultural properties. At the time of the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting, 4 properties (3 cultural and 1 natural) were on the List of World Heritage in Danger:

- Historic Centre of Vienna (Austria),
- Roşia Montană Mining Landscape (Romania);
- Medieval Monuments in Kosovo (Serbia),
- Everglades National Park (United States of America).

One cultural property, Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City (United Kingdom) – was delisted by the Committee in 2021.

2.2. Other conventions/programmes under which the World Heritage property is protected

Only 5% of cultural properties are also on the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar List). 6% of cultural properties reported that they are part of the World Network of Biospheres (MAB programme) and 4% are in the Global Geoparks Network. 6% of cultural properties are on the International Register of Cultural property under Special Protection (1954 Hague Convention) and 7% are on the related List of Cultural property under Enhanced Protection.

Region/Sub-Region	International Register of Cultural property under Special Protection (1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural property in the Event of Armed Conflict)	List of Cultural property under Enhanced Protection (Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural property in the Event of Armed Conflict)	The List of Wetlands of International Importance (The Ramsar List) (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention))	World Network of Biosphere Reserves Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme	Global Geoparks Network UNESCO Global Geoparks
Europe and North America	30	32	40	54	21
Eastern Europe	12	15	12	14	3
Northern Europe	1	1	9	3	1
Southern Europe	4	10	12	22	13
Western Europe	13	6	4	6	4
North America	0	0	3	9	0

Table 3.1 World Heritage properties (in whole or in part) designated and/or protected under other Conventions/programmes

Managers from 110 cultural properties were aware that there were elements associated with the property that had been inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage. There were 43 managers of cultural properties aware of documentary heritage associated with the property that had been listed under the Memory of the World programme.

Regarding natural and mixed World Heritage properties, the most highlighted synergies are with the Man and the Biosphere Programme. Eastern Europe, North America and Southern Europe are the sub-regions with more World Heritage properties designated under this Programme (11, 8 and 7 natural properties respectively). Designations of mixed properties under the Ramsar Convention are most common in the Northern Europe sub-region.

Overall, it is noted that there are very few points of contacts between managers of cultural World Heritage properties and the focal points of other designations/programmes. 78% of managers have no contact with focal points of the Hague Convention, and there is a lower

level of synergy regarding agreements and programmes related to natural heritage: 95% of managers of cultural properties have no contact with the focal point for the Ramsar Convention, and 94% have no contact with the MAB Programme or the Global Geoparks Network. For natural heritage, collaboration is much more frequent in relation to the MAB Programme (19% occasionally, 17% regularly, and 16% joint management).

With regard to the [Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change](#) on World Heritage properties (2006)³, only 7% of cultural properties (37) have a climate change policy that is based entirely on the 2006 Policy Document and all are located in Eastern Europe. A further 32% (173) have made some use of the Policy and a significant 61% have made no use of it at all (331). This does not mean, however, that other properties do not make use of other climate change policies at national level as some comments in the questionnaires revealed.

The [Strategy for Reducing Risks from Disasters](#) at World Heritage properties is used at similar levels among cultural and natural properties, with 10% of all properties fully basing their risk management on this document. Cultural properties in Eastern and Southern Europe are much more likely to base their risk management on this strategy than those in other sub-regions.

When looking at how cultural properties contribute to the [Policy for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention](#), significant or full achievement of objectives regarding inclusive economic development was reported at 70% of all properties, social inclusion and equity at 68%, human rights-based approaches at 64%, gender equality at 57%, conflict prevention/cultural diversity at 54% and ecosystem services/benefits at 40%. However, when looking at which objective was most fully achieved, the most successful objective was that of integrating human rights-based approaches, with 37% of managers reported their property fully achieving their objectives. Whereas North America reported greatest levels of contributions to gender equality, social inclusion and ecosystem benefits, Eastern Europe is the strongest sub-region for supporting inclusive economic development, human rights-based approaches and conflict prevention.

The level at which these policies and strategies are being adopted and implemented should be considered in light of the relevant corresponding factors which are affecting properties across the region (see in sub-chapter 3.4).

2.3. Statements of Outstanding Universal Value

Managers were asked to review their Statements of Outstanding Universal Value (SOUV) and, overall, 432 properties (80%) validated their SOUV as correct, while 111 properties (20%) signalled the need for its updating. Approximately 60 cultural properties mentioned the need to update details in the 'Protection and management requirements' section to reflect changing management mechanisms.

Managers were also asked to identify key attributes of OUV and provide an assessment of their condition. On the basis of this exercise, it was reported that 93% of the attributes of cultural World Heritage properties are preserved, 6% are compromised and less than 1% are seriously compromised. For natural properties, 92% of the attributes were considered preserved, 7% compromised, and less than 1% seriously compromised, whereas for mixed properties, 96% of the attributes were considered preserved and 4% compromised. No properties reported the loss of attributes. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the analysis of the reported attributes reveals varying levels of understanding of the concepts of values and attributes, with some properties providing incomplete and inaccurate information. This suggests a high level of risk that some attributes have not been identified and are, therefore, not necessarily protected. As a result, the self-assessment on the condition of the attributes cannot be solely relied on to reflect their current status at many properties.

³ This Policy document was updated in 2023 and renamed Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage. The updated version was adopted by the General Assembly of States Parties at its 24th session, held in November 2023, and it is accessible at <https://whc.unesco.org/en/climatechange/>.

2.4. Factors Affecting the World Heritage Properties

At the heart of the Periodic Reporting exercise was an in-depth series of questions which required managers to reflect on the factors that affect the World Heritage properties positively and negatively, both now and potentially in the near future. Each property faces its own unique set of challenges and opportunities, therefore, the following section attempts to highlight only those issues which are being faced by larger numbers of properties across the region. These factors are particularly relevant when considering the issues that need to be addressed in the regional Action Plan.



Figure 3.1 Factors affecting all World Heritage properties across Europe and North America as an outcome of the Periodic Reporting

2.4.1. Factors that negatively affect properties

The factors that most often negatively affect cultural World Heritage are related to the local conditions affecting physical fabric, with almost every factor in this category causing concerns at approximately a quarter of cultural properties. It is important to note that this factor appears to be underreported in the [State of Conservation information system](#) for properties under Reactive Monitoring in the region. For natural heritage properties, invasive/alien terrestrial species is the most reported current and potential negative factor for 58% (40) of the properties. This factor is also a concern for 21% (97) of the cultural properties throughout the whole Europe and North America region, and in particular for 32% (25) of the properties Northern Europe.

The impacts of tourism, visitation and recreation also raise significant concerns for natural properties: 52% (36) of the properties consider it to be a current factor, and 54% (37) as a potential negative one. Almost one third (29% = 136) of all cultural properties are also reporting current negative impacts in this regard. There are 24 cultural properties facing this issue in Northern Europe and 59 in Southern Europe, which means that both are facing slightly higher than average challenges in this area (30%,). Similar numbers of cultural properties are concerned about this as a potential factor in the future. The statistical information related to the properties under Reactive Monitoring in the region shows that, during the same period as the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting (i.e., since 2018), 21 properties have been affected by *tourism, visitation and recreation* and this is the third in the list of factors that affects the properties in the region within the same period of time as the Third Periodic Reporting Cycle. A further 12 properties under the Reactive Monitoring process are affected by *major visitor accommodation*.

With regard to factors related to climate change and severe weather events, 26% (119) of cultural properties indicate storms as a current negative factor. Storms are the most commonly reported negative factor in North America (36% = 15 cultural properties) and affect an above average number of properties in Northern Europe (28% = 22). Temperature changes were reported as a current factor for 22% (101) of cultural properties. For natural properties, this is considered a current negative factor in 49% (34), and a potential negative factor in 54% (37) of the properties. A high number of cultural properties indicated climate change-related factors as potential negative factors for the future: storms were a potential negative factor for 38% (178) of properties, temperature change for 31% (146), floods for 31% (144), and drought for 24% (111).

The negative factor most commonly reported for cultural properties in Western Europe is renewable energy facilities, which was indicated by a quarter of cultural properties in this sub-region (24% = 31). However, this factor and other service infrastructure factors are relatively uncommon across the other sub-regions. Nevertheless, there is recognition that renewable energy is a potential negative factor for 30% (138) of cultural properties, with particular concern again in Western Europe (44% = 57) but also in Northern Europe (35% = 28).

Concerning transportation infrastructure, ground transport infrastructure is a negative factor for 25% (117) of cultural properties and the effects arising from the use of transportation infrastructure are a negative factor for 22% (104). In both cases this effects Northern Europe more than the other sub-regions. There are 17 properties in the Reactive Monitoring that are reported as having been affected by ground transport infrastructure in recent years, and another 7 by the use of transportation.

Development projects that affect cultural properties are much more likely to be related to housing, which is a negative factor for 23% (107) of properties across the region and a slightly more frequent problem in Eastern Europe (25% = 25). The potential for this to be a future negative impact is noted at much larger numbers of properties (35% = 162), with Northern Europe (44% = 35) and Eastern Europe (40% = 40) in particular noting this as a potential factor. There have been 22 properties under Reactive Monitoring that have been affected by housing since 2018, and this is the second most common factor in the region in this period of

State of Conservation reporting.

Illegal activities only currently affect 17% (79) of the properties but there is a potential for this to be a negative factor for 20% (91) of cultural properties in the future, with Eastern Europe (25% = 25) and North America (21% = 9) most likely to be facing this. For natural properties, these types of activities were mentioned as a current negative factor for 48% (33) properties and in 46% (32), as a potential negative factor. The negative impacts of illegal activities tend to decrease mainly in Eastern Europe and to be stable in the other sub-regions.

Fire was noted as a potential negative factor for 39% (179) of cultural properties, with half (50% = 50) of all Eastern European properties indicating this as a factor for the future. In addition, 30% (139) of cultural properties note the potential for earthquakes, with this being a factor reported by 51% (98) of Southern European properties. Together with the climate change factors noted above, these are the factors which are most commonly reported as potential future challenges.

A lower number of cultural properties reported concerns related to management factors. Nevertheless, it should be noted that lack of sufficient human resources was a current negative factor for 19% (87) of cultural properties, and similarly, the lack of adequate financial resources for 17% (81) and the lack of management system/plan for 16% (74). However, the comparison of this data with that from the Reactive Monitoring merits reflection: in this case the (lack of) management systems/plan is by far the greatest threat to properties in this region, having concerned 62 properties since 2018. In addition, the State of Conservation reports of 19 properties refer to negative impacts due to inefficient legal frameworks.

Many conclusions can be drawn from this information but perhaps the most pressing emerging need across the region relates to climate change mitigation and resilience. This includes conservation responses to environmental conditions affecting the fabric of cultural properties, together with disaster risk management for climate change and severe weather events. In addition, there is a need to manage the threats related to tourism, transport infrastructure and housing developments, as well as addressing the new but increasing challenge related to the construction of renewable energy facilities. Many of the negative factors affecting cultural properties also affect natural properties such as the impacts of tourism and visitation as well as ground transport infrastructure. In addition, for natural properties, invasive terrestrial species, solid waste, temperature change and illegal activities pose significant concerns. Illegal activities and solid waste are also emerging needs for mixed properties along with the impacts of tourism, localised utilities, temperature change and changes in traditional ways of life and knowledge system.

2.4.2. Factors that positively affect properties

When reviewing the factors that positively affect World Heritage, managers of cultural properties were most likely to report management and institutional factors as currently having a positive impact. A similar trend is observed for natural properties. Across the Europe and North America region management activities were positive at 89% (486) of all properties, although this indicates that a concerning 11% of managers do not consider their activities positively affect the heritage.

At cultural properties, the legal framework was a positive factor for 85% (395), governance for 81% (376), low impact research/monitoring activities for 79% (365), management system/plan for 77% (357), financial resources for 75% (348) and human resources for 72% (335). These same factors were also the most likely to be indicated as potential positive factors particularly in Eastern Europe.

Concerning natural properties, the main positive factors identified were low-impact research/monitoring activities and management activities. Both factors were mentioned as current positive factors for 88% (61) of the natural properties. Low-impact research/monitoring activities is also considered a potential positive factor for 45% (31) of the natural properties and management activities are also seem as potentially positive for 42% (29) of the properties.

The other group of factors that were most likely to be reported as positive are related to tourism and visitation. 78% (363) of managers indicated that interpretative and visitation facilities are currently a positive factor for their cultural property and 46% (214) predicted that they would be a potential positive factor in the future, with higher-than-average results in Northern Europe (56% = 44) and Eastern Europe (48% = 48). The impacts of tourism, visitation and recreation were found to be positive in 71% (329) of cultural properties, in particular in Eastern Europe, and 37% (172) of managers reported potential positive effects in the future. Major visitor accommodation and associated infrastructure is currently considered to have a positive impact on 30% (139) of cultural properties and future forecasts indicate that it will have a positive impact on 22% (104) of properties in the future, particularly in Northern Europe.

Other social/cultural uses of heritage that are often found to be positive across the region are the ritual/spiritual/religious and associative uses, which were reported at 64% (298) of properties, and society's valuing of heritage at 58% (268). Both of these positive factors are reported in higher numbers from Southern Europe. The positive impact of identity and social cohesion were also identified for 23% (106) of properties.

Finally, nearly half of all properties (46% = 214) noted that ground transport infrastructure currently had a positive effect on the property, with nearly a third (27% = 127) predicting future positive impacts in this area.

It is interesting to note that there are same factors with the potential to influence World Heritage both positively and negatively. In particular, the ongoing development of tourism and related facilities should be accompanied by proactive management and impact assessment to ensure the positive impacts are enhanced while negative impacts are avoided. Comments from managers show that they are aware of these contradictions and challenges.

In light of considerations of current and potential factors affecting the properties, managers were asked to predict what would be the state of conservation of the attributes of OUV in approximately six years (i.e., at the time of the next Periodic Reporting exercise). Twelve cultural properties feared that attributes might be seriously compromised, a further 68 properties predicted that the conservation of some attributes would be compromised, and one property reported that there would be a loss of at least one attribute conveying the OUV.

2.5. Protection and Management

This part of the Section II questionnaire aimed to collect information on how well properties are managed across the region. This overview is of particular interest given the large number of managers who reported management as one of the factors likely to have both positive and negative impacts on World Heritage properties.

2.5.1. Boundaries and buffer zones

Most managers reported that the boundaries of properties are adequate to maintain their OUV (85% of the properties), while some recognized that the boundaries could be improved (14%). Whereas for cultural and natural properties percentages in this regard are very similar, boundaries of mixed properties are adequate in 73% of the cases. Additional differences were found considering the sub-regions. Northern Europe is the sub-region with the lowest percentage of adequate boundaries to maintain the property's OUV (81%), but it has the second highest percentage for natural properties (91%).

With regard to buffer zones, only 60% of the properties have a buffer zone that is considered to be adequate. North America and Northern Europe report the highest percentages of properties without buffer zones, but these are the sub-regions where they are mostly considered to not be needed (62% and 33% respectively). This percentage is even higher for natural properties: 75% in North America and 64% in Northern Europe respectively. Managers from 9% of all properties reported not to have a buffer zone but to need one.

Similar figures emerge with regard to the recognition of buffer zones: while for 58% of cultural

properties, buffer zones are known and recognized, only 42% of natural properties report the same. Comments by managers on this subject reveal that States Parties are using a range of national tools to provide a layer of added protection to World Heritage properties, and they often consider that this is an alternative to a buffer zone. A significant number of properties are considering reviewing their buffer zone and/or modifying it.

Region/Sub-Region	The property has no buffer zone and does not need one	The property has no buffer zone, but there is a need for one	Inadequacies in the buffer zones make it difficult to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value	The buffer zones do not limit the ability to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value but they could be improved	The buffer zones are adequate to maintain the property's Outstanding Universal Value
Europe and North America	14,3	8,5	0,6	16,9	59,7
Eastern Europe	7,9	6,9	1,0	12,9	71,3
Northern Europe	32,9	7,9	0,0	17,1	42,1
Southern Europe	4,7	7,9	1,0	19,9	66,5
Western Europe	7,0	12,4	0,0	20,2	60,5
North America	61,9	4,8	0,0	2,4	31,0

Table 3.2 Percentages of World Heritage properties reporting on adequacy of buffer zones to provide an additional layer of protection to them

2.5.2. Protective measures

When asked to comment on the adequacy of the protective legal framework for their property, 78% of managers responded positively. However, 20% of the properties identify deficiencies in their legal framework. In this regard, there are no significant differences between cultural and natural properties.

Region/Sub-Region	There is no legal framework for maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property	The legal framework for maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property is inadequate	An adequate legal framework for maintaining of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property exists but there are some deficiencies in implementation	The legal framework for maintaining of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property provides an adequate basis for effective management and protection
Europe and North America	0,2	1,3	20,1	78,4
Eastern Europe	0,0	0,0	29,7	70,3
Northern Europe	0,0	3,8	28,2	67,9
Southern Europe	0,0	1,6	16,8	81,7
Western Europe	0,8	0,0	16,3	82,9
North America	0,0	2,4	9,5	88,1

Table 3.3 Percentages of World Heritage properties reporting on adequacy of the legal framework for their effective protection and management

With regards to the legal framework for buffer zones (and leaving out of consideration the 21% of the properties that do not have a buffer zone), 54 % of managers reported that it was adequate for maintaining OUV. However, 21% of the properties report some deficiencies in the legal framework for the buffer zone.

Region/Sub-Region	The property has no buffer zone	There is no legal framework in the buffer zone for maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property	The legal framework in the buffer zone for maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property is inadequate	An adequate legal framework in the buffer zone for maintaining the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property exists but there are some deficiencies in implementation	The legal framework in the buffer zone for the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the World Heritage property provides an adequate basis for effective management and protection
Europe and North America	21,4	0,7	2,2	21,2	54,4
Eastern Europe	13,9	0,0	0,0	29,7	56,4
Northern Europe	40,8	0,0	6,6	19,7	32,9
Southern Europe	12,4	0,5	2,1	20,6	64,4
Western Europe	17,8	0,8	2,3	20,2	58,9
North America	57,1	4,8	0,0	9,5	28,6

Table 3.4 Percentage of World Heritage properties reporting on adequacy of the legal framework in their buffer zone

Finally, when reporting on the legal framework for the wider/broader setting 77% of managers reported that it was adequate. A further 19% noted some deficiencies. Similar findings are observed for both cultural and natural properties.

Region/Sub-Region	There is no legal framework for controlling use and activities in the broader setting of the World Heritage property	The legal framework for the broader setting of the World Heritage property is inadequate to ensure the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the property	An adequate legal framework exists for the broader setting of the World Heritage property, but there are some deficiencies in implementation which undermine the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity of the property	The legal framework for the broader setting of the World Heritage property provides an adequate basis for effective management and protection of the property, contributing to the maintenance of its Outstanding Universal Value including conditions of Authenticity and/or Integrity
Europe and North America	1,5	2,0	19,3	77,2
Eastern Europe	3,0	3,0	22,8	71,3
Northern Europe	2,6	2,6	25,6	69,2
Southern Europe	0,0	1,5	17,0	81,4
Western Europe	1,6	2,3	17,8	78,3
North America	2,4	0,0	14,3	83,3

Table 3.5 Percentage of World Heritage properties reporting on the adequacy of the legal framework for their broader/wider setting

Overall, the findings suggest that concerning the adequacy of a protective legal framework, this is the most challenging for buffer zones, with larger numbers of properties which do not enjoy any additional protection provided by a buffer zone or with a buffer zone that is not fully adequate. When asked if their legal framework can be adequately enforced, 66% of managers said yes. A further 30% noted some deficiencies to acceptable enforcement, while 3% reported major deficiencies in capacity/resources to enforce legislation.

Region/Sub-Region	There is no effective capacity/resources to enforce legislation and/or regulation in the World Heritage property	There are major deficiencies in capacity/resources to enforce legislation and/or regulation in the World Heritage property	There is acceptable capacity/resources to enforce legislation and/or regulation in the World Heritage property but some deficiencies of enforcement remain	There is adequate capacity/resources to enforce legislation and/or regulation in the World Heritage property
Europe and North America	0,6	3,0	30,2	66,3
Eastern Europe	1,0	5,9	40,6	52,5
Northern Europe	0,0	3,9	37,7	58,4
Southern Europe	0,5	3,1	36,1	60,2
Western Europe	0,8	0,0	8,5	90,7
North America	0,0	2,4	31,0	66,7

Table 3.6 Percentage of World Heritage properties with adequate capacity/resources to enforce the legal framework

Managers provided comments on how the legal framework works in practice for their property, and obviously the range of answers reflect a very diverse situations across the region. Nevertheless, the spatial planning and development frameworks emerged as being of particularly critical for many properties. Many site managers commented on the need for coordination with a number of institutions across sectors and at different levels (from national to local). Some noted the difficulty of working in contexts where the responsibilities of States Parties under the World Heritage Convention have not been fully transcribed into national legislation.

Overall, the region has seen a slight improvement in legal frameworks for *identifying* heritage since the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, as compared to 90% of properties who stated that it was adequate in the previous cycle, there are now 94% of cultural properties with an adequate framework. However, the situation is more serious when considering the legal framework for the *conservation and protection* of heritage: whereas 90% of properties reported an adequate framework in the Second Cycle, this fell considerably to only 76% of properties in the Third Cycle.

2.5.3. Management system/management plan

Approximately a third (31%) of the properties have joint management between national and local levels, while 23 % are managed at the national level. However, there are some very large differences between the sub-regions: for example, while half of all the properties in North America are managed at the national level, this is only the case for 5% of Western European properties. Eastern, Northern and Western Europe are most likely to have a joint national/local management system, whereas this only represents 10% of properties in North America.

With regards to the various management tools that are used, the responses for the cultural properties were almost identical for the trends presented for World Heritage properties in general. By far the most widespread tool in use are management plans, which are used at 71% of properties. Other more common tools are the statutory management plan or zoning plan (63%), annual work plans or business plans (56%) and other statutory and non-statutory plans (53%). Within these general trends, there are some sub-regional differences: management plans are more likely to be used in North America, Northern Europe and Western Europe.

Comments from managers describing the management system in place at their property show a wide range of situations; they also reveal that most attention is given to institutions, legislation, and management plans, rather than other aspects of the management system.

When rating the coordination between the various levels of administration involved in management, only half (54% = 290) of all properties report that there is adequate coordination.

While 42% (225) of managers note that there is the need for improvements, a further 4% (23) note little coordination among administrative bodies.

Similar trends could be seen in both the question on the adequacy of the management system/plan to maintain OUV and whether it is being implemented. Managers of 72% of all properties felt that the management system/plan was adequate; 61% stated that it was fully implemented and monitored. It should be noted that 3% cultural properties reported that there was no management system or plan in place, however, this seems to be based on a misunderstanding of the question by respondents, as replies providing further details to questions reveal that there are management systems at these places, although perhaps not fully adequate and perhaps without a management plan. Managers in North America are much more confident in the adequacy and implementation of their management system/plan than those in other sub-regions.

Overall, management has improved across the region since the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, with 9% more properties reporting that they have a management system that is fully implemented and monitored. However, this improvement is not seen in North America or Western Europe, which saw a decrease in this aspect with the increase in properties listed from one cycle to the next. Eastern Europe, in particular, has improved by 23%. In addition, since the Second Cycle there has been an increase by 11% of all properties who reported that the management system/plan was adequate to maintain the property's OUV. Again, when looking at sub-regional trends, North America had a slight decrease in this aspect, whereas Eastern Europe has 19% more properties reporting the adequacy of their management system/plan.

2.5.4. Financial and Human Resources

Managers were asked to provide information on the sources of funding for costs related to conservation. It emerged that national/federal government funding accounts for approximately a third (30%) of the running costs for all properties across the region and this is the most significant funding source. However, this varies significantly across sub-regions, for example national/federal spending accounts for nearly half of all running costs in North America but only 19% and 26% in Western and Northern Europe respectively, where instead local/municipal funding is the largest contributor to running costs.

Many managers noted the difficulty of providing estimates for properties with complex multiple ownership often with a range of variable income streams. Only a quarter (26%) of all managers claim that they have an adequate budget for effective management of their World Heritage property, although a further 63% rate it as acceptable while noting that it could be further improved. There is a significant variation in this topic across the sub-regions: while 40% of Western Europe and 39% of North American properties report adequate budget, only 16% of Eastern European managers can say the same. The majority of properties in Western Europe and North America state that they have secure funding over the mid- and long-term; in comparison the other sub-regions only report secure mid-term funding.

Concerning human resources, overall, in the region less than half (42%) of properties report it as being at an adequate level, with higher levels in Western Europe (58%) and North America (60%). Approximately half (51%) of the managers of all properties noted that their human resources only partly meet the management needs of their property.

2.5.5. Visitor Management

The data provided by managers for the annual visitor numbers to their properties over the last five years is difficult to analyse due to methodological differences in data collection and major gaps in the extracted dataset. For example, most properties (75%) use entry tickets as a method for collecting visitor statistics but this has limitations on how much it captures visitation throughout a property and is not applicable to all types of properties.

There are also difficulties in analysing the collected data on the average length of visitor stay

at a World Heritage property. Managers across the region have the impression that the approximately two thirds of their visitors stay for a maximum of one day, i.e., they do not stay overnight in the local area and, therefore, are contributing only minimally to the local economy. Despite the lack of visitor data, 78% of managers of all properties claim to have a visitor management strategy in place, although only half of these have been fully planned and effective.

The implications of this can be seen in the fact that only half (52%) of properties consider visitation to be effectively managed so that it does not negatively impact OUV. Almost all the other sites (46%) have some level of visitor management but acknowledge the need for improvements.

The effectiveness of tourism management is monitored at 61% of all properties. Managers cooperate well with the tourism industry at 57% of properties and some limited cooperation at a further 26%. Regarding the presentation and interpretation of OUV, only 44% of managers claim it to be adequate. A further 49% of managers note that while their presentation/interpretation is acceptable they see the potential for improvements.

Visitor/tourism revenue makes a substantial contribution to the management of only a quarter of World Heritage properties (23%); tourism makes some contribution at a further 44% of properties. From a sub-regional perspective, tourism revenue makes a greater contribution to the management of properties in North America (38%), but it is more limited in Western Europe (17%).

There are locally driven sustainable tourism initiatives at 65% of properties and these are more likely to occur in North America (74%) and Northern Europe (71%). 77% of properties report that benefits from tourism are shared with local communities. This situation is worse than what was reported in the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, as previously 87% of properties indicated that local communities shared the benefits of tourism.

2.5.6. Monitoring

Only half (53%) of all properties report that they have a comprehensive, integrated monitoring programme which is relevant to management needs. A further third (31%) of all properties have considerable monitoring in place but it is not directed on management needs. This is similar to cultural and natural properties, but different to mixed properties – of these, only 45% report to have a comprehensive monitoring programme relevant to management needs.

It is interesting to compare this with the fact that only 39% of properties state that they have adequate and key indicators used in monitoring, showing a potential gap in the effectiveness of the monitoring programmes taking place. Another 60% of the properties report the need to define or improve their monitoring indicators to be more efficient.

2.5.7. Identification of Priority Management Needs

The overall picture concerning the identification of priority management needs points in the direction that climate change is the most important issue that needs addressing across the region with 68% of all properties selecting this; there is a particular urgency to address this for 93% of properties in North America.

Disaster risk management is also a priority for 63% of properties, with particular concern to address this in North America (79%) and Western Europe (72%).

Tackling the issue of human resources, this is a reported need for 51% of the properties, and particularly in Eastern Europe (64%) and Southern Europe (61%).

Finally, budget related issues are the most important priority for properties in Eastern Europe (68%) and at half of all the properties across the region (50%).

3. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE PERIODIC REPORTING EXERCISE

In comparison to the Second Cycle of Periodic Reporting, there are very minimal changes to the answers provided in relation to preserving OUV:

- 90% of properties maintained their OUV in the Second Cycle, compared to 91% in the Third Cycle;
- 9% of properties had been impacted but addressed in the Second Cycle, while 8% in the Third Cycle;
- 0.4% of properties had been seriously impacted in the Second Cycle compared to the 0.9% in this Third Cycle.

Even fewer differences can be seen in the integrity and authenticity of properties between the two cycles. Overall, 95% of cultural properties claim that the conditions of authenticity have been preserved.⁴ Conditions of integrity are met at 92% of cultural properties and 93% of the natural properties.

By comparing the question of factors reported in the Periodic Reporting with information of properties in the Reactive Monitoring, the Periodic Reporting exercise confirms many of the same factors as affecting significant numbers of properties across the region. However, the comparison also highlights where some factors are less visible in the Periodic Reporting but should nevertheless be considered in the regional Action Plan based on information on dominant threats to properties observed through the Reactive Monitoring process. It is important to triangulate the data wherever possible to create a more reliable overall picture on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties today and compensate for any limitations of a single methodology for data analyses.

⁴ It is to be noted that managers of 28 out of a total of 69 natural properties evaluated conditions of authenticity, although it applies only to cultural properties.