The IUCN World Heritage Outlook

Conservation Outlook Assessments -
Guidelines for their application to natural World Heritage Sites

Version 3.1
26.03.2020

Acknowledgements

List of acronyms

AZE	Alliance for Zero Extinction
CMP	Conservation Measures Partnership
COM	World Heritage Committee Meeting
EOH	Enhancing Our Heritage
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
IBA	Important Bird Areas
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IPA	Important Plant Areas
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value
PA	Protected Area
SOC	State of Conservation
SoOUV	Statement of Outstanding Universal Value
SP	State Party
SSC	IUCN Species Survival Commission
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCPA	IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
WHC	World Heritage Convention

Contents

Overview

In 2014, IUCN launched the IUCN World Heritage Outlook – a ground-breaking first global assessment of the potential of natural World Heritage sites to conserve their World Heritage values over time. In 2017, IUCN successfully released the first update – the IUCN World Heritage Outlook 2, which enabled trends in key conservation issues across all natural World Heritage sites to be identified for the first time.

The IUCN World Heritage Outlook is based on individual Conservation Outlook Assessments of each natural and mixed site on the World Heritage List. These desk-based assessments, conducted by independent experts and based on referenced evidence, summarize the current state and trend of a site's values, the threats to those values, and the effectiveness of protection and management. The objective of the IUCN World Heritage Outlook is to identify and anticipate conservation challenges while also recognizing conservation successes. IUCN is looking to use the IUCN World Heritage Outlook as both a catalyst for developing specific actions on the ground and as a metric for assessing and communicating the progress achieved.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide guidance on undertaking Conservation Outlook Assessments. The primary audiences for the Guidelines are Site Assessors, who are being invited by IUCN to lead the development of Conservation Outlook Assessments, as well as Reviewers who will contribute to this process. The Guidelines will also be useful for anyone involved or interested in the process. These Guidelines inform and should be read while completing the Conservation Outlook Assessments in the online assessment module (or in the *IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessments – Worksheets v. 3.0* Word document if working offline). As IUCN develops the World Heritage Outlook process, subsequent versions of the Guidelines will be produced. This version of the Guidelines (Version 3.0) is the current version as of 2019.

BACKGROUND ON CONSERVATION OUTLOOK ASSESSMENTS

1.1 What are Conservation Outlook Assessments?

IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessments are a projection of the potential for a natural World Heritage site to conserve its values over time. This projection is based on desk-based assessments of:

→ the state and trend of values;

→ the threats affecting those values; and

→ the effectiveness of protection and management.

Assessments also identify *benefits* of natural World Heritage sites and active conservation *projects* taking place in sites.

The Conservation Outlook Assessment framework is illustrated in Figure 1. The five Conservation Outlook categories against which each site is assessed are listed below.

CONSERVATION OUTLOOK CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA
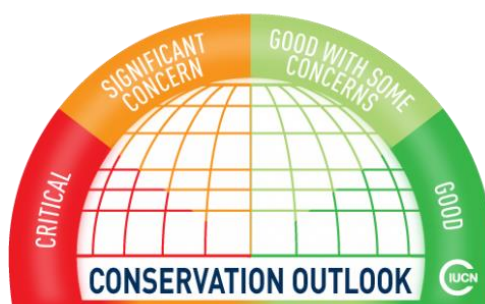
Good: The site's values are in good condition and are likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current conservation measures are maintained.

Good with Some Concerns: While some concerns exist, with minor additional conservation measures the site's values are likely to be essentially maintained over the long-term.

Significant Concern: The site's values are threatened and/or are showing signs of deterioration. Significant additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore values over the medium to long-term.

Critical: The site's values are severely threatened and/or deteriorating. Immediate large-scale additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore the site's values over the short to medium-term or the values may be lost.

Data Deficient: Available evidence is insufficient to draw a conclusion
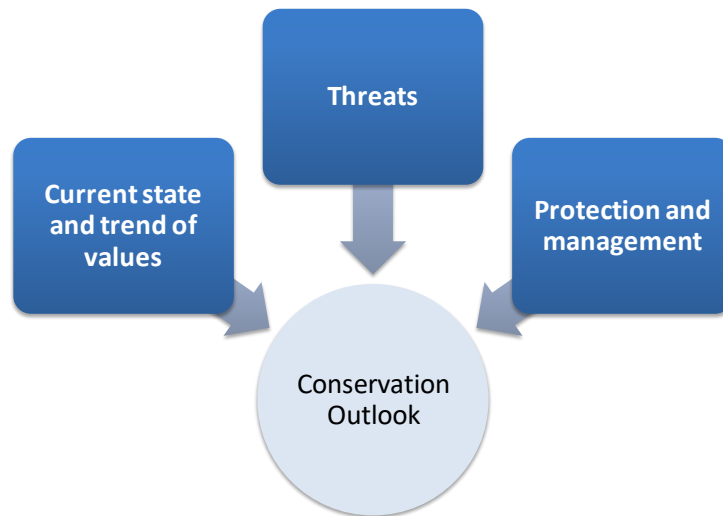
Figure 1: The Conservation Outlook Assessment framework. Conservation Outlook Assessments are a projection of the potential for a natural World Heritage site to conserve its values over time**.**

1.2 Assessment methodology and process

IUCN has developed a standardised methodology for desk-based assessments[1] of natural World Heritage sites. This methodology was developed in collaboration with a technical Advisory Group, drawing on the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' (WCPA) established methodologies and framework for Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas, the results of pilot assessments undertaken in a range of selected sites, and the lessons learned from the assessment frameworks developed for the *Great Barrier Reef Outlook report[2]* (2009), the *Enhancing Our Heritage Toolkit*[3], the *Managing Natural World Heritage Manual[4]*, the World Heritage *Periodic Reporting questionnaire*[5], and other relevant literature.

The current Version 3.0 of the Guidelines was developed in 2019, building on the feedback received during the first and second round of Conservation Outlook Assessments in 2014 and 2017, the results of the review by the Methodology Review Group, and the outcomes from the 2018 Methodology Review Workshop.

Conservation Outlook Assessments are completed using an online assessment module that allows Site Assessors to easily update assessments by filling in online worksheets for each step of the Conservation Outlook Assessment, and Reviewers to provide further input and comments on the updated assessment. The Conservation Outlook Assessment is structured around eight steps, which are detailed in Section 1 and 2.

A small number of assessments may need to be completed offline using the *IUCN Conservation Outlook Assessments – Worksheets v. 3.0* Word document. These Guidelines provide guidance on how to complete worksheets both in the online assessment module, as well as offline in the Word document.

1.2.1 Information sources

Conservation Outlook Assessments are based on best-available information mobilised from a wide range of sources, including consultation. All information used in the assessments is referenced for transparency and so

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[1] The use of the term assessment is in line with the definition in the IUCN WCPA Management Effectiveness Framework: *the judgement of performance against some predetermined criteria.*

[2] http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/about_us/great_barrier_reef_outlook_report

[3] http://whc.unesco.org/documents/publi_wh_papers_23_en.pdf

[4] http://whc.unesco.org/en/managing-natural-world-heritage/

[5].http://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting

that future assessments can review the previous information base. Aside from GIS and remote sensing work on a case-by-case basis, no new research will be undertaken for the assessments.

The types of information sources used in Conservation Outlook Assessments are listed in Annex 1. Information is sourced from IUCN's knowledge bank on World Heritage sites, publicly available World Heritage Committee reports, published management effectiveness evaluations, scientific research, and information provided by a wide range of knowledge-holders, including site managers, national authorities, and IUCN's network of 11,000 experts, particularly the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Species Survival Commission (SSC). Each type of information source has its different strengths and limitations in terms of depth, coverage and quality. It is expected that the assessments will help identify information gaps which, if filled, will aid future assessments.

Starting from 2017, previous versions of Conservation Outlook Assessments will also serve as a source of information for current assessments and Site Assessors will be able to maintain the parts of the previous assessment which are still accurate (e.g. description of values), and update the parts where changes have occurred since the last assessment (particular attention should be given to assessment of the current state of values, threats and protection and management, as well as assessment of the overall Conservation Outlook).

Site Assessors should be assured that in updating a Conservation Outlook Assessment for a given year, information from earlier Conservation Outlook Assessments is not lost; previous assessments (e.g. for 2014 and 2017) can always be accessed by navigating to the 'Download PDF' button on the site assessment page of the relevant World Heritage site on https://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org/explore-sites/.

1.2.2 Roles in the assessment process

The different roles in the assessment process are described below and are illustrated in Figure 2. All assessments are carried out in close consultation and collaboration with IUCN's Global Protected Areas Programme, regional offices, as well as the WCPA and SSC.

→ **The Assessment Coordinator** based within IUCN Secretariat provides ongoing support to Site Assessors in applying the assessment methodology. The Coordinator contacts and consults knowledge-holders prior to assessments, requesting feedback on values, threats, and protection and management. The Assessment Coordinator also reviews draft assessments to ensure that they conform to the Guidelines, and provides other support as necessary.

→ **Site Assessors** are protected area specialists familiar with World Heritage. Using information from IUCN's knowledge bank on World Heritage, consultation feedback, and other information sources, Site Assessors undertake desk-based Conservation Outlook Assessments in English, French, or Spanish, in line with the Guidelines.

→ **Knowledge-holders** are individuals/organisations who have first-hand knowledge of a site, including researchers, site managers, non-governmental organisations, relevant national management authorities, community groups, WCPA and SSC members etc. Their feedback can include the provision of documents, as well as specific comments on the state of a site's values, threats and protection and management. With the exception of information supplied in published documents, feedback received from knowledge-holders and shared with Site Assessors is confidential and non-attributable and needs to be referenced as a 'Confidential IUCN consultation' in Conservation Outlook Assessments (information on how to cite confidential IUCN consultations and other types of references can be found in Step 8: References of this document).

→ **Expert Reviewers** are knowledge-holders with advanced protected area expertise and extensive first-hand knowledge of a site. They provide detailed reviews of draft assessments.

→ **Regional Review Groups** consist of representatives of IUCN regional offices, WCPA Regional Vice-Chairs and other key regional experts on World Heritage. They review the overall conclusions for all natural sites in a particular region and provide their comments to the World Heritage Panel.

→ **The World Heritage Panel** is IUCN's established governance body for World Heritage matters and is composed of senior IUCN and WCPA specialists. The World Heritage Panel has oversight of the approval process for Conservation Outlook Assessments.

1.2.3 Reviewing assessments

Each Conservation Outlook Assessment undergoes multiple internal and external reviews before finalisation. Draft assessments are internally reviewed to verify that they meet the standards set out in the Guidelines. They are then reviewed by selected Expert Reviewers with extensive knowledge of a site. Site managers are also invited to comment on the assessments. Regional review groups in each IUCN region then review the overall conclusions for all sites in their region and provide their comments to the World Heritage Panel.
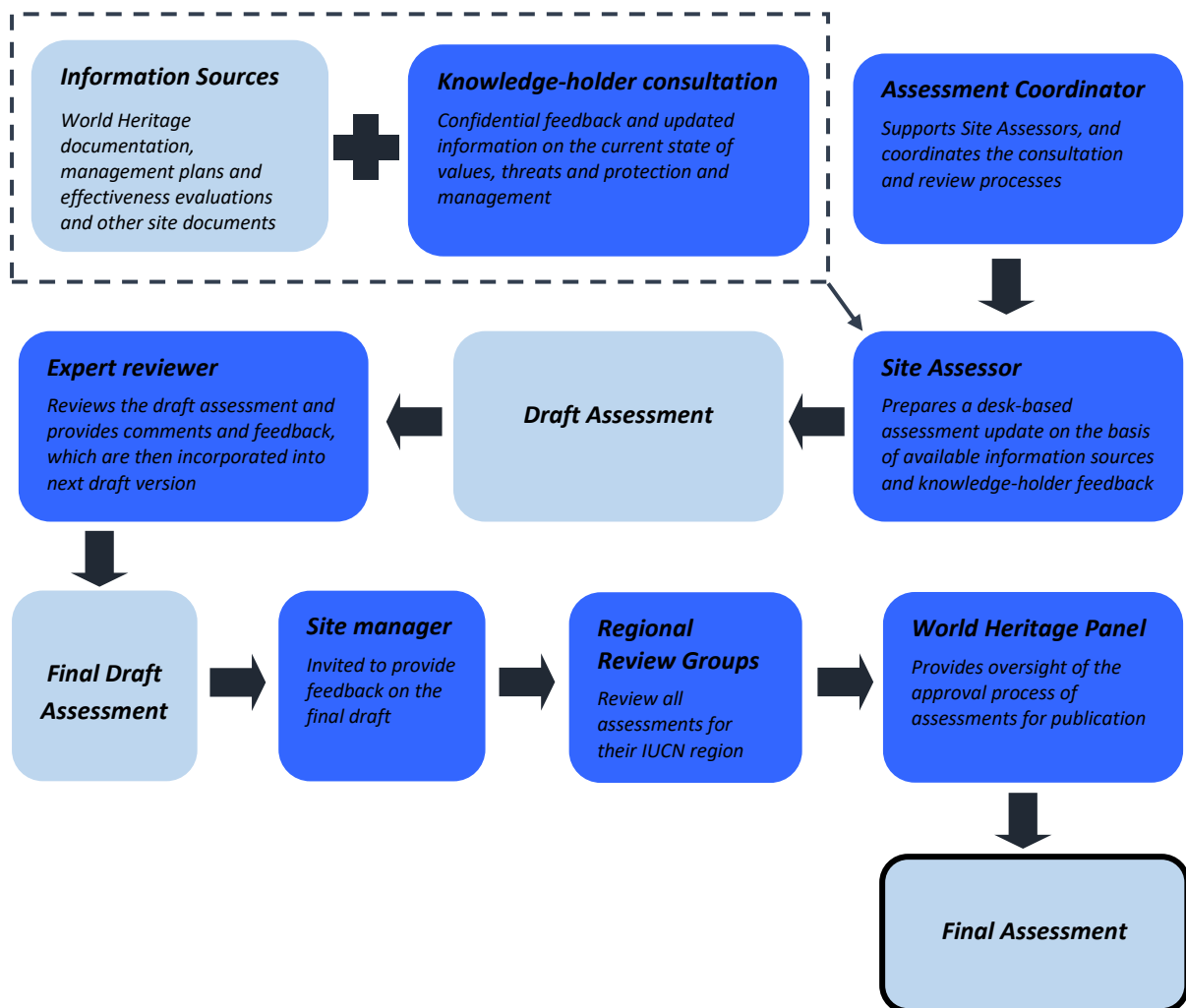

Figure 2: Roles in the Conservation Outlook Assessment process

CONSULTATION

OVERVIEW

The IUCN Assessment Coordinator contacts and consults knowledge-holders prior to the assessment, requesting feedback on values, threats, protection and management in the form of literature and updates on the site since the last Outlook assessment. The relevant national and site-level management authorities are also contacted, informed of the assessment process and invited to contribute.

The consultation process is indispensable to ensuring that Conservation Outlook Assessments are accurate and focused on the most pressing issues. Knowledge-holders include, but are not limited to: stakeholders involved in the management of sites (including IUCN member organisations, relevant government authorities, site managers, NGOs, community groups, international agencies etc.), IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) members, IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) members, other IUCN commission members, researchers and IUCN staff. Knowledge-holders are identified through the World Heritage Programme's contacts database, the IUCN WCPA and IUCN WCPA World Heritage Network, and IUCN's network of experts and the iterative process of consultation.

CONSULTATION GUIDELINES

a) **Transparency:** In line with an evidence-based approach, all information used in assessments needs to be referenced for transparency and so that future assessments can review the previous information base. Information sources should be clearly referenced within the 'description' column in the case of Worksheet 1 (Values), and in the 'justification for assessment' columns in Worksheets 2 (Threats), 3 (Protection & Management) and 4 (Assessing Values), e.g. (World Heritage Committee, 2019). Further guidance on the referencing style, including examples of how to reference different types of documents, can be found in Step 8: References of this document.

b) **Confidentiality:** All comments provided by knowledge-holders through consultations are strictly confidential and are made available to the Site Assessor only upon agreement (via a user agreement in the online assessment module) that the Site Assessor will respect this confidentiality and not disclose the consultation feedback or any of the content it contains to third parties. Please note that feedback and comments from consultations need to be cited and referenced as an 'IUCN consultation' in Conservation Outlook Assessments, making sure that any citations or references do not name individuals or organisations (information on how to reference IUCN consultations can be found in Step 8: References of this document) .

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING WORKSHEETS

Step 1: Identifying and describing values - Worksheet 1

STEP SUMMARY

The first step in undertaking an assessment is to identify and describe a site's values, including World Heritage and other important biodiversity values (if applicable).

For those sites which were assessed during the 2014 and/or 2017 World Heritage Outlook cycles (241 natural and mixed sites inscribed prior to 2018), the description and composition of the values have already been checked and reviewed in previous versions, and don't require further work by the Site Assessor, unless significant changes have occurred (e.g. renomination of an existing site under a new additional criterion). If Site Assessors have any comments or further edits/suggestions on the description and composition of these values, they can provide an internal comment to IUCN in the online assessment module or by contacting their IUCN Assessment Coordinator.

For World Heritage sites inscribed after 2017 and which do not already have a 2017 assessment, the following steps should be taken by the Site Assessor to define and describe a site's values:

World Heritage values are defined here as the natural features of a site which make up the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) that led to the inscription on the World Heritage List. They are directly related to the criteria for which a site was inscribed. The World Heritage criteria for natural sites are given below in Box 1.1. 'Other important biodiversity values' are identified for sites that are listed for scenic and/or geological values (criteria (vi) and (vii), see below), but which also have important biodiversity values. Wherever possible, it should also be described how these other biodiversity values are linked to the site's OUV. Other site designations (e.g. Ramsar site, Biosphere Reserve, Geoparks, Key Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites) should not be included here, as this information will be compiled and presented automatically for each site on the online World Heritage Outlook website. Ecosystem services, spiritual values etc. are assessed under Step 6: Understanding Benefits.

Note that each criterion encompasses a number of values and that these should be broken down as relevant. For example, criteria (x) could be broken down into 'rare and endemic birds', 'rare and endemic mammals', 'Montane flora' etc. as appropriate.

Box 1.1: World Heritage criteria for natural sites

Criterion (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance

Criterion (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features

Criterion (ix) to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals

Criterion (x) to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation

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a) **Filling in Worksheet 1 (Values)**: The World Heritage value is defined in the 'Value' field, described in detail in the 'Description' field, and then cross-referenced to the relevant World Heritage criterion/a in the 'WH criteria' field. Note, if you working offline and filling in the Word document, you will also need to number each value (V1, V2 etc). 'Other important biodiversity values' are described separately.

b) **Identifying World Heritage values:** Statements of outstanding universal value, statements of significance, IUCN evaluation reports, nomination dossiers, and UNEP-WCMC information sheets from the time of inscription of the site on the World Heritage List are the main basis on which World Heritage values are identified:

→ *Statements of outstanding universal value* (SoOUV)[6] are the official statements adopted by the World Heritage Committee at the time of inscription of a site on the World Heritage List. These statements encapsulate why the site is considered to be of OUV, how it satisfies the relevant criteria, the conditions of integrity, and how it meets the requirements for protection and management in order to sustain OUV in the long-term. SoOUVs have only been introduced in 2007 and the sites inscribed on the World Heritage List prior to this date are required to prepare and present for adoption by the Committee a Retrospective Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, but some World Heritage sites still do not have such a statement. SoOUVs can be found in the site page on the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website, in the 'description' tab[7].

→ Prior to 2007, *statements of significance* were produced for World Heritage sites and were generally prepared as part of the nomination dossier. These statements cover values and integrity, but do not consider protection and management. Statements of Outstanding Universal Value are now replacing Statements of Significance.

→ *IUCN evaluation reports* are the product of an 18 month evaluation process, which includes desktop reviews of the nomination file submitted by the State Party, a comparative analysis of the nominated site with existing World Heritage sites and other protected areas, and a field visit to the nominated site. These reports include a detailed description of a site's values, and often also include a description of other significant biodiversity, geological and/or aesthetic values for which the site was not nominated. When a nominated site is recommended for inscription, the IUCN Evaluation Report specifies under which World Heritage criteria it should be inscribed, and gives a justification for its inscription under those criteria. IUCN evaluation reports can serve as a useful resource for identifying the values of natural and mixed World Heritage sites, particularly if there is no Statement of Outstanding Universal Value. Site Assessors can also review the original site nomination dossiers.

→ *WCMC information sheets:* These provide detailed site descriptions. The information sheets prepared at the time of inscription are available for most sites, but are not official World Heritage Committee records.

Please ensure that the breakdown of World Heritage values is sufficiently detailed and relates to the criteria for the site. Although there are no right number of values for a site, up to 5 values should be sufficient for most sites (and in all cases no more than 15 values should be listed). To help determine

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[6] See the World Heritage Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre's guidance note on preparing *Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage Properties - http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/whouven.pdf*
[7] To search for your site, go to https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/

the appropriate number of World Heritage values for your site, consider whether you will be able to report on the state and trend of the defined values later in worksheet 4 (Assessing values).

For example, values breakdowns could include:

Criterion	Example values breakdowns
(vii) to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance	V1. An extensive and spectacular landscape of majestic quartz sandstone peaks V2. Outstanding scenic value expressed by the topographic variation, geology and vegetation V3. The most dramatic known manifestation of the phenomenon of insect migration V4. An exceptional example of permanent lakes in a desert setting
(viii) to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features	V5. Globally significant rock record, fossil localities and geomorphological features V6. One of the most significant fossil areas and a classic representation of on-going glacial processes V7. An outstanding example of an earlier and major stage in the evolutionary history of the world's flora V8. Geological records of transition of hydrographic system from fluvial to hyper-arid conditions
(ix) to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals	V9. Rich mosaic of arctic ecosystems V10. Ongoing ecological and biological processes associated with the evolution of the unique Fynbos biome V11. An outstanding example of an oceanic island ecosystem in which evolutionary processes are active
(x) to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation	V12. Rare and endemic birds V13. Rich montane flora and fauna V14. Mountain Gorillas and other threatened mammals V15. A highly significant breeding ground for green turtles and hawksbill turtles

Example: Serengeti National Park	
Criterion	**Values breakdowns**
(vii) The Serengeti plains harbour the largest remaining unaltered animal migration in the world where over one million wildebeest plus hundreds of thousands of other ungulates engage in a 1,000 km long annual circular trek spanning the two adjacent countries of Kenya and Tanzania. This spectacular phenomenon takes place in a unique scenic setting of 'endless plains': 25,000km² of treeless expanses of spectacularly flat short grasslands dotted with rocky outcrops (kopjes) interspersed with rivers and woodlands. The Park also hosts one of the largest and most diverse large predator-prey interactions worldwide, providing a particularly impressive aesthetic experience.	**V1. Greatest terrestrial mammal migration on Earth** The Serengeti supports the greatest large mammal migration on Earth, involving approximately 1.4 million wildebeest, 200,000 zebra and 300,000 Thomson's and Grant's gazelle (TAWIRI Aerial Census, 2010). The predators are dependent on the abundance of grazers, and the ecosystems harbours 7,500 hyenas, 3,000 lions and other predators. The annual migration follows a 1,000 km circuit between key dry-season water points and grazing lands along the Mara river (in Kenya's Masai Mara Reserve) and short-grass pastures and calving grounds to the south (in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area) (World Heritage Committee, 2012). **V2. Outstanding savanna scenery** Serengeti means 'endless plains' in the local Masai language, and the vast expanse of short-grass savannas provide a spectacular setting for the phenomenal congregations of wildlife. The plains are punctuated by impressive outcrops of massive weathered granite 'kopjes', seasonal wetlands, low hills and a diversity of woodland types (World Heritage Committee, 2012).
Example: Great Barrier Reef	
Criterion	**Values breakdowns**
(x) The enormous size and diversity of the GBR means it is one of the richest and most complex natural ecosystems on earth, and one of the most significant for biodiversity conservation. The amazing diversity supports tens of thousands of marine and terrestrial species, many of which are of global conservation significance. **As the world's most complex expanse of coral reefs, the reefs contain some 400 species of corals in 60 genera. There are also large ecologically important inter-reefal areas. The shallower**	**V1. Outstanding diversity of plants including mangroves and seagrass** The continental islands within the property support thousands of plant species, while the coral cays have their own distinct flora including threatened species. The shallower marine areas support 37 species of mangroves (54% of the world diversity) and 15 seagrass species covering over 6,000 km² (23% of the world diversity). A further 40,000 km² of deep-water seagrasses is also estimated. There is also a high diversity of macroalgae and benthic microalgae (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997; GBRMPA, 2009; Coles et al., 2009). **V2. Outstanding diversity of invertebrate species, including hard and soft corals** As the world's most complex expanse of coral reefs, there are more than 500 species of corals in 60**

marine areas support half the world's diversity of mangroves and many seagrass species. The waters also provide major feeding grounds for one of the world's largest populations of the threatened dugong. At least 30 species of whales and dolphins occur here, and it is a significant area for humpback whale calving.

Six of the world's seven species of marine turtle occur in the GBR. As well as the world's largest green turtle breeding site at Raine Island, the GBR also includes many regionally important marine turtle rookeries.

Some 242 species of birds have been recorded in the GBR. Twenty-two seabird species breed on cays and some continental islands, and some of these breeding sites are globally significant; other seabird species also utilise the area. The continental islands support thousands of plant species, while the coral cays also have their own distinct flora and fauna.

genera including hard corals, soft corals, sea pens and sea fans. This equates to 56% of the world's hard coral species, and one-third of the world's soft coral and sea pen species. Ecologically important inter-reefal areas include at least 330 species of ascidians, between 300 and 500 species of bryozoans, 800 species of echinoderms, at least 4,000 species of molluscs, 1,500 species of sponges and a high diversity of flatworms, crustaceans and polychaetes (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997; GBRMPA, 2009).

V3. Outstanding diversity of fish including threatened species
The property is home to over 1,600 species of fish in more than 130 families with the number of reef-associated fish alone being 1,468. Over 130 species of sharks, rays and skates, many of which are threatened, have also been recorded within the property (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997; GBRMPA, 2009).

V4. Threatened reptiles
With six of the world's seven species of marine turtle, the property provides globally important nesting and feeding grounds for the Loggerhead (Caretta caretta, EN); Green (Chelonia mydas, EN); Hawksbill (Eretmochelys imbricata, CR) and Flatback (Natator depressus, DD) turtles, including one of the last significant breeding populations of the Hawksbill Turtle in the world, the largest Green Turtle breeding population in the world and 70% of the South Pacific population of the Loggerhead Turtle. 14 species of sea snakes breed in the property (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997; GBRMP, 2012).

V5. Bird diversity
Some 242 species of birds have been recorded with twenty-two breeding species of seabird on cays and some continental islands; some of these breeding sites are globally significant. Species previously regarded as threatened include the Roseate Tern (Sterna dougallii gracilis), Little Tern (Sterna albifrons) and Torresian Imperial-pigeon (Ducula spilorrhoa), although they are now classified as Least Concern. Beach Thick-knee (Esacus giganteus) is

	considered to be Near Threatened (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997; IUCN, 2013).
	V6. Threatened mammals The property is home to one of the world's largest populations of Dugong (Dugong dugon, VU, including 15% recorded within Australian waters). Significant refuge for cetaceans with at least 30 species of whales and dolphins, including the Australian Snubfin Dolphin (Orcaella brevirostris, CR) and the Indo-Pacific Humpbacked Dolphin (Sousa chinensis, NT). Regionally important habitat for the Dwarf Minke Whale (Balaenoptera acutorostrata, LC) and an important breeding ground for Humpback Whale (Megaptera novaeangliae, LC). Longman's Beaked Whale (Indopacetus pacificus, DD), possibly the rarest whale in the world, has been recorded here. Most important remaining habitat for the Endangered Proserpine Rock Wallaby (Petrogale persephone) (World Heritage Committee, 2012; State Party of Australia, 1981; 2013a; IUCN, 1981; Lucas et al., 1997).

c) **Naming species:** Assessments should use both the vernacular and scientific names for species (as in table above).

d) **Identifying other important bio**diversity values: 'Other important biodiversity values' are typically identified for sites that are listed for geological and/or scenic values, but which also have important biodiversity values. These values may need to be identified and assessed based on other data sources. The IUCN Assessment Coordinator can support this process.

Please note, the designation or nomination of a site (e.g. as a Ramsar site or a KBA) is not a 'biodiversity value' in and of itself; it is the biodiversity element (species or ecosystem) that triggers the identification of the site as important for biodiversity that needs to be identified (e.g. 'site contains threatened and geographically restricted mammals'). Please also indicate in the description field how the identified values link or relate to a site's World Heritage status or Outstanding Universal Value. General information on a site's other official designations (e.g. as a Ramsar site, KBA, IBA, Biosphere Reserve etc) will automatically appear on the site assessment page on the IUCN World Heritage Outlook website, so this does not need to be specified by the Site Assessor.

e) **Wording of the World Heritage criteria**: Please note that the numbering of the natural criteria was changed in 2005 [Criterion (vii) was previously N(iii), Criterion (viii) was previously N(i), Criterion (ix) was previously N(ii); and Criterion (x) was previously N(iv)]. For sites that were inscribed prior to 1994 the World Heritage criteria at the time of inscription were differently worded to the present day criteria. Most of these changes have been addressed by revising the assignment of criteria, so can be largely ignored for the purposes of the assessment. However, a range of sites that were inscribed under criterion N(ii) [now criterion (ix)] were inscribed in relation to "*Man's interaction with his natural environment.*" Assessment Coordinators will alert Site Assessors to these sites on a case-by-case basis.

f) **Describing values:** Values should be described to a good degree of detail and where possible should be as quantitative as possible (Worksheet 1, 'Description' column), and should be referenced, e.g. (World Heritage Committee, 2011). Good analysis and description of values is crucial as it drives other steps of the assessment process, such as assessment of the current state of these values, assessment of threats to these values, and the consequent effectiveness of site protection and management.

Step 2: Assessing threats - Worksheets 2(a) and 2(b)

The second step consists of identifying and assessing current and potential threats to a site. In the online assessment module, this section is presented as one worksheet; in the Word document, the step is split into two parts - Worksheets 2(a) and 2(b). The summary below provides instructions for the two-step process; in the online assessment module, the two steps are combined and can be completed in one go.

1. **Checklist of threats** (Worksheet 2(a)) – Threats are identified using a checklist format to help ensure that assessments are comparable across sites. This checklist is based on the IUCN-CMP threat taxonomy[8]. If present, threats are described in column 3. Please note that threats should be very briefly described, e.g. 'wastewater disposal from recreational boats at and around the property' (the identified threats are then copied into column 1 of Worksheet 2(b) and described in detail). Threats are identified as being within or outside the site in columns 4 and 5. If a threat is located within a site, please indicate its extent[9] in column 5 (throughout [>50%]/widespread [15-50%]/scattered [5-15%]/localised [<5%]). The extent categories are adapted from the Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Area Management (RAPPAM) methodology. If the extent of the threat is not known, please indicate 'not known'. If not applicable, please indicate 'Not applicable'. For all the 'Biological resource use' subcategories, please indicate whether the resource use is legal or illegal (or unknown) and if known, which species are targeted.

2. **Assessing threats** (Worksheet 2(b)) – The assessment focuses on direct threats rather than underlying drivers, and threats are split by whether they are current or potential (see glossary). The threats identified in Worksheet 2(a) are listed in column 1 and are then cross-referenced to the values they affect in column 2 (using the references Vx1, V1, V2 etc). The justification for the assessment is presented in column 3 and referenced, e.g. a State of Conservation Report (UNESCO, 2009). The threats are then assessed against five assessment ratings - **Very Low Threat, Low Threat, High Threat, Very High Threat,** and **Data Deficient** - in columns 4-8 (these ratings are defined in Table 2.1 below).

Overall assessment of threats - Current and potential threats, as well as the overall threats, should be summarised and assessed in the last three rows of the worksheet. In the online assessment module, this section appears in separate boxes at the bottom of the worksheet.

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[8] http://www.conservationmeasures.org/initiatives/threats-actions-taxonomies/threats-taxonomy

[9] Extent is the expanse across which the impact of the activity occurs. The extent of an activity should be assessed as a percentage of the site. 'Throughout' means that an activity occurs in 50 per cent or more of the site, 'widespread' means occurrence in between 15 and 50 per cent, 'scattered' occurs in between 5 and 15 per cent, and 'localized' in less than 5 per cent of the site. Adapted from: Ervin, J. 2003. WWF: Rapid Assessment and Prioritization of Protected Area Management (RAPPAM) Methodology WWF Gland, Switzerland.

Table 2.1: Threat ratings

Rating	Criteria
Very Low Threat	Few or no threats are evident and accepted predictions indicate that negative impacts on the site's values and integrity are likely to be minor.
Low Threat	Some minor threats are evident and there is concern that based on accepted predictions there are likely to be some localised but reversible negative impacts on the site's values and integrity.
High Threat	There are clear threats to the site, and current and/or predicted future impacts are likely to result in significant negative effects on the site's values and integrity.
Very High Threat	The threats to the site are very high, and current and/or predicted future impacts are likely to result in the irreversible loss of the majority of the site's values and its integrity.
Data Deficient	Available evidence is insufficient to draw a conclusion.

ASESSEMENT GUIDELINES

a) **Filling in Worksheet 2 (Threats):** As outlined above, the steps for this worksheet are different between the online assessment module and the Word document. In the online assessment module, threats are entered one by one by clicking the 'Add more' button in the worksheet. Current threats are identified and assessed first, followed by potential threats, and then finally the overall assessments of threats is provided in the 'Overall assessment of threats' boxes. In the Word document, threats are first identified in Worksheet 2(a), and then assessed in Worksheet 2(b), before being summarised in the last three rows of Worksheet 2(b).

b) **Information sources**: Threats are identified and assessed on the basis of IUCN/UNESCO state of conservation reports, reactive monitoring mission reports, periodic reporting questionnaires (section 2), IUCN evaluation reports, management plans, management effectiveness assessments, consultation feedback, and other data sources as appropriate (see Annex 1 for an annotated list of information sources).

c) **Writing the 'justification of assessment':** Where relevant, the 'justification of assessment' should include detailed figures, e.g. poaching data, area affected by encroachment, number of artisanal mines etc, linked to references, e.g. a State of Conservation report (UNESCO, 2011). The justification of assessment also needs to consider:

→ The **risk** posed by a threat (its likelihood x consequence on the site's values). **Risk** is defined as the likelihood of a threat (rare, unlikely, possible, likely or almost certain) combined with its impact (insignificant, minor, moderate, major or catastrophic) on World Heritage and/or other important biodiversity values (see the risk matrix in Figure 3).

→ the **extent** of the threat inside the site, defined as the range across which the impact of the threat occurs. Threats can be localised, scattered, widespread or occur throughout a site. It should be noted, however, that even if a threat is occurring in a small area of the property and/or during a short timeframe, it should still be considered significant if it threatens the site's World Heritage and/or other important biodiversity values.

→ Any **cumulative effects** of the threat on the site's values, in addition to direct and indirect/secondary effects, should also be evaluated. Cumulative effects result from the impact of an action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions; and

→ the **trend** (whether the threat has been decreasing, static or increasing over the past 5 years).

d) **Current vs. potential threats –** Definition of current and potential threats is provided in the glossary. Potential threats need to be evidence-based, rather than speculative, and referenced. Some threats can be both current and potential (e.g. climate change), in these cases the threat could be added in both tables; however, their description and justification of assessment will be different.

e) **Assessing the overall state of threats:** The assessment summaries for current and potential threats, as well as for the overall state of threats, should focus on World Heritage values and also note threats to other important biodiversity values. These summaries should include a brief description of the most significant threats, and their likely direct, secondary and cumulative impacts on the site's values.

LIKELIHOOD					CONSEQUENCE
Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain	
Very Low	High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Catastrop
Very Low	High	High	Very High	Very High	Major
Very Low	Low risk	High	High	Very High	Moderate
Very Low	Low risk	Low risk	High	High	Minor
Very Low	Very Low	Low risk	Low risk	High	Insignifica

Figure 3: Risk matrix

Step 3: Assessing protection and management – Worksheet 3

Protection and management is assessed against 15 standardised topics, which reflect IUCN best-practice guidance on protected area management, and are harmonised with those used in the *Managing Natural World Heritage Resource Manual* (prepared by IUCN and WCPA in 2011) and as also reflected in Questionnaire 2 of the second cycle of *Periodic Reporting*. Standards to assist in undertaking the assessment are provided in Table 3.2. The state of each topic is assessed against five ratings: **Highly Effective, Mostly Effective, Some Concern, Serious Concern** and **Data Deficient**. These ratings are defined in Table 3.1.

PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT RATINGS

Table 3.1: Protection and management ratings

Rating	Criteria
Highly Effective	The protection and management system under implementation is effective and able to maintain the site's values and integrity. Aspects of site management can be regarded as being best-practice.
Mostly Effective	The protection and management system under implementation is adequate and is likely to essentially maintain the site's values and integrity over the medium-term. However, it may be insufficient to maintain the site's values and integrity over the long-term.
Some Concern	The protection and management system is not fully addressing the threats to the site's values, resulting in a number of conservation issues. However, these issues could be reversed and effectively addressed in the short-term if management capacity and/or protection are improved.
Serious Concern	The protection and management system shows major deficiencies and is unable to maintain the site's values and integrity over the short or long-term. Major interventions are required to enhance management capacity and/or protection.
Data Deficient	Available evidence is insufficient to draw a conclusion.

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

a) **Filling in Worksheet 3 (Protection and Management)**: The state of protection and management is described in the 'Justification of assessment' field for each topic, and then assessed by selecting one of five ratings: Highly Effective, Mostly Effective, Some Concern, Serious Concern or Data Deficient.

b) **Information sources**: Protection and management is assessed on the basis of management plans, management effectiveness assessments, state of conservation reports, mission reports, periodic reporting questionnaires, consultation feedback and other data sources as appropriate (see Annex 1 for an annotated list of information sources).

c) **Time horizons**: Long-term = more than 10 years; Medium-term = 5 to 10 years; and Short-term = 1 to 5 years.

d) **Specific protection and management contexts:**

→ **Transboundary, transnational and serial sites**: Sites that are jointly managed by two or more governments/institutions should be assessed as a single site, while noting any differences in management effectiveness between different component parts. Paragraph 114 of the Operational Guidelines notes that: *"In the case of serial properties, a management system or mechanisms for ensuring the co-ordinated management of the separate components are essential."*

For a transboundary or serial property, its overarching integrated management system should also be assessed. It needs to be indicated if a management plan and an overarching management authority for the entire transboundary/serial property exist and their effectiveness needs to be assessed.

→ **Sites affected by conflict**: Assessment of sites in areas subject to conflict or post-conflict situations, and particularly those affected by armed conflict, should take into consideration the considerable management and governance challenges faced by these sites and, where relevant, acknowledge the efforts made by management authorities as well as rangers and protected areas managers working in the field in these difficult and often dangerous situations.

e) **Assessing the overall state of protection and management**: This assessment summary should provide an overall picture of the site's current protection and management and should also note: i) external threats beyond the control of the management authority; ii) whether the site is transboundary/transnational, or serial, and whether it is affected by conflict and the ensuing challenges; and iii) any protection and management issues relating to other important biodiversity values, where applicable. The assessment should also note the ability of the site management to address threats originating outside the site.

f) **Best-practice examples:** Finally, where relevant, best-practice examples should be noted, including a short explanation of why they are considered to be best practice and key lessons learned that could be replicated in other sites. All best-practice examples should be specific and focused on concrete management aspects and should be referenced.

Table 3.2: Standards for protection and management topics (Source: Managing Natural World Heritage Manual). Sites ranked 'Mostly Effective' or 'Highly Effective' should meet the majority of these standards.

Standards - to be used in assessing the 14 Protection and Management topics

Management system
- Does the site have a management plan, and is it up to date and implemented?
- Does the management plan identify values, management objectives, desired management outcomes, and key threats?
- Does the planning process provide sufficient opportunity for stakeholder input?
- Is there relevant, current and accessible information about natural values, threats, protected area use and community issues available to management?
- Is there a legitimate, accepted, transparent and accountable governance framework?
- Is governance and decision-making open to scrutiny by stakeholders, with information presented in appropriate format and reasoning behind decisions evident?

Effectiveness of management system
- Are the objectives of the management plan being achieved?
- Is there a process for monitoring, review and adjustment of the management plan during the life of the plan?
- Is the management plan actively used to guide management?
- Has a management effectiveness evaluation been undertaken for this site using available management effectiveness tools/methodologies (e.g. the WWF and World Bank Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool [METT], the IUCN framework for assessing management effectiveness of protected areas). If yes, please indicate the main results/conclusions.
- Are natural resources management activities conducted to a planned work programme, and aimed at minimising threats and protecting values, using adaptive management practices?
- Is the management system adequate to maintain the site's values?

Boundaries
- Are the boundaries of the site, including buffer zone, effective in relation to the management and protection of its values?
- Are the boundaries clearly marked or fenced as necessary to conserve values?
- Does the site have a buffer zone and is its use of the buffer zone of the site regulated in ways that enhance site protection?

Integration into regional and national planning systems
- Is the site well-integrated into the national and regional planning systems?
- Is management of the site integrated with broader landscape /seascape management and sustainable development priorities?

Standards - to be used in assessing the 14 Protection and Management topics

Relationships with local people (including stakeholder relationship, participatory management, rights and access to benefits and equity)

- Have the key stakeholders been identified and are they involved in site management?
- Are indigenous people and human rights being respected?
- Are traditional management practices and the involvement of Indigenous people in natural and cultural resource management and decision-making fostered as appropriate?
- Is there a programme of outreach, communication and information exchange with local communities and other key stakeholders using mechanisms appropriate to the stakeholders?
- Do relationships with stakeholders in and around the site help facilitate effective conservation of the site's values?
- Are the needs of stakeholders addressed effectively within the management system for the site, without compromising the conservation of the site? If yes, are benefits provided by the World Heritage site shared equitably with local people? If not, what are the main conflicts with stakeholders that need to be addressed?
- Is local employment fostered and are community wellbeing programs implemented where appropriate?
- Are the impacts of site management on the community positive or at least neutral and stable or improving?

Legal framework

- Is the legal framework for the World Heritage site effective in maintaining its values?
- Are land tenure issues resolved so that there is no impediment to management?

Law enforcement

- Is the legal framework effectively enforced (e.g. adequate capacity to detect infringements through patrols and other enforcement activities, an effective system for the prosecution of offenders, fair permit system with compliance monitored and enforced)?

Implementation of World Heritage Committee decisions and recommendations, if applicable

- Has the State Party implemented the decisions and recommendations of the World Heritage Committee related to the site?
- If not, what are the key limitations to fully implementing these decisions?

Sustainable use

- Are there any assessment of the type and level of resources that could be used from the site without jeopardizing the site's conservation?
- Are there effective mechanisms in place to ensure resource use permitted in and around the World Heritage site is sustainable and does not impact negatively on values?
- Does any resource use at present represent a threat to the conservation of the site? If yes, how can this be addressed?

Sustainable finance

- Has the site assessed the level of financial resources required to ensure its effective management?
- Are financial resources adequate to implement the management measures required to maintain the site's values? If not, what is the funding gap?
- What are the existing sources of funding and are these sources secure and are they likely to remain so?
- If not, what measures are in place to obtain additional financial resources to support management?

Standards - to be used in assessing the 14 Protection and Management topics

Staff capacity, training and development
- Is staff capacity/numbers adequate to manage the site, with appropriate support staff?
- Do staff have the necessary capability and training to conduct essential management activities including community relations and biodiversity conservation?
- Are staff respected and nurtured, and staff health, safety and well-being are given a high priority by the management authority?
- Is there adequate equipment and infrastructure available and accessible to staff as appropriate to manage the site?
- Is equipment and infrastructure well maintained and regularly replaced as necessary so that the functioning and safety of management assets remains high?
-

Education and interpretation programmes
- Do education, interpretation and awareness programmes significantly enhance the understanding of values of the site among stakeholders?
- Is there any education or awareness programme in place on regulations about the adequate use of the site's natural resources?

Tourism and visitation management
- Is there an understanding and promotion of the sites values in local and national tourism policies?
- Is there a tourism and/or visitation plan for the site? If yes, is it under implementation?
- Do visitor services and facilities meet standards of design, environmental sustainability and safety and are they appropriate for the character, values and use of the protected area?
- Is the tourism industry within the protected area managed to support protected area objectives?
- Are visitor impacts managed to minimise harm to the natural and cultural values of the protected area (for example through permits, access control, facilities, education and enforcement)?

Monitoring
- Are the values for which the site was inscribed on the List of World Heritage adequately and systematically monitored?
- If not, can the management agency establish cooperation programme with academic and/ or research centres to support monitoring activities?
- Are management plans, tools and decisions adapted and improved as a result of monitoring outcomes?

Research
- Is there a targeted research programme in place as part of the adaptive management system of the site?
- If not, can the management agency establish cooperation programmes with academic and/or research centres to support research?
- Is there adequate knowledge, based on up to date data and information, about the site to support planning, management and decision-making to ensure that values is maintained over the long-term?

Step 4: Assessing the current state and trend of values - Worksheet 4

STEP SUMMARY

Assessing values involves both an assessment of their current state and their trend over the last five years. In this step, World Heritage values are assessed as outlined in steps 1. and 2. below. Note: 'Other important biodiversity values' are not assessed individually, however if they have been identified in an assessment, a summary of their state and trend is provided in the 'Assessment of the current state and trend of other important biodiversity values' field.

1. **Current state** is assessed against five ratings: **Good, Low Concern**, **High Concern**, **Critical** and **Data Deficient** (see Table 4.1). The baseline for the assessment should be the condition at the time of inscription, with reference to the best-recorded historical conservation state. Current state should be reported in the 'State' field in the online assessment module, and in columns 4-8 of Worksheet 4 in the Word document.

2. **Trend** is assessed in relation to whether the condition of a value is **Improving, Stable, Deteriorating** or **Data Deficient**, and is intended to be a snapshot of recent developments over the last five years. Trend should be reported in the 'Trend' field in the online assessment module, and in column 9 of Worksheet 4 in the Word document.

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

a) **Filling in Worksheet 4 (Assessing Values)**: The state and trend of the World Heritage values are described in the 'Justification of assessment' field for each topic. The state of each value is assessed by selecting one of five ratings: Good, Low Concern, High Concern, Critical or Data Deficient. The trend of each value is assessed in relation to whether the value is Improving, Stable, Deteriorating or Data Deficient. Finally, a summary of the state and trend of World Heritage values is provided in the 'Assessment of the current state and trend of World Heritage values' box (if other important biodiversity values have been identified for the site, a summary of their current state and trend needs to be provided as well). Note, in the Word document, the World Heritage values will need to be copied from Worksheet 1 ('Values' field).

b) **Information sources**: The information used to assess the current state and trend of values should be as quantitative as possible. Information sources include state of conservation reports, periodic reports, management effectiveness assessments, management plans, the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, scientific papers, and consultation feedback, which provides up-to-date information on the current state and trend of values (see Annex 1 for an annotated list of information sources). Tracking the state and trend of values over time will be critical to get a better understanding of the trajectory of the site's conservation outlook over time. The rating and trend of values from previous assessments (2014 and/or 2017) should be consulted when completing this assessment step. **Assessing the overall state and trend of World Heritage and other important biodiversity values:** These assessment summaries should present how the state and trend of values has changed since the time of inscription, or the best-recorded conservation state, and highlight any key declines/improvements.

Table 4.1: World Heritage values ratings

Rating	Criteria
Good	All elements necessary to maintain the site's values are essentially intact, and their overall condition is stable or improving. Available evidence indicates only minor, if any, disturbance to the values of the site.
Low Concern	Some loss or alteration of the elements necessary to maintain the site's values has occurred, but their overall condition is stable or improving and is not causing persistent or substantial effects on the values of the site.
High Concern	Loss or alteration of many elements necessary to maintain site values has occurred, which is leading to a significant reduction in the values of the site.
Critical	Loss or alteration of a majority of elements necessary to maintain site values has occurred and has caused a major loss of the values of the site.

Step 5: Assessing Conservation Outlook – Worksheet 5

Conservation Outlook Assessments aim to not only track the current state of natural World Heritage sites, but to also use the information collected in the assessment to project the sites' longer-term ability to conserve its values.

> **Definition:** Conservation Outlook is a projection of the potential for a site to conserve its values over time. This projection is based on an assessment of the state and trend of values, the threats affecting those values and the effectiveness of protection and management.

Conservation Outlook is assessed against five ratings: **Good, Good with some concerns, Significant Concern**, **Critical,** and **Data Deficient** (see Table 5.1). In the Word document, the 'justifications of assessment' and assessments for rows 3-5 should simply be copied from Worksheets 2-4. This process is not necessary when using the online assessment module as justifications will be automatically imported into the relevant box from the previous worksheets. Only the Conservation Outlook summary and assessment in Worksheet 5 are new.

Note that Worksheet 5 will constitute the assessment summary and will be most visible on the online site assessment pages. It should therefore be as detailed and as self-explanatory as possible, so that it could be read clearly as a standalone section.

CONSERVATION OUTLOOK RATINGS

Table 5.1: Conservation Outlook ratings

Rating	Criteria
Good	The site's values are in good condition and are likely to be maintained for the foreseeable future, provided that current conservation measures are maintained.
Good with some concerns	While some concerns exist, with minor additional conservation measures the site's values are likely to be essentially maintained over the long-term.
Significant Concern	The site's values are threatened and/or may be showing signs of deterioration. Significant additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore values over the medium to long-term.
Critical	The site's values are severely threatened and/or deteriorating. Immediate large-scale additional conservation measures are needed to maintain and/or restore the site's values over the short to medium-term or the values may be lost.
Data Deficient	Available evidence is insufficient to draw a conclusion

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

   a) **Filling in Worksheet 5 (Conservation Outlook)**: The conservation outlook for the site is summarised in the 'Justification of assessment' field, and assessed by selecting one of five ratings: Good, Good with Some

Concerns, Significant Concern, Critical, or Data Deficient. As noted above, in the Word document, the 'Justifications of assessment' and assessments for rows 3-5 should be copied from Worksheets 2-4.   This worksheet has also been placed upfront in the Word document as it is a vital part of the assessment and will be most visible to the general public.

b) **Guidelines for Conservation Outlook assessments:**

→ The previous assessment of threats, protection and management (including capacity of site management to respond to threats), and site values should all be considered when applying the ratings in Table 5.1.

→ Where there have been major data gaps in the assessments undertaken, these should be noted.

→ The assumptions upon which the Conservation Outlook is based should be clearly presented in the 'justification of assessment' column of Worksheet 5.

c) **Time horizons**: Long-term = more than 10 years; Medium-term = 5 to 10 years; and Short-term = 1 to 5 years.

d) **Critical**: This category generally includes those sites that are already inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger and those that are subject to severe threats that could lead to the loss of their values.

e) **Disclaimer:** Conservation Outlook Assessments project (an estimate of future possibilities based on a current trend) but do not predict (a statement that some outcome is expected).

Step 6: Understanding benefits – Worksheet 6 (optional)

The primary focus of the World Heritage Outlook is to track the conservation state, trend and outlook of World Heritage sites. Collecting additional information on the benefits and ecosystem services natural World Heritage sites provide to people, and the threats to these benefits, is useful when considering how sites can help to support healthy ecosystems which deliver benefits to people. Moreover, identification of these benefits and drivers affecting them provides insights into the overall protection and management of a site.

In the online assessment module, this section is presented as one worksheet; in the Word document, the step is split into two parts - Worksheets 6(a) and 6(b). The summary below provides instructions for the two-step process; in the online assessment module, the two steps are combined and can be completed in one go.

1. **Identify benefits using the checklist** (Worksheet 6(a) in Word document): Benefits present in the site are identified using a checklist based on the benefit categories. The list of benefit types and sub-categories has been developed based on different existing classifications, including the classification used by the Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool[10]. Benefits that are not selected are assumed to be absent.

2. **Describe selected benefits** (Worksheet 6(b)): The assessor describes the selected benefits in the 'Summary' column. The description should be evidence-based and referenced wherever possible.

3. **Assess factors negatively affecting provision of selected benefits:** Where information is available, the assessor should include information on factors negatively affecting the provision of selected benefits (indicating the level of impact [Very High, High, Moderate, Low] and the trend [Increasing, Continuing, Decreasing]). Where no information on such factors is available, the fields can be left blank. The list of these factors consists of five direct drivers of change: habitat change (land use change), pollution, overexploitation, climate change and invasive species. This classification is based on that used in the UK NEA (2011). Any comments or additional information on these factors can be added in the 'Comments on factors' column for each benefit.

In 2014 the IUCN World Heritage Programme undertook a study specifically focused on the benefits provided by natural and mixed World Heritage sites. Part of the study used the information collected through the Conservation Outlook Assessments and this also provided an opportunity to collect some additional information, including on direct drivers of change. The assessors can consult the study at https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2014-045.pdf.

a) **Filling in Worksheet 6 (Benefits):** As outlined above, the steps for this worksheet are different between the online assessment module and the Word document. In the online assessment module, benefits are entered one by one by clicking the 'Add more' button in the worksheet. A brief summary of key benefits generated by the World Heritage site (and identified in the worksheet) is also provided in the 'Summary of benefits' field. In the Word document, benefits present are first identified in Worksheet 6(a), and then assessed in Worksheet 6(b).

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[10] Dudley, N., Stolton S. (2009). The Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool: A methodology. World Wide Fund for Nature.

b) **Limits of the assessment:** It is important to keep in mind that Step 6 is not meant to be a full assessment of benefits, but an identification of the types of benefits provided by a site.

c) **Benefits compatible with a site's conservation objectives**: In the case of provisioning services, assessors should only consider those activities that are compatible with a site's conservation objectives, e.g. legal collection of medicinal plants from a site for local use.

d) **Valuing benefits:** Assessors are not expected to value benefits in monetary and quantitative values. However, where such figures are easily available from existing studies these can be included with clear references and disclaimers where relevant.

Step 7: Compiling information on conservation projects in the site– Worksheet 7 (optional)

STEP SUMMARY

To date, there has been no systematic attempt to compile information on the organisations and conservation projects in natural World Heritage sites. The purpose of Worksheet 7 is to begin compiling this information. Conservation projects are identified and described and references provided if available (e.g. web links).

ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

a) **Filling in Worksheet 7 (Projects)**: The organisation undertaking the project is defined in the 'Organisation' field, and described in the 'Description' field. In the 'Description' field, alongside details of activities, if known, please also state how the project is addressing threats affecting the site identified in previous worksheets If a website exists with further information on the project, it is noted in the 'Website' field.

b) **Limited or incomplete information is still useful:** If limited information is available on the organisations and conservation projects active within a site, Site Assessors are encouraged to provide whatever information is easily available, even if incomplete.

Step 8: References – Worksheet 8

All information used in assessments is referenced for transparency and so that future assessments can review the previous information base. Accurate and consistent referencing ensures high quality of assessments. Information sources should be clearly referenced within the 'description' column in the case of Worksheet 1 (Values), and in the 'justification for assessment' columns in Worksheets 2 (Threats), 3 (Protection and management) and 4 (Assessing values). Throughout the assessment the Harvard system should be used, e.g. (Smith, 2009). References should be compiled in Worksheet 8 (References). If deleting a reference in-text, then also delete it in the reference list in Worksheet 8.

REFERENCE GUIDELINES

Filling in Worksheet 8 (References): Enter references in the 'References' field. References should follow the **Harvard system**, also known as the author–date system which is structured as follows: author(s), date, title, place of publication, publisher (this is the standard IUCN format). Where possible, URLs for documents available online should be included. In the assessment text, references should be cited using the Harvard format (Smith, 2009).

In the online assessment module, you can **bulk upload references** – to do this, click 'Add more', then paste your references in the text field, making sure that each reference is separated by a line. The online assessment module will then automatically separate the references.

There is **no need to alphabetise** references (neither in the online assessment module, nor in the Word document), as references will be automatically alphabetised online by the system.

For **online/electronic information sources**, please indicate that this is an online source (insert '[online]' after the source title), and place the document URL at the end of the citation, followed by the date the document was accessed online, for example:

IUCN (2016). Report on the Mission to Chitwan National Park, Nepal, from 14 to 21 March, 2016. [online] Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/147201>. [Accessed 27 October 2016].

How to reference different types of information sources:

→ **Books:**
Pomeroy, R.S., Park, J.E. and Watson, L.M. (2004). How is your MPA doing? A Guidebook of Natural and Social Indicators for Evaluating Marine Protected Areas Management Effectiveness. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK: IUCN, pp.26-30.

→ **Chapter or extract from a book:**
Margarey, M.E. (1988). Examination of the Cervical and Thoracic Spine. In: R. Grant (ed.) Physical Therapy of the Cervical and Thoracic Spine. New York: Churchill Livingstone, pp.81–109.

→ **Articles from periodicals or journals**:
Rips, L.J., Shoben, E.J. and Smith, E.E. (1973). Semantic Distance and the Verification of Semantic Relations. Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behaviour, 12, pp.1–20.

→ **Unpublished or soon to be published works**:
  - For books: McNeely, J. (In press). The politics of biodiversity: a reader. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.
  - For journal articles: Jones, J. (2006). Planting tree saplings in the Amazon. To be published in Journal of Amazonian Botany 5.

→ **Papers or presentations (ppt) delivered during meetings or conferences:**
Smith, D. (2002). How the Dodo Died. Paper delivered at the Annual Conference of Extinct Species, London, 29 February 2002.

→ **Publications authored by organisations:**
Where no author is given, the organisation acting as the author should be cited as such, e.g.:

IUCN (2006). Progress and Assessment Report 2006. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK: IUCN, pp.1-5.

→ **Academic theses and dissertations:**
Holford-Stevens, L.A. (1971). Select Commentary on Aulus Gellius, Book 2. PhD thesis. Oxford: Oxford University.

→ **Advisory Mission reports**:

IUCN (2018). Report on the Advisory Mission to Ha Long Bay World Heritage Site, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam from 16th July to 20th July 2018. [online] Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, pp.1-56. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/672/documents/> [Accessed 26 March 2020].

→ *Reactive Monitoring Missions reports:*

UNESCO and IUCN (2018). Report on the Joint World Heritage Centre – IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to Bialowieza Forest (Belarus and Poland), from 24 September to 2 October (2018). [online] Paris, France and Gland, Switzerland: UNESCO World Heritage Centre and IUCN, pp.1-88. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/document/172879> [Accessed 15 November 2019].

(*NOTE: Advisory and reactive monitoring missions may be undertaken by IUCN individually, or joint missions between UNESCO and IUCN. ICOMOS may also take part in advisory and reactive monitoring missions for mixed World Heritage Sites. This should be indicated as appropriate.)

→ **Nomination file from State Party**:
State Party of Argentina (2016). Nomination of Los Alerces National Park as a World Heritage Site. [online] Buenos Aires, Argentina: National Parks Administration, pp.1-182. Available at: <https://whc.unesco.org/document/155647> [Accessed 23 February 2017].

→ **IUCN evaluation reports**:
IUCN (2016). World Heritage Nomination – IUCN Technical Evaluation, Hubei Shennongjia (China). In: IUCN World Heritage Evaluations 2016, IUCN Evaluations of nominations of natural and mixed properties to the World Heritage List. WHC/16/40.COM/INF.8B2. [online] Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, pp.17-28. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2016/whc16-40com-inf8B2-en.pdf> [Accessed 15 January 2017].

→ **Advisory bodies' state of conservation reports**:

UNESCO (2008). Report on the State of Conservation of Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania. State of Conservation Information System of the World Heritage Centre. [online] Paris, France: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, pp.2. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/891> [Accessed 23 February 2017].

→ **State Party state of conservation reports**:

State Party of Australia (2014). Report of the State Party to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of the Great Barrier Reef (Australia). [online] Commonwealth of Australia, pp.1-114. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/document/127128> [Accessed 23 February 2017].

→ **Periodic reports**:

State Party of Canada (2014). Periodic Report Second Cycle Section II: Dinosaur Provincial Park. [online] Paris, France: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, pp.1-11. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/periodicreporting/EUR/cycle02/section2/groupa/71.pdf>. [Accessed 7 June 2015].

→ **Statements of outstanding universal value**:

World Heritage Committee (2014). Decision: 38 COM 8B.5 Okavango Delta Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (Botswana). In: Decisions Adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 38th Session (Doha, 2014). [online] Paris, France: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, pp.156-159. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6090> [Accessed 8 April 2015].

→ **World Heritage Committee decisions**:

World Heritage Committee (2009). Decision 33 COM 7B.24. Belovezhskaya Pushcha / Białowieża Forest (Belarus / Poland). In: Report of decisions of the 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee (Seville, 2009). [online] Paris, France: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, pp.73-74. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1816> [Accessed 15 March 2015].

(Roman numerals for decision numbers were used up to and including 2001. For these decisions, keep the Roman numerals 20 COM VIII.A.4, rather than 20 COM 8.A.4)

→ **UNEP-WCMC information sheets**:

UNEP-WCMC (2012). Banc d'Arguin National Park, Mauritania. UNEP-WCMC World Heritage Information Sheets. [online] Cambridge, UK: UNEP-WCMC. Available at: <https://yichuans.github.io/datasheet/output/site/banc-darguin-national-park/> [Accessed 20 September 2017].

→ **Management plans:**

Range to Reef Environmental (2016). Aldabra Atoll Management Plan. [online] Victoria, Seychelles: Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF), pp.1-90. Available at: <https://www.sif.sc/sites/default/files/downloads/Aldabra%20Atoll%20Management%20Plan.pdf> [Accessed 5 November 2018].

→ **Reports on specific projects:**

State Party of Malawi (2018). Final Report, International Assistance Request (IAR) 2895, Strengthening the

management of Lake Malawi National Park World Heritage Site. Paris, France and Lilongwe, Malawi: UNESCO and Malawi National Commission for UNESCO, pp.1-4.

→ **Speeches/statements/presentations/lectures:**

Maige, E. (2011). Statement by the former Tanzanian Minister of Tourism, Hon. Ezekiel Maige, to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee, 35th session. Paris, France.

→ **Consultations/consultation forms:**

Very important: Do not name individuals or organisations in the reference. Consultations/consultation forms are confidential.

When there is only one consultation/consultation form/respondent:
IUCN Consultation (2017). IUCN World Heritage Confidential Consultation form: Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China.

When there is more than one consultation/consultation form/respondent:
IUCN Consultation (2017a). IUCN World Heritage Confidential Consultation form: Respondent 1. Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China.

IUCN Consultation (2017b). IUCN World Heritage Confidential Consultation form: Respondent 2. Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area, China.

Glossary

→ **Boundary:** For natural World Heritage sites, boundaries should reflect the spatial requirements of habitats, species, processes or phenomena that provide the basis for their inscription on the World Heritage List. The boundaries should include sufficient areas immediately adjacent to the area of Outstanding Universal Value in order to protect the site's heritage values from direct effect of human encroachments and impacts of resource use outside of the nominated area.

→ **Buffer zones** are areas that are not part of the site, but surround all or part of it and provide for its protection. These areas are described in the Operational Guidelines as "*An area surrounding the World Heritage site which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development to give an added layer of protection to the World Heritage site*." (Paragraph 104).

→ **Conservation Outlook** is a projection of the potential for a natural World Heritage site to conserve its values over time. This projection is based on an assessment of the state and trend of values, the threats affecting those values and the effectiveness of protection and management.

→ **Current vs. potential threats**: Current threats are the proximate human activities or natural processes/disasters that are causing the destruction, degradation, and/or impairment of a site's values (e.g. illegal logging and extreme weather events). Current threats are ongoing, while potential threats are likely to occur in the future. Their effects can be direct, indirect or cumulative:

- **Direct effects** are caused by an action occurring at the same time and place, e.g. forest loss following logging.

- **Indirect or secondary effects** are effects that occur later in time or further removed in distance, e.g. degradation of soil and water quality as a result of erosion due to forest loss.

- **Cumulative effects** result from the impact of an action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, e.g. forest fragmentation and impacts on wildlife as the result of multiple logging projects.

→ **Drivers:** Underlying direct threats are demographic and macroeconomic factors that ultimately drive the loss of biodiversity. Examples of drivers include population pressures, poverty and poor governance.

→ **Integrity** is a specific term used in the World Heritage Convention. It is described in the Operational Guidelines as "*...a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its values. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires assessing the extent to which the site: a) includes all elements necessary to express its OUV; b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the site's significance; c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect*" (Paragraph 88).

→ **Management effectiveness:** The assessment of how well the protected area is being managed - primarily the extent to which it is protecting values and achieving goals and objectives.

→ **Management plan:** An explicit set of rules governing how to apply the principles and framework of natural resource management in a given area. This plan may be adapted to various changes in the natural and social environment, or upon the basis of new information about how a system functions. (Source: Hockings et al., 2006, p.xiii)

→ **Other important biodiversity values**: Other important biodiversity values are typically identified for sites that are listed for geological and/or scenic values, but which also have important biodiversity values, including those identified under international, regional and national designations such as Ramsar, KBA, IBA, IPA, AZE, Natura 2000 etc.

→ **Outstanding Universal Value** is a specific term used in the World Heritage Convention, and is defined as *"...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."* (Source, Operational Guidelines, see Figure 4)

Figure 4: The three pillars of Outstanding Universal Value are reflected in the three main Conservation Outlook Assessment topics – values, threats, and protection and management

→ **Sustainable use:** The use of resources at rates that do not exceed the capacity of ecosystems to replace these.

→ **Threats within and outside a site**: Threats within and outside a site are differentiated by their points of origin. Threats within a World Heritage site are caused by actors or events located within the site or its immediate surroundings, while threats outside a site can originate locally, regionally, nationally or globally, and are caused by actors or events outside the site.

→ **Time horizons**: Long-term = more than 10 years; Medium-term = 5 to10 years; and Short-term = 1 to 5 years.

→ **World Heritage values**: Within the World Heritage Convention, natural values refer to the four criteria listed in Box 1.1. What makes a site outstanding and universal is its 'value', which implies clearly defining the importance of a site, and rating its importance in relation to other sites around the world. In natural World Heritage terms therefore the value of the site is what makes it one the most outstanding natural places on Earth.

Annex 1: Annotated list of information sources

Note: Most of the information sources below will be emailed to Site Assessors by the IUCN World Heritage Outlook Coordinator.

→ **Designation information**: Many World Heritage sites are also designated at Ramsar sites[11] or Biosphere Reserves under UNESCO's MAB program[12]. The IUCN Assessment Coordinator can provide support on obtaining this information.

→ **GIS and remote sensing imagery:** Depending on availability, remote sensing imagery can be used to assess level and rate of forest loss, encroachment, and the occurrence of mines, dams and/or roads in and around a site. GIS datasets can be used to cross reference existing ecological datasets with natural World Heritage sites. Where relevant, both GIS and remote sensing data may be used on a case by case basis at the request of the Site Assessor.

→ **Grey literature:** World Heritage sites tend to be the focus of many conservation projects. Useful sources of information include: Important Plant Areas database[13]; Important Bird Areas[14]; Alliance for Zero Extinction[15]; WWF's ecoregion[16] etc.

→ **IUCN and IUCN/UNESCO mission reports:** Publicly available reports from IUCN missions (including advisory and joint missions) provide a detailed analysis of pressing conservation issues affecting a site, as well as recommendations to address these issues. These can be accessed on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/.

→ **IUCN evaluation reports**: The evaluation report written by IUCN at the time of a site's nomination can provide a historic basis for assessing the trend in values, threats and protection and management. Evaluation reports can also be helpful in identifying the values for which a site was inscribed on the World Heritage List. Available for all sites on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/.

→ **UNEP-WCMC information sheets:** The UNEP-WCMC information sheets provide a detailed site description, including information about land tenure, climate, species and habitats, management and threats[17]. The information sheets are prepared at the time of inscription and are available for most sites.

→ **IUCN/UNESCO state of conservation reports:** The state of conservation reports prepared by IUCN and UNESCO for the World Heritage Committee discuss the state of a site's values, threats to those values and protection and management issues, and propose a draft decision to the World Heritage Committee. These reports are based on State Party reports, and on other available information. These reports are either requested by the World Heritage Committee or by IUCN/UNESCO because of urgent threats to a site's Outstanding Universal Value. These can be accessed on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/.

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[11] http://ramsar.wetlands.org/Database/AbouttheRamsarSitesDatabase/tabid/812/language/en-US/Default.aspx
[12] http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/mab/
[13] http://www.iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/iucnmed/iucn_med_programme/species/key_biodiversity_areas/
[14] http://www.birdlife.org/action/science/sites/
[15] http://www.zeroextinction.org/
[16] http://www.worldwildlife.org/science/ecoregions/item1847.html
[17] The UNEP-WCMC information sheets are available at http://www.unep-wcmc.org/world-heritage-information-sheets_271.html

→ **Management effectiveness evaluations:** Published evaluations of the effectiveness of site management to maintain World Heritage values[18]. Not available for all sites.

→ **Management plans:** Management plans may include threat assessments, assessments of key values etc., in addition to information about a site's protection and management regimes. Not always available or up to date. Available for some sites.

→ **Maps of the World Heritage site** – Can be accessed on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/ and on Protected Planet www.protectedplanet.net. Note that the quality of maps is highly variable.

→ **Media reports:** The level of media coverage will vary considerably between sites. This source of information should be consulted with care, and should preferably only be referred to when the issues they raise are confirmed by other reliable sources.

→ **Periodic reporting questionnaires:** Section 2 of the Periodic Reporting Questionnaire is a site-based questionnaire, which is intended to be completed by World Heritage managers. The questionnaire draws heavily on the IUCN WCPA management effectiveness framework and includes a detailed threat (i.e. factors affecting the site) assessment as well as assessment of the state of conservation, and the effectiveness of protection and management.

→ **Previous World Heritage Outlook conservation outlook assessments:** Previous versions of conservation outlook assessments will serve as a source of information for current assessments. Site Assessors can maintain the parts of the previous assessment which are still accurate (e.g. description of values), and update the parts where changes have occurred since the last assessment. Previous conservation outlook assessments are available from the IUCN World Heritage Outlook website: http://www.worldheritageoutlook.iucn.org/search-sites

→ **Protected Planet** (www.protectedplanet.net) - Protected Planet allows you to find information about individual protected areas.

→ **Scientific publications:** Where relevant, available recent scientific publications relating to a site or its values should be consulted.

→ **Statements of outstanding universal value** or **statements of significance:** Where available, the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value (required for all inscriptions since 2005) provides the official public statement of the values for which a site was inscribed on the World Heritage List. Older sites often lack a Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, but many have a Statement of Significance instead, which is usually less detailed. For all sites inscribed before 2005 a process to define retrospective statements of outstanding universal value is currently being undertaken. These can be accessed on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/.

→ **World Heritage Committee Decisions**: These are the official decisions taken by the World Heritage Committee, containing recommendations for conservation action. These decisions are based on the IUCN/UNESCO State of Conservation Reports and can be accessed on UNESCO's World Heritage Centre website http://whc.unesco.org/.

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[18] IUCN WCPA and UNEP-WCMC have developed a searchable database of management effectiveness assessments carried out worldwide which can be accessed at: http://www.wdpa.org/ME/