



# **IUCN EVALUATION OF WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATIONS**

## **Guidance for Desktop Reviewers**

“Outstanding universal value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity”

**IUCN, 2009**

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I. CONTEXT

IUCN cannot financially compensate reviewers. Experts contribute on a voluntary basis and in doing so help identify and promote the conservation of the world's most outstanding natural heritage. For WCPA members this is an ideal way to contribute to the WCPA network. IUCN is grateful for suggestions for additional external reviewers.

names will be made available in any form to the World Heritage Committee, the media or anybody else. All contributions are taken into consideration by the IUCN World Heritage Panel. This Panel conveys its recommendations to the World Heritage Committee based on the assessment of the various components presented in the above figure.

Reviewers should pay particular attention to the following two key areas:

- A. The nominated property's compliance with **outstanding universal value** according to the **criteria** stated in the *Operational Guidelines*;
- B. The nominated property's compliance with conditions of **integrity** as understood in this context.

For further detailed guidance reviewers are asked to refer to the *Operational Guidelines*. For the convenience of reviewers the most important paragraphs are provided in the final section of this guidance.

#### **A. Reviewing compliance with outstanding universal value criteria**

1. Reviewers are asked to provide a considered judgment on whether the nominated site meets the criteria for the assessment of outstanding universal value. The World Heritage Convention aims at the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value. This is the central concept of the World Heritage Convention and is defined in paragraph 49 of the *Operational Guidelines* to the Convention as follows:

*'Outstanding universal value means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. The Committee defines the criteria for the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List (of the Operational Guidelines).'*

For the purpose of the evaluation process the following levels serve as a reference for determining the significance of natural values of the nominated property. Some features

value and should therefore be included on the World Heritage List.

3. Reviewers are asked to contribute to the comparative analysis, i.e. to evaluate the nominated properties in comparison with areas containing similar natural values at the

The criteria for the assessment of outstanding universal value of natural properties

Out of the total of ten criteria defined in paragraph 77 of the *Operational Guidelines* four refer to natural heritage. The World Heritage Committee considers natural heritage as having outstanding universal value if the property meets one or more of the following **criteria**:

(vii) *to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;*

(viii)



*(i) The most easily identifiable is the clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by man. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.*

*(ii) The second category is the organically evolved landscape. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features.*



## **SUGGESTED REPORTING FORMAT**