Consultation meeting on the role of accredited NGOs in the 2003 Convention

UNESCO Headquarters, 18 April 2019
Participants of the consultation meeting

- 65 accredited NGOs and 37 States Parties registered (as of 17 April)

Accredited NGOs

- Western Europe and North America: 38
- Eastern Europe: 7
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 3
- Asia and the Pacific: 9
- Arab States: 3
- Africa: 5

States Parties

- Western Europe and North America: 8
- Eastern Europe: 6
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 5
- Asia and the Pacific: 5
- Arab States: 7
- Africa: 6
Wifi network: HQ-AIR-PUB
Username: hq-air
Password: uneswifi


https://ich.unesco.org/fr/reflexion-sur-le-role-des-ong-01037
Consultation meeting on the role of accredited NGOs in the 2003 Convention

UNESCO Headquarters, 18 April 2019
Objectives, working methods and agenda
Context of the reflection on the role of NGOs

- **2008**: Creation of the accreditation system for NGOs
- **2013 (8.COM)**: Report on the profile of the NGOs accredited to act in an advisory capacity to the Committee
- **2015 (10.COM)**: First quadrennial review of accredited NGOs
- **2017 (12.COM)**: Launch of the reflection process on the role of NGOs
Timeline

April 2018
Launch of consultation process

May-August 2018
Preliminary consultation with NGO Forum and Informal Ad Hoc Working Group

September-October 2018
Electronic consultation with accredited NGOs and States Parties

13.COM
Report to the Committee on initial results of consultation

Spring 2019
Consultation meeting

14.COM
Report to the Committee on results of consultation process and possible revision of OD (8.GA)

Background document presents current situation, challenges and potential ways forward

13.COM Document presents the plan for the consultation process and initial results from electronic consultation

Working document integrates results from electronic consultation and 13.COM debates and presents proposed ways forward

14.COM Document integrates results from consultation meeting

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18 April 2019
Why a need for a reflection on the role of NGOs?

**Challenges**
- Lack of clear definition of *inter alia* advisory functions
- Assymetry of criteria applied in accreditation and review processes
- Imbalance in geographical representation
- Workload of the governing bodies and of the Secretariat

**Other issues to be considered**
- Regular increase in the number of accredited NGOs
- Diversity of profiles and expertise among accredited NGOs
- Role of the ICH NGO Forum

Does the current system fulfill its objectives?
Electronic consultation (2018)

- 68 accredited NGOs (39% of the accredited NGOs) and 38 States Parties (21% of States Parties) responded

- Main general findings:
  - Overall positive impression of the current accreditation system (80% of accredited NGOs)
  - NGOs expect more concrete guidance from Committee
  - Need to improve cooperation among accredited NGOs
  - Need to improve cooperation between accredited NGOs and States
  - Importance of improving the fair representation of all regions

- Findings form the basis of the 3 main ways forward proposed
Three proposed ways forward

Main rationale:
- To ensure that the accreditation system is best fit to advise the Committee given the limited resources at hand
- To ensure that the Committee can adequately benefit from a diversity of expertise/experience

Option 1: Improved current accreditation system
- Maintain and adjust the current accreditation system

Option 2: Accreditation system managed by umbrella organization
- Establish an ‘umbrella organization’ responsible for the accreditation system and the coordination of the contribution of NGOs to the work of the Committee

Option 3: ‘Hybrid’ system
- Create a hybrid system with two or more types of accreditation for NGOs
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<th>Objectives</th>
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<td><strong>Session 1 (AM)</strong></td>
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<td>• Identify ways in which accredited NGOs could advise the Committee (Advisory functions)</td>
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<td>• Review the relevance of accreditation criteria and define additional criteria in relation to the advisory functions</td>
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<td>• Review the relevance of the criteria applied for the review of accreditation</td>
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<td>• Discuss potential measures to improve the representation of each region among accredited NGOs</td>
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<td><strong>Session 2 (PM)</strong></td>
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<td>• Discuss ways in which the accreditation process and the review process can be managed</td>
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<td>• Identify potential actions to enhance the active participation of NGOs to the work of the Committee and the implementation of the Convention</td>
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<td><strong>Next steps and conclusion</strong></td>
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<td>• Present and discuss the steps leading up to 14.COM and 8.GA</td>
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Working methods

- Public meeting
- Each session will be framed by introductory presentations
- General debate moderated by the Secretariat
Session 1

Identifying the advisory functions of accredited NGOs and reviewing accreditation criteria
Which advisory functions?

Current advisory functions (OD 96):

- Mainly relate to the evaluation of nominations, proposals and requests
- Fulfilled through the work of the Evaluation Body
- Only concern 6 NGOs (1 per region) at any one time

- Also include the evaluation of the effects of safeguarding plans for elements inscribed on the Urgent Safeguarding List
Which advisory functions?

Potential new advisory functions:

Option 1

- Advisory services to the Committee on specific thematic issues
- Experience-sharing on good safeguarding practices

Option 2

- Implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels
- Advisory services to the Committee in the review of accreditation of NGOs

Option 3

- Accreditation for advisory services to the Committee
- Accreditation for implementation of the Convention
Which accreditation criteria?

General observations

• Accreditation criteria are interlinked with advisory functions
• Alignment of criteria for the review of accreditation and accreditation criteria
• Additional criterion on integrity and professional standing?

If the accreditation system is focused on direct advisory services to the Committee:

• Focus on capacities of NGOs to evaluate nominations and their international experience

If the accreditation system is focused on the implementation of the Convention at all levels:

• Focus on experience in the safeguarding of living heritage at all levels (current accreditation criteria based on the ‘inter alia’ advisory functions’)

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18 April 2019
How to improve the geographical representation?

• **Issue linked with the identification of advisory functions**

• **Fair geographical distribution difficult to achieve**

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<th>‘Hard’ measures</th>
<th>‘Soft’ measures</th>
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<td>• Impose a <strong>ceiling/priority system</strong> to limit the maximum number of accredited NGOs per region</td>
<td>• Focus on <strong>specific awareness-raising and capacity-building activities</strong> targeting NGOs in under-represented regions</td>
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<td>• May prevent the Committee to benefit from a full range of expertise</td>
<td>• Requires the mobilization of <strong>national authorities</strong> (Ministries, National Commissions) and <strong>partners</strong> (ICH NGO Forum, accredited NGOs, C2Cs, UNESCO Chairs)</td>
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<td>• Only <strong>10%</strong> of respondents to survey were favourable</td>
<td>• <strong>States</strong> could be encouraged to mobilize NGOs active in the safeguarding of heritage at the national and local levels</td>
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<td>• <strong>53%</strong> of respondents proposed at least one type of soft measures</td>
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1. What does the Committee expect from accredited NGOs?

2. How shall NGOs be evaluated when requesting/renewing accreditation?

3. How can NGOs from all regions be encouraged to seek accreditation?
Session 2

Defining an accreditation system for NGOs (process and responsibilities)
Accreditation and review of accreditation processes

Current situation

- Ever-increasing number of accredited NGOs, many of which do not have the intention, interest or capacities to serve in the Evaluation Body
- Heavy processes for NGOs, the General Assembly, the Committee and the Secretariat while assigned tasks are very limited

Question

48% of accredited NGOs considered that the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels is a potential advisory function

Should the accreditation system make a distinction between advisory services to the Committee and participation in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels?
How to facilitate the contribution of accredited NGOs?

**Improve information-sharing**

- Mapping of expertise offered by accredited NGOs
- Informational welcome letter to all newly accredited NGOs

**Facilitate networking and coordination among NGOs**

- Need for a coordination mechanism for accredited NGOs?
- Enhance the role of the ICH-NGO Forum?

**Prevent the misuse of accreditation**

- Formal pledge against unrelated political claims in accreditation requests
- Development of a code of conduct for all accredited NGOs
Debate

Towards a revision of the accreditation process?
• From what type of NGOs does the Committee expect advisory services?
• Should NGOs of all sizes and competencies be accredited? Or shall the accreditation be more selective?
• On what basis shall NGOs be selected?
• How shall the contribution of NGOs be reviewed?

Relation between the Committee and accredited NGOs
• How to facilitate the contribution of accredited NGOs to the work of the Committee?
• How shall the Committee interact with accredited NGOs?

Relations between States and accredited NGOs
• How to facilitate cooperation between accredited NGOs and States?
Next steps and conclusion
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What’s next?

- Working document of the 2019 consultation meeting
- Findings of the 2018 electronic consultation
- Debates at the 2019 consultation meeting
- Report of the consultation meeting
- To be reviewed by the ICH NGO Forum
- Report to 14.COM (December 2019)