



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

The Assistant Director-General for External Relations and Public Information

To Non-Governmental Organizations, official partners of UNESCO

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30 June 2014

Dear Partners,

First I would like to share the outcomes of recent important events for our Organization:

- ◆ 26 new sites – including the 1000th site with the inscription of Okavango Delta in Botswana - were added to the **World Heritage List** during the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee, organized in Doha, Qatar from 15 to 25 June last, bringing the List to a total of 1007 properties in 161 States Parties. To discover the list of new sites, please click on [this link](#).
- ◆ Thirteen new sites have been added to the **UNESCO's World Network of Biosphere Reserves**, which now numbers 631 sites in 119 countries, including 14 transboundary sites. Those of you interested in learning more about these new sites can connect to http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/about-us/single-view/news/thirteen_sites_added_to_unescos_world_network_of_biosphere_reserves/

I wish also to recall that the deadlines for registering to the Forums of NGOs that the Liaison Committee organizes in 2014, are approaching. The Forum on "Access to water for all in Africa" (Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 30-31 July 2014) has attracted the interest of many of you and I am pleased to already note a broad participation with almost 250 possible participants. I hope to see you in Yamoussoukro in late July.

I hope you will also be as many to attend the third Forum to be held in Sofia and Sozopol (Bulgaria) from 28 to 30 September 2014 on the theme "The role of youth in the safeguarding of tangible and intangible cultural heritage". Your participation is essential!

1-4 September 2014 – UN Conference on Small Island Developing States - Apia, Samoa

The Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States coincides with the celebration of the International Year for SIDS and aims to review the 20-year implementation of the SIDS Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA, developed at World Conference held in 1994 in Barbados).

UNESCO is contributing actively to the 20-year review process of the BPoA that has started in 2013 with national, regional and inter-regional preparatory workshops. The Organization is also participating in the process of developing the outcomes of the Apia 2014 Global Conference.

The Conference will be preceded by related-activities from 28 to 30 August 2014, to be held also in Apia, Samoa. A number of side and parallel events to the Samoa Conference are planned to be organized under the leadership of UNESCO, including on: (i) "Enhancing Island Resilience through Education for Sustainable Development", (ii) "The potentials of Underwater Cultural Heritage for SIDS States", (iii) "Culture and Development - Heritage and Creativity in SIDS", (iv) "Coping with and adapting to ocean threats for resilient SIDS communities", and (v) "Promoting Career Prospects of young people in the Sciences including the Water Sector as a means of ensuring the sustainable development in SIDS".

Representatives of civil society interested in participating as observers in the SIDS Conference and its preparatory process are required to be accredited to the United Nations and register accordingly.

You will find more information on the Conference on the devoted site (<http://www.sids2014.org/>) and information on UNESCO's action for SIDS at the following address: (<http://www.unesco.org/en/sids>).

Contact: Mr Douglas Nakashima (d.nakashima@unesco.org)

9-10 September – 21st Session of the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (IBC) and the Joint Session of IBC and the Intergovernmental Committee for Bioethics (IGBC), UNESCO Headquarters, Paris

In order to streamline the working methods of the two Committees, the public meetings of the 21st Session of IBC will be held in conjunction with the Joint Session of IBC and IGBC.

Two main topics will be discussed during these sessions: the elaboration of the principle of the sharing of benefits, as set out in Article 15 of the *Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights* (2005), and the update of the IBC's reflection on the human genome and human rights. In addition, the revision of the Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers (1974) has been included as an item for discussion, as well as the current global reflection on addressing the ethical aspects of converging technologies.

The IBC was created in 1993. It is a body of 36 independent experts appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO and follows progress in the life sciences and its applications in order to ensure respect for human dignity and freedom. The IBC represents the only global forum for in-depth reflection on bioethics. The IGBC was created in 1998, comprising 36 Member States elected by the General Conference of UNESCO, whose representatives meet at least once every two years to examine the advice and recommendations of the IBC.

I know many of you follow the work of these committees. You will find more information about the 21st Session of IBC and the Joint Session of IBC and IGBC at www.unesco.org/shs/bioethics in the coming weeks.

Contact person: Mr Tee Wee Ang (email: ibc@unesco.org)

UNESCO Publications

- The report *Higher Education in Asia: Expanding Out, Expanding Up* aims at providing data and analysis to help Asian countries weigh the balance of different policies to expand their higher education systems. It is based on data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and a diverse range of national and international sources. It is available in English only at the following address: <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/higher-education-asia-graduate-university-research-2014-en.pdf>
- The issue *World Heritage – World Heritage in Qatar – N°72* has just been published. This number allows you to discover the richness of Qatari heritage and its people. It is available in French, English and Spanish at the following address: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/revue/72/>
- *Africa's Mind. Build for a Better Future* is a booklet showcasing eleven success stories from throughout the continent that highlight how science, technology and innovation can contribute to a better quality of life and sustainable development. Published by UNESCO, in partnership with the Islamic Development Bank, the booklet is available in English and French under the following link: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002278/227858e.pdf>

Yours sincerely,



Eric Falt