Foreword

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The celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the World Heritage Convention, which were held throughout 2012, provided an opportunity to reflect on some of the pressing issues facing the properties included on the World Heritage List. The official theme of the anniversary year, 'World Heritage and sustainable development: the role of local communities', acknowledged, and placed emphasis on, what is perhaps the most significant challenge for World Heritage in our times: maintaining its values to society while accommodating the changes imposed on it by major global phenomena such as rising inequalities, globalization, climate change and massive urbanization.

The community of heritage practitioners has long recognized the need for new approaches to conservation, which would reflect the increased complexity of their work and facilitate a positive interaction with the larger environment in which their properties exist, with particular attention paid to local communities. This is especially important for cultural heritage properties, whose very meaning is often the subject of contention among multiple stakeholders, in the face of rapid socio-cultural mutations.

I am therefore happy to introduce this new Resource Manual on *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, developed under the leadership of ICCROM in consultation with ICOMOS, IUCN and the World Heritage Centre, which builds on and complements a first Resource Manual on the management of natural World Heritage (issued in June 2012).[1] As was the case for its companion, this new manual does not intend to replace the vast literature on this subject, but simply to provide guidance on the specificity of managing cultural World Heritage properties while providing useful references to existing approaches and examples.

The manual also introduces an innovative conceptual framework for understanding management systems of cultural heritage, the result of a research project undertaken by ICCROM since 2009, which hopefully will not only assist heritage practitioners, but also policy-makers and communities, in better defining issues and identifying possible solutions to the problems they face at their properties. This framework represents the 'minimum common denominator' among the very wide range of possible management systems that exist throughout the world for cultural heritage properties as diverse as historic cities, cultural landscapes, individual monuments or archaeological sites.

We hope that readers will find this manual relevant to their needs and look forward to receiving comments and suggestions to improve and enrich it, particularly with specific examples and case studies that would demonstrate best practice or provide lessons learned.

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1. Accessible online at: http://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-703-1.pdf