

POLICY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICOMOS WORLD HERITAGE MANDATE

The purpose of ICOMOS' involvement with the World Heritage Convention is provision of the highest available degree of professional expertise in the evaluation of World Heritage nominations and other aspects of implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The purpose of this document is hence to ensure that the credibility of ICOMOS in performing these functions is above question and to this end it brings together a variety of practices and decisions that have been previously adopted.

Further to the above, ICOMOS understands that in dealing with this area, situations that have potential to create perceptions of conflict of interest are as damaging to the credibility of its work as those in which an actual conflict may exist. This policy is hence designed to avoid both situations where misperceptions may arise and those that raise real questions concerning the validity of its professional opinions.

Experts in the ICOMOS World Heritage system include all persons involved in the process of evaluation of nominations, state of conservation reports and other missions and programmes, including amongst others experts consulted by ICOMOS, its World Heritage Panel (ie: the Panel appointed by the Executive Committee of ICOMOS to evaluate the work of the organisation in the area of World Heritage), experts presenting nominations and the state of conservation reports to the Panel and World Heritage Committee, those conducting evaluation missions and other officers of the organisation.

In order to avoid possible conflicts of interest the following apply:

1. ICOMOS bases its evaluations and other opinions on research and peer review.
2. Whilst as a standard practice ICOMOS consults the national committees concerned with a property that is being evaluated, in all other steps of the process it draws only on experts from countries other than the State Parties concerned.
3. ICOMOS does not use in its involvement with a property experts who have contributed to the nomination file, the development of a management regime or any other study, or state of conservation report submitted by a State Party, regardless of the nationality of the experts concerned.
4. All experts involved in ICOMOS' World Heritage work are required to disclose to ICOMOS any advice given or other work (scientific, professional, contractual or voluntary) done on advancing the nomination of the property in question or such activities in the country concerned, including the particular circumstances of the service provided (eg: guest expert).
5. ICOMOS does not utilise in field evaluations experts who are currently serving as representatives of their countries on the World Heritage Committee.
6. Experts are all made aware of the ICOMOS Ethical Commitment Statement and are required to abide by its principles.

7. In order to ensure equitable handling of all nominations and state of conservation reports, ICOMOS does not entrust external missions to any of those whom it employs in its Secretariat, or in any capacity to process World Heritage nominations nor does it involve those serving on its World Heritage Panel in missions the results of which will be considered by the Panel.
8. During discussion of a report or situation that concerns their own country, members of the World Heritage Panel must absent themselves from discussion and decision making processes.
9. The recommendations to the World Heritage Committee adopted by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel, or a working group mandated to evaluate additional information, are final and may not be changed or amended in any way other than by the Panel itself.
10. When new information concerning a nomination is submitted by a State Party before 31 March, a revised evaluation will be submitted to the World Heritage Panel, or a working group convened for this purpose, in order that the recommendation to the World Heritage Committee may, if appropriate, be amended. New information received after 31 March will only be examined for submission to the following year's session of the World Heritage Committee.
11. The recommendations and opinions of ICOMOS experts and the World Heritage Panel are confidential and individuals may not in their independent capacity engage the media, representatives of the State Party or any other individual or organisation that may or may not have an interest in the property concerned. Furthermore, officials of ICOMOS and members of its World Heritage Panel may not disclose the discussions that have taken place in the panel to any person or organisation that was not present in those discussions.

A copy of this policy must be provided to each individual formally involved with ICOMOS World Heritage work (including experts, panel members and staff) and those conducting evaluation and other missions must indicate in advance that they understand and will abide by its terms.

**APPROVED FOR IMPLEMENTATION
ICOMOS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
17 January 2006**