



Press Release

**CLIMATE CHANGE - THE FASTEST GROWING THREAT TO WORLD HERITAGE**  
**23 June 2018**

**Bahrain:** Climate change is emerging as the fastest growing pressure facing the Outstanding Universal Value of many World Heritage properties.

The World Heritage Watch Forum in Manama, Bahrain in 22-23 June 2018 expressed its continued concern about the impacts of climate change on numerous World Heritage properties. The Forum devoted a session to climate change and World Heritage. Accelerating climate threats include sea level rise and coastal erosion, more intense storms, worsening wildfires and drought, and coral bleaching.

Hundreds of World Heritage sites around the globe are already being affected by climate change, including coral reefs, glaciers, Arctic landscapes, wetlands, forests, coastal archaeological sites and historic cities.

Among those sites that were discussed at the Forum that are already impacted by climate change included Lamu (Kenya), Lake Baikal (Russia), Hoi An (Vietnam), Kujataa (Denmark) and the Mesopotamian marshlands (Iraq).

The Forum discussed the need for policy responses that match the scale of this fast-growing threat to global heritage, including identification of sites most at risk from climate change, and the inclusion of climate vulnerability assessments in the official nomination process.

The Forum reiterated the importance of (all countries) undertaking the most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The Forum called for coordination between the World Heritage Convention, the Bonn convention and other environmental conventions on one side and the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to ensure that adaptation and mitigation measures do not have any harmful impacts on World Heritage Sites

The proposed updating of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee's 2007 climate policy should be an urgent priority.

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For interviews

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