Management Effectiveness: The Case of World Natural Heritage

Summary of an international workshop

Workshop of the
World Commission on Protected Areas Task Force on Management Effectiveness
With the World Heritage Bureau and the IUCN/WWF Forest Innovations Project
International Expert Workshop on Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas: The Case of World Natural Heritage
September 27-29 1999, Oulton Broad, UK
Hosted by The Broads Authority
Management Effectiveness: The Case of World Natural Heritage

Summary of an international workshop

The Management Effectiveness Task Force of the World Commission on Protected Areas held a workshop in the Broads, UK, in September 1999, to discuss developments in the assessment of management effectiveness for protected areas. The meeting built on proposals developed at an earlier (June 1999) workshop in Costa Rica. There were three main aims: (1) to review development of a framework for assessing management effectiveness of protected areas (2) to review existing application of evaluation methods in World Heritage sites and (3) to draw up a proposal for a monitoring and evaluation project to assess management effectiveness across a range of natural World Heritage sites. The meeting discussed existing experience in the evaluation of management effectiveness in selected World Heritage sites and other protected areas, including the Great Barrier Reef, Tasmanian Wilderness and Fraser Island in Australia, the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador, various sites in Central America, the Dja Reserve in Cameroon and Minkebe Reserve in Gabon. It also reviewed and modified the WCPA framework for assessing management effectiveness of protected areas and the associated draft principles and guidelines for assessment. A range of assessment methodologies, including the WWF-CATIE system in Central America and the IUCN/WWF Forest Innovations system in Africa, were presented and reviewed. The meeting discussed the application of the
methodology in the context of IUCN category V national parks in the UK, including the
Snowdonia and the Norfolk Broads. A proposal and a timetable were developed for a project
piloting the WCPA framework as a means of monitoring management effectiveness within a
range of World Heritage properties as a contribution to meeting periodic reporting requirements
under the Convention.

INTRODUCTION
Effective management is a necessary condition for all protected areas that are legally designated
to meet biodiversity conservation and other natural heritage protection goals and objectives.

The Management Effectiveness Task Force of the World Commission on Protected Areas has
been working to develop a global framework for assessment of management effectiveness, in
association with practitioners throughout the world. The current meeting, which follows three
months after a first international workshop in Costa Rica, had a number of aims:

1. To review development of a framework for assessing management effectiveness of
protected areas.

2. To review existing application of these methods in World Heritage sites.

3. To draw up a proposal for a larger monitoring project in association with the
World Heritage Convention.

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION
The workshop began with a welcome and introduction by Dr Michael Green, Chief
Conservation Officer with the Broads Authority and an outline of the workshop objectives and
programme by Marc Hockings, Chair of the WCPA Task Force on Management
Effectiveness.

The World Heritage Convention and management effectiveness – requirements for
periodic reporting
Dr Natajaran Ishwaran, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Paris

There are requirements for two types of reports in relation to World Heritage sites:
• Reactive reports that are initiated when a threat to World Heritage values is
identified; and
• Systematic or periodic reports that routinely assess and report on aspects of management
of World Heritage properties.

Currently most reporting has been in relation to reactive monitoring of properties under threat.

The World Heritage Committee is working to improve the nature and extent of periodic
reporting. To this end the Committee has prepared guidelines for State Parties and a paper
titled Format for periodic reporting on the application of the World Heritage Convention
has been prepared and was circulated to participants at this workshop. This sets out a
format and timetable for reporting, which will be undertaken on a regional basis every six
years.

There is a need to improve the technical content of reports including better definition of the
attributes that should be monitored in relation to management of World Heritage sites. The
WCPA Framework might provide a structure that could contribute to the development of a
more systematic and useful basis for periodic reporting. The World Heritage Centre would
like to see pilot studies on application of the WCPA framework in a set of World Heritage
sites.

The WCPA Framework – its potential application to World Heritage sites
Marc Hockings, WCPA Task Force on Management Effectiveness

The three broad uses of information on management effectiveness were outlined as:
1. Programming (problem identification and priority setting);
2. Adaptive management (use of performance information to improve management); and
3. Accountability (reporting on activities and performance).

The WCPA Framework is based around the process of managing protected areas and
recognises that different aspects of this management process (design and planning, inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes) can be evaluated. Issues and assessment methods related to many of these aspects on management will be common for all protected areas, including World Heritage sites. The identification of attributes of significance in relation to the World Heritage criteria during the listing process provides one basis for monitoring management outcomes (i.e. has the condition of these attributes been maintained?).
however this is not a sufficient basis for comprehensive assessment of management effectiveness.

SESSION 2: EXPERIENCES WITH EXISTING ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES IN SELECTED WORLD HERITAGE STATE PARTIES

Evaluation of Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas: the WWF-CATIE experience
Arturo Izurieta, WWF Central America

A methodology for assessing management effectiveness has been developed and progressively refined by a group of researchers from the WWF Central American Office and CATIE since 1990. The system is based around a scorecard including 10 fields, 53 variables and 24 sub-variables, covering management functions and issues of relevance to effective management (administration, policy, legal status, planning, information, management plans, legal use, illegal use, biogeographical characteristics and threats). The optimum situation is defined in relation to each variable or sub-variable and the actual condition is then rated against this optimum on a 5 point percentage scale from unsatisfactory to very satisfactory. The scores assigned to each variable can be assembled into matrices that make it possible to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of management for a given issue or area.

Research has demonstrated that the most consistent assessment is derived from protected area managers and community members undertaking a joint assessment as a group process rather in preference to individual expert assessment or use of Delphi techniques. Amongst other pilot sites, the methodology has been applied in the Galapagos National Park (a World Natural Heritage site) as part of the process to revise this area's management plan.

Evaluating management of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.
Glenys Jones, Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment.

The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Australia, covering approximately 1.4 million hectares, was listed on the basis of all four natural, and three cultural, criteria for World Heritage designation.

Like most management plans for protected areas, the first (1992) management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness did not provide a good basis or mechanism for evaluating management effectiveness under the plan. However, the recently revised (1999) management plan incorporates a framework for evaluation of management that links the management objectives to requirements for monitoring, assessment and reporting. The system is based on identifying a range of tangible outcomes that management is seeking to achieve and then monitoring performance indicators that reflect the extent to which these 'key desired outcomes' have been achieved.

The key steps in this process are:

- Identify objectives
- Define key desired outcomes and targets
- Identify performance indicators
- Undertake monitoring
- Periodically assess results
- Report findings
- Adjust management as necessary

'State of the Tasmanian Wilderness' reports will be regularly produced to summarise the results of the monitoring and evaluation program, and provide a 'handle' on changes that have occurred in the area over the term of management. Factors that have helped or hindered management effectiveness will be identified, and recommendations provided for improving ongoing management.

Evaluations of management effectiveness will draw upon:
- scientifically-based monitoring programs and other measured data;
- the views of visitors and the public; and
- assessments of performance and critical comment about management performance by internal and external sources (including agency staff and members of the World Heritage Area Consultative Committee).

It is expected that an evaluation system based on the approach developed for the World Heritage Area will be progressively extended to all protected areas in Tasmania, and implemented through the individual management plan for each area.
The following points were made in relation to the evaluation of management effectiveness for protected areas in general:

- Evaluation needs to be firmly embedded into core management systems (such as the management plan for the area).
- Management standards for protected areas can provide a sound basis for evaluating management performance, even in the absence of a management plan.
- Evaluation can be as simple or as complex as circumstances dictate.

Applying the WCPA framework: a case study on the Fraser Island World Heritage Area
Marc Hockings, WCPA Task Force on Management Effectiveness

The essential features of the WCPA framework for evaluation of management effectiveness were first elaborated in 1994 in developing an assessment system for the Fraser Island World Heritage Area in Queensland. Although the framework recognised the potential to evaluate all components of the management cycle (i.e. design, inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes), the original intention for the Fraser Island case study was to limit assessment to outputs and outcomes only. This was on the reasoning that these provide the most direct and relevant measures of management effectiveness.

Outputs are being monitored through an annual assessment of the extent of implementation of each of the actions, policies and guidelines specified in the management plan for the area. Implementation is scored on a 7 point scale (action not commenced → action complete). This information is stored in a specialised database that permits analysis of progress in implementation of the plan in numerous ways (e.g. by plan strategy, by priority, by subject area etc.).

Monitoring programs to assess the achievement of desired outcomes specified in the plan have been developed for priority issues and areas. These were developed by determining indicators that would reflect the achievement of the desired outcomes and determining the data requirements and monitoring programs needed to make these assessments. Examples include monitoring vegetation change, water quality in freshwater lakes and recreational impacts on fauna.

Experience in developing the framework for wider application through the WCPA Task Force, as well as experiences in applying the framework on Fraser Island have reinforced the relevance and usefulness of all component measures of management effectiveness (i.e. inputs and processes as well as outputs and outcomes). Measures of management inputs and processes have now been added to the assessment system for Fraser Island.

WWF/IUCN Forest Innovations project
Nigel Dudley, IUCN/WWF Forest Innovations Project

The IUCN/WWF Forest Innovations project is based around concepts developed in the WWF/IUCN Forests for Life strategy. The project links field experience with policy advocacy at national, regional and international levels. It includes a major focus on protected areas, based on the recognition that quality of protected areas is as important as quantity of the area under protection. Current partners include BMZ and GTZ, WCPA, the WWF-World Bank Alliance, WWF's Forests for Life campaign, WWF Netherlands, IUCN and WWF marine programmes, and governments and institutions.

The protected area component has a number of elements:
- Identification of threats
- Development of assessment methodologies
- Field testing of these techniques
- Implementation and advocacy for management effectiveness

The background philosophy of the project is set out in a book of essays from 40 experts - Partnerships for Protection - published this summer. Identification of threats to protected areas includes a survey of PA status in ten key forest countries for the WWF-World Bank Alliance and development of a longer report on threats to protected areas around the world funded by WWF Netherlands. Development of proposals for assessment has taken place in cooperation with WCPA and the World Bank, including a workshop in Costa Rica in June 1999. The project has since provided support for and development of methodologies and field testing in Central America and Central Africa and is co-ordinating a report on existing methodologies.

The project is also working with the WWF Forests for Life campaign and the World Bank, who are developing a country-wide rapid assessment system for PA effectiveness. Political lobbying, for example at the
Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, is an important component of the overall project.

Preliminary conclusions of the project include a recognition of the need for a global framework for assessing management effectiveness, whilst noting that different types of assessment systems are needed in different situations, including systems that look at both social and ecological issues. To this end the project will be working with the WCPA-METF to finalise the WPCA Framework described above.

**A protected areas effectiveness system in Africa**

As part of the Forest Innovations project, a system for assessing protected area management effectiveness has been developed for Africa, and two field tests run during summer and autumn 1999. A participatory approach involving interaction between the assessor, the project managers and the stakeholders was adopted. The system is based upon two questionnaires, aimed at protected area managers and local stakeholders, and includes a gap analysis of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats in relation to management. The system is closely matched to the framework developed by WCPA and aims to be economically feasible whilst trying to capture key elements in management effectiveness; it can be expanded in detail depending on the time and budget available.

Following development in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and discussion with conservation professionals in Africa, tests were run in Dja Reserve in Cameroon and Minkebe protected area in Gabon, in association with IUCN and WWF field staff. Initial results were presented at the workshop and a full report is in preparation.

**Development of performance indicators for management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area**

Dr Zena Dinesen, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Cooperative Research Centre for the GBR World Heritage Area (CRC Reef)

A number of reviews have been carried out in recent years concerning management of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and World Heritage Area. These have included a number of issues-based reviews, agency reviews and reviews of zoning plans. In addition, a State of the Great Barrier Reef Report was released in 1998, based on data from many sources including the Australian Institute of Marine Science long-term ecological monitoring program.

A new program has been initiated by the GBRMPA and the CRC Reef to develop indicators of management effectiveness, relating both to management agencies and to industries and other users of the GBRWHA. This task aims to:

- develop a comprehensive set of performance indicators and benchmarks acceptable to stakeholders; and
- report on how ecological, social, economic and cultural objectives are being achieved in the GBRWHA.

The initial focus of this program (1999/2000) will be on:

- specification of ‘whole-picture’ models and frameworks for assessment;
- development of broad-brush indicators for the Representative Areas program for biodiversity conservation; and
- development of detailed indicators for tourism management in the Whitsunday region.

Developing performance evaluation processes and indicators for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area is still very much a work in progress. However, issues that have already been raised include:

- the GBRWHA is a multiple-use area managed for a variety of objectives, hence a variety of performance data will be needed.
- performance indicators and evaluations need to involve managers and resource users.
- obtaining performance data may be costly - how will such exercises be financed?

**Monitoring Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Wales**

Mike Alexander, Countryside Council for Wales

When Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are designated, specific features are identified as the reason for this designation. These specified features provide the basis for designing the monitoring program that is closely linked to the planning and management of these sites.

During the planning process specific objectives are written for each nominated feature that indicate the desired condition required for the feature. The monitoring program then measures...
the condition of the feature, which is reported as favourable or unfavourable. Factors affecting the feature (i.e. threats or positive factors) are also subject to monitoring. Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) carries out site audits for all the sites under its remit (number?). The audit ensures compliance with management plans, and checks the audit trail on how features are monitored.

SESSION 3: REVIEW OF DRAFT PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The workshop split into three groups and then met in plenary session to review the draft principles and guidelines for assessment of management effectiveness of protected areas that were developed at the CATIE workshop in June.

The following text reflects the results of the plenary discussion, some editing and rationalisation undertaken by Marc Hockings, Sue Stolton, Nigel Dudley and Glenys Jones following the workshop together with review and comment by workshop participants.

Principles and Guidelines for Assessing Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas

Objective
To improve conservation and management effectiveness of protected areas – including analysis of individual protected areas and analysis of protected area systems.

Principles

• Assessment systems should aim to be participatory at all stages of the process and should seek to involve all relevant organisations and individuals that may have an interest in the management and use of a site.

• Assessment should be based upon a well founded, transparent and comprehensible system of evaluation. The findings should be readily accessible to all interested parties.

• The management objectives and the criteria for assessing performance of management must be clearly defined and understood by the managers and assessors.

• Assessments of management effectiveness should focus on the most important issues – including threats and opportunities - affecting or potentially affecting the achievement of management objectives and the maintenance of conservation values.

• Consideration of inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes, as well as the design of the protected area itself, can all contribute to an assessment system. Outcome-based evaluations provide a particularly meaningful basis for assessing the overall effectiveness of management of protected areas.

• Indicators should identify critical aspects relating to social, environmental and management issues, including the relationship between the protected area and its surroundings.

• Critical gaps in information and limitations of the evaluation should be clearly identified in the assessment report.

• The system should be capable of showing change over time through periodic assessments.

• Reports of the findings of the assessment should identify areas where management has been performing well in addition to areas where management needs to improve. Issues should be divided between those that are within and outside the manager's control.

• Assessment should allow prioritisation of conservation effort.

• Clear recommendations for management improvement should be included in all assessments.

• The methodology for evaluation and performance indicators should be progressively verified and/or refined as necessary.

• Assessments should be based on sound and appropriate environmental and social science. Assessment is likely to include both quantitative and qualitative information that should be supported by measurement or other evidence.
Quality control or accreditation systems can assist assessment systems to achieve high standards, and to gain acceptance and credibility in the wider community.

Requirements for widespread adoption of a management effectiveness evaluation system

- Awareness of the need for evaluation of management performance for protected areas
- Political will to promote and support evaluation among agencies, governments and donors
- Sound conceptual framework and practical, cost-effective methodologies for evaluation
- Training and extension in evaluation systems/methods
- Mechanisms for consolidating, synthesising and reporting on global information at ecosystem, IUCN category, and site-specific levels.

SESSION 4: REVIEW OF WCPA FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

Participants discussed the WCPA framework for assessment of management effectiveness in protected areas, developed by Marc Hockings.

A summary of the comments is given below.

There was considerable discussion about the format of the assessment framework and the need to stress the feedback systems inherent in the system: a flow diagram of the sort used in the Tasmanian example was considered useful as a complement to the matrix already presented.

Outcomes: ideally all systems should include analysis of outcomes, although there may be limitations to how far this is possible in some cases. In general systems the methodology should either include outcomes or recommend a strategy to collect data to measure outcomes in the future.

Outcomes do not only measure management impacts but also other factors influencing the condition of the protected area.

The assessment system should be attempting to link outcomes with management actions and with other influencing factors.

Analysis of "threats" or influencing factors should include both anthropogenic and natural factors, occurring both on and off the site – assessment of these should be a key factor in modifying planning and operations.

SESSION 5: APPLYING THE METHODOLOGY TO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

The World Heritage Convention secretariat is interested in testing the framework in a number (20-30) World Heritage sites around the world. A workshop session looked at the implications of using the methodology within the World Heritage Commission and included the development of a draft proposal, appended to this report.

It was agreed that any assessment of World Heritage sites should consider at least three different aspects:

- Specific criteria relating to listing under the World Heritage Convention – i.e. is the site doing what it is supposed to according to the original listing agreement
- Other national legislative requirement
- General environmental and social requirements for a protected area, drawing on WCPA's framework and principles and criteria

The issue of funding available and the 'level' of assessment was discussed and it was agreed that different methodologies might well be suitable in different geographical or political situations – all nonetheless fitting within the WCPA framework and principles and criteria.

The way in which different systems could be 'checked' for suitability – and the possible role of WCPA in such a process – was discussed without reaching conclusion. It was agreed that systems should be designed with these issues in mind even if it is too early to agree precisely how they will be implemented.

One option particular to World Heritage might be to develop a set of management standards suitable to all World Heritage sites and used as the basis of assessment to allow some consistence and comparison. Additional criteria for particular sites could be added on as necessary. It is also possible that further examination will conclude that World Heritage sites could simply be one category of protected area suitable for using in the pilot study of the framework; in this case no unique management standards would be required.

Furthermore, there is currently no mandate to establish 'standards' as such, although there is an option of initiating a process that will lead towards agreement of standards.
The use of World Heritage sites in a series of regional pilot studies allows a number of tests to be made of the validity of the framework and a range of methodologies, including:

- Testing the methodologies in a range of different conditions.
- Building regional expertise.
- Adding or subtracting components as necessary following testing.
- Comparing different systems, and levels of assessment, at the same site.

It was agreed that as much as possible the tests would look at the whole process of protected area effectiveness: design and planning, inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes.

SESSIONS 6 & 7: DEVELOPING PILOT PROJECTS IN WORLD NATURAL HERITAGE SITES

Working in plenary session, a proposal was developed to apply the WCPA framework in assessing management effectiveness in a number of World Heritage properties in different regions around the world.

The aims of this project are:

- To develop, within the WCPA framework, systems for periodic reporting that assess the effectiveness of management of World Heritage properties, including information on:
  - the maintenance of World Heritage values;
  - the changing circumstances of properties; and
  - the state of conservation of the properties.

- To pilot these systems in a range of World Heritage properties.

- To demonstrate the benefits and application of monitoring and evaluation to site managers.

- To refine the WCPA framework based on the experience within World Heritage application.

The WCPA Task Force working with a project manager and regional project coordinators would manage the project. The project would be conducted from May 2000 to September 2002 and would culminate in a number of reports and a workshop at the World Parks Congress in Durban. A more detailed project proposal and budget are attached.
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World Heritage sites, both natural and cultural, are inscribed on the basis of specific criteria as outlined in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the Convention. State of conservation of World Heritage sites is monitored, using a combination of reactive and systematic approaches. While those approaches have enabled timely detection of major threats to the integrity of the sites, and the planning and implementation of remedial actions, the experience gained via these monitoring approaches is yet to be articulated into specific enabling protocols that would facilitate periodic appraisals of management effectiveness.

Evaluations of management effectiveness are required to guide managers, policy makers, funding bodies and others concerned with improving the management of protected areas. Despite the recognised need for such assessments, little work has been done in this area, partly because of a lack of known or accepted methodologies for making such assessments. IUCN's World Commission of Protected Areas (IUCN/WCPA) Task Force on Management Effectiveness, working together with the IUCN/WWF Forest Innovations project, has developed a framework (consisting of conceptual structure, guiding principles and associated methodologies) to address this need.

The framework provides a unique vehicle for harmonising and interpreting a range of protected area assessment methodologies. Through a series of international workshops, various new and existing methodologies have both drawn from and influenced further development of the framework. The framework recognises the importance of different levels and objectives of assessment and seeks to locate these in a coherent structure that allows users to select the best tools for a particular task. The framework can also provide a template for developing new systems for specific needs.

This proposal provides for the application and testing of methodologies within this framework for evaluating management effectiveness of a selected number of sites described on UNESCO's World Heritage List that take account of the particular needs for periodic reporting under the World Heritage Convention.

Aims

- To develop, within the WCPA framework, systems for periodic reporting that assess the effectiveness of management of World Heritage properties, including information on:
  - the maintenance of World Heritage values;
  - the changing circumstances of properties; and
  - the state of conservation of the properties.

- To pilot these systems in a range of World Heritage properties.

- To demonstrate the benefits and application of monitoring and evaluation to site managers as well as providing them with instruments to assess management effectiveness of their sites.
To refine the WCPA framework based on the experience within World Heritage application

To use the project as a mechanism for regional co-operation and exchange of information and experiences

To provide a report on status of selected World Heritage sites for the World Parks Congress in 2002

Strategy

Identify regional co-ordinators

Overview paper on addressing WH periodic reporting requirements within existing methodologies

Initial international workshop to introduce ideas to one or two key people who would be responsible for pulling together information on a regional level from each region and others who have political influence within the region. (This could take place for example at the WWF Maputo conference). Aims are to:
- Explain guidelines
- Initial site selection
- Agree overall work plan
- Allocate methodologies to sites

Criteria for site selection

- World Heritage selection criteria
- Biomes – particularly marine/coastal areas and tropical forests
- Geographical/regional representation
- Different types of evaluation linked to the Framework
- Level of management planning
- Local socio-economic and political conditions
- Levels of national resources
- Different levels of complexity (geographical/political)
- Existing assessments taking place in World Heritage sites

Regional co-ordinators to develop capacity within the regions through a follow-up regional workshop. At this meeting the aims would be:
- explain guidelines
- agree mechanisms for information exchange
- decide on appropriate methodologies for each site (if necessary)

Following the meeting the first on-site assessment will take place with all workshop participants observing. This is to enhance consistency between site-based assessments.

Site based activities – managers and experts carry out assessment on individual sites. External inputs from the regional co-ordinator and regional experts/facilitators. There are three principal stages:
- Set up monitoring system
  - external expert facilitation
- training of site managers
- internal consultation (including stakeholders)
- feedback on framework and methods/tools
- set up information management system

- Other visits by regional co-ordinators as necessary while the assessment takes place
- Revision and internal validation (including stakeholders) of assessment as a result of experience

- *International workshop* – for site managers and assessors, World Heritage central staff and task force members. Aims:
  - Assessment of progress by international team
  - Feedback on site assessments
  - Review WCPA framework in light of WH experience
  - Refine data management

**Schedule**

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<td>Revision on framework documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2000</td>
<td>Maputo Workshop</td>
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<td>March 2002</td>
<td>Guidelines revised</td>
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<td>September 2002</td>
<td>World Parks Congress</td>
<td>Documents will include details of results, processes, lessons learned and a revised framework and tools. Information will already be available on the web site.</td>
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**Products**

- Documents for 2002: will include details of results, processes, lessons learned and a revised framework and tools
- Information will already be available on the web site.
- Trained experts and WH site managers.
- Web site
- Publications
- Database
- Periodic reporting to World Heritage
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