

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Tenth Session

(Unesco Headquarters, 24-28 November 1986)

Item 8 of the Provisional Agenda: Monitoring the status of conservation of properties included in the List of World Heritage in Danger (natural properties)

Attached for the information of the Committee, is a document prepared by IUCN containing a brief update of conditions in 17 sites.

10TH WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE MEETING, 24-28 NOVEMBER 1986, PARIS, FRANCE

AGENDA ITEM 8: MONITORING THE STATUS OF CONSERVATION OF PROPERTIES
INCLUDED IN THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

Summary Report on Areas of Current Concern

At the 7th Meeting of the Committee IUCN was asked to keep the Committee regularly informed of the state of conservation of existing natural properties. A brief update of conditions in 17 sites of concern is given below.

A. NATURAL PROPERTIES ON THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

1. Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania. An IUCN mission visited the NCA 21-24 April to meet with the Acting Conservator, to review conditions and to assist in formulating a request for technical assistance. Conditions were still much the same as described at the 7th and 8th Committee meetings with severe shortages of equipment and supplies necessary for effective management. A key immediate need is vehicles for patrol and administration. Two project requests were prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Secretariat by the Unesco representative for Tanzania, and approved for immediate implementation. Further assistance in the order of several million dollars is being sought from NORAD as a result of the December IUCN workshop. If a portion of this is obtained, IUCN would recommend removal of the site from the Danger List.
2. Djoudj National Park, Senegal. The situation here has remained unchanged since the December Committee report. IUCN has coordinated a major review of conservation issues in the Senegal Delta with special emphasis on the creation of the Diawling Reserve adjacent to the Djoudj, and is awaiting clearance from Mauritania to release the report. A project for assistance for Djoudj has been received by IUCN/WWF from Senegal's Director of National Parks and this is currently being screened.
3. Garamba National Park, Zaire. Progress reports have been received from the project officers and the Zaire representative will provide further details at the Committee meeting. The rhino population has stabilised at 17 animals, but there remain serious problems in management (for example, late payments of staff salaries).

B. NATURAL PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION ON THE LIST OF WORLD HERITAGE IN DANGER

4. Ichkeul National Park. An official response to the request made at the last Committee meeting has been received by the Secretariat. The Tunisian Government in April opened tenders for construction of a sluice that would mitigate the immediate problems facing the park, but tenders have not been approved and long term problems still remain. A special wetlands management course was held in Ichkeul in January which assisted in raising local awareness of the problems with the park.

5. Tai National Park, Ivory Coast. IUCN's Tropical Forest Officer discussed the situation in Abidjan in March and apparently no improvements have been made. Despite repeated requests no information has been received by the World Heritage Secretariat. We continue to recommend this site for the Danger List.

C. OTHER NATURAL PROPERTIES

6. Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore Reserves, Zimbabwe. Unprecedented poaching pressures from the Zambian side of the Zambesi River have resulted in the loss of over 100 rhinos as well as loss of human life. Senior government officials from each country have issued statements of concern, and patrols have been reinforced. Addition of the Lower Zambesi National Park in Zambia to the site as proposed at the 8th Committee meeting would be one measure that could lead to better protection of the area. (Further details to be reported at the Committee meeting).

7. Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania. Reports have been received of heavy poaching over the past 2 years in this reserve which has an area larger than Switzerland. The elephant population declined from 85,000 to 60,000 with 5,000 animals poached in 1985. The decline in black rhinos is even more pronounced with a drop of some 90% to less than 300 today. The area was visited in April and meetings held with the Warden and Game Department officials. With the assistance of WWF and Frankfurt Zoological Society a census and management review is currently underway and will form the basis of a concerted assistance effort to be prepared in several months time. It should be noted that the Tanzanian Treasury received US\$2 million in foreign exchange as revenue from hunting safaris in the Reserve in 1985.

8. Iguazu National Park, Argentina. Misiones Province in which this park is located has sent a request to the Argentine Congress requesting that the area in the vicinity of the falls be transferred to their administration in order that additional commercial facilities can be developed. IUCN's Director General has sent an intervention to the President of the Republic noting that this is inadvisable and that control should rest with the national park authorities. No replies have been received.

9. Los Glaciares National Park, Argentina. IUCN visited the site in March. Development of a village settlement by the Province has indeed begun and has resulted in detrimental impacts in this key area of the park. There are also further plans for dam construction in the park and great concern by local conservationists over the future of this site has been expressed.

10. Pirin National Park, Bulgaria. The report requested at the 9th Committee meeting has not yet been received.

11. Aldabra Atoll, Seychelles. The Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF) has reported that lack of funds for management may require that facilities be developed on the island which could include an airstrip. While not necessarily resulting in severe detrimental impacts, commercial tourism development can bring with it a host of management problems and concern for careful planning to ensure minimal impacts should be registered with the SIF.

12. Niokolo-Koba National Park, Senegal. A new road across this park has been proposed. Already suffering from intensive poaching the road could open up the park to further depredations. An alternative route has been suggested.

13. Mt. Nimba Reserve, Guinea. A Swedish mining company and the Société des Mines de Fer de Guinée have proposed a new railway link to the Liberian side of the mountain. IUCN has sent an intervention letter noting that although the forests on the Liberian side have been destroyed, those on the Guinea side still retain much of their biological and watershed value, and the new railway should take this into account. We are awaiting follow-up to this suggestion.

14. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, Australia. A proposal for revocation of 390 ha of Lindeman Island for expansion of a holiday resort was tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 27 February 1986. Public interest in this action was high and on 12 March the proposal was withdrawn. Another potential threat from a proposed silica mine at Shelburne Bay has been the subject of an official IUCN enquiry.

15. Kakadu National Park, Australia. The boundaries of this site have been considerably enlarged to include an important wetland area which should add to the viability of this property. During a visit to Australian National Park and Wildlife Service offices in Canberra in January, IUCN was informed that notation of this extension would be given to the Secretariat. The new area would be included as a part of the existing World Heritage Site, without need for a new nomination. The question of proposed mining in the park, however, is a matter of concern and clarification of these plans has been requested by the Secretariat.

16. Galapagos Island National Park, Ecuador. Senior Ecuadorian parks officials visited IUCN Headquarters in March to discuss possible inclusion of a marine reserve surrounding the islands in the Park. This was strongly encouraged and a workshop on the topic is to be held later this year.

17. Manas Tiger Reserve, India. The Committee at its 9th Session asked to be kept informed of possible construction of a dam on the Manas River. This proposal has now been rejected and the threat to the reserve has been averted.