

PERIODIC REPORTING ON THE APPLICATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECTION I: APPLICATION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE CONVENTION BY THE STATE PARTY

I.1 Introduction

- a. **State Party**
New Zealand
- b. **Year of ratification or acceptance of the Convention**
Ratified 22 November 1984
- c. **Organisation responsible for the preparation of the report**
The Department of Conservation (Te Papa Atawhai)
- d. **Date of the report**
- e. **Signature on behalf of the Party**

I.2 Identification of cultural and natural properties

- a. **National inventories**

The Department of Conservation is currently reviewing its procedures for involving the community in the identification of properties for inclusion in New Zealand's 'national inventory' and 'tentative World Heritage list'. The current focus of this work is to establish processes to involve the indigenous Māori community. Development of the inventory and tentative list will be deferred until these community consultation processes have been developed.

Responsibility – Department of Conservation

- b. **Tentative list**

See report I.2a

Responsibility – Department of Conservation

c. Nominations

New Zealand's World Heritage nominations have been successful and have resulted in the inscription of three properties:

World Heritage property	Natural	Cultural landscape
Te Wahipounamu (South-west new Zealand)	1990	
Tongariro National Park	1990	1993
NZ Sub-Antarctic Islands	1998	

Experience gained in that process and in attempting to develop national inventories and tentative lists of potential World Heritage sites and wetlands of international significance (Ramsar sites) has convinced the Department of Conservation that it is unwise to undertake these exercises in the absence of appropriate community consultation. In New Zealand, Māori with particular tribal association with these areas have a special place in the consultation process. The Department's current efforts are being directed to developing appropriate processes for that consultation.

Recent settlements of indigenous peoples' land claims have tended to give tribal authorities a greater role in protected area policy matters, such as by making them statutory advisers on matters requiring action.

I.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

a. General policy development

New Zealand's World Heritage properties comprise national parks, reserves and other public conservation land that is administered by the Department of Conservation. The Department develops policies for the management of such land generally, which are applied through conservation management strategies and plans. Those policies relates directly to New Zealand's World Heritage properties, addressing such matters as the conservation and appropriate enhancement of the site's natural and cultural values and the requirements of communities to enjoy these sites and appreciate their significance as a part of our World Heritage.

The Department is preparing a general policy for conservation under the Conservation Act and a review of the general policy for National Parks under the National Parks Act. In addition, management plans for the National Parks covered by World Heritage statutes are in various stages of review.

Opportunities are being explored for increasing the involvement of Māori, as New Zealand's indigenous community, in the co-operative management of the World Heritage sites with which they have a particular ancestral association. This work has lead to the proposal for a World Heritage Indigenous People's Council of Experts (WHIPCOE).

b. Status of services for protection, conservation and presentation

The Department of Conservation provides integrated protection, conservation and presentation services from within its regional conservancy structure.

These services are applied to New Zealand's World Heritage areas but directed at particular conservation priorities, regardless of land status, and guided by the management plans that have been developed for their component parts, such as national parks and other specially protected areas. In 2001, the Department delegated an overlying co-ordinating role for the management of World Heritage areas to a single Regional General Manager (RGM, Southern Region). The purpose of this delegation is to maximise the additional conservation benefits that World Heritage inscription can bring to land that is already managed for conservation purposes.

New Zealand's World Heritage properties benefit both directly and indirectly from the Department of Conservation's strategic directions for biodiversity conservation and the programmes that integrate the way in which natural and cultural heritage is managed. World Heritage areas benefit from this concerted action, which takes place both on and off site. Examples include combating weeds and pests that threaten indigenous biodiversity, developing threatened species recovery programmes and from co-operative conservation relationships with landowners, iwi (the indigenous Maori community), other community groups and local authorities.

As part of this work, the Department of Conservation is developing new monitoring and evaluation tools. These assist World Heritage site managers in measuring performance, and setting priorities.

c. Scientific and technical studies and research

Scientific and technical studies and research that relate to New Zealand's World Heritage sites principally focus on the conservation of New Zealand's indigenous species and ecosystems; the human history associated with the land that the Department manages and on managing the experience and impacts of visitors. The Department of Conservation funds most of this work.

Recent publications of general significance to World Heritage management are:

- Cessford, G. (ed) 2001. *The state of wilderness in New Zealand*, Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand, 107 p.
- Harris, S., Brown, J., Timmins, S. 2001. Weed surveillance - how often to search? *Science for Conservation* 175. 27 p.
- Hutcheson, J., Walsh, P., Given, D. 1999. Potential value of indicator species for conservation and management of New Zealand terrestrial communities. *Science for Conservation* 109. 90p.
- James, B. 2001. Rotoiti nature recovery project: an evaluation of advocacy. *Science for Conservation* 160. 46 p.
- Overton, J., Leathwick, J. R. 2001. Measuring environmental distinctiveness. *Science for Conservation* 174. 20 p.
- Sheppard, B. (ed), 2001 'Proceedings of the World Heritage Managers' workshop, Tongariro National Park, 26-30 October 2000', Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand, 168 p.
- (Pamphlet) 2001 'Making the best choices for conservation'. www.doc.govt.nz/Publications/004~Science-and-Research/Pamphlets/index.asp

Research currently being processed for publication by the Department of Conservation includes:

E. Eijgelaar and S. van Poelgeest, 2001. *'Socio-economic impacts of the designation of Te Wahipounamu-South West New Zealand World Heritage Area on neighbouring communities'*. Department of Conservation Publication, Wellington, New Zealand, 75p. (in preparation for publication)

d. Measures for identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation

Within the context of managing conservation land generally, the Department of Conservation has a suite of decision making and planning tools that determine measures undertaken with respect to its World Heritage obligations. Amongst these are requirements of statutes such as the Conservation Act, National Parks Act and the Wildlife Act and the obligations to Maori, as set out in the Treaty of Waitangi. These are further refined by a series of general management principles including a biodiversity strategy, a visitor strategy and an historic heritage strategy. National and regional conservation management strategies and plans provide detailed guidance for particular places and 'Standard Operating Procedures' have been developed for specific management tasks. Standards for presentation of World Heritage properties are also defined, through World Heritage Visitor Information guidelines.

Visitor centres at Whakapapa (Tongariro National Park) and Haast (Te Wahipounamu) provide visitors with attractively-presented information on the significance of these properties; their World Heritage values and how those values are being managed. They also provide advice on visitor safety. Other information for Te Wahipounamu is co-ordinated thematically and systematically through an agreed set of standards.

e. Training

Training is undertaken for staff, to meet needs identified in job descriptions and annual work plans. The Department of Conservation also works with an external training organisation to provide general instruction for trainee rangers and it takes part in regional workshops for World Heritage Managers. New Zealand hosted one such meeting at Tongariro National Park in October 2000.

I.4 International co-operation and fund-raising

New Zealand plays an active role, in co-operating with other countries, to further the aims of the World Heritage Convention. In October 2000, the Department hosted and facilitated the UNESCO World Heritage Managers' workshop for the Asia-Pacific region. The workshop was held at the Tongariro National Park World Heritage Site.

The New Zealand Overseas Development Assistance (NZODA) programme has also funded a contract position for a World Heritage officer at the UNESCO Office for the Pacific, in Apia.

I.5 Education, information and awareness building

- The New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO has developed an Internet-based New Zealand addition to UNESCO's World Heritage Education kit. The

National Commission is also co-ordinating a Pacific addition to the kit, involving input from Australia, Fiji, Samoa and the Solomon Islands.

- The Ministry of Education has funded the 'LEARNZ' computer-based, interactive education programme for New Zealand schools, which has included a popular module on the Tongariro National Park World Heritage site.
- The Department of Conservation maintains an internet website that provides a ready source of information about the World Heritage Convention and New Zealand's World Heritage sites. It also provides links to the World Heritage Centre's website and to other key websites that relate to World Heritage in this region.

I.6 Conclusions and recommended action

a. Main conclusions

New Zealand's three World Heritage properties are on land already managed for conservation purposes. This presents an interesting challenge, of identifying ways of improving the conservation benefit that can be derived from World Heritage inscription. Each is recognised for its outstanding natural character and one (Tongariro) is also recognised as an outstanding cultural landscape. This cultural association and New Zealand's Treaty obligations to Māori have provided a focus for increasing the involvement of Māori in the work of the World Heritage Convention. New Zealand's broader associations with its Pacific neighbours also provide opportunities to furthering the work of the Convention in those countries.

b. Proposed future action(s)

Engage Maori and other sectors of the community in the objectives of the World Heritage Convention, including the development of a national inventory and tentative list of potential World Heritage sites.

Explore opportunities for improving the conservation benefit that can be derived from World Heritage inscription where the land is already managed for conservation purposes.

Continue to work with regional neighbours to further the objectives of the World Heritage Convention.

c. Responsible implementation agency(ies)

The Department of Conservation.

d. Timeframe for implementation

The timeframe for developing a national inventory and indicative list will be dependent on the progress made in gaining the acceptance and participation by Māori and other key sectors of the community.

e. Needs for national assistance

None