

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY:

HOW WORLD HERITAGE SITES CONTRIBUTE TO BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AROUND THE WORLD



From left to right: Great Barrier Reef (Australia) © *Tourism Queensland* ; Machu Picchu (Peru) © *UNESCO/F.Bandarin* ;The Dolomites (Italy) © *UNESCO/Emma Catherine* ; Rainforests of the Atsinanana (Madagascar) © *IUCN/Geoffroy Mauvais*; Wadi Al-Hitan (Egypt) © *UNESCO/Guy Debonnet*

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WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE MISSION

UNESCO's World Heritage mission is to:

- * encourage countries to sign the World Heritage Convention and to ensure the protection of their natural and cultural heritage;
- * encourage States Parties to the Convention to nominate sites within their national territory for inclusion on the World Heritage List;
- * encourage States Parties to establish management plans and set up reporting systems on the state of conservation of their World Heritage sites;
- * help States Parties safeguard World Heritage properties by providing technical assistance and professional training;
- * provide emergency assistance for World Heritage sites in immediate danger;
- * support States Parties' public awareness-building activities for World Heritage conservation;
- * encourage participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage;
- * encourage international cooperation in the conservation of our world's cultural and natural heritage.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / INTRODUCTION

UNESCO's World Heritage Convention benefits from worldwide recognition as a powerful legal instrument created to protect the world's unique natural and cultural heritage of outstanding universal value on behalf of humankind.

Cultural heritage forms the basis of our civilized world and represents the evolution of humanity. These unique cultural properties tell the story of past and present systems of human knowledge, major artistic achievements, behaviour and beliefs. In some cases they also share a close relationship with their natural environment.

Natural heritage consists of physical, biological and geological formations as well as natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty. Natural heritage sites are therefore important sites for both human well-being and *in situ* biodiversity conservation.

This is our common heritage and it is therefore our universal duty to protect these properties for future generations.

The World Heritage Website: <http://whc.unesco.org/en>



Volcanoes of Kamchatka (Russian Federation)
© UNESCO/Guy Debonnet

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE



WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / INTEGRITY AND AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity and integrity are key qualities in the nomination of sites of outstanding universal value.

In 1992, the World Heritage Committee recommended that the 'criteria governing authenticity and integrity' be revised.

Until the end of 2004, World Heritage sites were selected on the basis of six cultural and four natural criteria. With the adoption in 2005 of the revised *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, only one set of ten criteria now exists.

Until then the *Operational Guidelines* recognized 'authenticity' to be judged according to 4 attributes: design, materials, workmanship or setting; a more culture-based value. Now a site must be based on the cultural context to which it belongs.

The 'conditions of integrity' were also revised to correspond to these new natural heritage criteria

In addition, sites must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, and institutional protection in order to be inscribed.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / MEETS WORLD HERITAGE CRITERIA

There are 10 World Heritage criteria:

	Cultural criteria	Natural criteria
Operational Guidelines 2005	(i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi)	(vii) (viii) (ix) (x)

Of which 4 criteria for natural sites:

- (vii) “Contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty...”
- (viii) “Contain outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history, including the record of life...”
- (ix) “Contain outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of ecosystems and communities...”
- (x) “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 or science or conservation”.

Criteria (ix) and (x) are specifically biodiversity-related.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / NATURAL CRITERIA

Examples of sites that represent natural heritage criteria:



From left to right: Wet Tropics of Queensland (Australia) [criteria (vii)(viii)(ix)(x)] © *Tourism Queensland* ; Pantanal Conservation Area (Brazil) [criteria (vii)(ix)(x)] © *M&G Therin-Weise* ; Waterton Glacier National Peace Park (Canada and USA) [criteria (vii)(ix)] © *UNESCO/Nomination File* ; Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiajin Mountains (China) [criterion (x)] © *UNESCO/Yange Yong*.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / MIXED SITES

Mixed sites are those that have both outstanding natural and cultural values. Since 1992, the significant interactions between people and the natural environment have been recognized as cultural landscapes. They demonstrate the relationship between people, nature and ecosystem, which shapes culture and identity, and enriches both cultural and biological diversity.



Examples include (from left to right): Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru) [criteria (i)(iii)(vii)(ix)] © UNESCO/F.Bandarin ; Meteora (Greece) [criteria (i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)] © UNESCO/B.Doucine et L..Lalaité ; Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia (Turkey) [criteria (I)(iii)(v)(vii)] © UNESCO/F.Bandarin ; Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Australia) [criteria (v)(vi)(vii)(viii)] © UNESCO/G.Brehm.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

The World Heritage Convention is the only international legislative instrument that regularly monitors listed sites to ensure continued integrity, protection, and management. In terms of biodiversity protection, the World Heritage Committee has the intergovernmental mandate to intervene and plays an essential role in its contribution to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) work on protected areas as well as within the global system of protected natural areas, which is a critical part of any strategy that seeks to conserve biodiversity *in situ*.

To achieve this mission the World Heritage Centre cooperates with governments, internationally recognized institutions, local NGOs, and private corporations in order to safeguard existing World Heritage sites as well as help identify other sites of outstanding universal value that are not yet listed.

Monitoring the increasing number of sites is a large part of the World Heritage Centre's tasks. The Centre acts on information gathered from monitoring missions, periodic reports, or even unsolicited reports to engage with national governments and help tackle the imminent threats to World Heritage sites.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / PARTNERS AND COOPERATION

States Parties, signatories to the Convention, must operate within the guidelines set out in *The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, which forms the basis for implementation. Work is carried out at every level from national governments to site managers. UNESCO works closely with the three Advisory Bodies, ICCROM, ICOMOS (for culture), and IUCN (for nature), as well as many other specialized organizations and institutions worldwide in a truly international effort.

Cooperation exists on several fronts whether in an advisory or technical capacity such as with IUCN, UNDP-GEF, and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, including through the Biodiversity Liaison Group, or financial, through bilateral and multilateral funding sources, and private corporations. Private sector partners must adhere to the universal principles of the UN Global Compact, which shows their commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices.

The World Heritage Partnerships for Conservation Initiative (PACT), launched in 2002, involves more than 70 partners.



TripAdvisor, a recent partner, pledged to develop an online outreach and awareness-building campaign focusing on conservation and community involvement at World Heritage site destinations.

© UNESCO/Eric Esquivel

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / IN AN EMERGENCY

The World Heritage Fund provides the financial assistance in times of need and can rapidly make emergency funds available; just one of the strengths of World Heritage listing. Emergency aid, whether financial or technical, can be quickly deployed to lessen the impacts of natural or human disasters. The Rapid Response Facility (RRF), working together with Fauna & Flora International (FFI) and the United Nations Foundation, can provide immediate assistance in the form of small grants to those sites that are in urgent need.

To date it has intervened in 16 situations in 14 natural World Heritage sites, responding to urgent conservation threats caused by natural disaster, armed conflict or sudden increases in illegal activity in these protected areas. Without such intervention years of conservation efforts could be lost in months, weeks or less.

RRF has just launched a new website: www.rapid-response.org.



Years of conservation efforts up in smoke. Fighting fires at the Emas National Park, Cerrado Protected areas (Brazil) thanks to RRF funding.
© *Emas National Park/ Oreades/Rapid Response Facility*

THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION / INTRODUCTION

The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, widely known as the World Heritage Convention, is considered one of the most successful international instruments for the conservation of heritage sites around the world. It is certainly one of the most well known. It is the only Convention encompassing both natural and cultural heritage, and represents a unique and powerful link between the instruments dealing with cultural heritage, and those addressing issues of natural heritage conservation, biological diversity, endangered and migratory species, wetlands and climate change.

There are five strategic objectives (known as the 5 'Cs'):

1. Credibility
2. Conservation
3. Capacity-building
4. Communication
5. Communities



A range of communication and information materials are regularly produced by the World Heritage Centre.

THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION / BIODIVERSITY LIAISON GROUP

In order to enhance coherence and cooperation in implementation, a liaison group has been established between the heads of the secretariats of the six biodiversity-related conventions. The Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions meets regularly to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and increased coordination, and to exchange information.

The group, known as the Biodiversity Liaison Group or BLG, was formed in June 2004 and includes:

- * Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage
- * Convention on Biological Diversity
- * Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- * Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- * Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar)

For more information: <http://www.cbd.int/cooperation/related-conventions/blg.shtml>

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

The 2010 Biodiversity Target was endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations General Assembly at the 2005 World Summit and commits 192 countries (Parties to the CBD) to achieving by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth.

However, the findings released last year under the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment – an exhaustive analysis of the health of the planet’s ecosystems undertaken by over 1,300 experts from 95 countries – show we have a long way to go with two-thirds of the world’s products and services that humankind derives from nature in decline.

For more information on the 2010 Biodiversity Target:

<http://www.cbd.int/2010-target/>

For more information on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment:

<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/index.aspx>



Biodiversity is life
Biodiversity is our life

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

In 1994 the World Heritage Committee adopted a Global Strategy for achieving a balanced, representative and credible World Heritage List that reflects the world's diverse heritage. Over the past 10 years a number of studies and consultations have been carried out to help define the inter-related elements of biogeography, habitats, and biological diversity that make up much of what we consider 'natural heritage'.

World Heritage sites include:

- * Marine and terrestrial sites.
- * Sites on all continents except for Antarctica.
- * Sites in all major biomes of the planet.
- * Biodiversity hotspots and coldspots.

But lacks:

- * Arctic sites
- * Sites situated in identified gaps (slide 37)



Ilulissat Icefjord (Denmark) © M&G Therin-Weise,
Cocos Island National Park (Costa Rica) © UNESCO/Mario Santana

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

The World Heritage's contribution to the target:

- * Protected areas, if effectively established and managed, are an important means to achieve this target and thus an indicator for assessing progress.
- * Biodiversity World Heritage sites already contribute more to 2010 Biodiversity Target than any other comparable number of protected areas.
- * Inscribing a site of outstanding universal value on the World Heritage List ensures its international protection.
- * Monitoring and reporting requirements are a particularly powerful aspect of the World Heritage Convention and are part of an effective programme of protection.
- * The IUCN, Advisory Body on natural World Heritage actively encourage nominations from identified gaps in the World Heritage List.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The World Heritage List currently includes 890 natural and cultural properties of outstanding universal value in 148 countries.

As of July 2009, these include 689 cultural properties, 176 natural properties, and 25 mixed properties in 148 countries.

Currently 16 natural sites are on the List of World Heritage In Danger.

Natural World Heritage Site Occurrence by Continent / Region

Continent / Region	Natural	No. of WH mixed sites	Sites In Danger	Total
Asia	33	7	1	38
Africa	33	3	12	36
North America	25	0	0	20
South America	29	3	3	31
Europe	40	7	0	31
Oceania /Australasia	16	5	0	20
Total	176	25	16	201

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

World Heritage (regional & national) includes:

- * 11% of the total protected area in Asia and the Pacific.
- * 9% of the total protected area in Africa.
- * 7% of the total protected area in Latin America and the Caribbean, Arab States and in Europe and North America.
- * In 17 countries the extent of natural World Heritage sites is more than 25% of all protected areas.
- * In 32 countries the extent of natural World Heritage sites is more than 10% of all protected areas.

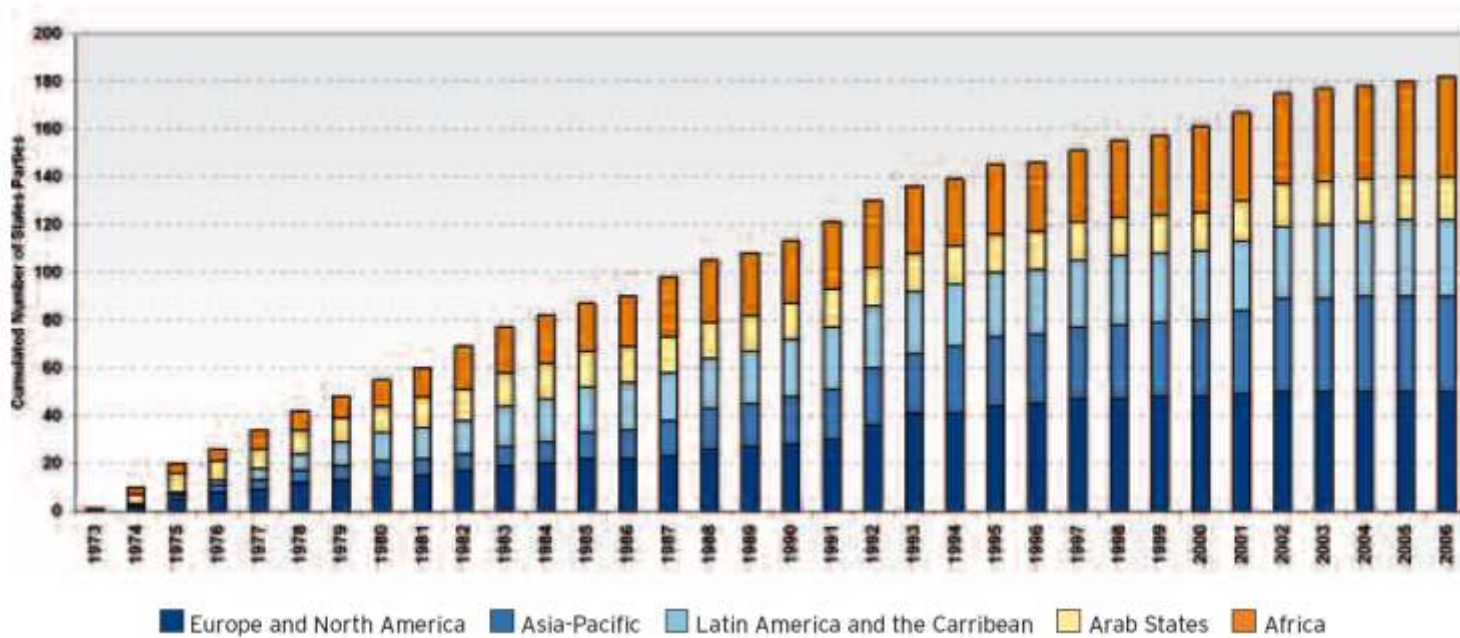
WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The World Heritage List includes:

- * 176 biodiversity World Heritage sites.
- * 201 natural/mixed World Heritage sites in 81 countries protect over 177,000,000 ha of land and sea. That's half the size of Europe!
- * 8% of the total area of the 110,000+ terrestrial (6%) and marine (21%) protected areas recorded in the World Database on Protected Areas.
- * 0.5–1.0% of the total land area on Earth.
- * 31 natural sites with significant marine components.
- * 186 States Parties to the Convention

THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION / MEMBERSHIP

The 186 State Parties to the World Heritage Convention around the world representing 95% of UNESCO Member States, its membership is almost universal.



Source: UIS based on UNESCO/WHC data

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

The List of World Heritage in Danger is one of the instruments used that has an effect on the preservation of sites as it can help raise the political profile at both national and international levels and lead to greater financial and technical investment in resolving issues. There are 16 natural sites on the List of World Heritage in Danger.



Examples include (from left to right): Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea) © UNESCO/Guy Debonnet ; Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (India) © UNESCO/Rao Kishore ; Simien National Park (Ethiopia) © UNESCO/Guy Debonnet ; Galápagos Islands (Ecuador) © M&G Therin-Weise

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

The table below shows both the sites inscribed and removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

World Heritage in Danger (IUCN, 2008)

Property	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	
Ngorongoro Conservation Area		I													R																	
Garamba National Park			I												R																	
Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary				I											R																	R
Srebarna Nature Reserve						I																										R
Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve					I																											
Manas Wildlife Sanctuary								I																								
Air and Ténéré Natural Reserves														I																		
Sangay National Park						I																										R
Plitvice Lakes National Park		I																			R											
Everglades National Park		I																														R
Virunga National Park			I																													
Yellowstone National Park	I																														R	
Simien National Park	I																															
Rio Plátano Biosphere Reserve						I																										R
Manovo-Gounda St Floris National Park															I																	
Kahuzi-Biega National Park			I																													
Okapi Wildlife Reserve																					I											
Ichkeul National Park			I																													R
Salonga National Park								I																								
Rwenzori Mountains National Park																I															R	
Iguaçu National Park																																R
Comoé National Park																																
Niokolo-Koba National Park				I																												
Galápagos Islands	I																															

Figure 1: Inscriptions and removals of natural properties from the List of World Heritage in Danger.

Key: I=date of first inscription on the World Heritage List, Grey box=inscribed on World Heritage List, Black box=included on List of World Heritage in Danger, R=year of removal from the List of World Heritage in Danger

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / DELISTING

When all avenues for remedial action have been exhausted and the integrity and outstanding universal value of a site or property has been irreversibly compromised, the site is delisted.

Unfortunately, two sites have been delisted: one natural and one cultural site.

* The Arabian Oryx Sanctuary (Oman) site was removed from the List in 2007 due to the reduction in size of the sanctuary and plans to proceed with hydrocarbon prospection, which was seen by the Committee as destroying the outstanding universal value of the site. It is also home to other endangered species such as the Arabian Gazelle and the houbara bustard.

* The Dresden Elbe Valley (Germany), was removed from the List in 2009 due to the building of a four-lane bridge in the heart of the cultural landscape which meant that the property failed to keep its outstanding universal value as inscribed.

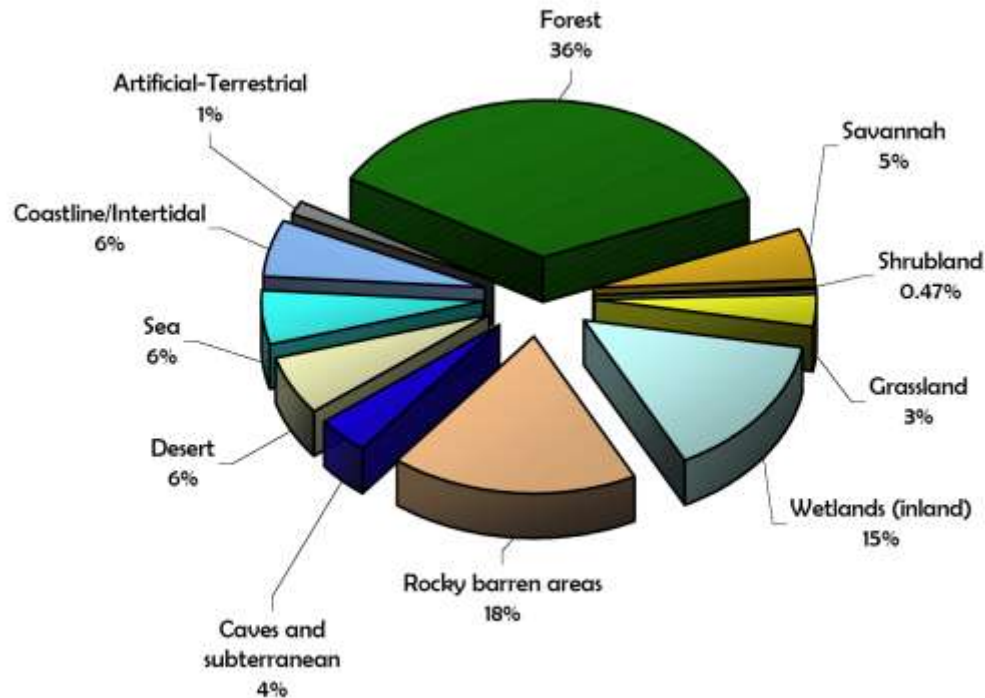


The Arabian Orxy Sanctuary is one of only two delisted sites (the other being the cultural site of the Dresden Elbe Valley). The protected area had been reduced by 90%.
© UNESCO/Marc Patry

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / GLOBAL COVERAGE

The World Heritage Convention has already achieved a great deal since it came into force in 1975. There are currently 201 natural and mixed properties inscribed on the World Heritage List and they encompass many of the most important landscapes, ecosystems and habitats on the planet. The number of World Heritage sites covers almost two million square kilometres – equivalent to more than 9% of the total coverage of protected areas.

Global coverage of first level habitat types in World Heritage sites



Source: *Review of the World Heritage Network: Biogeography, Habitats and Biodiversity*

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / GLOBAL COVERAGE

Wetlands, mountains, and tropical forests are the dominant habitat types in existing World Heritage sites. Coastal and marine areas follow in relation to dominant habitat types, while sub-polar/polar tundra sites are the least common habitats.

Boreal forests appear to be less common in number, but this is compensated by their substantial size.

Three habitat types cover a far greater area than all others, together accounting for over 70% of the total area of the natural WH network:

- * Forest: 474,000 km²
- * Sea: 466,000 km²
- * Desert: 310,000 km²



Fraser Island (Australia)
© UNESCO/Roger Franck

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

There are only 12 World Heritage natural sites that are inscribed solely under criterion (x):

“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 or science or conservation”.

of which:

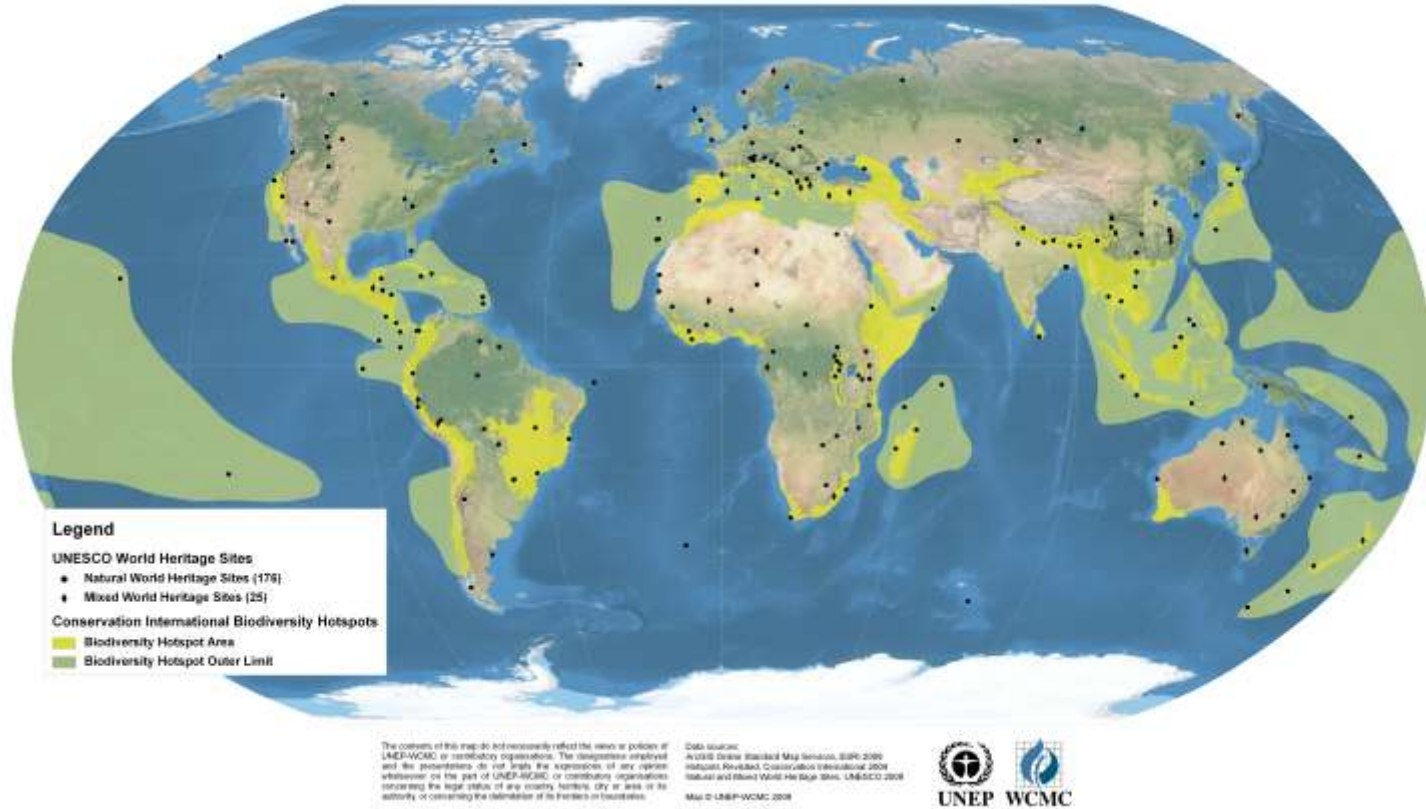
- * 5 have high diversity and charismatic megafauna.
- * 2 includes areas of lower diversity but still represent outstanding biodiversity as well as flagship species.
- * 3 sites were inscribed for conserving extraordinary waterfowl.
- * 2 represent a mostly marine ecosystem with charismatic megafauna namely whales.

How do World Heritage sites fit into these conservation priorities? By identifying areas in the world that fit the criteria of natural World Heritage, and which are particularly species-rich. Three such categories used in identifying these areas include:

- * Biodiversity hotspots
- * Plant diversity
- * Endemic Bird Areas

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS

Natural and Mixed World Heritage Sites and Biodiversity Hotspots 2009



Presence of World Heritage sites in the world's biodiversity hotspots and regions
© United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS AND WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Overall coverage of Conservation International hotspots in World Heritage sites

Biodiversity Hotspot	Area in WH Sites (km ²)	Total hotspot area (km ²)	% of hotspot contained in WH Sites
Africa's Western Cape/Succulent Karoo	0	104,467	0.00
Atlantic Forest	35,820	1,482,983	2.42
Brazilian Cerrado	5,743	1,831,454	0.31
California Floristic Province	3,447	352,065	0.98
Caribbean	4,561	259,634	1.76
Caucasus	3,595	556,184	0.65
Central Chile	0	292,225	0.00
Choco-Darién-Western Ecuador	6,122	226,575	2.70
Eastern Arc Mountains & Coastal Forests	24,044	192,805	12.47
Guinean Forests of West Africa	4,533	881,111	0.51
Indo-Burma	8,836	2,287,772	0.39
Madagascar & Indian Ocean Islands	1,607	602,141	0.27
Mediterranean Basin	264	529,815	0.05
Mesoamerica	19,386	1,154,778	1.68
Mountains of S. Central China	21,505	557,495	3.86
New Caledonia	0	19,166	0.00
New Zealand	24,138	267,116	9.04
Philippines	50	295,855	0.02
Polynesia & Micronesia	726	48,106	1.51
South Africa Cape Floristic Region	0	75,000	0.00
Southwest Australia	4,495	308,623	1.46
Sundaland	1,787	1,497,444	0.12
Tropical Andes	17,643	1,405,808	1.26
Wallacea	530	339,089	0.16
Western Ghats & Sri Lanka	96	256,594	0.04
TOTAL	188,929	15,824,302	1.19

Source: Review of the World Heritage Network: Biogeography, Habitats and Biodiversity

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / ANIMAL DIVERSITY

Endangered species in some World Heritage natural Sites: important sites for *in situ* biodiversity conservation.



From left to right: Garamba National Park (Democratic Republic of the Congo) © *Nuria Ortega* ; Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiajin Mountains (China) © *UNESCO/Yange Yong* ; Royal Chitwan National Park (Nepal) © *UNESCO/Francisco Gattoni* ; Serengeti National Park (United Republic of Tanzania) © *UNESCO/Marc Patry*

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / PLANT DIVERSITY

In the 1990s, concern about the rapid loss and degeneration of natural ecosystems and the urgent need to highlight botanical hotspots led to the IUCN/WWF initiative to identify Centres of Plant Diversity (CPD). As a result almost 250 priority sites for the global conservation of higher plants was recorded in *Centres of Plant Diversity: A Guide and Strategy for their Conservation* (WWF and IUCN, 1994–1995), and are sites of global botanical importance.

CPDs are likely to be:

- * important genepools of plants of known value to humans or that are potentially useful
- * sites with a diverse range of habitat types
- * sites with a significant proportion of species adapted to local conditions, and/or
- * threatened or under imminent threat of large-scale devastation.

According to the CPD GIS datasets, 74 World Heritage sites (43%) overlap with 57 Centres of Plant Diversity. The most comprehensive CPD, in terms of World Heritage, is the Afroalpine Region (East and North-east Africa), which has five World Heritage sites within it: Kilimanjaro, Mt Kenya, Rwenzori, Simien and Virunga.

Overall, 20.2% of CPDs, for which GIS data are available, occur in World Heritage sites.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / PLANT DIVERSITY

Plant diversity is used as the biological basis for hotspot designation.



From left to right: Cape Floral Region Protected Areas (South Africa) © *OUR PLACE The World Heritage Collection* ; Tongariro (New Zealand) © *UNESCO/S.A. Tabbasum* ; Sangay National Park (Ecuador) © *OUR PLACE The World Heritage Collection* ; Laurisilva of Madeira (Portugal) © *UNESCO/Nomination file*

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / ENDEMIC BIRD AREAS

Endemic Bird Areas or EBAs cover approximately 2% of the world's land surface.

Some World Heritage sites have EBA's ranging from 100% to less than 1%.

Four EBAs (all islands or island groups) are completely included in World Heritage sites. These are:

- * The Galápagos Islands in Ecuador harbouring 22 restricted range bird species.
 - * The Cocos Island in Costa Rica harbouring three restricted range species.
 - * The Auckland Islands (New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands) harbouring two restricted range species.
 - * Henderson Island harbouring four restricted range species.
-
- * Most World Heritage sites (64) only overlap one EBA, but some cover more.
 - * Seventeen World Heritage sites cover two EBAs.
 - * Huascarán National Park in Peru covers parts of three EBAs.
 - * Sangay National Park in Ecuador covers parts of four EBAs.

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / ENDEMIC BIRD AREAS

Endemic Bird Areas represent important conservation priority areas.



From left to right: East Rennell (Solomon Islands) © UNESCO/S. A. Tabbasum; Galápagos Islands (Ecuador) © Evergreen ; Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (Philippines) © Toppx2 ; Manú Nationa Park (Peru) © UNESCO/K. Fubomichi

WORLD HERITAGE AND BIODIVERSITY / IDENTIFIED GAPS

Closing the gaps in the World Heritage List will help achieve biodiversity targets in the future.

Grasslands

Sudd-Sahelian savanna and flooded grasslands (a WWF ecoregion in Central and Eastern Africa)
Sub-antarctic grasslands, including South Georgia
Sub-polar and arctic tundra

Wetlands

Flooded grasslands such as Okavango (Botswana)
Volga and Lena River deltas (Russia)
Western Ghats rivers (India)

Deserts

Succulent Karoo (Namibia and South Africa)
Namib desert (Namibia)
Central Asian deserts
Socotra desert (Yemen) – has since been inscribed

Forests

Madagascar moist forests
Forests in southern Chile and southern Argentina
Dry and moist forests in New Caledonia (France)
Western Ghats forests (India)

Marine

Red Sea corals
Andaman Sea (India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, etc.)
Benguela Current (marine) (includes South Africa, Namibia, Angola)
Marine sites within the following ecoregions: Fiji, Palau and Tahiti (Fiji, Palau, France)
Gulf of California (Mexico) – has since been inscribed
Maldives/Chagos atolls (Maldives, UK)

Source: Magin and Chape (2004)

THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / INTRODUCTION

In order to ensure the smooth running of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO established in 1992 the World Heritage Centre, which is the secretariat of the World Heritage Convention. It is also the focal point and coordinator within UNESCO for all matters related to World Heritage.

It's many roles include:

- * the day-to-day management of the Convention
- * the organization of the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee
- * advising to States Parties in the preparation of site nominations
- * organizing international assistance from the World Heritage Fund
- * coordinating both the reporting on the condition of sites and the emergency action undertaken when a site is threatened.
- * organizing technical seminars and workshops
- * updating the World Heritage List and database
- * developing teaching materials to raise awareness among young people of the need for heritage preservation
- * keeping the public informed of World Heritage issues



Learning from the chapter on tourism in the World Heritage in Young Hands resource kit.
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THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / PRIORITY AREAS OF WORK

The World Heritage Centre is at the heart of international efforts to conserve these unique sites. Whether actions involve emergency operations or long term conservation, the World Heritage Centre and its partners are proactive in their approach in seeking to develop innovative projects and activities that cover the range of pressing environmental issues such as climate change, deforestation or invasive species as well as in priority areas of work such as education and marine conservation.

Some priority areas of work

[World Heritage Forest Programme](#)

[World Heritage Marine Programme](#)

[Small Islands Developing States](#)

[World Heritage Education Programme](#)

Cross-cutting themes

[Climate change](#)

[Cultural landscapes](#)

[Sustainable tourism](#)

THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE / KEY PUBLICATIONS



The UNESCO World Heritage Centre's Natural Heritage Strategy
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/naturalheritagestrategy>

World Heritage: Challenges to the Millennium
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/558/>



World Heritage and Biodiversity, *World Heritage* No. 49. April 2008.
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/review/49/>



World Heritage Series n°1 - Managing Tourism at World Heritage Sites:
a Practical Manual for World Heritage Site Managers:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/1/>



World Heritage in Young Hands:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/educationkit/>



Case Studies on Climate Change and World Heritage:
<http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/473/>

