



Keeping the Outstanding Exceptional: The Future of World Heritage in Australia

THE CAIRNS COMMUNIQUE

The Wet Tropics has the oldest continuously surviving tropical rainforests on earth and are a living museum of how land plants have evolved. Photo © K. Trapnell, Wet Tropics Images

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WORLD HERITAGE IN AUSTRALIA

Australia has a proud record in the identification and listing of World Heritage under its jurisdiction. It currently boasts 19 natural, mixed or cultural properties on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The first-listed World Heritage property in Australia was the Great Barrier Reef (1981). The most recent listing was Ningaloo Reef in 2011.

Australia's World Heritage properties represent a wide range of the natural and cultural values that Australians and the global community value. Elements of our forest heritage are represented in South West Tasmania, the Wet Tropics of Queensland, Gondwana Rainforests, Fraser Island and the Greater Blue Mountains. Our marine heritage is represented in the Great Barrier Reef, Lord Howe Island, Shark Bay and Ningaloo. Iconic arid landscapes of great beauty are represented by Uluru-Kata Tjuta and Purnululu and our tropical savannahs by Kakadu. Our fossil mammal heritage is recognised at Riversleigh and Naracoorte caves. The ancient occupation of Australia by Aboriginal peoples is demonstrated at Willandra Lakes. Antarctic and sub-Antarctic heritage is represented by the listing of Heard and McDonald Islands and Macquarie Island. Many properties represent outstanding examples of multiple values.

The World Heritage Convention provides for the listing of places with outstanding universal cultural value. The Australian Convict Sites, the Sydney Opera House and Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens are each included on the World Heritage List. Most of Australia's World Heritage Properties are special places for their Traditional Owners, but the Indigenous cultural values of Kakadu, Uluru-Kata Tjuta, Willandra Lakes and South West Tasmania are specifically recognised as a component of the Outstanding Universal Value of these properties.

The summary of values listed above vastly simplifies the global significance of Australia's World Heritage properties. Full details of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of each listed property can be found at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre website: www.whc.unesco.org

Australia's participation in the World Heritage Convention

The *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (the 'World Heritage Convention') was adopted by the United Nations in 1972. In August 1974, Australia became one of the first 20 countries to ratify the Convention. So far, 188 States Parties have ratified the Convention; making it the most widely recognized international treaty for heritage protection.

2012 marked the 40th anniversary of this unique international treaty that links the concepts of nature conservation and preservation of cultural properties, recognising the way people interact with nature, and the fundamental need to preserve the balance between the two.

In ratifying the World Heritage Convention, Australia accepted a duty under Article 4, to ensure, 'the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of [its natural and cultural heritage]' and undertook to, 'do all that it can to this end, to the utmost of its own resources...'

Under Article 5 of the Convention Australia committed to a number of other specific actions, including: to give its World Heritage properties a function in the life of the community; to establish services for the protection, conservation and presentation of natural and cultural heritage; to develop scientific and technical studies; to take appropriate legal, scientific, technical and financial measures in support of heritage; and to foster the establishment of centres of excellence.

The World Heritage Committee, comprising 21 members elected by States Parties to the Convention, guides implementation of the Convention. In accordance with the Convention, the World Heritage Committee is supported

by advice from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in relation to natural heritage values and by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (the Rome Centre) in relation to cultural heritage.

The World Heritage Convention is supported by *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* prepared by the World Heritage Centre at the direction of the World Heritage Committee. These guidelines aim to facilitate the implementation of the World Heritage Convention by setting forth procedure such as:

- a) the inscription of properties on the World Heritage List and the List of World Heritage in Danger;
- b) the protection and conservation of World Heritage properties;
- c) the granting of International Assistance under the World Heritage Fund; and
- d) the mobilization of national and international support in favour of the Convention.

Intergovernmental Cooperation for Australia's World Heritage

While the Commonwealth is the State Party to the World Heritage Convention, Australia's constitutional arrangements require the involvement and cooperation of the States and Territories in the management of most World Heritage properties. The formal framework for these cooperative arrangements is the *Australian World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement*. This agreement lays out in general terms the respective roles and commitments of the Australian and State and Territory governments in relation to governance, management and funding arrangements and guiding principles in relation to these roles and commitments.

Arrangements for Ministerial liaison are in a state of transition. Many World Heritage properties once supported specific Ministerial Councils to oversee joint commonwealth and state government interests but these were mostly abolished several years ago at the direction of the Council of Australian Governments. The Environment and Heritage Protection Council then adopted a role in World Heritage intergovernmental coordination until it was itself abolished during 2011. Responsibility for World Heritage and implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement now rests with the Standing Council on Environment and Water.

In addition to advice received from their own agencies, Ministers on the Standing Council on Environment and Water are advised by the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee. This committee comprises representatives of each of the Australian World Heritage properties. In most cases, the representative is the chair of the property's advisory committee.

World Heritage property governance and management arrangements

Arrangements for the management of Australia's World Heritage properties are almost as diverse as the properties themselves.

Some World Heritage properties are managed directly by Commonwealth agencies (Heard and McDonald Islands, Kakadu and Uluru-Kata Tjuta).

Many natural values properties are managed directly by the states e.g. Fraser Island, Purnululu, Greater Blue Mountains and Tasmanian Wilderness. The serially-listed properties: Gondwana Rainforests, Australian Convict Sites and the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites require coordination between the Australian government and two or more states.

Specific purpose statutory bodies that have explicit responsibility for World Heritage, sometimes in combination with other responsibilities, are in place for the Wet Tropics, Great Barrier Reef and Lord Howe Island group.

The Sydney Opera House and Royal Exhibition Buildings are managed by the Sydney Opera House Trust and Museums Victoria respectively. Two of the places on the Australian Convict Sites are in private ownership.

World Heritage listing is not necessarily linked to a single land tenure. Willandra Lakes, Wet Tropics, Great Barrier Reef and Shark Bay are examples of properties that comprise a mosaic of protected areas and other public land tenures and freehold or leasehold land. This requires coordination between multiple land managers to achieve a consistent management regime for these properties.

Most World Heritage properties have some form of community advisory committee that provides a focus for community engagement and advice and support for property managers. Several also have scientific advisory committees and some have established committees or other arrangements to facilitate the involvement of Traditional

Owners in the management of the property. In some cases, community, scientific and Indigenous interests are represented on a single committee. While the general role and powers of these committees have broad similarities, there are also significant differences between properties and States.

The Australian government funds executive support for many of the advisory committees. For state-managed properties, the relevant state managing agency often hosts and supports the executive officer position for these committees.

State of Conservation of Australia's World Heritage

The state of Australia's heritage conservation, including its World Heritage, was briefly addressed by the *State of the Environment Report 2011*. This report noted that Australia's most recent World Heritage periodic report submitted to the World Heritage Centre in 2011 was 'generally very positive'. It found however that the three most significant factors affecting the condition and integrity of Australia's World Heritage properties were:

- Invasive and alien species or hyper-abundant species
- Climate change and severe weather events
- Social or cultural impacts on heritage (including changes in traditional ways of life as well as impacts of tourism)

KEEPING THE OUTSTANDING EXCEPTIONAL – THE ACIUCN WORLD HERITAGE SYMPOSIUM

Prompted by a need identified by its members to sponsor a national dialogue about the future of World Heritage in Australia, the Australian Committee for IUCN (ACIUCN) with support from the Wet Tropics Management Authority and the Australian Conservation Foundation, convened a symposium in Cairns on 9 and 10 August 2012. The symposium formed part of Australia's celebration of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention.

The symposium was organised by a steering committee comprising government and non-government representatives of IUCN and others with knowledge of aspects of World Heritage in Australia. Membership of the committee comprised the following people:

Mr Andrew Maclean, Wet Tropics Management Authority/Chair ACIUCN (chair)
Mr Peter Cochrane, Director of National Parks
Mr Jon Day, PSM, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
Ms Kate Feros, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
Ms Penelope Figgis, AO, Director ACIUCN
Ms Chrissy Grant, Deputy Chair, Indigenous Advisory Committee
Dr Jane Harrington, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority/President Australia ICOMOS
Prof Richard Mackay, AM, Chair, Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee
Mr Ross Macleod, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Queensland
Mr Paul Murphy, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
Dr Lea Scherl, IUCN Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy
Assoc Professor Peter Valentine, James Cook University
Ms Ellen Weber, Wet Tropics Management Authority

The objectives of the symposium were:

- To elevate and enhance the significance and profile of natural and mixed World Heritage properties in Australia
- To share experience and learning, and forge new and existing partnerships between properties as a basis for improved future management of World Heritage properties
- To agree on a 'Cairns Communiqué' highlighting emerging priorities and key principles for Australian World Heritage in the future.

A particular focus of the symposium was consideration of the implications of the report of the joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN monitoring mission to the Great Barrier Reef, which was presented to the World Heritage Committee meeting in St Petersburg, Russia in July 2012. The report expressed significant concerns regarding the condition of the Reef and made a number of recommendations to improve protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef. The World Heritage Committee largely adopted the mission's findings and recommendations. The mission's report and recommendations have important relevance to other Australian World Heritage Properties.

The symposium was attended by around 100 people from throughout Australia. The Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and the Hon Andrew Powell MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Qld) each addressed the symposium.

Along with the symposium proceedings, a primary output from the symposium is the following communiqué.

ABOUT ACIUCN

The Australian Committee for IUCN (ACIUCN) comprises all Australian-based members of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

ACIUCN supports the implementation of the IUCN global program through information sharing between Australian members and where appropriate, representing the collective view of Australian members to the IUCN council and executive.

A key objective of ACIUCN is to support environmental policy development by facilitating dialogue between its university, NGO and government agency members. The '*Science Informing Policy*' seminar series is an important means to achieve this goal.

For further information: www.aciucn.org.au

THE CAIRNS COMMUNIQUÉ

This communiqué has been prepared as a contribution to development of a contemporary statement of priorities and principles for the management of World Heritage in Australia¹.

The communiqué follows and acknowledges the *Richmond Communiqué on principles and guidelines for the management of Australia's World Heritage Areas*. The Richmond Communiqué was developed at a national workshop in Richmond NSW also organised by ACIUCN, on 7-9 August 1995.

In the 17 years since the Richmond Communiqué, eight new Australian places have been inscribed on the World Heritage List. Policy, management and reporting arrangements have continued to evolve. In this 40th anniversary year of the World Heritage Convention, it is timely to review and refresh our collective commitment to the effective protection and management of these places of outstanding universal value.

The communiqué has been developed in the context of key World Heritage policy documents including the *UNESCO Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*; the *UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *World Heritage Convention* itself, Australia's *World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The communiqué is intended to reinforce, complement and guide implementation of, but in no way replace these documents.

The communiqué is intended to influence policy and planning for Australian World Heritage management and to contribute to best practice standards. It does not seek to be a comprehensive guide to World Heritage management but does highlight issues of particular importance.

The articles of the communiqué are structured to generally follow the obligations accepted by Australia under the World Heritage Convention.

The initial draft of this communiqué was developed by the Steering Committee for the symposium on World Heritage held in Cairns on 9/10 August 2012. The draft communiqué was provided to delegates for consideration prior to the symposium and was the subject of a discussion during the symposium. Informed by their own often substantial experience and by presentations at the symposium, delegates provided comment on the draft and authorised its completion by the Steering Committee as representing a consensus view of symposium delegates.

The presence of a delegate at the symposium does not imply endorsement of the communiqué.

¹ The Cairns Symposium was organised by the Australian Committee for IUCN (ACIUCN) primarily to address World Heritage issues in relation to natural and mixed values. The interests and expertise of symposium participants largely reflected this emphasis. ACIUCN acknowledges that its sister organisation, Australia ICOMOS has a vital interest in World Heritage properties with cultural values, including those Australian properties with mixed natural and Indigenous cultural values.

ARTICLES

Preamble

1. Australia's World Heritage properties include many of the most naturally and culturally significant places in Australia, which have been recognised internationally as forming part of the cultural and natural heritage considered to be of outstanding universal value. These properties merit the very highest standards of participatory planning, management and resourcing – not only to discharge our obligations under the World Heritage Convention but to demonstrate our commitment to these places to the people of Australia and the World².
2. The primary goal for the management of World Heritage properties should be to implement Australia's duty for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation, rehabilitation and transmission to future generations of the place within the meaning of the World Heritage Convention
3. Designation of a place as a World Heritage property requires the establishment of a specific management approach that encompasses the distinctive nature and requirements of the property and of its links to communities and stakeholders and also, the mobilisation of adequate resources to implement the approach to management.

Identification, assessment and nomination of potential World Heritage properties (and amendments to currently inscribed World Heritage properties)

4. The Australian Government in close collaboration with State governments and communities should continue to assess the natural and cultural heritage of Australia which may be of potential outstanding universal value and to prepare nominations (and where appropriate re-nominations) for consideration by the World Heritage Committee.
5. The Australian Government, in collaboration with the States, should expand the tentative list of prospective World Heritage nominations to provide for an orderly process and a focus for expert and community engagement in relation to listing priorities. In developing this list, the Government should engage with Australia ICOMOS and Australian Committee for IUCN as the relevant expert advisory bodies³.
6. Noting that, for Traditional Owners, natural and cultural values cannot be separated, in identifying, assessing and developing potential World Heritage nominations, particular care should be taken to obtain the free, prior and informed consent of Traditional Owners having regard to Indigenous cultural heritage values and continuing traditional ecological knowledge and practices within Indigenous communities before submitting a nomination⁴.
7. Noting that there is currently a requirement for National Heritage listing prior to nomination or amendment or inscription of a property on the World Heritage 'tentative list', the Australian Government, Australian Heritage Council and others involved should use their best endeavours to ensure that the National Heritage listing process does not unduly delay progression of potential World Heritage nominations.
8. The process of identifying, assessing and nominating places for consideration by the World Heritage Committee should be carried out through a collaborative process that aims to engage fully with governments, scientists, heritage professionals, site managers and Australian communities and stakeholders, with the objective of achieving widespread recognition and support for the outstanding values of the place and support for World Heritage nomination.
9. In its role as a State Party to the World Heritage Convention, Australia should provide leadership in adherence to the agreed procedures of the Convention, including ensuring that appropriate weight is given to the advice of IUCN and ICOMOS as Advisory Bodies under the World Heritage Convention.

2 In this document, the term 'property' is used in a broad sense and includes specific sites, places and properties. This term is consistent with the language of the World Heritage Convention.

3 A list of places identified in presentations to the symposium as possibly having outstanding universal value is included in Annex A.

4 The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is important context for this article.

Protecting the Outstanding Universal Value⁵ of World Heritage Properties

Legislation

10. The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the 'EPBC Act') provides and should remain the primary statute for managing potential significant adverse impacts on World Heritage values in Australia.
11. Implementation of the EPBC Act in respect of World Heritage properties should be improved through greater use of strategic assessment processes, carried out in collaboration with the States, which address the cumulative impacts of development.
12. State Governments should ensure effective complementary recognition and protection of World Heritage in relevant environmental, heritage and planning legislation.
13. Recognising the very important role that statutory regional planning can play in protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties, governments and communities should support and encourage local government and other statutory entities including Native Title prescribed body corporate, to protect and support World Heritage values through the development and implementation of planning controls and other mechanisms⁶.

Management planning

14. As a minimum standard, an integrated, values-based plan of management or other documented management system should be prepared for each established World Heritage property that explicitly describes the management systems and programs aimed at ensuring maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. This should include management planning for serial World Heritage Properties wherein effective coordination measures are prescribed for all component sites.
15. Noting that the preparation of a plan of management is desirable at the time of nomination of a property for consideration by the World Heritage Committee, the Commonwealth and States and Territories should work collaboratively to correct any shortcomings in planning systems for previously established properties. Once a system of planning is in place, it should be reviewed regularly, no less frequently than every ten years. Implementation reports should be prepared regularly to meet the needs of both managers and communities.
16. Traditional owners of World Heritage properties should be granted financial or other assistance to provide for their effective participation in planning and management of their traditional lands.
17. The process of developing and implementing management plans or other management arrangements for World Heritage places should be inclusive, adopting international best practice for engaging communities and stakeholders in decision making, noting in particular the objectives of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* objectives relating to the role of Indigenous peoples.

Conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Properties

18. The values of World Heritage properties in Australia are threatened by numerous pressures including in particular climate change, population pressures, impacts of resource extraction and associated industries, invasive species, pathogens, habitat loss and fragmentation and legacy impacts from historical change. The scale, impact and risk of these pressures vary between properties⁷.
19. The cultural values of Australian World Heritage properties are threatened by lack of resources; insufficient identification understanding and identification; population shift; loss of knowledge; obstacles to the expression of traditional cultural practices and social connections; and the (lawful but inappropriate) incremental destruction of heritage sites.

5 Outstanding Universal Value is capitalised when it refers to the specific statements attached to World Heritage properties which set out the core value set against criteria for which the site was accepted on the World Heritage List.

6 Local government has a particularly important role in relation to developments outside World Heritage Properties which have potential to cause adverse affects on World Heritage values.

7 The Australian State of the Environment Report 2011 systematically assessed general threats to Australia's natural and cultural heritage.

20. The Australian government, States and Territories and on-site property managers should systematically assess and record the place-specific threats and risks to the long-term conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of each World Heritage property as a basis for planning, resource allocation and monitoring progress. These assessments should include consideration of boundary and off-site threats and risks.
21. Conservation strategies and planning for World Heritage should address wider geographic, policy and legal contextual issues, so as to ensure that appropriate attention is given to threats, risks and opportunities. For natural heritage, addressing bioregional context can ensure that World Heritage plays an important driving role in setting regional conservation priorities. For cultural heritage, the context for World Heritage may be geographic but may also relate to Indigenous tradition or historic themes. Understanding the wider context for both natural and cultural values is therefore an essential element of well-informed conservation strategy development.
22. The Commonwealth and State governments and others with responsibility for World Heritage should ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to guarantee protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties and to respond to any threats to those values.

Rehabilitation of World Heritage Properties

23. The impacts of past land use such as forestry, fishing, infrastructure, mining, agriculture and roads remain evident in many World Heritage properties in Australia, even if these activities are now appropriately regulated. In some cases the relict landscape and historic cultural places have heritage values.
24. World Heritage property managers, with support from the Commonwealth and State governments, should systematically assess the impacts of past uses of World Heritage properties and implement strategies and projects that aim to rehabilitate impacted areas in a manner which addresses all of the values of World Heritage properties.
25. Where past or proposed actions or activities outside of World Heritage properties create significant adverse impacts to the World Heritage values of the properties, World Heritage property managers should work in collaboration with neighbouring landholders, Traditional Owners, natural resource and heritage management bodies and governments to implement landscape rehabilitation programs and consider appropriate mitigation actions that will benefit the World Heritage property.

Presentation of World Heritage Values

26. World Heritage listing is the highest acknowledgement of heritage value accorded to places on earth. This special status should be strongly promoted in the broader Australian community as a source of pride and a sense of shared responsibility.
27. The Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties should have a prominent place in the promotion, interpretation and other presentation activities associated with each property.
28. The Commonwealth in close collaboration with the States and other World Heritage property managers should establish and implement nationally consistent standards for recognition and branding of World Heritage properties.
29. World Heritage property managers with support from relevant governments should develop and implement property-specific information and interpretation services that aim to ensure visitors, communities and stakeholders improve their understanding and appreciation of the values of World Heritage properties as a basis for ongoing support of each property's protection.
30. The tourism industry has an important role to play in presenting the Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage properties through commercial guiding and interpretive services, through advocacy for conservation of World Heritage properties and by contributing to the function of World Heritage in the life of the community. Particular care should be taken to ensure a role for local and Indigenous enterprises in the delivery of tourism services.
31. World Heritage property managers should collaborate closely with the tourism industry to ensure that World Heritage values are protected and conserved and that high standards of environmental performance and high quality information and interpretative services are implemented, commensurate with the global significance of

these places. In achieving this, World Heritage property managers and the tourism industry should collaborate in the development and implementation of schemes of training and accreditation to ensure high standards are achieved.

Giving World Heritage a Function in the Life of the Community

32. To ensure World Heritage properties are a vibrant and essential part of the life of local communities, World Heritage property managers should establish and implement effective, place-specific systems of engagement with communities and stakeholders to:
 - ensure meaningful input and influence in decision making for the place
 - build collaborations with and among communities in support of the property and its communities
 - facilitate voluntary contribution to planning and management
 - provide opportunities for study and learning
 - maintain community confidence in and support for management programs and the values of the place
33. The rights, needs and aspirations of Traditional Owners of World Heritage properties should be recognised and respected in all aspects of assessment, nomination and management of World Heritage properties. This is relevant whether or not the place is specifically listed for its Indigenous cultural values and whether or not Native Title settlement has been achieved⁸.
34. Systems of engagement with Traditional Owners should be developed having regard to cultural heritage values, continuing cultural knowledge and practices and any diversity of views within Indigenous communities.
35. The Commonwealth and State Governments should establish, and where successful, continue programs and projects to achieve social and economic benefits for Traditional Owners associated with all World Heritage properties whether they have cultural values listed or not, as a contribution to national 'Closing the Gap' goals.
36. Governments should recognise the very significant contribution World Heritage properties make to regional, State and national economies in allocating resources for the management of Properties and in the systems of governance, engagement and presentation and promotion established for the various Properties.
37. While always ensuring protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of each of Australia's World Heritage properties, managers should seek opportunities to increase the economic and social contribution World Heritage properties can make to regional communities through sustainable tourism and recreation, and through programs of research, education and communication.

Transmission: Research, Monitoring and Reporting

38. In view of the Outstanding Universal Value of Australia's World Heritage properties, Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments should facilitate the allocation of sufficient funding for effective management programs and project work. Further, governments should ensure that World Heritage properties receive funding priority in areas such as climate change or invasive species research and the implementation of ethical best practice management principles based on the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
39. World Heritage property managers should actively encourage research within World Heritage properties, as a means of generating knowledge for application in both the place itself and for wider application in environmental and cultural conservation⁹.
40. Systems of monitoring in World Heritage properties, reflecting World's best practice should be established and supported to ensure trends in the conservation of the Outstanding Universal Value of the properties are evident; to provide evidence of the impact of management interventions; to evaluate the wider social and economic benefits of the property; and to provide information to assist project design, ongoing management programs and resource allocation decisions.

⁸ In accordance with the EPBC Act (s.8) WH listing will not affect Native Title claims or negotiations

⁹ UNESCO policy encourages the use of World Heritage properties as laboratories for the study of climate change. The logic extends to other disciplines.

41. World Heritage property managers should establish collaborations with universities, CSIRO and other Australian research agencies and initiatives as a means of ensuring programs are built on the best available knowledge and to facilitate sharing of monitoring outcomes.
42. An advisory committee (or some other effective partnership or and communication mechanism, relevant to specific properties) should be established for each World Heritage property with functions including:
 - advising managers of developments in scientific, conservation, social, cultural and economic research relevant to the property
 - advising on the scientific basis of management plans and programs
 - advising on incorporation of traditional knowledge into management plans and programs
 - facilitating and coordinating research programs relevant to the property
 - advising on research and monitoring priorities
 - promoting World Heritage properties as centres of excellence for engagement and working with indigenous communities.
 - assisting with the design and implementation of monitoring programs
43. The Commonwealth, in collaboration with the States, Territories and other World Heritage property managers, should periodically arrange for the preparation and publication of independent reports on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties and on other matters relevant to the World Heritage Convention. These reports should provide information relevant to the periodic reports on the state of conservation of World Heritage properties prepared for the World Heritage Committee by the Commonwealth and property managers.

Education and Training for World Heritage

44. The Commonwealth, in partnership with the States and others as appropriate should establish a national World Heritage Centre of Excellence with the functions including¹⁰:
 - celebrating, communicating and interpreting Australia's World Heritage properties
 - providing a focus for research, education and training in relation to World Heritage management and related functions
 - supporting World Heritage management in developing Asian and Pacific Island nations
 - highlighting Australia's commitment to World Heritage to domestic and international audiences
 - recognising and incorporating Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Systems and Indigenous peoples
45. Australian schools and universities, in consultation with World Heritage property managers are encouraged to develop programs of teaching and research in support of World Heritage management to ensure Australia maintains adequate knowledge, skills and capacity in relation to World Heritage. Such programs should focus on actions and activities that practically apply that knowledge, skills and capacity. This will foster stewardship of each World Heritage property within the community which in turn will help protect the values and increase the resilience into the future.
46. Australia's long experience and capacity in relation to World Heritage management provides a basis for knowledge sharing and capacity development projects with World Heritage managers, especially in Asia and the Pacific. The Australian Government, through its environment agencies and AusAid, in collaboration with World Heritage property managers, should actively pursue opportunities to build international capacity for World Heritage management through training, staff exchange, twinning and other arrangements that meet the mutual needs of the partners.

Governance and Management

47. Recognising that under the Intergovernmental Agreement on World Heritage, the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC) fulfils an important role, providing advice on cross-cutting matters relating to World Heritage property conservation and management and Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention the Australian Government should ensure that AWHAC is properly supported, tasked and resourced.

10 The Convention calls for State parties to foster the establishment or development of national or regional centres for training in the protection, conservation and presentation ... and to encourage scientific research in the field.

48. Recognising the importance of ensuring the Traditional Owners of World Heritage properties have a direct and influential voice in national World Heritage policy and management, the Australian Government should ensure that the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network (AWHIN) or some alternative effective arrangement is properly supported, tasked and resourced.
49. The global significance of World Heritage properties demands a property-specific framework for management of each property that ensures an appropriate focus on retaining their outstanding universal value. At a minimum, this should comprise:
- An independently chaired advisory committee drawn as relevant from the regional, stakeholder and Traditional Owner community with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, accountable to the relevant Minister
 - An appropriately senior executive officer with capacity, professional competencies relevant to the property and sufficient authorisation to provide leadership and to build partnerships in relation to the property
 - A place-specific, values-based framework for management of the property documented in legislation and policy or through statutory management plans.
50. The Australian, State and Territory Governments should jointly undertake an early review of the adequacy of resources for World Heritage management that should consider:
- The overall level and security of funding committed to World Heritage
 - Development of nationally-relevant outcome and performance statements to provide a basis for investment decisions and program evaluation
 - Identification of appropriate cost drivers, including property size, levels of visitation, regional economic significance, and the nature of management needs and issues
 - Appropriate mechanisms for joint investment by the Commonwealth and the States, including transparent accounting for in-kind and voluntary contributions
 - Recognition of the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits that accrue from World Heritage listing.

Annex A: Potential future Australian World Heritage Nominations

Potential Australian Tentative List based on previous proposals including some extensions to existing sites. (See Mosley this volume and Valentine this volume).

PLACE	STATE	DESCRIPTION
Cape York Peninsula	QLD	An immense region with a rich cultural heritage; relatively pristine savannah, rainforest, woodland and wetland landscapes with distinctive ecohydrology.
Eastern Arid Zone	SA,NT, QLD, NSW	Channel Country, Simpson Desert, and Lake Eyre with geological, hydrological and geomorphological heritage in its vast plains and channels which fluctuate between extreme aridity and flooding.
Western Arid Zone	NT, SA, WA	This zone includes the beautiful West MacDonnell, Peterman and Musgrave Ranges of Central Australia which are rich in both natural and cultural values.
Kimberley (East and West)	WA	Spectacular coasts and islands, ranges and rivers; enormously significant Aboriginal cultural heritage including extensive exquisite rock paintings.
SW of Western Australia	WA	The region has globally significant plant diversity with many endemic species and associated faunal richness.
Antarctica		Antarctica is the most pristine and spectacular environment on earth with outstanding natural phenomena and intact processes. Includes historic heritage.
Arnhem Land	NT	The vast area of eroded sandstone plateau is a rugged and beautiful landscape with high cultural and ecological values the equal of the Kakadu to its west.
The Nullarbor	WA, SA	The Nullarbor Plain is one of the world's largest limestone landscapes and the largest in an arid area. Its features include marine, coastal and inland processes; spectacular karst, significant geomorphology and coastal landforms and marine species.
Australian Alps forests of SE Aust.	NSW, Vic, ACT	Australia's unique alpine areas are part of the wider Eucalypt story with forest diversity from alpine ash to snowgums. The alps are globally distinctive with extensive endemism of plants and animals. Sea to snow vegetation.
Tasmanian Wilderness	Tas	Forest extensions to the Tasmanian Wilderness WHA including the Tarkine, the largest area of Gondwanan cool-temperate rainforest in Australia, which also holds a high concentration of Aboriginal sites.
Great Barrier Reef	Qld	The remote Torres Strait Island Region is seen as a suitable Northern extension of the GBRMPA to protect its unique and rich ecological and cultural heritage
Coral Sea		The spectacular marine habitat of the Coral Sea could be nominated to cover the Australian extent or possible as a transnational nomination;
Burrup Peninsula	WA	The Burrup Peninsula in the Pilbara region of WA contains the largest concentration of rock art in the world, perhaps a million rock engravings.
Fossil Mammal Sites		Extensions to complete the time series of fossil deposits have been suggested.
The Story of the Eucalypts		Extensions could further develop the Blue Mountains to include other sites as part of the serial exposition of Eucalyptus.
Houtman Abrolhos	WA	The most southerly coral reefs in the Indian Ocean and one of most southerly in the world. They have vast seabird rookeries and a rich history as the resting place of numerous wrecks including the Batavia shipwreck of 1692.
Rowley Shoals	WA	Rowley Shoals is a near perfect example of coral geomorphology in a remote location north west of WA
Sydney Basin	NSW	This site holds high coastal biodiversity and the beginnings of the national parks movement.
Flinders Ranges	SA	This region of dramatic landforms including synclinal Wilpena Pound, is home to millions of ancient fossils believed to be some of the earliest of life forms in its ancient geology. Ediacaran fossils are found only in a handful of places on Earth. It also holds cultural values to its Indigenous people and rich semi-arid flora and fauna