

AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATIONS

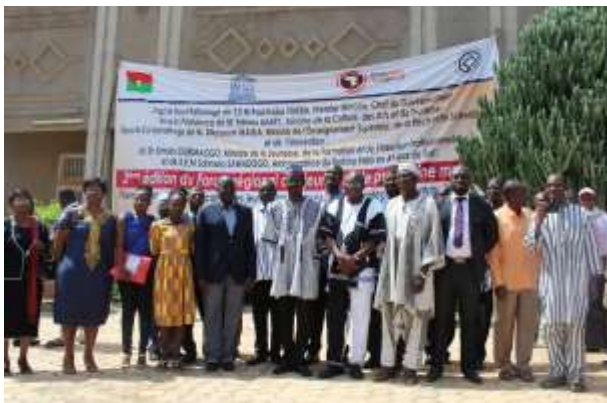
5 MAY 2017



Dr. Webber Ndoro - Executive Director of AWHF

African World Heritage Day is an opportunity for people around the world to celebrate one of Africa’s most precious resources: its irreplaceable cultural and natural heritage which was proclaimed by the General Conference of UNESCO in November 2015. Recognized as the birthplace of humanity, Africa boasts the remains of ancient civilisations, vast parklands renowned for breath taking wildlife and unique ecosystems, marvels of earthen architecture reflecting age-old building traditions, and much more. To date, a total of 131 African properties have been inscribed on UNESCO’s prestigious World Heritage List in recognition of their outstanding universal value. Faced with contemporary threats such as climate change, uncontrolled development, civil unrest and instability, many of these wonders are in danger. It is therefore more urgent than ever that this heritage be protected and preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. UNESCO and AWHF are convinced that we must draw on the potential of Africa’s cultural and natural heritage as

a force for poverty reduction and social cohesion as well as a driver of sustainable development and innovation. African World Heritage Day aims to increase global awareness of African heritage and to mobilise enhanced cooperation for its safeguarding. To mark the second edition of this international day, our Member States were encouraged to host a wide range of events and activities related to diverse aspects of World Heritage, with the active involvement of local communities, women and young people. The Government of Burkina Faso, in collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund organized a series of flagship events to mark the second edition of African World Heritage Day in 2017, including a Francophone youth forum and a seminar devoted to the theme of training heritage practitioners in Africa. These events culminated on 5 May with celebrations in the presence of high-level officials. The African continent’s wealth and diversity is truly astounding and active participation was witnessed from many countries to ensure the success of the 2017 African World Heritage Day.



African World Heritage Day celebrations in Gaoua, Burkina Faso





Participants receiving their certificates of participation, awarded by the representative of AWHF

OFFICIAL REGIONAL CELEBRATION IN BURKINA FASO

The 2017 activities of the regional celebration of the African World Heritage Day took place in Gaoua where AWHF had partnered with UNESCO and the Government of Burkina Faso. A Regional Youth Forum and Seminar on World Heritage in Africa was organized involving youth participants from 23 African Member States. Gaoua is located at about 300 kilometers from Ouagadougou, the capital city of Burkina Faso. The **official regional celebration of the African World Day** was chaired by the Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism of Burkina Faso, **Mr Tahirou Barry** in the presence of various dignitaries including **Mr. Lazare Eloundou**, Deputy Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, **Mr. Sanmalme Aristide Dabire**, General Secretary of UNESCO National Commission in Burkina Faso and **Mr Souayibou Varissou**, Head of Partnerships at AWHF. During his address, the Minister asserted that recommendations from the Youth Forum and the Seminar will be implemented. He reaffirmed the renewed support of the Government of Burkina Faso to the work of AWHF and promised the signing of a new partnership agreement in the upcoming days. Upon conclusion of the ceremony, the Youth participants were awarded certificates for their attendance and participation in the Forum.



Youth Forum Participants with the officials



Participants with their certificates gathered with all the dignitaries on the final day of the Forum

REGIONAL YOUTH FORUM

The **Youth Forum** was aimed at “Increasing youth involvement in the promotion and protection of African World Heritage” for French speaking countries. It was held from 26th April to 5th May 2017 and gathered 29 youth representatives between the ages 20 to 28 both males and females with 30 observers from different regions in Burkina Faso. The Youth were equipped with information about the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, AWHF programmes as well as about opportunities available in the National Commission for UNESCO in Burkina Faso. The gathering also provided an opportunity for the youth to learn more about the Management and Sustainable Development of World Heritage Properties in Africa, in particular regarding the heritage typology, management issues and challenges on mitigation measures. The participants were given an on-site experience by visiting the Ruins of Loropéni World Heritage property; discussing and proposing actions for the improvement of the site’s promotion and its state of conservation. A Declaration on African World Heritage was developed and it was presented during the celebration of the African World Heritage Day in Gaoua.





Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism of Burkina Faso, Mr Tahirou Barry

The **Seminar** that followed was based on “Protection of African World Heritage: Stakes, Challenges and Perspectives” and was hosted on 4th May in Gaoua. It saw participation from 200 youth, academics, decision makers, regional and local authorities and representative of media. The Seminar was officially opened by Mr. Alkassoum Maiga, Minister of High Education, Scientific Research and Innovation of Burkina Faso. In his address, the Minister advocated for the world cultural and natural heritage to be inserted in the curriculum of the University of Gaoua which will be opened next year. The various presentations and discussions assessed the achievements and challenges that exist when implementing the World Heritage Convention in Burkina Faso and Africa. The closing ceremony of the Seminar was led by Mr. Tahirou Barry, Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism of Burkina Faso.

OTHER EVENTS AROUND THE CONTINENT

Angola - Visit to the historic town of Mbanza Kongo

A visit to the Technical Department of Tourism, Hotel Officials and Culture in the town of Mbanza Kongo was done which served to be a review of the co-operation protocol between the Ministry and the Valuation, Preservation and Dissemination of the Cultural Identity of Angola.



Botswana - Heritage Commemorative Day

A commemorative gathering was done to serve to inform the public about the African World Heritage Fund and its activities.



Angola – Mbaza Congo



Botswana - Tsodilo

Democratic Republic of Congo - Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Kahuzi-Biega Reserve, an event that was created on 2nd May 2015

Connecting the youth to nature was the main activity of focus. A public awareness session engaging elders (who know the history of the reserve) and the youth gathered and assessed the evolution and discussed the future of the reserve. As they are located in a remote village area, the evening was used to project films on the emblematic species in DRC.



Ethiopia – Celebrated their Public and International Relation aspect.

Tourism development and marketing around natural and cultural world heritage sites was highlighted through a community gathering.



Madagascar - Showcasing Antakarana people and their heritage.

The Antakarana population is one of the most recognised population of Malagasy origin since the 8th century. A specificity still succeeds in showing casing the different cultures but has not succeeded in eliminating its basic culture. The celebrations in the city of the province of Antsiranana made them feel proud of belonging to their clan.



Democratic Republic of Congo - Virunga Mountains



Ethiopia – Fasil Ghebbi



Madagascar - Tsingy de bemaraha strict nature reserve

Mali - Protection of Cultural Heritage and Culture of Peace

Since 2012, Mali has undergone an institutional and security crisis that has greatly affected the preservation of heritage properties. Various cultural sites have been the object of unprecedented attacks and destruction, often in the name of religion. For this reason, religious leaders united to raise the awareness of the site communities through projections and theatrical performances.



Nigeria – Highlighted two decades of enlistment of “Osun Osogbo sacred Grove as a World Heritage Property: Prospects & Challenges”. The celebration of the African World Heritage Day was done through:

1. Public Lecture, Mini Exhibition and Cultural Activities.
2. Cultural dances and paper presentation around Sukur World Heritage Site.



Senegal – Heritage Awareness Day

Heritage Awareness Day on the need to protect the natural, cultural and world heritage for future generations was initiated. The fact that protection requires effective management of the values of the sites and the involvement of communities in safeguarding was highlighted.



Mali – Tomb of Askia



Nigeria – Sukur World Heritage Site



Senegal – Island of Goree

Rwanda – Memorial Visitations

The contribution of memorial sites to prevent genocide based on experiences of visitors at the World Heritage tentative listed sites of Gisozi, Nyamata, Murambi and Bisesero was highlighted. An analysis was done which focused on who the frequent visitors are, the interpretation of their message and their addresses.



Rwanda – Murambi Genocide memorial Sites

Tanzania - Heritage for the future

Based on the fact that local community has been part of heritage conservation, the celebration of the World Heritage Day focused on the role of youth especially from schools on participating in heritage conservation and protection through educational activities.



Tanzania – Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Zambia – The 2017 event was graced by the Minister of Tourism and Arts, Hon. Charles Banda who was accompanied by the Provincial Administration led by the Deputy Permanent Secretary and Members of the Board for the National Heritage Conservation Commission and other Senior Government officials.

Zambia joined the rest of Africans in commemorating the second African World Heritage Day under the theme: “Creating opportunities, enhancing livelihoods”. The national celebrations were held at Mwela Rock Art National Monument in Kasama, Northern Province, a site on the World Heritage National Tentative List of Zambia since 2009. The venue for the 2017 African World Heritage Day celebrations was strategically selected in order to conduct awareness for a potential World Heritage site.



Zambia – Mwela Rock Art National Monument