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For more than thirty years, UNESCO has been working with countries all over the world to identify sites suitable for classification as world heritage and to ensure that they are protected for future generations. There is currently a total of 851 cultural, natural and mixed sites on the World Heritage List. Their splendour is the best testimony to the diversity of our planet and its inhabitants.

Understanding the relation between man and nature in order to preserve it is one of the fundamental objectives of the World Heritage Convention.

The sky belongs to us all and forms a whole with the environment perceived by man. Associating nightscapes with natural and cultural heritage protection is a logical step in the relationship between man and nature.

Man's relation with the sky is constantly changing. Its previous mystical role has now been obscured by the realities of modern life. Although its apparent lack of motion fascinates our moving world, it is frequently seen as a space for developing trade, information, or more generally, a place for spatial tourism and scientific discoveries.

At present, the lights of our cities hinder the contemplation of the sky, source of inspiration and knowledge for all cultures of the world. The loss of this link has led to an impoverishment of our sensitivity to the phenomena of nature and the understanding of the universe.

One of the main objectives of the Declaration in Defence of the Night Sky and the Right to Starlight is raising awareness concerning the preservation of these values. There is a need to promote this Declaration, which supports the recognition and conservation of natural and cultural sites of exceptional universal value and their nightscapes.