

UNESCO CONVENTIONS

A number of legal acts of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) concerning the world's tangible and intangible heritage and its legal and institutionalised protection.

Among the UNESCO Conventions dedicated to the protection of heritage, it is worth noting:

1. Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague 1954);
2. Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transport of Ownership of Cultural Property (Paris 1970);
3. Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris 1972);
4. Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (Paris 2001);
5. Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (Paris 2003);
6. UNESCO Declaration concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage (Paris 2003);
7. UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011).

One of the main legal acts of UNESCO is the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, which obliges signatory states to identify, protect, preserve, restore and pass on to future generations the cultural and natural heritage. The provisions of the Convention are the result of a perceived threat to the cultural and natural heritage due to social and economic transformations, among other things. It is recognised that some of the cultural and natural heritage assets are of exceptional importance as part of the world heritage and that their damage or destruction constitutes impoverishment of the world heritage.

The Convention defines cultural heritage as monuments (architecture, sculpture, painting, archaeology, etc.) and complexes (architectural and landscape) of general importance from the point of view of history, art or science. It also formulates a definition of a historical site as a work of man or a joint work of man and nature, having universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view. The document also defines the scope of the term 'natural heritage', which includes natural monuments created by physical and biological formations, geological and physiographic formations as zones hosting endangered animal and plant species, and places or natural zones with delimited boundaries, characterised by natural beauty. Natural heritage represents a common scientific or aesthetic value.

The "World Heritage Committee" was established under the auspices of UNESCO and universal heritage protection was established, among others, by including monuments on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

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Literature:

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