

ICOMOS

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MONUMENTS ET DES SITES
CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE MONUMENTOS Y SITIOS

Principles and Rules for the Work of the Monitoring Group (Preventive Monitoring) of the German National Committee of ICOMOS

The following principles govern the composition, working methods and internal organisation of the monitoring group in terms of rules of procedure in accordance with Article 30 of the statutes of ICOMOS Germany. They replace the previous "Principles" from 2009-10, 2013, and 2019, which were revised several times.

1. PRINCIPLES

The monitoring group is a working group of the German National Committee of ICOMOS according to Art. 30 of the statutes of ICOMOS Germany. It pools specialist knowledge and is a tool for monitoring World Heritage sites in Germany and for advising the bodies responsible for them. It pursues continuous preventive monitoring of the World Heritage sites in accordance with the principles developed by ICOMOS, the guidelines of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, and the mandate for preventive monitoring as stated in Resolution No. 27 of the 16th General Assembly of ICOMOS of 4 October 2008 and in Resolution No. 32 of the 19th General Assembly of ICOMOS of 11–15 December 2017.

2. TASKS

2.1 Regular monitoring

The most important task of the members of the monitoring group is to contribute to conflict prevention or conflict mitigation through early advice. As a rule, two members of the monitoring group from different disciplines are to supervise a World Heritage site. On the basis of site visits, meetings with local officials and experts, and the study of current plans, the monitoring experts gain an overview of the condition of and possible changes to the World Heritage sites under their care. As a rule, the World Heritage sites are to be visited once a year and the plans and projects affecting them should be discussed with the local authorities, also taking into account the (updated) management plans. The relevant heritage authorities and the official bodies concerned should be involved in these meetings. By 20 January of the following year at the latest, the monitoring experts responsible for the respective World Heritage sites prepare a written report (state of conservation) for the steering committee of the monitoring group to review and approve. The monitoring experts send the report to the parties involved after it has been approved. The report should be based on the form prepared for this purpose (see appendix).

2.2 Procedure in case of problems and conflicts

If the monitoring experts are informed about measures that could affect the "Outstanding Universal Value" and the "integrity" and "authenticity" of the World Heritage sites, they will, if necessary, review and discuss the case with the relevant heritage authority and the relevant municipal heritage authority and the World Heritage site representatives.

In critical cases, the steering committee of the monitoring group will be informed. If necessary, the monitoring experts will draft letters to be sent by the spokespersons of the monitoring group to the local officials and/or the competent authorities in Germany.

The Board of the German National Committee of ICOMOS decides if a report to the Secretariat of ICOMOS International should be forwarded to the Secretariat of the World Heritage Centre on the basis of a proposal by the steering committee of the monitoring group.

The regulations and instructions agreed between the German National Committee of ICOMOS and the German Commission for UNESCO (DUK) or the Vereinigung der Denkmalfachämter in den Ländern (Association of State Conservation Authorities in the Federal States, VDL) must be observed.

2.3 Experts

In addition to the monitoring experts assigned to the respective World Heritage sites, suitable ICOMOS members can be called in for monitoring in cases where specialist knowledge and expertise are required for the assessment of an issue (e.g. in the fields of restoration, building construction and physics, urban planning, garden heritage management, cultural landscape management, archaeological heritage management, epochs).

3. ORGANISATION

3.1 Members/Monitoring experts

The monitoring group is composed of members of ICOMOS. Membership in the monitoring group is granted by the steering committee, which informs the Board of the German National Committee of ICOMOS in writing.

When appointing the monitoring experts and their responsibilities, their professional qualifications and the specific nature and needs of the World Heritage site in question must be taken into account. In the event of a new appointment, the monitoring experts still in charge are to be consulted. They must hand over their documents to the new monitoring expert and conduct a handover talk.

In order to avoid the impression of bias, members will only look after World Heritage sites with which they are or were not professionally involved, e.g. as full-time curators or on the part of the owner(s) of a World Heritage site.

The monitoring task is to last three years on a rotational basis and can be extended.

3.2 General meeting of the monitoring group

The annual general meeting of the members of the monitoring group decides on the proposals of the steering committee regarding the monitoring group's work programme. In addition to the formalities, the annual general meeting of the monitoring group serves in particular for the exchange of expertise and information on special topics relating to individual World Heritage sites. Reporting on the World Heritage Sites should be limited to relevant individual cases and primarily illustrated in short presentations; general reporting on all World Heritage Sites should be dispensed with in favour of written reports.

An annual general meeting of members will be held once a year, usually in the spring or first quarter, at the invitation of the spokesperson(s) of the monitoring group at a World Heritage site in Germany. It is quorate regardless of the number of members present.

Upon resolution of the steering committee or upon written request of at least one third of the members of the monitoring group, a further – extraordinary – general meeting of the monitoring group may be convened by the spokesperson(s).

The invitation with a proposal for the agenda is to be issued at least four weeks before the monitoring group's general meeting. Supplementary proposals for the agenda must be submitted to the spokesperson(s) of the monitoring group within two weeks of receipt.

The preparation of the meeting is the responsibility of the spokesperson(s) and the steering committee. The meeting shall be chaired by the spokesperson(s) of the monitoring group, the steering committee or by chairperson(s) appointed by the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, a member is chosen from those present to write a draft for the minutes. After consultation with the steering committee, the minutes will be sent to all members of the monitoring group after eight weeks at the latest; proposals for amendments to the minutes can be submitted to the spokesperson(s) of the monitoring group within a further four weeks. The final version of the minutes will be decided by the steering committee. An updated list of the World Heritage sites in Germany and their monitoring commissioners with contact details is also sent out with the minutes.

3.3 Spokesperson(s) and steering committee

The monitoring group elects the spokesperson(s) and three representatives from among its members for a period of three years. A tandem assignment of the spokesperson function is possible. Re-election is possible up to two times. The spokesperson(s), their representatives, and the President of the German National Committee of ICOMOS or an ICOMOS board member appointed by the President form the steering committee of the monitoring group; they have one vote each in decisions. The steering committee agrees on an internal division of labour, in particular for the supervision of special projects within the scope of the monitoring. The representatives of the spokesperson(s) support the work of the spokesperson(s) and represent them if necessary. The steering committee meets regularly, at least twice a year, in person or online. Important decisions on individual World Heritage sites in terms of technical and personnel matters are taken by the steering committee in consultation with the relevant monitoring experts.

The spokesperson(s) or a representative may, upon invitation or request, participate in meetings and site visits together with the locally responsible monitoring expert.

The steering committee decides which problematic cases are proposed to the Board or the President of the German National Committee of ICOMOS for reporting to the International Secretariat of ICOMOS, which may forward the case to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

In the event of changes in the responsibilities of individual monitoring experts, the spokesperson(s) will notify the locally responsible persons/owners of the World Heritage Site, and the competent monument authorities (State Offices and municipal monument protection authorities) and introduce the new monitoring experts in their area of responsibility.

The members of the monitoring group are bound by the principle of confidentiality. Statements made to the press and media on behalf of the monitoring group are the sole responsibility of the spokesperson(s) of the monitoring group or of the President of the German National Committee of ICOMOS, or, where appropriate, a representative appointed by them, in consultation with the locally concerned monitoring expert.

On the basis of the reports of the monitoring group, the steering committee prepares an annual press report on significant developments in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Germany. The report is to be published on the occasion of the annual World Monument Day on 18 April each year.

The steering committee of the monitoring group informs the Board of the German National Committee of ICOMOS directly of all decisions.

Communication among the monitoring experts and with the steering committee is usually by telephone or e-mail. In addition, the monitoring group maintains a members' area on the ICOMOS website or on another secure web-based platform, to which only the monitoring experts and the steering committee have access via a personal log-in.

4. FINAL PROVISIONS

In addition, the statutes of the German National Committee of ICOMOS apply. Changes to these principles are decided by the annual general meeting of the monitoring group and require the confirmation of the Board of the German National Committee of ICOMOS.

Decided at the general meeting of the monitoring group in Schleswig on May 17, 2025.