

Concept note

Towards a Nordic-Baltic model region for World Heritage & Sustainable Tourism

By the Nordic World Heritage Foundation

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Summary

During the 36th meeting of the World Heritage Committee in St. Petersburg, Russia, June-July 2012, the **Draft Programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism** will be presented for adoption (WHC-12/36.COM/5E). The Programme will follow the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012-2022 (WHC-10/34.COM/5D) and run between 2013 and 2022.

This concept note proposes, within the context of the first phase of the proposed Programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism (2013-2015) and the **2nd cycle of the Periodic Reporting for Europe and North America** (2012-2015), to develop an approach for better utilising Periodic Reporting in terms of addressing and managing tourism at and around World Heritage properties. Based on the outcomes/data coming from the reporting exercise, an approach would be developed for how this can feed into and inform the development of sustainable tourism strategies specifically addressing the livelihood of local communities.

Following up on the outcomes from the Nordic-Baltic workshop *World Heritage, Tourism and Development - Towards a Nordic-Baltic approach to Stakeholder Involvement and Cooperation* (Visby, October 2010), this approach should follow the principles of the “3Is” - *inclusion, information and incentives*. The approach should furthermore be relevant for both inscribed World Heritage properties as well as tentative / nominated properties. Reference / pilot properties from the regions would be identified and involved.

This proposal is an opportunity for the Nordic and Baltic countries to demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (1972) and sustainable development through tourism.

Upon interest a draft project proposal and budget would be presented. The proposal will include relevant recommendations from the Conference “Living with World Heritage”, Røros 14-16 May 2012.

Background

During the 36th meeting of the World Heritage Committee in St. Petersburg, Russia, June-July 2012, the **Draft Programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism** will be presented for adoption (WHC-12/36.COM/5E). This follows the Committee Meeting in Brasilia 2010 (WHC-10/34.COM/5F) requesting the World Heritage Centre “*to convene a new and inclusive programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism, with a steering group comprising interested States Parties and other relevant stakeholders*” and “*to outline the objectives and approach to the implementation of this programme.*”

Nordic World Heritage Foundation (NWHF) has, upon request from the World Heritage Centre, provided technical assistance in the development of the Programme.

The public launch of the Programme is anticipated to take place during the 40th anniversary celebration of the *World Heritage Convention (1972)* in Kyoto Japan, 6-8 November 2012 subject to the adoption by the World Heritage Committee.

The Programme and Action Plan

Throughout 2010-2012 the Draft Programme has been developed through an inclusive process involving a number of different stakeholders including States Parties, Advisory Bodies, UN organisations, tourism private sector, site managers/coordinators, heritage practitioners, local community representatives, etc.

The resulting Draft Programme methodology features:

1. The use of the mechanisms of the Convention
2. A focus on early intervention
3. Strengthening the enabling environment
4. Co-operation and partnership with the tourism sector
5. A destination approach
6. Capacity development

The **programme objectives** and **activities** will provide frameworks for addressing already identified as well as future needs across World Heritage properties, stakeholders and regions.

The Programme will run between 2013 and 2022, and follow the Strategic Action Plan for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2012-2022 (WHC-10/34.COM/5D). The first phase of the Programme will run between 2013 and 2015.

The proposed Programme represents a framework within which there are many opportunities for States Parties to benefit and contribute.

Towards a Nordic-Baltic model region for World Heritage & Sustainable Tourism

The Nordic-Baltic countries are in the forefront of promoting World Heritage and sustainable tourism. In October 2010 Norway, Sweden and Denmark hosted the Nordic-Baltic workshop on *World Heritage, Tourism and Development - Towards a Nordic-Baltic approach to Stakeholder Involvement and Cooperation*. The outcomes of the workshop have been fed into the development of the Programme with specific focus on the “**3Is**” - **inclusion, information and incentives** (cf. “*Visby Report*”).

The approach to stakeholder involvement and cooperation supports the focus of the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention; *World Heritage and Sustainable Development - The role of local communities*, which again reflects the priorities of UNESCO and encourages further efforts by all States Parties.

Opportunities within the Nordic-Baltic region

There are a number of opportunities within the Nordic-Baltic countries to strengthen the sustainability of tourism at and around its current and future natural and cultural World Heritage properties. The Visby meeting encouraged all Nordic and Baltic States Parties as well as World Heritage site managers to *“in an inclusive and collaborative manner, develop sustainable tourism strategies as an integral part in the overall management regimes”*.

Another timely opportunity to address tourism relates to the upcoming **2nd cycle of the Periodic Reporting for Europe and North America**, to be launched during 36COM in 2012 and presented during 39COM in 2015.

The alignment of the first phase of the tourism Programme and the 2nd cycle of Periodic Reporting (PR) presents a unique opportunity for the Nordic and Baltic States Parties. It specifically allows contributing to the prioritised effort of strengthening the PR tool in terms of tourism, and to be among the first regions to undertake strategic analysis of the results identifying opportunities and challenges concerning World Heritage and sustainable tourism with a specific focus on livelihood opportunities for local communities.

The proposal is to, as part of the PR exercise, develop an approach for better utilising PR in terms of addressing tourism, and based on the outcomes/data develop an approach for how this can feed into and inform the development of sustainable tourism strategies following the principles of the “3Is” - *inclusion, information and incentives*. The approach should be relevant for both inscribed World Heritage properties as well as tentative / nominated sites.

Representing the focal point for the PR exercise and with specific knowledge on and involvement in the new World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme, NWHF could assist the Nordic-Baltic States Parties in positioning the Nordic-Baltic Region into a model region for World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism leading up to 39COM in 2015.

The Nordic-Baltic region currently represents 42 World Heritage properties where such strategies could be developed and implemented. There are in addition high profile tentative properties in need of tourism strategies, for instance the Viking- and the Svalbard/Spitsbergen nominations. It is suggested that a specific number World Heritage properties and nominations in the Region, in cooperation with the States Parties, could be identified as pilots and/or reference sites in this effort.

Upon interest a draft project proposal and budget would be presented. The proposal will include relevant recommendations from the Conference “Living with World Heritage”, Røros 14-16 May 2012.

Opportunity in support of the World Heritage & Sustainable Tourism Programme

The abovementioned proposal is an opportunity for the Nordic and Baltic countries to demonstrate its commitment to the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (1972) and sustainable development through tourism.

In terms of resource mobilization for the Programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism of UNESCO, it is envisioned that contributions will be channelled through a multi donor trust fund, and that the donors will be members of a **Steering Group** that will *guide the overall implementation of the Programme*. The Steering Group would be comprised of representatives of the UNESCO Electoral Groups, The Advisory Bodies, UNWTO and donor agencies, whose mandate will be given by the World Heritage Committee.

The Steering Group will be announced at a special event at the celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention in Kyoto, Japan 6-8 November 2012.

Reference documents

Draft Programme on World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism (WHC-12/36.COM/5F)

Draft Action Plan World Heritage & Sustainable Tourism Programme 2013 – 2022 (WHC-12/36.COM/Inf. 5F)

Budget World Heritage & Sustainable Tourism Programme 2013 – 2015 (WHC-12/36.COM/Inf. 5F/Annex 1)

Report from the Nordic-Baltic workshop on *World Heritage, Tourism and Development - Towards a Nordic-Baltic approach to Stakeholder Involvement and Cooperation*, Visby, Gotland (13)-14-15 October 2010.