1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 IUCN and the World Heritage Convention

IUCN is the technical / scientific advisory body on natural heritage to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, the governing body of the Convention. This role is affirmed in the legal text of the Convention in articles 8, 13 and 14. Please refer to whc.unesco.org for a wealth of information on the Convention. Since 1979 IUCN has received annual contracts from the Committee (through the UNESCO World Heritage Centre) to provide technical / scientific advisory services on eight general functions:

Evaluation of new nominations;

Monitoring the status of existing sites;

Participation in training and technical workshops;

Management of information (with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC));

Communication and promotion activities;

Advice on international assistance requests;

General standard-setting on protected area management; and

Contributing to the Global Strategy for a representative World Heritage List.

1.2 Objective of this Paper

This paper is provided as an informal "manual" which is intended to assist in the first of the above functions – the preparation of technical evaluations of new nominations. The following "tips" are provided to assist experts in carrying out evaluation missions and preparing their evaluation reports. This paper should be used in conjunction with the latest version of the "Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention" which is the official framework for conducting the business of the Convention. The full text can be downloaded from the internet at http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines (English) and http://whc.unesco.org/fr/orientations (French).

2. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

2.1 The Procedure

New nomination files must be received by the World Heritage Centre each year before the 1 February. They are first scrutinised by the Centre and then the Advisory Bodies (IUCN and ICOMOS) for completeness, following which the complete nominations for natural and mixed properties and cultural landscapes are forwarded to IUCN in March/April when the evaluation process begins. This process (summarised graphically in Figure 1 on Page 4) of determining whether a nominated property is of "outstanding universal value" involves five elements:

External Review

are carrying out a desk review for each nomination and they submit their independent and confidential comments to IUCN.

After the first meeting of the IUCN World Heritage Panel – If the Panel finds some questions still unanswered or further issues arising, a final letter will be sent to the State Party requesting supplementary information by a specific deadline (28 February, as per decision of the 30th session of the World Heritage Committee). That deadline must be adhered to strictly in order to allow IUCN to complete its evaluation. IUCN cannot deal with large amounts of additional information at the end of the evaluation process so the questions need to be very specific.

Note: If the information provided by the State Party at the time of nomination and during the mission is adequate, IUCN will not request supplementary information. All supplementary information should be formally submitted to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to ensure that it is registered as part of the nomination dossier. The Centre then sends a copy to IUCN.

Important: It should be understood by those who conduct field missions that decisions are not taken at the time of the mission. Indeed, field mission results can vary significantly from the final recommendation made depending on considerations arising in the other stages, notably the opinions of external reviewers and any additional information provided by the State Party or other relevant sources. The evaluator should therefore avoid making any comment on his / her recommendations to IUCN and should only explain the evaluation process.

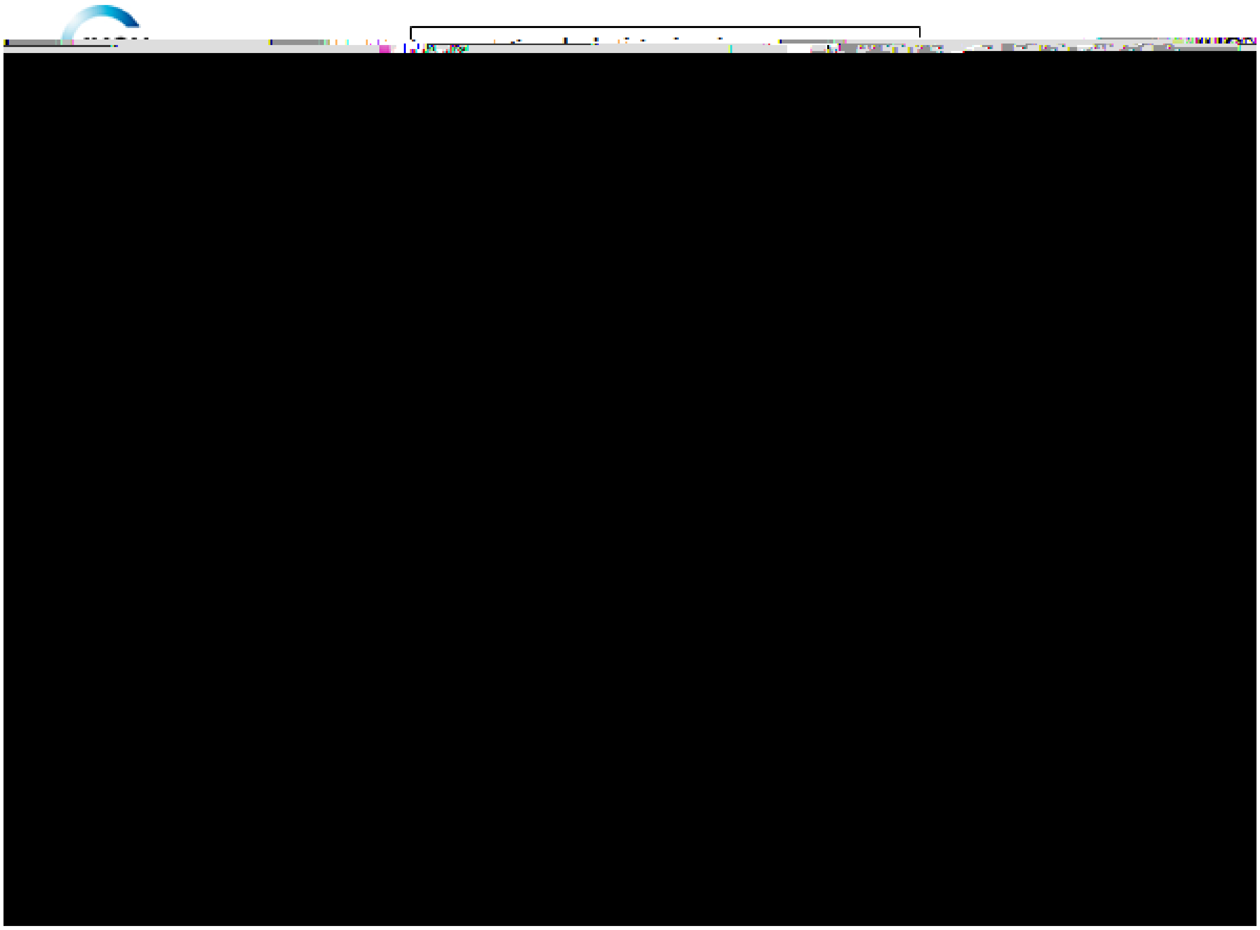
2.2 The Field Inspection / Evaluation Mission

The report of the evaluation mission is just one part of the technical evaluation process. The draft evaluation report that is prepared following the field mission is an internal document and its distribution remains at IUCN's discretion. The evaluator may wish to provide two or three options for a recommendation that the IUCN World Heritage Panel could then consider. The7 Tw in6( )]hert46.w -

Finally, diversity. What diversity of species, habitat types and natural features does the property contain? Properties like Sian Ka'an in Mexico with a combination of marine, coastal and terrestrial habitats along with cultural values are usually more favourably received than single feature properties.

Obviously an area that scores high on several of the above indicators, such as Te Wahipounamu in south-west New Zealand, would most likely be of World Heritage calibre. The aim then, of IUCN evaluations, is to ensure that only the best properties are inscribed by the Committee and that the credibility of the World Heritage List does not get devalued.

Figure 1: The IUCN evaluation process.



When an area does not meet one or more of the natural criteria it is always helpful if some other means of recognition (e.g. Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar site, GeoParks) can be suggested, if relevant. It has also been possible in a number of cases to quietly discuss with the nominating State Party the option to withdraw a nomination. This can save everyone work and potential embarrassment but it has to be handled diplomatically. Several countries, however, have disagreed with IUCN's recommendations and the process can then go beyond technical issues into political considerations. The important principle is that IUCN must maintain its credibility while keeping within its role as an independent technical / scientific advisory body.

2.3 The Technical Evaluation Report

There is a standard format for IUCN technical evaluation reports that is attached as Annex 1.

3. MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

The following is a short, random check-list of tips based on IUCN's experience in conducting evaluations.

> **Be Prepared**. Have good field clothes, camera equipment, binoculars, rainwear, and first aid essentials. Don't forget the UNEP-WCMC datasheet, copy of nomination, relevant IUCN reference books, field guides. Some trips can be physically demanding – if they're not, you haven't seen the place.
>
> **Be Tough**. Let it be known that the Operational Guidelines require evaluations to be "rigorous

It is also useful to feel the pulse on the motivation for applying for World Heritage status. In some cases, promotion of tourism is the primary motivation. In others the Convention may be being used inappropriately to help prevent a development threat to a site of local importance. Unless the site clearly meets the criteria, such cases should be closely scrutinised.

Be Appreciative. Field missions bring you in contact with many individuals who are usually eager to assist in a "show and tell" of their area. It has been good PR to bring along small tokens of appreciation for those who make a special effort on your behalf. A thank-you letter at the end of the mission is also a customary gesture. Be cautious not to accept (inappropriate) gifts however.

Box 1: Levels of Significance.

It is important for the evaluation of World Heritage nominations to determine how significant a site may be. The following levels provide a frame of reference:

International Significance: Natural landscapes or features that are clearly unique and are not duplicated or surpassed anywhere in the world.

Regional Significance: Natural landscapes or features which are of limited distribution or the best examples of a feature in the region.

National Significance: Natural landscapes or features that are of limited distribution or are the best examples of a feature in the country.

Provincial Significance: Natural landscapes or features which are of limited distribution at a provincial level or are the best examples of a feature in the State, Province or Canton.

Reporting format for field evaluators including explanatory notes

Please complete this form in English.
Where missions are undertaken by two evaluators, a single joint mission report must be provided.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, INTERNAL TO IUCN

This report does not represent the formal or final view of IUCN, and is one element of IUCN’s World Heritage evaluation process.

This mission report is one of several components of the IUCN evaluation process of World Heritage nominations made under the natural World Heritage criteria (criteria vii, viii, ix and x). The report presents the findings and recommendations of the field evaluator(s) based on a site visit. The IUCN World Heritage Panel will subsequently consider this report in addition to the nomination document, a comparative analysis undertaken by UNEP-WCMC, independent desktop reviews from members of IUCN networks and other relevant information, including possible supplementary information that is provided by the nominating State Party. Based on all these elements, the IUCN Panel will elaborate IUCN’s recommendation to the World Heritage Committee. The role of the field evaluator(s) is to inform the IUCN World Heritage Panel. However, given the multiple sources of information considered by the IUCN Panel, the final IUCN evaluation report may differ from the technical field mission report in terms of conclusions and recommendations.

Please note that this report is internal and is a report to the IUCN World Heritage Panel from the IUCN evaluation team only. It is to be retained as strictly confidential to the IUCN World Heritage Panel, and when completed the evaluator should provide [illegible] IUCN [illegible] views within [illegible]

3. Mission conclusions relevant to Outstanding Universal Value

Important note to evaluators.

The Operational Guidelines define Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) as a value "so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present

Did the Global Comparative Analysis treat all of the values or attributes that were described in the dossier?
Evaluators' comments on significance of values of the property: please make a separate comment for each applicable nominated natural criterion and if you consider the property also meets other natural criteria please also comment upon those.
Evaluator comment on criterion (vii):
Evaluator comment on criterion (viii):
Evaluator comment on criterion (ix):
Evaluator comment on criterion (x):

3B. Meeting conditions of integrity *(suggested word limit per question: 500 words)*

3B1: Evaluation of current integrity

Integrity is defined in paragraphs 87-95 of the Operational Guidelines as "a measure of wholeness and intactness of the property". The evaluation should assess whether the nominated property: a) includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value; b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance; c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect. Evaluators should review the required conditions of integrity for each criterion in the *management sections above. This section is intended to provide information on the current and potential future threats to the property in addition to any issues noted previously.*

Current or potential threats are diverse and may include mining, dams, encroachment, disturbance, energy and transportation infrastructure, pollution, excessive resource use, invasive species, climate change, security, unregulated or excessive public use, and others. The threats should be assessed against the conservation values of the property, impact on stakeholders and the willingness, capacity and options to deal with them. Where threats need to be tackled, the report should indicate at what level they should be addressed (noting that some threats are