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### **The Comparative Analysis for the Getbol**

The format for the nomination of properties for inscription in the World Heritage List requires a Comparative Analysis with similar sites, whether on the World Heritage List or not. The comparison should outline the similarities the nominated property has with other properties and the reasons that make the nominated property stand out. The comparative analysis should aim to explain the importance of the nominated property both in its national and international context.

The purpose of the comparative analysis is to ascertain whether there is scope in the World Heritage List for the inclusion of the nominated property, and to demonstrate that there are no comparable properties globally with similar values that might be nominated in the future.

The starting point of the Comparative Analyse are the potential Outstanding Universal Values and its related features or attributes. In other words: the listing of the Guinness Book of World Records for the property. The UNESCO requires to describe the **attributes** and **integrity**.

**Attributes**, often called features, are aspects of a property which are associated with or express the Outstanding Universal Value. Attributes can be tangible (physical) or intangible (nonphysical).

Examples of attributes for natural properties could include:

- visual or aesthetic significance;
- scale of the extent of physical features or natural habitats;
- intactness of physical or ecological processes;
- naturalness, and intactness of natural systems;
- viability of populations of rare species; and
- rarity.

It is important to define attributes as *specific* and *measurable* as possible.

**Integrity** is a measure of the wholeness, intactness and absence of threats of the natural heritage and its attributes. It is the extent to which the property:

- is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property's significance.
- includes all elements [attributes] necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value.
- suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

Carrying out a Comparative Analysis consists of three tasks:

**Task 1:** to ascertain whether the combination of values and attributes is already represented on the World Heritage List. This is done by comparing the nominated property with other World Heritage properties already inscribed.

The method is to work through the WH list searching for "marine sites", "archipelagos" and "tidal flat systems" or "mudflats". Compare with WH-properties such as Kvarken Archipelago, Cat Ba Archipelago, Sundarbans, Banc d'Arguin and Wadden Sea.

**Task 2:** to consider whether, in the future, other similar properties could be nominated from other parts of the world. The nominated property needs to be compared with other known examples based on the selected values and attributes. A comparison with ALL other comparable systems in the world must be made.

The method is to make a database for all (many) tidal flat systems in the world and to categorize by abiotic factors: size, climate zone, river-dominated, tide-dominated or wave-dominated, microtidal, mesotidal or macrotidal, presence/absence of islands → beach barrier or other. And biotic factors: Presence/absence of mangroves, corals, seagrass, cordgrass, macrobenthos abundance, primary production, etc.

List and score the attributes of the Getbol. For instance the number of islands, the character of the mudflats, the seasonality in sediment properties, the depth of the oxic layer in the sediment, the number of migratory birds, the rarity of birds, the number and biomass of macrobenthos, etc.

Work through the long list of tidal flat systems and **eliminate**.

**Task 3:** The comparative analysis must **draw conclusions**. The analysis should show that there is room on the List for the nominated property, and that there are no other similar properties that could be nominated.

Stress the unique attributes of the Getbol rocky archipelago tidal flat system: wave-dominated sand flats and macrotidal mud flats with high primary productivity, abundant macrozoobenthos, endangered bird species.

### **About the Wadden Academy**

The Wadden Academy is an independent foundation with the ambition to develop the Wadden Sea Region into an incubator for widely applicable integrated knowledge of sustainable development of a coastal area in which natural values are a key element and form the foundations of the local and regional economy. The region is a meeting place for scientists from the Netherlands and elsewhere, administrators, policy makers and management agencies. Together, they develop sustainable and innovative solutions based on interdisciplinary knowledge. By 2020, the trilateral Wadden Sea Region will be the best monitored and best understood coastal system in the world.

<http://www.waddenacademie.nl/en/>