

Distribution limited

CC-90/CONF.004/4
Paris, 29 October 1990
Original: English

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF THE
WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee
Fourteenth Session
Banff, Canada, 7-12 December 1990

ITEM 9 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA: Monitoring of the state of conservation of natural World Heritage properties and related technical problems

At the fourteenth session of the Bureau the Secretariat and IUCN together provided reports on the status of conservation of 18 natural or natural/cultural properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. Upon the Bureau's request, its recommendations were transmitted to the relevant authorities in the States Parties concerned during late July/early August 1990. The comments and views of States Parties that had already been communicated to the Secretariat are described below. Other responses that are received before the fourteenth session of the Committee will be orally presented to the Committee at its forthcoming session. A report prepared by IUCN will also be submitted to the Committee.

1. Olympic National Park (USA): In response to the letter from the Secretariat dated 9 August 1990 transmitting the recommendations of the Bureau on the conservation of this site, the US authorities have provided a map indicating the additions to this site, its new boundaries and the new designated wilderness areas. They have also requested that the Committee formally consider including the new additions to the site as part of the property already inscribed on the World Heritage List (see document CC-90/CONF.004/10).

In regard to the recommendations of the Bureau regarding the precautions that need to be taken by the State Party to prevent future oil spills, similar to the "Nestuca Oil Spill", the US authorities have indicated that they have requested park officials to provide additional information on contingency plans that may be under consideration for future emergencies of this kind.

2. Mont St. Michel and its Bay (France): The Bureau's concerns were brought to the attention of the French authorities by letter dated 25 July 1990. Also, the Secretary for the natural part of the Convention, at the invitation of the French authorities, participated in the first meeting of the Conseil de la Baie (Bay Council), which brought together all the partners concerned by the protection and development of the site. The meeting took note of the Bureau's recommendations concerning the siltation of the Bay and the re-definition of the limits of the inscribed area, in order to avoid projects such as the construction of pig farms and large-scale amusement parks. The French authorities

have not yet officially replied to the the Secretariat's letter but have indicated that an oral report on all of these problems will be presented to the Committee at Banff.

3. Mt. Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire): The concern of the Committee and the Bureau regarding the impact of the proposed mining of iron-ore in this site had already been communicated to the Guinean authorities, the French authorities (in view of the interests of a French mining company), as well as the World Bank. Neither the Guinean nor the French authorities have replied at the time of writing. The threat to this site is being further exacerbated by the incursion of several thousand refugees from Liberia who, at the time of writing, were receiving emergency aid from the United Nations.

The World Bank (Occidental and Central Africa Department) has informed the Secretariat that at present it is administering a US \$ 500,000 Japanese grant for an environmental assessment study. US \$ 300,000 from this grant have been provided to a Unesco ecological study on Mt. Nimba which is likely to provide information necessary for making future environmental assessments. The Bank has furthermore informed the Secretariat that it has recommended the Guinean authorities not to approve any mining project as long as the environmental assessment study has not been completed. The mining group, which includes American, French, and Japanese interests, has in the meantime commissioned its own environmental assessment, including an environmental protection plan, which should be completed by mid-November and be available for inspection and review, by the World Heritage Committee as by others.

Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (India): The Secretariat transmitted the concerns of the Bureau regarding the integrity of this site to the Indian authorities by a letter dated 8 August 1990. The Indian authorities, by their letter of 22 August 1990, have acknowledged receipt of this letter and informed the Secretariat that the Bureau concerns have been communicated to the Director, Project Tiger, for a suitable response, since this site is being managed as a Tiger Reserve under this project.

Royal Chitwan National Park (Nepal): The Secretariat transmitted the Bureau's concerns regarding the impact of a proposed irrigation project to divert the Rapti river, which forms the northern boundary of this Park, to relevant authorities in Nepal and in the Asian Development Bank by letters dated 9 August 1990. The Asian Development Bank, by letter of 30 August 1990, has indicated that the Bank was "...equally concerned with the possible adverse effects..." of the East Rapti Irrigation Project on the wildlife of the Royal Chitwan National Park. The Bank had requested consultants to carry out a detailed environmental impact assessment study which is expected to be completed in the last quarter of 1990.

The Government of Nepal and the Bank have commissioned other studies, including a survey of existing farmer-managed irrigation schemes in the area, which would also be completed by the end of this year. The future status of the project will be jointly reviewed by the Government of Nepal and the Bank, on the basis of the conclusions of these studies and the likely options resulting from this review, and a set of alternatives will be foreseen. The Asian Development Bank indicated that it would keep the Secretariat informed of the future status of the project, as has been agreed with the Nepalese authorities, as a result of this review.

6. Niokola Koba National Park (Senegal): Following the recommendation made by the Bureau at its fourteenth session in June 1990, Unesco and IUCN representatives participated at several meetings organized by the Senegalese authorities in Dakar, to

launch the comparative ecological and socio-economic study of the proposed route across this Park and the alternative route to the north outside the Park boundaries. This study is expected to cost US \$ 38,000 of which US \$ 20,000 has been requested from the World Heritage Fund in order to meet part of the expenses of consultants who will undertake this study. This request has been approved by the Chairman of the World Heritage Committee. IUCN would provide \$ 10,000 and the World Bank \$ 8,000. It is expected that this study will take place in September/October/November 1990 and that the results will be communicated to the Committee.